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A Study of University Students' Idiomatic Competence

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Abstract

There is no doubt that formulaic expressions such as collocations, idioms and compounds play an important role in the second language acquisition and their teaching should be an integral part of foreign language learning since they show insights into foreign language culture and promote fluency, proficiency and communicative competence. That is the reason why idioms present an integral part of the English language curriculum at the Faculty of Food Technology and students are taught idioms related to food. The aim of this paper is, therefore, to establish whether the students are familiar with the food idioms prior to teaching them in order to incorporate them into the curriculum. The assumption is that most of the idioms are not intelligible to students since it is impossible to guess their meaning by anlaysing their individual components. However, due to the fact that the subjects were the 1st year graduate students who have been learning English for 15 years, this research will reveal whether there are students who are almost proficient users of English since they are familiar with most of the idioms. These results will, then, be of great importance when revising and designing the teaching materials intended for the students of food technology.

Keywords: idioms, multi-word units, formulaic expressions, collocations

1. Introduction

Acquisition of vocabulary and word combinations presents an important aspect of language learning. Language learners are often not aware of the existence of compounds, collocations and idioms and they perceive them as separate units, which leads to a number of errors. Language for specific purposes is a special area where the knowledge of specific lexical items is of great importance. Since idioms present a major component of lexical knowledge, their importance for successful communication cannot be denied. Figure 1 shows the hierarchy of errors and, as evident from this figure, lexical errors are considered the most serious because it is possible to understand a speaker if he/she makes a grammatical error, but not if a lexical error is made, which can lead to misunderstanding. For this reason, lexical

units play a pivotal role in language teaching and learning and lead to native-like proficiency.

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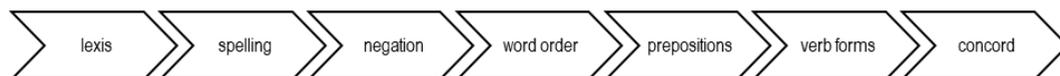
Figure 1. Hierarchy of mistakes according to McCretton and Rider. Source: Adapted from James (1998, p. 229)

2. Defining idioms

A lot of problems emerge when one tries to define idioms. Scholars agree on one point: they are multi-word units. So are collocations, which do not cause any serious problems to the EFL/ESL learners in the understanding process (Mackin, 1978). A multi-word unit can be defined as a fixed and recurrent pattern of lexical material sanctioned by usage (Grant and Bauer, 2004). This term encompasses both idioms and restricted collocations (those where it is possible to substitute only one constituent), but not phrasal verbs since they are a separate and independent group that deserves research on its own. According to Fernando (1996), idioms are "conventionalized multi-word expressions often, but not always non-literal." Gramley and Patzhold (2003) define an idiom as a "complex lexical item which is longer than a word form but shorter than a sentence and which has a meaning that cannot be derived from the knowledge of its component parts." In the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, we can find the following definition of an idiom: a <u>group</u> of words whose <u>meaning considered</u> as a <u>unit</u> is different from the <u>meanings</u> of each word <u>considered separately</u>. However, the context in which a certain multi-word unit is used is necessary to decide whether we are dealing with a literal or idiomatic interpretation of a multi-word unit. For example, a multi-word unit *to kick the bucket* can have the following meaning: to strike the pail with your foot or to die. It is generally accepted, however, that literal senses of some expressions do not survive alongside their figurative ones in normal, everyday use (Cowie, Mackin and McCaig 1993). The criteria for defining idioms have changed, have been narrowed and modified by lexicographers, Eastern European phraseologists, lexical semantics, lexicologists and vocabulary in language teaching research, and the most generally accepted definition of an idiom is the one describing them as words, whose meaning cannot be predicted from the meaning of their constituent parts (Grant and Bauer, 2004).

3. Types of idioms

Makkai (1972) divides these idiomatic multi-word units into a heterogeneous set of phrase and sentence "types", the most common of which include lexemic idioms (those can be subdivided into phrasal verbs -*bring up*, tournures – *rain cats and dogs*, irreversible binominals – *coffee and cream*, phrasal compounds - *blackmail*, incorporating verbs - *eavesdrop* and pseudo-idioms – *to and fro*), and sememic idioms (further subdivided into: proverbs – *It never rains but it pours*, familiar quotations – *brevity is the soul of wit*, first-base idioms associated with a national game like baseball – *have two strikes against one*, idioms of institutionalized politeness – *May I ask who's calling*?, idioms of institutionalized greeting – *how do you do*?, idioms of an institutionalized understatement – *I wasn't too crazy about him* and idioms of institutionalized hyperbole – *he won't even lift a finger*). This classification was further extended by different authors. Alexander (1987) adds four more categories to Makkai's classification of lexemic idioms (proverbial idioms – *the land of Nod*, metaphorical idioms – *a hot potato* and idiomatic similes – *as cool as a cucumber*) and McCarthy (1998) adds even more categories – prepositional expressions – *in two shakes of a lamb's tail*, frozen similes – as keen as mustard, possessive's phrases – *a king's ransom*, opaque compounds – *a mish-mash*, idiomatic speech routines, gambits and discourse markers – *by the way*, restricted collocations – *breakneck speed* and cultural allusions – *to be or not to be*. Semantically, idioms can be classified into six categories: a) semi-idioms which include at least one word connected to its literal meaning (e.g. *stir up trouble*), b) semi-opaque idioms whose meaning can be guessed, but not easily (e.g. *keep one's head above water*), c) pseudo idioms which include an element that has no meaning on its own (e.g. *spic and span*), d) pure idioms, well-formed idioms, or idioms that have both literal and non-literal meaning (e.g. *spill the beans*), e) full idioms which consist of constituents whose ordinary meanings are not related to the idioms' semantic interpretations (e.g. *toe the line*) and f) figurative idioms that have figurative meanings besides current literal interpretations (e.g. *catch fire*) (Grant 2003). Syntactically, idioms seem to include any type of immediate constituent (they can be further divided into asyntactic idioms – *by and large*, commonly occurring phrase patterns – *in the nick of time*, clause patterns – *foot the bill*, different grammatical types – *keep tabs on someone*). However, such classification provides descriptions rather than definitions (*under the water, blow the gaff*). As far as functional classification of idioms is considered, it appears that the function of idioms varies with the spoken (making complaints or for topic transition) or written genre. No matter which classification is considered, they seem to exhibit discoursal (Moon, 1998a) and pragmatic functions as well (Simpson and Mendis, 2003). Liontas (1999, as cited in Liontas, 2017) claims that there are at least three relevant dimensions to any given idiomatic expression: the semantic opacity dimension (also known as transparency), the structural dimension, and the conventionalized pragmatic dimension. Semantic opacity or transparency is "the extent to which an idiom's meaning can be inferred from the meanings of its constituents" (Glucksberg,

2001: 74). When the structural dimension is taken into account, they interpreted as are memorized configurations which are identified when those word configurations become unique to the idiomatic expression in the minds of language learner (Glucksberg, 2001).

4. Importance of idioms

It is a well-known fact that learning the words individually results in a number of problems. It takes a lot of time to retrieve the words from the learners' memory and to make proper sentences. Thus, learning the words in chunks and different combinatory possibilities of words contribute to developing proficiency in a foreign language. A successful language learning mastery includes a crucial component of learning formulaic sequences such as idioms, collocations, and compounds (Wray, 2000). Apart from that, learning idioms and other formulaic sequences results in making the learners familiar with the foreign language culture and customs. It is roughly estimated that native speakers of English use approximately 7,000 idioms per week, although these numbers have yet to be corroborated by empirical data (Hoffman, 1984, as cited in Liontas, 2017). That is the reason why idioms should be included in the curriculum and should be presented to learners according to the frequency of usage, which is a topic covered by applied and corpus linguists who take into accounts the frequencies and patterns of idioms in order to give priorities in teaching and learning contexts (Liu, 2003). While designing the teaching materials, the teachers can group the idioms according to themes, which creates the possibility of better retention since these topics and themes present a framework and organization for the random lists and make it much easier for the learners to grasp them more deeply (Boers, 2000). There is a wide range of idioms related to nature, animals, body parts, sports, food, etc. It just remains for the teachers to check and decide which idioms out of these groups are used most frequently. Another, so-called, non-semantic approach to teaching is to provide the idioms one by one and quite incidentally through the materials. The importance of formulaic sequences is also emphasized by Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992) who point out their usefulness in teaching conversation and developing fluency. Promotion of communicative competence, proficiency, fluency and familiarization with the target language seem like convincing arguments emphasizing the importance of idioms (Wray, 2000; Wood, 2002; Schmitt, 2004; Thyab, 2016). That is the reason why idioms should find their place in teaching materials and curriculum.

5. Methodology

For corpus analysis, two written activities were administered to thirty 1st year graduate students of the faculty of food technology. These students have been studying English for 15 years. That is the reason why the receptive (in the first activity) and productive (the second activity) knowledge of idioms was tested. In the first activity, the students were asked to connect twenty-two food idioms with their

meanings. The second activity was designed to check the productive knowledge of idioms since the students were asked to use idioms from the previous activity in the sentences containing gaps. It is generally accepted that most of the idioms are not intelligible to students, but the activities were so designed (starting from the easier) to enable students to fulfil their tasks without any difficulties (in the first activity, they could have matched the idioms they are familiar with their meaning and the meaning of the rest of the idioms could have been guessed). The other reason why this research was conducted on the 1st year graduate students is the fact that they have been studying English for quite a lot of time and there may be students who are advanced (or proficient) users of English who can recognize and use idioms related to food.

6. Results and discussion

The results of this research were attained from the corpus which consisted of 22 idioms. In the first activity, the students had to match idioms with their meanings (Table 1). The students were very successful since the accuracy percentage shown in Table 3 was very high (77 %). They had most problems with matching the idiom *to go pear-shaped* with its meaning since the accuracy percentage was only 33 %. The idioms *full of beans* and *to put all one's eggs in one basket* were correct in 50 % of cases, whereas they were well-familiar with the idioms *a piece of cake* and *a big cheese* (accuracy percentage 97%), followed by *to take something with a pinch of salt* and *to be as alike as two peas in a pod* (accuracy percentage 90 %). Generally speaking, the students showed good receptive knowledge of idioms, which was checked in the first activity. The next step was to use the idioms from the 1st activity in the corresponding sentences, so as to check the productive knowledge of idioms (Table 2). The results obtained in this case were slightly below the score from the previous activity. Namely, the accuracy percentage, also shown in Table 1, was 71 %. The idiom they had the most problems with was *to go pear-shaped* as in the first activity. However, they were more successful in the actual application of the idiom in a sentence, the accuracy percentage being 40 %. It was also difficult for them to use the idiom *hot potato* in a sentence (53 % accuracy). Interestingly, they had less problems with the usage of idioms *full of beans* and *to put all one's eggs in one basket* in a sentence (63 % and 67 % accuracy, respectively). Their score was, again, very high for the idiom *a piece of cake* (97 %), followed by the idiom *carrot top* (90 %). As expected, the students were less successful in the second activity since they were confronted with a more difficult task although there were students whose score was 100 %. However, the results do not deviate much from the previous activity so the next goal was to check whether there is a positive correlation between these two tasks. It was tested by Pearson's correlation coefficient. The score obtained was 0.7 which indicates a positive correlation between these two activities, meaning that it is very likely for the students who failed to match the idiom to its meaning to make the same error while using the same idiom in the corresponding sentence. The low scores obtained in some cases are a signal that some idioms (*to go pear-shaped, hot potato*) are not known to students

and they show us that they should be practised and taught more in the future. The possible reasons why the students are not familiar with these idioms might be due to the contextual factors, meaning they were not exposed enough to these idioms and could, therefore, not foresee their meanings although the idiom *hot potato* is used very often and it is not clear why it is not familiar to the students. Out of all the above-mentioned idioms, the idiom *in a nutshell* is the most frequently used (Rafatbakhsh and Ahmadi, 2019) with the usage of 1.18 per million and this research showed that this idiom was used correctly in 80 and 70 % of cases, respectively. So, one of the methods of teaching idioms could be to present them to students according to their frequency of usage and to organize them according to different themes conveyed by their meaning. Previous research on idiom learning strategies revealed that the most frequently used strategies were guessing the meaning of the idiom from the context, discussing and analysing the idiom, using the literal meaning of an idiom, repeating and paraphrasing idiom, using background knowledge, referring to an L1 idiom, imagining an actual situation in which the expression could be used, a meta-analysis about the nature of idioms, using an L1 equivalent, group discussion, retelling and rephrasing (instead of 'repeating and paraphrasing'), and figuring out the meaning of individual words in order to guess the meaning as a whole (Cooper, 1999; Al-Khawaldeh et al., 2016). An additional strategy which could be applied is using various media and different kinds of texts to encourage the students to explore authentic L2 language materials themselves (Pucelj, 2018). Furthermore, some studies were also conducted to establish the relationship between the participants' attitudes and the idiom learning strategies they employ while acquiring new idioms (Liontas, 2002; Ababneh, 2016). There seems to be a positive correlation between these two variables, meaning the more positive the attitude a student has, the more strategies he or she will use to learn new idiomatic expressions. Very high scores obtained in the present study showing that the students possess good knowledge of idioms could be explained by the fact that Croatian students do have an overall positive attitude towards English, regardless of their education level (Mihaljević Djigunović, 2007; Batur, 2016; Badžoka, 2017). Furthermore, the studies conducted in Croatia also show that there is a small statistically significant positive correlation between the participants' academic achievement and the attitudes towards acquiring new idiomatic expressions. It implies that the learners that have a higher grade in the course also possess a more positive attitude towards learning idiom (Pucelj, 2018). Overall, it can be concluded that the students show positive attitudes towards learning new idioms and that they already possess good knowledge of idioms; it is only up to the teachers to find the most efficient way of teaching them and create the materials that would best suit their students' desires and wishes.

Table 1. Idioms and their meaning (1st activity)

Idiom	meaning
1 to egg someone on	earn the income
2 a big cheese	very relaxed
3 to bring home the bacon	very important person (VIP)
4 to butter someone up	person with red or orange hair
5 carrot top	be extra nice to someone (usually for selfish reasons)
6 cool as a cucumber	be pregnant
7 full of beans	have a lot of (silly) energy
8 hard nut to crack	rely on one single thing
9 hot potato	use your brain
10 in a nutshell	do not be upset about making a mistake, since you cannot change that now
11 it's/there's no use crying over spilled milk	don't consider sth 100% accurate
12 a piece of cake	to become irrational or crazy
13 to put all one's eggs in one basket	difficult to understand (often a person)
14 to take something with a pinch (grain) of salt	a controversial or difficult subject
15 use your noodle	in summary
16 to know one's onions	to redden in the face (blush)
17 to go pear-shaped	reveal the truth
18 to be as alike as two peas in a pod	to be very similar
19 to go bananas	to fail or fall apart
20 to go red as a beetroot	to be very knowledgeable or skilled in some area
21 to spill the beans	very easy
22 to have a bun in the oven	to urge someone to do something

Table 2. Idioms in a sentence

idiom	sentence
full of beans	The kids are always _____ after sleeping.
bring home the bacon	My husband has had to _____ ever since I lost my job.
carrot top	I bet my future child will be a _____. Red hair runs in my family.

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to go pear-shaped	The project was very successful at first, but then it _____. Everything went completely wrong.
go bananas	Robert _____ when he found his wife had crashed his car. I've never seen him so angry.
egg someone on	The gang tried to _____ us _____ but we didn't want to fight.
cool s a cucumber	When the fire broke out everybody panicked, except Tom. He stayed _____. He stayed completely calm.
as alike as two peas in a pod	Paul and his father are _____. It's incredible - they're completely identical.
red as a beetroot	Brian went _____ when he realized that we'd overheard what he said. He was so embarrassed.
to know one's onions	If you want to know about the pros and cons of GMO, ask William. He really _____. It's a field which he's expert in.
to have a bun in the oven	I don't think she will come to the bar because she has a _____. I wonder if it's a boy or a girl.
to take something with a pinch (grain) of salt	Take everything you read on the Internet with a _____ and you'll be okay.
a big cheese	I thought I was just going to interview the secretary, but they let me talk to the _____ himself.
butter someone up	We'll have to _____ Anne _____ before we tell her the news about the broken plate.
hard nut to crack	The spy we captured is a _____; he hasn't said a thing since we began the interrogation.
hot potato	Another _____ in US politics is whether or not to keep abortion legal.
in a nutshell	I don't want the long version—just tell me what your point is _____.
It's no use crying over spilled milk	I know that you really wanted to pass that exam, but you didn't study enough. There's _____. It will be better next time.
a piece of cake	Studying English is _____ for me. It is very easy and I don't have to prepare at home at all.
to put all one's eggs	I applied to several colleges so I _____ in one basket.

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in one basket	
to use one's noodle	You're going to have to really _____ on this crossword puzzle. It's an extra difficult one.
to spill the beans	There is a surprise party for her on Saturday. Please don't _____.

Table 3. Accuracy percentage (1ˢᵗ and 2ⁿᵈ activity) and Pearson's correlation coefficient

idiom	% accuracy (1ˢᵗ activity)	% accuracy (2ⁿᵈ activity)	Pearson's correlation coefficient
1 egg someone on	83 %	63 %	
2 a big cheese	97 %	80 %	
3 bring home the bacon	83 %	70 %	
4 butter someone up	80 %	73 %	
5 carrot top	90 %	90 %	
6 cool as a cucumber	87 %	83 %	
7 full of beans	50 %	63 %	
8 hard nut to crack	83 %	80 %	
9 hot potato	57 %	53 %	
10 in a nutshell	80 %	70 %	
11 it's/there's no use crying over spilled milk	93 %	63 %	
12 a piece of cake	97 %	97 %	
13 put all one's eggs in one basket	50 %	67 %	
14 take something with a pinch (grain) of salt	90 %	83 %	
15 use your noodle	93 %	63 %	
16 to know one's onions	63 %	57 %	
17 to go pear-shaped	33 %	40 %	
18 to be as alike as two peas in a pod	90 %	87 %	
19 to go bananas	63 %	70 %	
20 to go red as a beetroot	80 %	80 %	
21 spill the beans	83 %	83 %	
22 to have a bun in the oven	63 %	63 %	
	77 %	**71 %**	**0,7414**

7. Conclusion

The aim of this research was to determine whether the 1st year graduate students who have been learning English for 15 years are familiar with the idioms related to food, i.e. to check if they can match the idioms with their meanings and then use them in sentences. The results revealed that they possess good knowledge of idioms because the accuracy percentage was 77 % and 71 %, respectively. Furthermore, there were even two students who made no errors, their score was 100 % in both activities. The meaning of the idiom *a piece of cake* was well-known to them and they were able to use it correctly in the corresponding sentence. The idioms they mostly struggled with were the idioms *to go pear-shaped* and *hot potato*. The obtained results will be a good starting point for teaching as it is clear that more time should be spent explaining and teaching the above-mentioned idioms since they lead to more fluent speaking and writing. Idioms can be taught in various ways: explaining their meaning or by demonstrating the meaning of a certain idiom through a context, by discussing and analysing the idiom, using the literal meaning of an idiom, repeating and paraphrasing idiom, using background knowledge, imagining an actual situation in which the expression could be used, a meta-analysis about the nature of idioms, group discussion, retelling and rephrasing (instead of 'repeating and paraphrasing'), and figuring out the meaning of individual words in order to guess the meaning as a whole. Finally, idioms can be translated and compared to their equivalents in the mother tongue. To check whether a certain idiom is acquired, the students can be asked to match idioms with their meanings or they can be offered several different meanings of an idiom (a multiple-choice question) and they should circle the correct one. Furthermore, foreign language learners can be asked to use idioms in sentences or to replace the demonstrated meaning with the corresponding idiom. To conclude, teaching materials should contain more idioms and special emphasis should be put on their active usage since prefabricated chunks help learners to improve fluency, especially in spoken language and lead to native-like proficiency. Thus, their importance should not be neglected because they are means by which the foreign language learners can express very complex thoughts through very few words.

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Hume on The Epistemological Status of Metaphysical Statements

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Abstract

My paper examines critically the widespread view that Hume confines meaningful propositions to those which are analytic (*a priori*), and those which are synthetic empirical, thereby rejecting synthetic *a priori* propositions as meaningful. What I show is that Hume does recognize certain metaphysical synthetic *a priori* propositions as meaningful, thereby dispelling the traditional view that Hume rejects all synthetic *a priori* as meaningful.[1]

Keywords: analytic *a priori*, synthetic empirical, synthetic *a priori*, meaning

Hume on The Epistemological Status of Metaphysical Statements

During the past century, commentators, especially the logical positivists, have sought an understanding of the types of propositions Hume is willing to allow as genuine, in light of his emphasis on observation and experience, and the need for the employment of the Experimental Method in Philosophy. Two interpretations emerged in this discussion. Each begins with the view that, in addition to analytic (*a priori*) propositions, Hume recognizes as meaningful propositions which are synthetic and empirical.[2] Where they differ is that one side holds the more extreme position, that

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[1] Notes on the Contributor

Stanley Tweyman is University Professor, Humanities and Graduate Philosophy, at York University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. He has published 39 books, authored and/ or edited (some in their third edition), and more than 50 articles. The main focus of his research is the Philosophy of René Descartes and the Philosophy of David Hume; he has also published on George Berkeley and William Wollaston.

[2] All references to Hume's *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* are to the Tom L. Beauchamp edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006 (T. followed by the page number(s)), and to the Selby-Bigge edition, *Enquiries Concerning The Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, Second Edition, Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1963 (S.B.E. followed by the page number(s)). References to Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature* are to the edition edited by D.F. Norton and Mary Norton, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000 (T. followed by the page number(s)), and to the Selby-Bigge edition, revised by P.H Nidditch, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978 (S.B.T. followed by the page number(s)). The two passages most often cited to support this view are contained in the first two paragraphs of Section IV, Part I of the first *Enquiry*, and in the very last paragraph of the same book.

Hume holds that there are no synthetic *a priori* propositions,[1]whereas the other group insists that synthetic *a priori* propositions are misleading and meaningless, inasmuch as no means of verifying them is possible;[2] and consequently, they are pseudo-proposition. What these views have in common is that both maintain that Hume's critique of his opponents - especially the rationalists, when they are doing metaphysics - is carried out by rejecting any proposition which purports to be both synthetic and *a priori*. I will attempt to establish that both views are mistaken in that, on the basis of what he says, Hume must admit a class of metaphysical propositions which are synthetic and *a priori*, and meaningful. If the views of Macnabb and Ayer are mistaken, then a reinterpretation is in order of the last paragraph of Hume's *First Enquiry*, cited by A.J. Ayer in defence of his position on Hume, and which I set out in the third footnote in this article.

I will now show that both views mentioned above are fundamentally mistaken, inasmuch as on the basis of what he says, Hume must admit a class of metaphysical propositions which is synthetic and *a priori*, and meaningful.[3]

For the purposes of this paper, I will make the well - known assumption that all propositions can be divided into those which are analytic and those which are synthetic; and that every proposition is either *a priori*, or empirical or *a posteriori.* The meanings of these four classifications will also be offered along traditional lines. Accordingly, I hold that a proposition is empirical if, in order to verify it, some recourse to observation is required. If, on the other hand, no observation or series of observations can be employed to verify a proposition, solely because it would be impossible, even in principle, to verify it in this way, then the proposition in question is *a priori.* Therefore, to make out whether an *a priori* proposition is true or false, something other than recourse to observation is required.

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[1] For example, D.G.C. Macnabb in *David Hume—His Theory of Knowledge and Morality* (Blackwell, 1951) writes: "Hume's contention is that no *a priori* propositions are synthetic, all *a priori* are analytic, all synthetic propositions are empirical" (p.46).

[2] See, for example, A. J. Ayer's *Language, Truth, and Logic* (Dover Publications, Inc., New York, 1946), pp. 31, 35, 53-54. On page 54, Ayer writes: "Of Hume, we may say not merely that he was not in practice a metaphysician, but that he explicitly rejected metaphysics. We find the strongest evidence of this in the passage with which he concludes his *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. "If", he says, "we take in our hand any volume; of divinity or school of metaphysics, for instance; let us ask, DOES IT CONTAIN ANY ABSTRACT REASONING CONCERNING QUANTITY OR NUMBER? No. DOES IT CONTAIN ANY EXPERIMENTAL REASONING CONCERNING MATTER OF FACT AND EXISTENCE? No. Commit it then to the flames: for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion". (E.211; S.B.E.165) Ayer comments that this is but a rhetorical version of his own thesis that a sentence which does not express either a formally true proposition or an empirical hypothesis is devoid of literal significance? Ayer, therefore, regards Hume as holding the logical positivist position in regard to the meaning of sentences.
[3] This is not to say that Hume regards all metaphysical synthetic *a priori* propositions to be meaningful. More on this toward the end of this article.

Further, a proposition is analytic if it can be made out to be true by apprehending the meanings of the terms involved, or if it has been deduced from other propositions which have been so verified. Since all analytic judgements are verified without recourse to experience, all analytic judgements must be *a priori.* If, even after one has apprehended the meaning of a proposition, further steps would be required to verify it, then the proposition is synthetic.

Having now delineated three major propositional categories - the possibility of analytic empirical propositions having been shown to be impossible - I now turn to Hume's writings to see where these three classifications can be employed.

In the *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, Hume restricts propositions concerning the relations of ideas to Geometry, Algebra, and Arithmetic, and "in short, [to] every affirmation which is either intuitively or demonstratively certain." (E.108; S.B.E.25) Such propositions can be discovered by thought alone, "without dependence on what is anywhere existent in the universe", and as a result, "though there never were a circle or triangle in nature, the truths demonstrated by Euclid would forever retain their certainty and evidence". (E.108; S.B.E.25) An example of a proposition of this type which is intuitively certain is 'a triangle is not a square', and one which is demonstratively certain is 'the square on the hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the squares on the other two sides'. (E.209; S.B.E.163) To determine whether a proposition concerns the relations of ideas, we need only determine whether the contrary is contradictory. Now, it is this contention of Hume's which reveals that such propositions are analytic, since the criterion he has set out has application only in virtue of the meanings of the terms involved. Those propositions which are verified intuitively are immediately apprehended and gain our assent. However, others are not immediately seen by the mind, and, therefore, they require additional propositions (premises) before their truth is seen. And since the propositions to be demonstrated are analytically true, the premises employed in demonstrating their truth must be of the same nature.

Propositions concerning matters of fact are not verified in the same manner. The contrary of every matter of fact is still possible, and "we should in vain, therefore, attempt to demonstrate its falsehood". (E.108; S.B.E.26) How, then, do we acquire knowledge of matters of fact? According to Hume, there are three possible means, depending on the type of problem with which we are concerned.

In certain cases, we can have recourse to the "present testimony of the senses" (E.108; S.B.E.26), and here, clearly, Hume is thinking of verifying propositions through direct observation, as, for example, that the sun is now shining, or that I am angry. That is, included in this category are matters of fact which are external to the observer or states of her/ his own consciousness, and the propositions concerning these can be confirmed or confuted by an immediate observation or observations. Now, it often happens that the propositions concerning matters of fact can no longer be verified by

direct observation. Nevertheless, Hume holds that such propositions may be verified, provided that we can recall an observation of what they are about.

Hume's main concern is with determining what evidence, if any, we have for apprehending the truth or falsity of propositions for which we do not have the direct evidence of the senses. To this question, he answers, first, that I can know a matter of fact which I myself have not observed if I know that it is connected by the relation of cause and effect with some matter of fact which I have observed. For example, if I observe footprints in the sand, then I can be said to know that some other human being was present here at some time in the past. In addition, Hume asserts that, if I am to know that two facts are connected by this relation, I can do so only through the aid of my own past experience. That is, the only legitimate evidence I can acquire for assenting to a causal proposition is to have found objects like the ones I now believe to be connected causally to have been constantly conjoined in the past. Therefore, for Hume, the only tribunal available to us for settling questions of fact is observation and experience. And as such, he holds that, in principle, the types of propositions we have been discussing can be known to be true or false. Further, from what was said earlier, it is clear that all the propositions concerning matters of fact discussed thus far must be classified as being both synthetic and empirical, since they cannot be verified by attending to the meanings of the terms involved, but only be having recourse to observation and experience.

It is to this point that philosophers such as D.G.C. Macnabb and A. J. Ayer maintain that Hume is willing to go in determining the range of meaningful propositions. To see that this cannot be Hume's position, we must now push our inquiry concerning the causal relation even further.

As we have seen, reasonings concerning matters of fact are founded on the relation of cause and effect, and the foundation of such reasonings is experience. But Hume now asks for the foundation of all conclusions from experience, and he warns that this question "may be of more difficult solution and explanation", and that "even after we have experience of the operations of cause and effect, our conclusions from that experience are *not* founded on reasoning, or any process of the understanding" (E.113; S.B.E.32).

We must first get clear on what it is that Hume is asking; and it is this. We know nothing of the powers or forces which may reside in objects. All that is ever present to us are the sensible qualities which objects possess. But even in the light of our ignorance, whenever we observe objects with sensible qualities resembling those of objects observed in the past, we assume that they also have similar secret powers "and expect that effects, similar to those which we have experienced, will follow from them" (E.114; S.B.E.33). In effect, the problem resolves itself into determining how we move from 'I have found that such an object has always been attended by such an effect' to 'I foresee, that the other objects, which are, in appearance, similar, will be

attended with similar effects' (E.114; S.B.E.34); although Hume also poses the problem by asking by what argument or faculty we arrive at the conclusion that the future will resemble the past (E.117; S.B.E.37), and that similar powers will be conjoined with similar sensible qualities (E.117; S.B.E.36).[1]

Concentrating initially on the first formulation of the problem, Hume points out that, since the validity of the inference between these two propositions can be doubted, the connection between these two propositions cannot be intuitive. Nor can there be any demonstration of the conclusion we draw, since "it implies no contradiction that the course of nature may change" (E.115; S.B.E.35). Since we are able to assert without contradiction that the course of nature may change, the proposition that the future will resemble the past cannot be a tautology. Hence, this proposition must be synthetic in nature.

Perhaps, then, the inference between the two propositions in the first formulation is 'experimental'. But Hume shows that it is also not in this way that the inference is made. "To say it is experimental is begging the question. For all inferences from experience suppose, as their foundation, that the future will resemble the past, and that similar secret powers will be conjoined with similar sensible qualities - It is impossible, therefore, that any arguments from experience can prove this resemblance of the past to the future; since all these arguments are founded on the suppositions of the resemblance" (E.117; S.B.E.37-38).

Accordingly, we find in Hume's philosophy that the proposition that the future will resemble the past does not fit into the analytic - synthetic empirical mould which commentators such as Macnabb and Ayer hold is to be found there. In fact, the last passage quoted above makes our belief in the past as a standard for the future to be one which is requisite if we are to acquire empirical knowledge. That is, this belief that the future will resemble the past is ultimately seen to be a principle of the possibility of empirical knowledge - an expression anticipatory of Kant's philosophy.

Other passages offered by Hume lend further evidence to such an interpretation. For example, after concluding that we come to believe that the future will resemble the past through the influence of Custom, Hume adds:

Custom, then, is the great guide to human life. It is that principle alone which renders our experience useful to us. Without the influence of custom, we should be entirely ignorant of every matter of fact beyond what is immediately present to the memory and senses. We should never know how to adjust means to end, or to employ our

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[1] Hume is not always clear on the exact relationship between these formulations, and believes himself justified in selecting whichever formulation best suits his purpose. For our purposes here, the same method will be adopted.

natural powers in the production of any effect. There would be an end of all action, as well as of the chief part of speculation. (E.122-123; S.B.E.45)[1]

I stated earlier that in this article the assumption would be made that every proposition is either analytic or synthetic, and either *a priori* or empirical. Now, since experience has been ruled out as a means of verifying the proposition that the future will resemble the past, the proposition must be non-empirical, that is, it must be *a priori.* And since its being analytic or tautological has also been ruled out, it follows that it must also be synthetic. In short, we have come upon a synthetic *a priori* proposition in Hume's philosophy.

It may be objected here that the proposition that the future will resemble the past is not *a priori,* since the basis for our belief in this proposition is custom or habit which is acquired from repeated experience. But this objection can have no force here. Custom, for Hume, explains how certain propositions, and the belief which attends them, come to be generated. But Custom cannot explain the specific character of such propositions as synthetic and *a priori*, given that Custom has no role to play in the process of verification. In fact, the enigmatic aspect of the proposition that the future will resemble the past is that no means of verifying it is available to us. However, Hume's contention is that, precisely because of its character and the important role it plays in our lives, its veracity is something to which we must always consent: no speculative argument, nor any experience, can for long dissuade us of its truth. Unlike all synthetic empirical propositions, it is both, in practice and in principle, intrinsically unverifiable.[2]

Nature will always maintain her rights, and prevail in the end over any abstract reasoning whatsoever - and that principle (Custom) will preserve its influence as long as human nature remains the same. (E.120; S.B.E.41)

One matter remains to be dealt with here. As we have seen, the passage which is most often cited to support the contention that Hume holds that only analytic propositions and those pertaining to empirical matters of fact are genuine propositions is to be found in the last paragraph of the *First Enquiry*. Clearly, therefore, if the contention of this paper is correct, then a reinterpretation of this passage is required. The passage reads as follows:

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[1] This custom or habit is the same one which Hume cites as leading us to believe that objects related as cause to effect are necessarily connected. (See, for example, E.144-145; S.B.E.75, T.92, 111; S.B.T.134, 165.)

[2] To see that this is so, one need only imagine the most extreme case of a lack of uniformity in the universe, namely chaos, and speculate on how we would react to it. It is clear that in such a universe we would merely expect further irregularities rather than question the veracity of our belief that the future will resemble the past. In fact, the expectation of further irregularities is itself dependent upon our belief in the conformity of the future to the past.

When we run over libraries, persuaded of these principles, what havoc must we make? If we take in our hand any volume; of divinity or school metaphysics, for instance; let us ask, DOES IT CONTAIN ANY ABSTRACT REASONING CONCERNING QUANTITY OR NUMBER? No. DOES IT CONTAIN ANY EXPERIMENTAL REASONING CONCERNING MATTER OF FACT AND EXISTENCE? No. Commit it then to the flames: for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion. (E.211; S.B.E.165)

When dealing with this passage, commentators often lose sight of the context in which it is provided. For this paragraph sums up Hume's answer to the question raised two pages earlier, namely, "what are the proper subjects of science and enquiry?", that is, when is it appropriate to engage in reasoning? But it does not follow that, because our reasonings may be fruitfully employed solely with respect to quantity or number (relations of ideas) and matters of fact and existence, that these two realms provide the only genuine propositions. On the contrary, all that does follow is that it is only in these two realms that reasoning can serve a justificatory function. It is still possible that what we cannot justify or verify, namely, certain metaphysical propositions which are both synthetic and *a priori,* may be genuine and meaningful. And so it is with the proposition that the future will resemble the past: although we all do, and must, believe in it, we find that no process of reasoning ever can support our belief in it. Hence, what Hume wants committed to the flames are volumes which are concerned with attempting to reason about, or verify, propositions which are not the proper objects of science and inquiry. How could such volumes not but contain 'sophistry and illusion'? In short, the final paragraph is not concerned to outline the scope of genuine propositions, but rather is concerned with the types of propositions about which our reasonings can be concerned. Therefore, Hume has not ruled out the possibility that there are genuine propositions which are both synthetic and *a priori* in nature. And if the analysis presented here is correct, then Hume must accept certain synthetic *a priori* propositions as genuine propositions, in the sense that, without believing in them, empirical knowledge would, for us, be impossible.[1] Each of these beliefs is such that "Nature has doubtless esteem'd it an affair of too great importance to be trusted to our uncertain reasonings and speculations". (T.125; S.B.T.187)

A metaphysical proposition which is endorsed by Nature Hume holds to be genuine and meaningful, even though the proposition is synthetic and *a priori*. Synthetic *a priori* propositions which are not so endorsed, Hume rejects as meaningless. But even these meaningless propositions Hume divides into two groups. The first of these consists of those which are necessary to satisfy, at least temporarily, the conflicting claims of reason and imagination. Such is the case with those asserting the existence of souls and substance. The act of the mind here is called 'feigning', and the object of belief is entitled a 'fiction'. The 'feigning' and resultant 'fiction' take place when we

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[1] The other beliefs of this sort which Hume discusses are our belief in the Principle of Causality, our belief in the continued and independent existence of body, and our belief in a continuing self. Following Norman Kemp Smith, these beliefs are often referred to 'natural beliefs'.

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ascribe an identity to our successive perceptions, and suppose ourselves possessed of an invariable and uninterrupted existence through the whole course of our lives. Hume illustrates this with how we come to believe in the identity of plants and animals. He explains that we have a distinct idea of an object that remains invariable and uninterrupted through a period of time (identity or sameness), and we have a distinct idea of several different objects existing in succession and connected together by a close relation (diversity). He points out that in our common way of thinking, they are generally confounded with each other:

"[T]he relation facilitates the transition of the mind from one object to another, and renders its passage as smooth as if it contemplated one continuous object…In order to justify to ourselves this absurdity, we often feign some new and unintelligible principle, that connects the objects together, and prevents their interruption or variation. Thus we feign the continued existence of the perceptions of our senses, to remove the interruption; and run into the notion of soul, and self, and substance, to disguise the variation. But we may farther observe, that where we do not give rise to such a fiction…we are apt to imagine something unknown and mysterious, connecting the parts, and this I take to be the case with regard to the identity we ascribe to plants and animals….Thus the controversy concerning identity is not merely a dispute of words. For when we attribute identity, in an improper sense, to variable or interrupted objects, our mistake is not confin'd to the expression, but is commonly attended with a fiction, either of something invariable and uninterrupted, or of something mysterious and inexplicable, or at least with a propensity to such fictions. (T. 166-167; S.B.T. 254-255)

The second group of such metaphysical propositions which are rejected as meaningless are propositions expressing beliefs in the existence of matters with respect to which one can never have an idea, nor even generate a fiction, and, therefore, they are propositions which can never have meaning for us. Such is the case, for example, with regard to the claim that causal powers exist in objects.

'Tis natural for men…to imagine they perceive a connexion betwixt such objects as they have constantly found united together…But philosophers, who abstract from the effects of custom and compare the ideas of objects; immediately perceive the falsehood of these vulgar sentiments, and discover that there is no known connexion among objects… For it being usual, after the frequent use of terms, which are really significant and intelligible, to omit the idea, which we would express by them, and to preserve only the custom, by which we recall the idea at pleasure; so it naturally happens, that after the frequent use of terms, which are wholly insignificant and unintelligible, we fancy them to be on the same footing with the precedent, and to have a secret meaning, which we might discover by reflection. The resemblance of their appearance deceives the mind…and makes us imagine a thorough resemblance and conformity. (T.147-148; S.B. 223-224)

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Much of the Humean enterprise in the First Book of the *Treatise* can, therefore, be seen as an attempt to sort out metaphysical synthetic judgements *a priori,* in order to determine which are intelligible and which are not, and which are merely useful and which are not.

Hume's reliance on the Experimental Method does not commit him to the view that there are no synthetic propositions *a priori*, or that all such utterances are mere pseudo - propositions. The use of the Experimental Method is viewed by Hume as the technique for determining which propositions are meaningful and which are not, and how belief in such propositions arises.

Different Areas of Social Life and Their Access During and Post Covid-19

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Abstract

Corona-virus 19 has managed to penetrate and completely change the approach of society, thus further developing technology and giving way to the internet. The problem that arises in this paper is the technology and the inclusion of the lives of individuals in this new system of communication and action. Based on the qualitative scientific method we will seek to examine the reality of applied communication theories. The developed topic itself requires a special and dedicated research. Society is always evolving and its adaptation to socio-technological changes is required, with the advent of Corona-Virus 19 in all spheres of life. The Internet and technology are seen at this stage as the best problematic solution to not paralyze every sphere of life from daily activities, as if this were to happen we would be in a total social and global chaos. In the end, the question arises if we are ready (as a global population) to live with technology and this world order where big governments and international organizations (eg the Health Organization) are taking us and offering us?

Keywords: technology, Corona- Virus, New World Order

Introduction

Since the outbreak of COVID-19 on the European continent all social life has been paralyzed, building new behaviors starting with:

1. Use of protective masks.

2. Keeping distance between people no closer than 1.5m.

3. Conducting conferences, meetings or teaching through video conferencing using the Internet and technology programs such as: Microsoft Team and Zoom.

4. Online registrations, thus scheduling an appointment with a family doctor, hospital or various institutions.

From the above we see how this pandemic has managed to penetrate and completely change the approach of society, thus further developing technology and giving priority to the Internet. In our paper, we will see how CoronaVirus has developed and

claims to develop technology at a rapid pace from all generations. The question that arises in this study is whether the Corona Virus / Sars 19 is leading us to a New World Order and digitalization, thus marking a new stage for human society the development of technology and the distancing of direct social behaviors? However, we must not forget to mention the negative impact it has caused in various areas of life such as:

Tourism. Now different European countries but not only, as well as in our country Albania, tourism is being developed and advertised more on various public and private sites.

Economics. The movement of people is limited and the number of flights has decreased, which translates into less revenue generation for various airlines. Consumption in various areas of the toxic industry has also fallen sharply due to the closure of many private activities. However, there is the possibility of online shopping. Before the pandemic many different businesses in Europe offered online sales, but in some Balkan countries such as Kosovo, Albania, Macedonia, Greece, Croatia online shopping was not developed. Only in this lock down period, different individuals have used this method, but it is worth noting that private businesses in these states have not developed online sales, as most businesses do not have their own online sites to advertise their merchandise.

In addition, various businesses of the food and entertainment industry such as Bars and Restaurants are paralyzed by direct contact with customers but only the online service or via phone to place orders works.

From the above, we say with conviction that we are already living in the time of digitalization thanks to the pandemic. An interesting question to ask to my readers would be what would our life be like in this period if there were no Internet?

Literature review

Society is always evolving and its adaptation to socio-technological changes in all spheres of life is required. In order to be as close as possible to society and technological changes, it has been seen necessary to digitalize many social services, such as:

Online business.

Online written media.

Online services such as access to a product that we have posted through a code, access to national and international libraries, online conferences, etc. Before the pandemic that broke out in January 2020, the digitalization of various services was seen as an important process which contained long-term challenges. In this context, it is worth mentioning the use of digitalization in online media as well. Media digitalization is an evolution, a new technology of signal transmission in the air, but not only. The

benefits of this technology are many, ranging from high quality picture and transmitted audio, to standard definition (SD) and high definition (HD) image formats and ending with interactivity services and a range of benefits others[1] . The digitalization of the Albanian media is seen as an important process, which contains long-term challenges. Internet distribution has been a very slow process and with noticeable improvements in the last two years.

Telecommunications, networks and connectivity are more vital than ever, with so much of our society confined to their homes and much of the economy depending on them (Europian Commision, 2021). Networks need to be robust and flexible enough to deal with the additional traffic for working, doing business or e-learning and education online, but also for important social activities: from streaming or gaming to video calls with friends and families (Europian Commision, 2021). Telecoms data can be a vital source tracing the spread of coronavirus and as fuel for AI and supercomputers to analyze (Europian Commision, 2021).

Studies Issue

The problem that arises in this paper is the technology and the inclusion of the lives of individuals in this new system of communication and action. Therefore, it is quite interesting to see up close this problem of how the cry of technology is taking people away from social life and how the house has now turned into a Home Office. Before the current crisis, for many people, the internet was something like special equipment. Some even thought that digitalization was dangerous (turning man into a robot). Something worth mentioning regarding the issue of the study is the value that the internet has already received.

Methodology

The study on this topic was set up on the basis of qualitative scientific research, which helped me achieve new results and knowledge. Based on the qualitative scientific method we managed to examine the reality on the applied theories of communication. The developed topic itself requires a special and dedicated research.

In choosing the methodology of the study, in the research done to build and find the best forms of construction and review of the study has been taken into account, the experience of researchers in this field.

Research requires a systematic approach to identifying underlying processes and forces of change. In the methodology used it is as important as the collection of data and knowledge as well as the intersection of analytical methodologies. This is done in order to gather as much information as possible and to process it through the

knowledge obtained so it is a combination between researchers and the argument based on the knowledge gained throughout the research cycle.

Internet and post technology Covid-19

Today we are facing a new challenge and still unknown to us, let us call this the phase of individual experimentation and the use of technology as one of the existential services of man. If we look at the Internet and post technology COVD-19 at the same time, we remember keeping social distance, working from home, online teaching and other services such as the development of tourism through the Internet. The Internet and technology are seen at this stage as the best solution to the problem so as not to paralyze every sphere of life from daily activities. If such thing were to happen, we would be in a total social and global chaos, thus counting a high number of panels, pupils and students who would have lost their learning. Economic activities which would have been rejected and would not have been able to make transactions or other banking operations without having invoices or direct communication with certain individuals (this is due to the lack of access to travel due to flights or due to measures taken to travel). It is now worth mentioning and using an online system, in which we pass our data 24 hours before traveling, where we get a barcode, which is unique for each person who travels.

Therefore, in this crisis or in the post-Covid-19 period we see the internet and technology as an opportunity to develop social life. In this context, we see long-term consequences, as everything is being transmitted on the Internet and technological programs thanks to digitalization. Colleague Andrian Kreye recently described this as "forced digitization (Zunkuftinstitut, 2021)". Nevertheless, perhaps it is also a necessary step in the growth of a technology: Finally, everything that is available will be put to use.

The pandemic can be read as a kind of acceleration-deceleration paradox. The urbanization megatrend, the huge influx of people into the metropolises, is being slowed down, if not reversed (Horx, M., 2021). Digitization, on the other hand, is being driven forward, and at the same time a renaissance of analog cultural techniques is emerging . Globalization is weakening, while national tendencies are being strengthened, as is the longing for home and regional roots New syntheses arise from these pointed paradoxes: metatrends that rearrange the map of active trends. You can find the metatrends on the tentacles of the virus . The pandemic can be read as a kind of acceleration-deceleration paradox.The urbanization megatrend, the huge influx of people into the metropolises, is being slowed down, if not reversed . Digitization, on the other hand, is being driven forward, and at the same time a renaissance of analog cultural techniques is emerging . Globalization is weakening, while national tendencies are being strengthened, as is the longing for home and regional roots . New syntheses arise from these pointed paradoxes: metatrends that rearrange the map of

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active trends. You can find the metatrends on the tentacles of the virus (Horx, M., 2021).

By studying the crises of the past we come to the conclusion that each experience leaves a traumatic crisis on which to work and adapt to the new flow that the population is now globally. Therefore, the crisis during CoronaVirus is trying to adapt the population as a new generation, which we can fearlessly call the ´Corona generation. We can see this generation in the post-Coronavirus period, the fruits of which we will see in action by the younger generations.

Different areas of social life and their access during and post Covid-19

Online platforms are important sources of information and activity (Europian Commision, 2021). They are particularly important in times of crisis, when they are a vital channel for providing basic needs and ensuring access to information activity. They must be a source that people can rely on (Europian Commision, 2021). They need to play their part in ensuring information shared is reliable and timely, and tackle disinformation, fraudulent sales and other dangerous activities.

Economics, reading from the above, our own logic leads us to the question of how the economies of states will function during and after Covid-19. Change management and digital transformation define the agendas of today's companies. Behind this, there is a linear sense of change and the hope that everything will be better «afterwards» (Spindler, R., 2021). Entrepreneurship after Corona requires a new way of thinking in all areas of an organization: from a vision that takes the emotions in the company seriously, to a progressive corporate and management culture that enables real innovation, to a self-image of branding and marketing as well as a Human Resource Management that focuses on the needs and strengths of employees. The crisis is a moment in which is decided in which direction an organization wants to continue - in individual organizational areas, throughout the company and as part of the economy, society and ecosystem. In order to be able to rethink, we need a change of perspective. Entrepreneurship after Corona needs a change of perspective. Complexity, dynamism and a "clear for what" form the business logic according to Corona. In search of new business models, the next generation of business transcends the boundaries of classical business administration: Thinking about ecosystems, their own impact on plans and society, and a human-centered organizational model are becoming more important than classic value proposals, IPKs and buyers.

Systematic thinking enables thinking about connections and contexts instead of linear processes, in dynamics instead of individual events, in an "endless game" instead of short-term goals. Instead of long-term planning, action takes place on the move. Because in complex situations you need systematic pragmatics.

Setting promotional standards and support capacities for the development of tourism during and post Covid-19 through online communication is a strategic choice by the

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responsible institutions in different EU countries but also in our country. Despite the fact that so far our Ministry of Tourism has not been of a high standard comparing it with neighboring countries or other European countries. Here I emphasize that the management of online communication by relevant institutions has not been coherent. There is a lack of updating of various results related to Covid-19, such as the number of infected, deaths due to the virus, measures taken so far to stop the spread of the virus or what are the measures taken for citizens entering the territory of Albania. Despite the fact that our country allows foreign nationals to enter without the need for a test to see if nationals are infected or not. Communication through digitalization brings about improved tourism management in the post Covid period. From the above we see how the official website of the Minister has a great impact on tourists. The Ministry of Tourism (MT) of our country should practice communication with tourists through its website informing them about issues related to Covid through updated information. This will result in the creation of a culture of electronic communication between MT and tourists as well as informing citizens about a new way of receiving information and services. Thus increasing the confidence of tourists to come to the tourist destinations that Albania offers and thus increasing the good management of tourist destinations during and post Covid-19. Teaching in different EU countries has already started and is practiced online learning through the Microsoft Team program where it has enough internet access and a technological tool, such as pc, laptop, tablet or mobile. Where pupils or students stay at home without having to be present in their classrooms, while teachers or professors are in their offices or away from home. Here teaching takes place under normal circumstances, lacking blackboards and direct physical interaction. In terms of teaching in our country it is developed with the same technological methods as in European countries, starting with the program Zoom, Microsoft Office, Zoom, Microsofteams and Model. All three of these programs are widespread in the time of the pandemic and are the basic programs for adequate teaching. However, it is worth noting that the process of online teaching not only in Albania but also in other countries is already in a phase of experimentation of how effective it will be for learning but also for teaching.

Conclusions

What is noticed at this stage, but not only, is the intervention of technology in all areas of life and without fear we say convincingly that the whole social system is passing from modern society to the society of technology. We say with conviction that today we are living in the new world order, that of technology and in the phase of experimentation, which will be followed by the phase of adaptation where in some powerful EU countries such as Germany the population is trying to adapt to the spirit of new technology. When we speak in this language, we remember that Germany, but not only, are applying methods such as:

Online shopping- if today you move to the big cities of Europe, but not only (in all EU countries) we will notice that the method is already applied to have an appointment

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in the store, you need a reservation and a negative crown test. Many citizens prefer to buy online than to proceed with this way of shopping. Today at the time of the pandemic online shopping has taken another development. Every economic activity has its own website where different clients can order online from home.

Digital and Contactless payment- from the above we understand that the services performed through the ways of technology already and the payment has turned into a technological tool. What comes to mind is the idea of a common global currency. I think that using and paying various bills through technology will lead us to create a global currency.

Remote work - as mentioned above, many employees of the administration, but also of the private service have already turned the house into an online work office.

Distance learning- in the above chapter we talked about online teaching where already the teaching process in all its stages is performed online.

Online Training- if we look on YouTube or various internet channels we will notice that today after a past situation due to Covid-19 there are online trainings such as yoga, fitness, ballet etc.

Information and Communication technology- today at this moment every information and every communication has turned into a technological stage, a smartphone or laptop is enough and with one click everything appears in front of us. Thus losing social contact and taking off the new world order, that of technology.

Are we ready (as a global population) to live with technology and this new world order where big governments and international organizations (eg the Health Organization) are taking us and offering us?

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Fragility of Built Urban Objects to Vicious Attacks: Assessment by Means of Limited Data on Abnormal Violent Actions

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Abstract

An assessment of fragility of objects built (constructed) in urban environment to deliberately imposed abnormal actions (loads) is considered. The actions under analysis are explosions, vehicular impacts and fires that can be imposed by acts of terrorism and sabotage as well as such highly random events as car crashes into structures due to unintentional roadway departures. The fragility is assessed by means of mathematical models known as fragility functions and developed for vulnerable building and transportation structures, protective barriers, and energy supply facilities. The result of fragility assessment is the probability of the damage that can be foreseen and modelled by means of mathematical models used for structural analysis. The case is studied where information on an abnormal action can be expressed in the form of a small-size statistical sample with components acquired in post-mortem investigations of attacks or unintentional accidents. The basic idea is an application of the statistical (bootstrap) resampling for the estimation the damage probability. The resampling procedure is applied to values of the fragility function that can be developed for the damage caused by the abnormal action in question. The values of the fragility function are estimated for components of the small-size sample of abnormal action values. The resampling of the fragility function values yields a conservative estimate of the damage probability expressed by the limit of a one-sided confidence interval. The estimate of the damage probability can be applied to making decisions concerning the level of resilience of vulnerable urban objects.

Keywords: abnormal action, damage, terrorism, small-size sample, inaccurate data, fragility, inverse analysis.

1. Introduction

Urban environment is a natural scene of such vicious attacks as acts of terrorism and sabotage as well as the primary site for taking counterterrorist measures (Fregonese & Laketa 2022). Terrorism is a phenomenon with many faces that are revealed by classifications of violent incidents (Erickson, 1999; Purpura, 2019). For a long time, a

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variety of immovable objects built in urban environment has been the target of terrorist assaults called the physical incidents (Young, 2015). This study deals with physical terrorism threatening build urban objects. The acts of physical assaults on built objects are called the vicious attacks (VAs).

Built urban objects are sensitive to mechanical and thermal actions imposed in the course of VAs. Most structural objects built to date were conceptualized and detailed without taking into account the possibility of any VAs. The WTC twin towers completed in 1973 and destroyed in 2001 are a prime example of such objects. The decision concerning the protection of an existing or future structure against the hazard of AA contains at least four easily identifiable choices shown in Figure 1. Means of protection of previously unprotected structure are the same as or similar to ones that could be provided for a future potentially exposed object. However, independently of the status of exposed target, existing or future one, choice and detailing of protective structural elements will depend on prediction of foreseeable abnormal actions (AAs) imposed in the course of VAs.
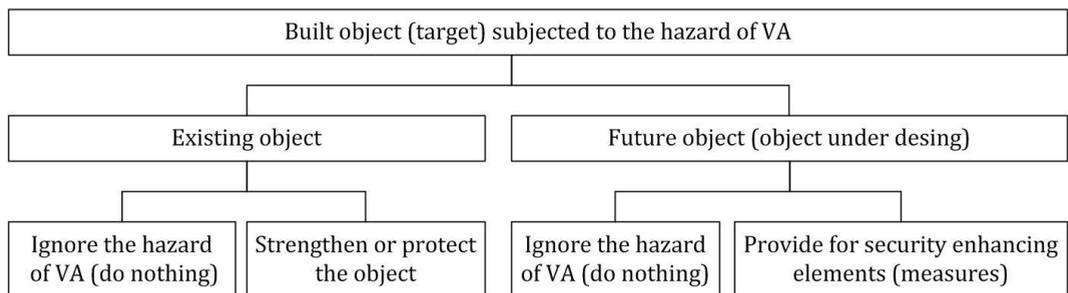
Figure 1. Four choices related to the decision concerning the protection of built objects against VAs

The present study is aimed at improving the prediction of damage to built urban objects by applying inaccurate data on AAs imposed during physical assaults. The main types of these assaults are malicious explosions and vehicle impacts. The gap of knowledge addressed in this study is how to estimate the likelihood of damage due AAs by means of inaccurate data on AAs generated in a relatively small number of VAs that happened in the past. The inaccurate data is modelled by subjective probability distributions that should be specified by the investigator of past incidents. A procedure that allows to propagate uncertainties expressed by inaccurate data to uncertainties related to the potential damage due to AAs is seen as the main added value of this study.

2. A Brief Review of Basic Equations Used for Assessing the Fragility of Built Objects Endangered by Vicious Attacks

From the standpoint of mathematical modelling, the damage to built urban objects ("targets" in what follows) caused by AAs imposed in the course VAs should be

considered to be a random event. In what follows, this event will be denoted by the symbol Δ. The event Δ will be a consequence of a random event of AA imposition (event A) and the latter event in its turn will be triggered out by a random event of VA (event V). Thus we can write that the intersection probability of these three events is

$$\text{Prob}[\Delta \cap A \cap V] = \text{Prob}[\Delta / A]\,\text{Prob}[A / V]\,\text{Prob}[V] \quad (1)$$

An estimation of the probability $\text{Prob}[V]$ and circumstances of the event V are generally speaking a problem of security analysis (Osterburg & Ward, 2010). In other words it lies outside the traditional field of civil engineering and architecture. This probability depends on the type of the event V, history of occurrences of V, current political context. Thus the estimation of $\text{Prob}[V]$ will not be considered here. The product $\text{Prob}[\Delta / A]\,\text{Prob}[A]$ contains two factors. The first is related mainly to the structural engineering and the second should reflect knowledge on the physical phenomena occurring as the random event A (blast, impact by deformable body, temperature and thermal radiation resulting from an arsonist fire). In brief, the first probability $\text{Prob}[\Delta / A]$ lies on the structural side and the second probability $\text{Prob}[A]$ is related to predicting AAs.

Adding the additional factor $\text{Prob}[V]$ to the product $\text{Prob}[\Delta / A]\,\text{Prob}[A]$ supplements the engineering core of the problem with information related to security of potential targets (buildings, protective structures, energy lines, technological equipment of services used in urban environment). As we are interested in the engineering part of the problem, we can simplify it by assuming that the type of VA (event V) is known is advance and the event A will triggered of by an occurrence of V. Then we have that

$$\text{Prob}[\Delta \cap A] = \text{Prob}[\Delta / A]\,\text{Prob}[A] \quad (2)$$

An assessment of fragility of the targets to a given AA presumes occurrence of the event A and exposure of a target to this event. In this context, the event A should be seen as a certain event with $\text{Prob}[A] = 1$. Then the problem reduces to an estimation of the conditional probability $\text{Prob}[\Delta / A]$. The above equation splits up the problem the fragility estimation into predicting vulnerability of a target to a given AA and assessing characteristics of this AA. These characteristics are usually expressed by a random vector $\mathbf{X} = (X_1, X_2, \dots, X_m)$, with a joint probability density function (pdf) $\psi(\mathbf{x})$ (Adam et al., 2018; Netherton & Stewart, 2009). With the vector $\mathbf{X}$, the probability $\text{Prob}[\Delta / A]$ is expressed as

$$\text{Prob}(\Delta \,|\, A) = \int_{\text{all } \mathbf{x}} \Phi(\mathbf{x})\,\psi(\mathbf{x})\,\mathrm{d}\mathbf{x} = \text{E}[\Phi(\mathbf{X})] \quad (3)$$

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where $\Phi(x)$ is the fragility function developed for the damage event Δ and $\mathrm{E}[\Phi(X)]$ is the expected value of the random function $\Phi(X)$. Eq. (3) arises from the field of seismic risk assessment and is now used in such fields as extreme wind risk analysis and nuclear power plant safety (Sundararajan, 1995).

In general, the event Δ present in Eqs. (1) to (3) can represent a very large number of damage states of target and AA in question. However, the estimation of the probability $\mathrm{Prob}[\Delta/A]$ will be an affordable task if only a limited number of typical damage states, n_d, will be considered. Let these discrete damage states (random damage events) denote by Δ_d ($d = 1, 2, \ldots, n_d$). An example of the events Δ_d that can be caused by a vehicular impact on a building is given in Figure 2a.

(a)

Slab (section)

Event Δ_1
Local damage to column, no
displacement of slabs

Event Δ_2
Intermediate damage, no
collapse of the system

Event Δ_3
Collapse of the system
(non-reparable damage)

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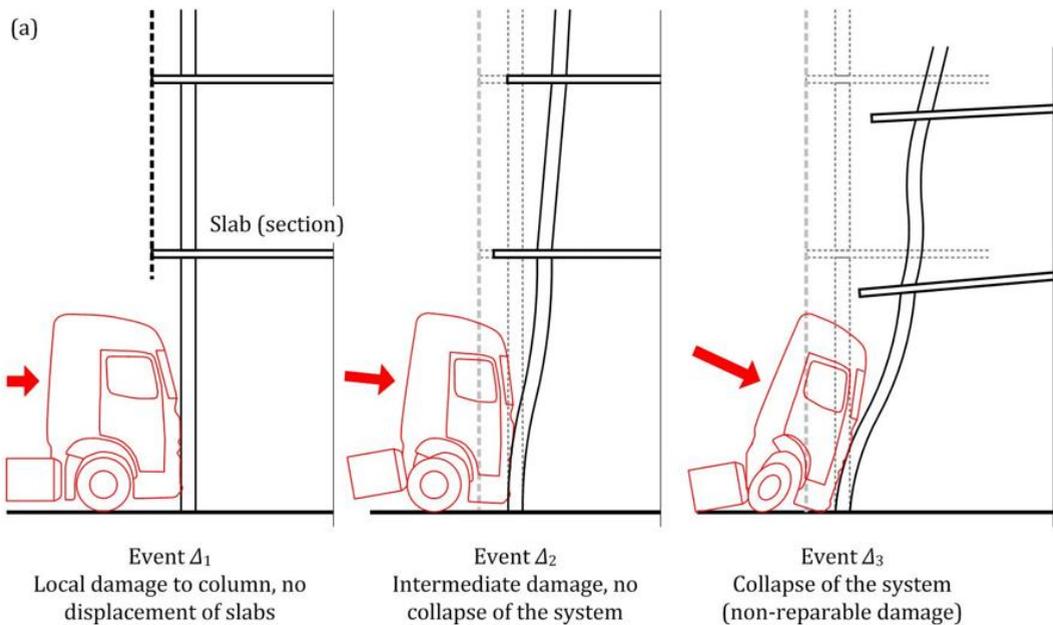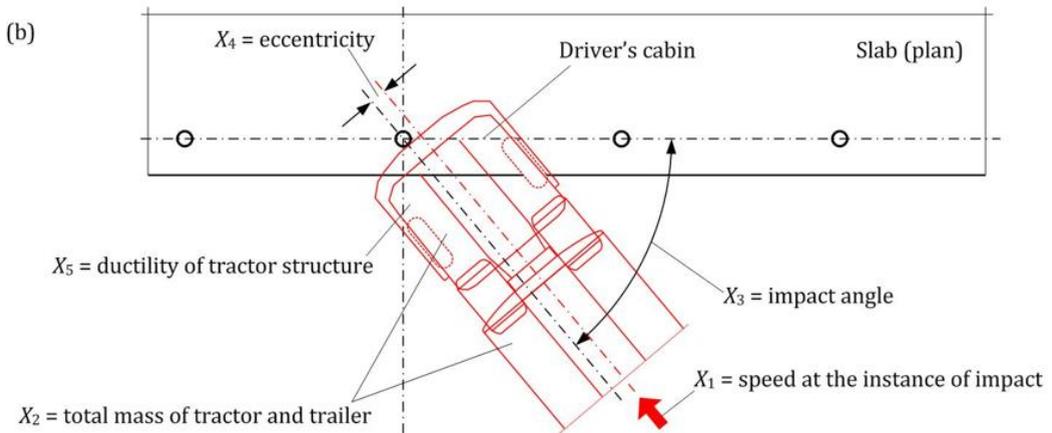
Figure 2. Illustration of the damage events $\varDelta_d$ (d = 1, 2, 3) obtained by discretizing the continuous process of damage due to a vehicular impact (case (a)) and five characteristics X_j (j = 1, 2, 5) that describe AA caused by this impact (case (b))

The number of AA characteristics, m, is different for various situations of exposure of the target to AA. The number m will be equal to 1 in case of a simple reflection of a shock wave by dynamically insensitive structure (Bulson, 1997). The variable X_1 will represent the peak pressure in this case. If the target is a dynamically responding structure, information on blast loading will be represented by two characteristics: peak pressure X_1 and impulse (positive duration) X_2. That is, m will be equal to 2. In more complex loading situations, the number m can be fairly high. An example of such situation is a vehicular impact on a ground floor column schematized in Figure 2b. One can easily identify at least five components of X that can influence the interaction between impacting vehicle and structural system incorporating this column. The five characteristics of AA are illustrated in Figure 2b.

The interaction between AA and target can be highly complex. For instance, the spread of a shock wave in constrained environment may result in numerous reflections of the wave and complex process of loading. In addition, uncertainty related to AA as well as time-dependence of AA and response of the target to AA requires that this interaction should be viewed a short lasting random process. In this respect, the representation of AA by the random vector X is a simplification used in many applications related to VAs without explicit justification. For the present, one can say that modeling AAs as short-lasting random processes is too complex to be attractive in practical sense.

For brevity and, as we hope, without loss generality, further consideration will be based on the assumption that AA under study can be characterized by a single random variable X with values x, that is, m = 1. In this case, Eq. (3) reduces to

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$$\text{Prob}(\varDelta_d \,|\, A) = \int\limits_{\text{all } x} \varPhi_d(x)\,\psi(x)\,dx = E[\varPhi_d(X)] \qquad (4)$$

where $\varPhi_d(x)$ is the fragility function developed for the discrete damage event $\varDelta_d$. This simplification allows to visualize the convolution of the functions $\varPhi_d(x)$ and $\psi(x)$ that produces the probability $\text{Prob}(\varDelta_d\,|\,A)$ (Figure 3a). Strictly speaking, the term "convolution" should be used only for a mathematical operation of two functions that produces a third function. This definition applies to the expression given by Eq. (4). However, this study uses this term in the broader sense to denote also a combination of the fragility function $\varPhi_d(x)$ and information on values of AA that is not necessarily expressed by a single mathematical function.

(a) information on AA is expressed by a prior pdf $\pi(\mu)$ used for Bayesian updating with the sample $\boldsymbol{x'}$
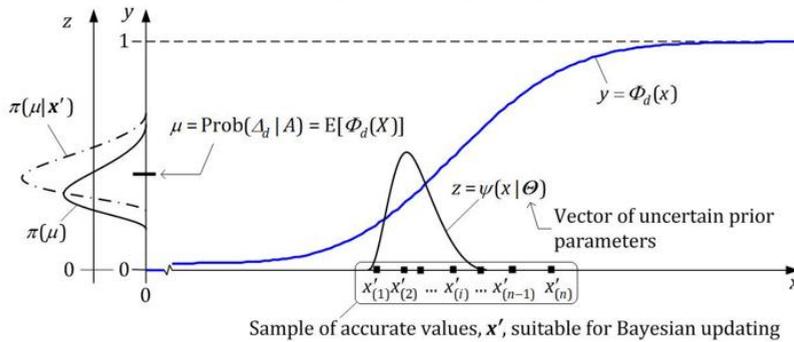
(b) information on AA is expressed by a small-size set of extracted from investigations of previous VAs
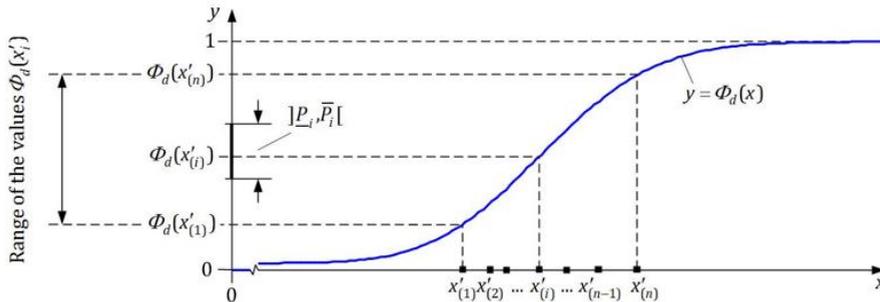
(c) information on AA is expressed by a small-size set of inaccurate data modelled by the pdfs $\psi_i(x)$
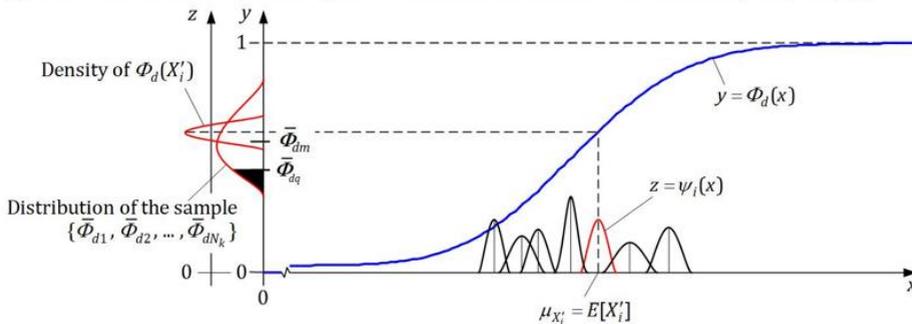
Figure 3. Illustration of the convolutions of the fragility function $\Phi_d(x)$ with three types of information on AA

3. Proposed Methodology for Prediction of Violent Actions With Limited and Inaccurate Information on their Occurrences

The present study considers the possibility to predict AA and the damage related to it by means of a small set of AA values extracted from investigations of previous VAs. The size of this set will be denoted by n and this number will be considered to be small in the sense of classical (Fisherian) statistics. Information that can be extracted from previous n incidents with AA under study can have three forms:

1. A set of values of the AA characteristic X expressed by $x' = \{x'_1, x'_2, \ldots, x'_n\}$. The ordered form of this set will be denoted by $\{x'_{(1)}, x'_{(2)}, \ldots, x'_{(n)}\}$. The ordered set is illustrated in Figure 3ab. Elements of this set, x'_i, are fixed values, that is, there are no uncertainties in this data. In other words, values of X that took place in previous incidents are known accurately.

2. A set of probability distributions with the pdfs $\psi_i(x)$ (Figure 3c). The density $\psi_i(x)$ expresses uncertainty in applicability of an AA value related to the incident i. The value x'_i is not known accurately. Thus the information related to previous incidents is expressed by the set $\{X'_1, X'_2, \ldots, X'_n\}$ and the corresponding set of pdfs $\boldsymbol{\psi} = \{\psi_1(x), \psi_2(x), \ldots, \psi_n(x)\}$. As VAs of given type are usually not related to each other, components of this set, X'_i, can be independent random variables. The expectation of X'_i is denoted by $\mu_{X'_i}$ and shown in Figure 3c. In the field of the quantitative risk analysis (QRA), the data expressed by the probability distributions $\psi_i(x)$ is called the imprecise data (Kelly & Smith, 2009, 2011).

3. Mixture of the accurate values x'_i and inaccurate data modelled by the pdfs $\psi_i(x)$.

Information expressed by the set $\boldsymbol{x}'$ can have different nature and can be used for the estimation of the damage probability $\mathrm{Prob}(\varDelta_d \,|\, A)$ in several ways. In the ideal case, the set $\boldsymbol{x}'$ can be viewed as a representative statistical sample of an imaginary population of the past and future incidents in which the AA in question is generated. Then the damage probability can be estimated by two-sided or one-sided confidence intervals $]\bar{P}_i, \underline{P}_i[$ or $]0, \bar{P}_i[$ computed by means of a statistical (bootstrap) resampling of the values $\varPhi(x_1'), \varPhi(x_2'), \dots, \varPhi(x_n')$ (Vaidogas, 2005). Both $]\bar{P}_i, \underline{P}_i[$ and $\varPhi(x_{(i)}')$ are illustrated in Figure 3b. Furthermore, the set $\boldsymbol{x}'$ as a representative sample can be applied to Bayesian updating of the prior distribution specified to express epistemic uncertainty in the probability $\mathrm{Prob}(\varDelta_d \,|\, A)$ (Vaidogas & Juocevicius, 2009). In this case, the probability $\mathrm{Prob}(\varDelta_d \,|\, A)$ is interpreted as a population mean $\mu = \varPhi_d(X)$, the prior distribution $\pi(\mu)$ is specified subjectively and the posterior distribution $\pi(\mu|\boldsymbol{x}')$ is estimated by a procedure of statistical resampling (Figure 3a).

The above approaches to the estimation of the damage probability $\mathrm{Prob}(\varDelta_d \,|\, A)$ with the data set $\boldsymbol{x}'$ presume representativeness of $\boldsymbol{x}'$. In case of VAs, a formal proof of this data property is a problem that has not been addressed to date, to the best of out knowledge. We think that the accurate values x_i' can be obtained and a certain degree of representativeness achieved in an experimental investigation of AAs. However, this issue is beyond the scope of the present study.

Information on an AA of the type in question is inevitably accumulated with time. This process is highly sporadic due to an intermittent nature VAs. In addition, VAs are rare events even on the global scale, especially if a particular kind of AA is considered. The quality of knowledge on AAs is also influenced by varying sophistication of investigations into previous incidents. Not every investigation of physical incident results in an assessment of AA characteristics that can be expressed by the values x_i (or x in the one-dimensional case). Unfortunately, some guides for an investigation VAs and non-intentional incidents similar to VAs are official, nontechnical documents that do not explicitly require a backward estimation of an AA that caused damage at the scene of VA (DOJ, 2000; HSE, 2022). These documents regulate mainly the forensic investigation of incidents. On the other hand, forensic evidence can be useful for the backward engineering analysis (Sudoyo et al., 2008).

A general theoretical framework for determining values of AAs generated in past incidents is the methodology of inverse problems (Gallet et al., 2022; Spranghers et al., 2014; Yu et al., 2021; Zhou et al., 2021). However, values of x_i can be retrieved also by means of engineering methods rather than a rigorous scientific inverse analysis. For instance, peak pressure and impulse of a distant explosion can be estimated by looking at damage caused not only to the main target on the incident scene but also to such neighboring objects as lighting poles or façade glazing (Bulson,

1997). A comprehensive analysis of engineering (not forensic) methods developed for retrieving values of AAs during investigations of incident scenes does not seem to be available. However, it can be said with confidence that estimates of AA characteristics retrieved during post-mortem investigations of VAs will hardly be accurate data expressed, for instance, by the fixed values x_i. Inevitable uncertainties in values of AAs will require to express these estimates as uncertain data and to use subjective probability distributions for modelling this uncertainty. Examples of modelling inaccurate data in QRA applications are provided by Siu and Kelly (1998) and Kelly and Smith (2009). In the format of the present study, results of investigation of n previous incidents are expressed by the set $\psi = \{\psi_1(x), \psi_2(x), \dots, \psi_n(x)\}$. Elements of this set, $\psi_i(x)$, quantify subjective uncertainty that is modeled by the random variables X_i'. A simple scheme for constructing the probability distribution of X_i' is shown in Figure 4. This scheme is based on the assumption that an investigation of the incident i will allow to obtain an approximate estimate (fixed likely value) of AA characteristic in question, x_{iL}'. Uncertainty in this value can be expressed by a subjective random variable ξ_i that will model the investigator's (analyst's) believe in the actual, albeit unknown value of the characteristic. The distribution of the imprecise value X_i' can be obtained by means of multiplicative scheme $X_i' = x_{iL}'\xi_i$ or additive scheme $X_i' = x_{iL}' + \xi_i$ depending on the investigator's preference. The type of the probability distribution of ξ_i will determine the distribution of X_i' and the pdf $\psi_i(x)$.

| Forensic and engineering post-mortem investigation of the incident i | → | Application of a deterministic backward analysis to obtain a likely value of AA characteristic, x_{iL}' | → | Quantification of uncertainty in the value x_{iL}' by means of a random variable ξ_i |
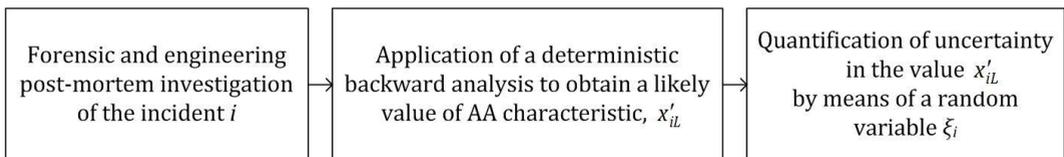
Figure 4. A scheme for specifying the subjective probability distributions of the inaccurate data X_i' on the basis of incident investigation results

The statistical quality the information expressed by the set $\psi = \{\psi_1(x), \psi_2(x), \dots, \psi_n(x)\}$ and its suitability for a rigorous estimation of the population mean $E[\Phi_d(X)]$ (damage probability $\text{Prob}(\varDelta_d \mid A)$) is difficult to assess. The set ψ simply expresses information on the previous n incidents and this information can be a combination of objective and subjective knowledge on the AA under investigation. Processing uncertainties expressed by components of the set $\{X_1', X_2', \dots, X_n'\}$ through the fragility function $\Phi_d(X)$ will yield another set of random variables with the elements $\Phi_d(X_i')$ (Figure 3c). The variables $\Phi_d(X_i')$ can be used to compute a measure of the likelihood of the damage $\varDelta_d$, say, $L(\varDelta_d \mid A)$. The term likelihood is used as a synonym of chance or possibility and not in the rigorous sense of the Bayesian updating. The likelihood

$L(\Delta_d \mid A)$ will not necessarily coincide with the population mean $\mathrm{E}[\Phi_d(X)]$. However, this value can be used for making decisions concerning the vulnerability of targets under analysis to VAs. The value of the likelihood $L(\Delta_d \mid A)$ can be computed by means of the following algorithm of the stochastic simulation:

1. Generated the value $\{x'_{1k}, x'_{2k}, \dots, x'_{nk}\}$ of $\{X'_1, X'_2, \dots, X'_n\}$ from the probability distributions expressed by $\{\psi_1(x), \psi_2(x), \dots, \psi_n(x)\}$.

2. Compute the set of values of the fragility function, $\{\Phi_d(x'_{1k}), \Phi_d(x'_{2k}), \dots, \Phi_d(x'_{nk})\}$.

3. Compute the average $\bar{\Phi}_{dk} = n^{-1} \sum_{i=1}^{n} \Phi_d(x'_{ik})$.

4. Store the average $\bar{\Phi}_{dk}$.

A repetition of the above procedure N_k times will yield a simulated sample of averages of fragility function values, $\bar{\Phi}_d = \{\bar{\Phi}_{d1}, \bar{\Phi}_{d2}, \dots, \bar{\Phi}_{dN_k}\}$. A hypothetical distribution of this sample is shown in Figure 3c. The value of the likelihood $L(\Delta_d \mid A)$ suitable for decision making can be either the mean value $\bar{\Phi}_{dm}$ of the set $\bar{\Phi}_d$ or a conservative q-quantile $\bar{\Phi}_{dq}$ (with q = 0.1, say) of $\bar{\Phi}_d$. Both the mean value of $\bar{\Phi}_d$ denoted by $\bar{\Phi}_{dm}$ and the quantile are illustrated in Figure 3c. The values $\bar{\Phi}_{dm}$ and $\bar{\Phi}_{dq}$ are nothing more than a result of uncertainty propagation. The uncertainty expressed by the variables $\{X'_1, X'_2, \dots, X'_n\}$ is propagated to the likelihood measures $\bar{\Phi}_{dm}$ and $\bar{\Phi}_{dq}$. They must be compared to some tolerable values. This will require to answer the well-known question "how safe is safe enough". It will be the task posed on urban community, what level of hazard posed by VAs can be tolerated.

4. Discussion

In line with the probabilistic procedure presented in this study, the assessment of fragility of built objects to AAs can be decomposed into two simpler sub-problems. The first sub-problem is a development of a fragility function for a damage event in question. The second sub-problem consists in collection and processing of information on the AA that can cause this damage and were encountered in past incidents. A solution of these two sub-problems for the case of VAs can be far from trivial.

A development of fragility functions is a problem of the structural reliability analysis (SRA). In a prevailing number of SRA applications, fragility functions have only one argument (earthquake loading, say) or two arguments (e.g., combined snow and earthquake loading) (Sundararajan, 1995; Lee & Rosowsky, 2006). However, an AA imposed on a built object can be characterized by three of more arguments (demand variables). An illustration of this case is the vehicle-ramming attack schematized in

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Figure 2b. A development of fragility functions having explicite form and more than two arguments can be an intricate task. To date, the only fragility function developed for VAs seems to be a single-argument function of façade glass strength calculated for impulse of terrorists' explosions with a triangular time-pressure history (Stewart & Netherton, 2008).

The collection of the set of imprecise data on an AA under analysis can be another intricate task. It will require to group incidents with similar AAs and to extract information on characteristics of these AAs from incident investigation reports. This task cannot be solved by security specialists alone. Expertise in physical processes of AAs and special skills in modelling uncertainties related to possible values of these actions will be necessary. At the present time, methods for extracting information in the form of the aforementioned inaccurate data are still to be developed or improved in some special cases.

5. Conclusions

In this study, a procedure has been proposed for estimating the fragility of built urban objects to vicious physical attacks. The fragility is expressed as likelihood of the damage that can be caused by abnormal actions imposed in the course of such attacks. The procedure consists in propagating uncertainties related to abnormal actions generated in past incidents and expressing results of this propagation in terms of the damage likelihood. The propagation can be carried out by means of stochastic simulation and mathematical model of an endangered object known as the fragility function.

The main finding is that the damage likelihood can be assessed by generating values of inaccurate data and transforming these values into corresponding values of the fragility function. The measure of the likelihood can be average or conservative quantile of the transformed fragility function values. The inaccurate data can be retrieved from investigations of incidents that generated the abnormal action under analysis. The amount of this data will inevitably be limited because the number of incidents that generated a specific abnormal action is small event on the global scale. Inaccurate data should be considered as a prevailing type of information on abnormal actions, because a retrieval of precise, accurate data on such actions is hardly possible in case of an investigation of incidents that happened in the past. Estimates of the damage likelihood can be used for making decisions concerning protection of urban objects against vicious attacks.

An application of the proposed fragility estimation procedure will require further studies into development of multivariate fragility functions for characteristics of abnormal actions. Further work will be required for improving and refining extraction of processing of data on occurrences of abnormal actions in the past incidents.

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Continuous Professional Development of Teachers - A Qualitative Study

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Abstract

This study aims to study lifelong professional education for teachers. It was used the qualitative method, a semi-structured interview was applied, which was used to explore the perspective that teachers and teacher candidates have on their professional training. There were 12 participants in this study, who attend the Master of Science in Teaching at the European University of Tirana, who were interviewed about their perceptions on the role and importance of continuous training in the development of their professional competencies.

Keywords: competencies, professional development, teachers, training.

Introduction

Teacher education is associated with certain values and the provision of relevant knowledge and skills to prepare them for the professional life (Dahlgren & Chiriac, 2009).

The Commission of the European Communities (2001) defined lifelong learning as "(a) ll learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective".

Nowadays, teachers tend to have knowledge of their profession, maintain high academic standards and be in continuous development. In the last decade, national policies and strategies have been developed on the professional development of teachers through the study programs that universities offer as well as the various trainings that teachers must attend.

Based on the Law No. 69/2012, "On the pre-university education system in the Republic of Albania", as amended ", Article 58 on Continuous Professional Development" Educational institutions must plan the professional development of teachers, according to their needs and in accordance with central, local, and institutional education policies. Forms of professional development should include in-house professional development, training, professional networking, counseling,

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short-term and long-term courses. Teachers and principals should be trained at least 3 days a year" and financial resources for training should be from the own contribution of the educational staff.

Nowadays more than ever, it is vital to measure the perceptions that teachers and teacher candidates have of their professional development. According to Stout (1996) staff development sometimes called continuous education, in-service training, or professional development as a central tool for altering teacher behaviors. In the educational profession, educators have often interchanged the terms professional development, in-service training, and staff development.

Methodology

The aim of this study is to explore the perspective of teachers and teacher candidates on their professional training. In this investigation the key research questions were as follows:

What are the perceptions of teachers and teacher candidates about the professional training they conduct?

What do you think should be done to strengthen the teachers lifelong learning skills?

Do teachers perceive that university systems offer adequate study programs in the continuous training of teachers?

Participants

In this study, there were 12 participants, who were teachers and teacher candidates for lower and upper secondary education who attend the Master of Science in Teaching at the European University of Tirana, 4 of them with experience in teaching and 8 without experience in teaching.

Results

Table 1: Perceptions of teachers and teacher candidates on their professional training

Area of questioning	Main themes	Core relevant narrative opinions
Are the trainings you attend important?	Yes, they are important	Relatively yes, given the seriousness of their organization as well as the teachers need for training and what the trainings offer. (M.R)
	Neutral	I have not completed any training so far. (A.M)

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	Yes, they are very important, because teachers also need to be trained to adapt to current needs and innovations. The teacher must go at the same pace with technology and society development. (E.J)
Yes, they are important	I have not done any training yet, but I believe they play a very important role (E. XH)
Yes, they are important	I think that training is very important, and we become more capable as we have different experiences. (A.T)
Yes, they are very important	I consider all the trainings I attend very important because they provide me new knowledge, skills, and abilities, which are very necessary for my professional life. Any training done during the pandemic period, helped me to be a successful teacher in online teaching. (E.S)
Yes, they are very important	Yes they are very important (A.Sh)
Yes, very important, lack of correctness	Trainings are another flaw in our system. The training topics are very interesting and valuable, but they are not realized correctly, consequently they are fictitious, therefore in my opinion they are important just to complete the number of credits that each teacher should have in the portfolio. (P.K)
	Yes, they are important. (R.K)
Relatively yes	Relatively yes, given the seriousness of their organization and the teachers need for training and what the trainings offer. (M.R)
Neutral	I have not completed any training so far. (A.M)

As illustrated in Table 1, respondents express their perceptions on professional training. Most of the respondents consider the trainings they conduct very important in the formation of their professional competencies. Some of the teacher candidates who have no work experience say that they have never attended professional trainings and as a result they cannot express their views on the importance of these trainings.

Table 2. Perceptions of teachers and teacher candidates in improving "lifelong learning skills"

Area of questioning	*Main themes*	*Core relevant narrative opinions*
What are the greatest difficulties you face in your professional development?	Bureaucracy	Superficial training neglecting the essence of teaching. The documentation bureaucracy neglects the essence of teaching. (A.P)
	Employment	Employment. (A. RR)
	Fulfilling the professional growth	Finding an individual program that fulfills my personal needs in my professional growth. (E.S)
	Non-contemporary program	Non renewing training topics for a long time. High costs considering a teacher's income (A.Sh)
	Employment	I think the employment is one of the biggest challenges. (E.XH)
	Lack of seriousness	The trainings offered by Ministry of Education and Sport are not always as serious as they are supposed to be. Various private agencies offer very serious training, but the fee is not low. Thus, it often happens that I am selective choosing the training, because I cannot afford 100% of any training offered. (E.J)
	Variety of topics covered	I would like a variety of topics. (A.Sh)
	Trainings with current topics	Introducing basic training by first measuring the teacher's needs. (E. XH)

What would you like to change in the teacher professional development scheme?	Personalized training	More personalized training as possible. (M.R)
	Variety of topics covered	Variety of topics addressed considering real needs (specific community, cultures, traditions, area of the place where the teacher exercises his/her profession) (R.K)
	I agree with the current scheme	I am satisfied with current teacher professional development scheme (A.Sh)
	To be implemented seriously	Neither less nor more to be practiced seriously to the extent of 100%. (P.K)
	I agree with the current scheme	I am ok about that (A.M)

As illustrated in Table 2, when asked the participants what they think should be done to strengthen the teachers' lifelong learning skills, they answered that they would like to have personalized training on contemporary topics, while the greatest difficulties they face in their professional development is evidenced by the bureaucracies, the lack of seriousness in their realization and the employment opportunities.

Table 3: Perceptions of teachers and teacher candidates about the validity of the study programs offered by universities on teacher professional development

Area of questioning	*Main themes*	*Core relevant narrative opinions*
Are the continuing education teacher training programs offered by universities adequate?	Very important, but need to be updated	They are very important but need a coherent update in relation to the situation and the student level. (M.R)
	Very important, but there must be continuity in professional development.	They are important, but it cannot end there. The continuous training of the teacher must continue even after the closure of a study program. (A.M)
	Very important but need to be updated.	Study programs, if they are well organized and well-conceived are very important, but there are cases when study programs

		do not keep pace with the time (the fault of excessive bureaucracy) (E.J)
	Very important	I think they are very important because they have nothing to do with the knowledge we have as teachers but with building the teacher-student relationship. (E. XH)
	Very important	They are important enough for us as teachers to be prepared and trained. The work we do, will be as efficient as possible. (A.T)
	Very important and valuable	Personally, I strongly support the idea that one who dares to teach should never stop learning. Universities, especially private ones, offer very valuable postgraduate studies. Blessed are those who have the physical and financial means to attend (E.S)
	Very important	They are very important (A.Sh)
	Valuable	I think that the cycle of post-university studies for teachers is very valuable as it makes a refresher of knowledge and an update of what he/she knows and does. (P.K)
	Priority	In my opinion, teaching ranks first in the continuous education study programs offered by universities. (R.K)
	Very important but needs to be updated.	They are very important but need a coherent update in relation to the situation and the student level. (M.R)

The question: Do teachers perceive that university systems offer adequate study programs in the continuous training of teachers? Most of the participants answered that the study programs in the field of teaching that the university offers are very important and valuable for their professional development, but they need to be reconceptualized and adapted to the needs of the market and the development of the current competencies of the teacher.

Table 4. The main factors that have influenced the choice of this study program

AREA OF QUESTIONING	MAIN THEMES	CORE RELEVANT NARRATIVE OPINIONS
WHAT ARE THE MAIN FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED THE SELECTION OF THIS STUDY PROGRAM?	Competition	A complete professional training. Labor market competition for the regulated teaching profession. (E. J)
	Desire	Being a teacher is wonderful. Children are not born with desires and passions. They acquire and learn them throughout life. And I believe that it is the teacher who discovers talents and guides them to the best path. (M. R)
	Competition / job opportunities	The only factor that attracted me to follow this study cycle has been the preservation of the workplace. (P. K)
	Finishing the study cycle	Completion of a Bachelor study cycle, to finish my studies I had started. Desire to work in education, as a teacher. (A. RR)
	Passion for the profession	The teaching profession is of great importance in society, teaching gives the opportunity to change other people's lives for better and gives the opportunity to share the passion with others more than other professions. (E.Xh)
	Passion & job opportunities	To take up a profession as a teacher. I like working with people. The work I will do continuously. Salary. (M.K)
	Passion for the profession	I like to teach and to prepare generations for the future. It is about a noble profession and hard work. (R.K)

	Passion for the profession	I like the teaching profession. (M. D)

When asked what are the main factors that have influenced the choice of this study program, the participants answered that the main factors are job opportunities, passion for the profession and professional development.

Discussion

In 2000, Burke noted that teachers often associate professional development with day-to-day service. (Burke, 2000). According to the teachers participating in this study, their professional development is closely related to the development of professional competencies, while for teacher candidates, their professional development is closely related to employment opportunities.

According to Anderson, an effective teacher is the result of three components: ability, personality, and knowledge (Anderson, 2009). As a result, the participants said that for the development of professional competencies through trainings, they would like to realize personalized trainings with contemporary topics that serve the digital competencies that teachers should acquire in adaptation to the labor market.

On the other hand, Johnson and Kardos (2002) notice the need for new teachers to have on site staff development. These new teachers need immediate assistance from a culture that is supportive and reassuring in times of difficulty. Nowadays, the study programs in the field of teaching that the university offers create opportunities for the formation and professional development of new teachers. Most of the participants declared that the study programs in the field of teaching that the university offers are very important and valuable for their professional development, but they need to be reconceptualized and adapted to the needs of the market and the development of current teacher competencies.

The organization of training must therefore be established, compared to the past, in a different relationship with the labor world and its multiple expressions. Between study and work are identified a series of cooperation forms rep-resenting articulated models of possible modalities and, as a result, of learning. We can thus enter into the logic of identification of learning not with the study only, but also with different forms of study - labor. (Beshiri & Puka 2016)

Conclusions

The image of oneself that every individual tries to affirm in respect to others is inspired on the largest autonomy and personal freedom. (Puka, 2011). Currently, the annual professional development of teachers should be realized through trainings, short-term and long-term courses offered by university educational institutions and

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other licensed public and private institutions. Most of the respondents consider the trainings they develop very important for the formation of their professional competencies but recommend that there should be more personalized trainings with contemporary topics to develop their professional and digital competencies.

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Recent Opportunities for Increasing Georgian Wine Export - Incentives or Obstacles to Improving Wine Quality

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Abstract

Along with the internationally recognized image of Georgian wine and the increase of wine exports, special attention is paid to maintaining and improving the quality of Georgian wine. Taking into account the requirements of the local and international wine markets and, consequently, promoting the development of a competitive market remains a challenge for Georgian law. The creation of favorable conditions for the export of wine at the local and international level implies, first of all, the existence of legal regulations. The aim of the Law of Georgia on Vine and Wine and its accompanying subordinate normative acts is to develop a competitive wine market in Georgia and to protect the interests of consumers, to maintain and grow the international reputation of the Georgian viticulture and winemaking sector. The law was substantially amended in 2017 and the aim of the reform was to adapt to the challenges in the wine sector and bring it closer to international standards. At the same time, the export of Georgian wine to different countries is regulated by a different legal framework. Therefore, it is in our interest to analyze these different legal regulations, which have a direct impact on the opportunities for wine exports from Georgia - the incentive or obstacle to improving the quality of Georgian wine. EU regulations apply to both wines produced in the EU and imported to the EU market, as well as to Georgia, as a third country that has signed the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) with the EU. Russia, Ukraine and the USA are important export markets for Georgia. Georgia has different international legal relations with each of them and, accordingly, the legal requirements for wine exports to these countries are different. The paper examines the current state of the modern Georgian wine market in the context of domestic and international norms regulating wine exports. It is analyzed whether local legislation and international agreements regulating wine exports contribute to the growth of Georgian wine exports and the improvement of wine quality.

Keywords: wine, wine export, wine quality, wine market, wine legislation, trade agreements

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Introduction

Georgia has recently entered into new types of trade agreements with the EU and partner and neighboring countries, which provide for the gradual reduction of tariff barriers and the shift from traditional tariffs and quotas to non-tariff measures (mainly to quality assurance measures). Non-tariff measures are central to trade agreements and are often seen as a particular challenge for developing countries. The Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) between the EU and Georgia, signed in 2014, is a prime example of this. It is a new generation trade agreement that combines liberalization and regulation. The agreement gives Georgia access to the EU market with 500 million users but, at the same time, provides for complex legal and institutional harmonization (Kasradze, Tea, 2018).

Unfortunately, even seven years after the implementation of the DCFTA, the removal of tariff barriers has not had the expected positive impact on exports, including wine exports. Non-tariff measures related to quality are considered to be one of the main impediments to the growth of exports to the EU.

Due to the fact that bilateral agreements with partner and neighboring countries place less emphasis on the quality of export products, the growth of Georgian wine exports in these countries is noticeable.

Research methodology

The paper is a desk study of the impact of new generation trade agreements on Georgian wine export. It is based on trade agreements, national legislation governing Georgian wine export, scientific papers by Georgian and foreign researchers, and studies and reports by various local and international organizations. The data was retrieved from the Internet, official websites and various scientific databases. Relevant conclusions were made based on the processing and analysis of the information obtained.

Literature review

Economists agree that trading barriers, such as tariffs and quotas, harm trade because they distort the price and hinder the distribution of resources so that they prevent the comparative advantage of the country. It is easy to calculate the exact effect of tariffs as they are transparent and predictable. According to the OECD, if tariffs were removed entirely, it would reduce trade costs and carry welfare gains equal to 1.37 percent of GDP per year in developing countries and 0.37 percent in developed countries (Love & Lattimore, 2009).

Unlike tariffs, non-tariff barriers, which are an essential part of new trade agreements, are not easily measurable. The impact of non-tariff SPS (Sanitary and Phytosanitary) and TBT (Technical Barriers to Trade) measures is mainly negative on the agriculture and food sector (Li & Beghin, 2012). Some scholars have suggested that compliance

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with standards increases short-term production costs (Maskus, Wilson, & Otsuki, 2000). Some argue the opposite, that standards have a positive effect on exports because they indicate quality protection. (MANGELSDORF, PORTUGAL-PEREZ, & WILSON, 2012).

The goal of policymakers when pursuing a non-tariff policy is not to influence foreign trade flows. Unlike tariffs and quotas, which are discriminatory measures that lead to inefficient allocation of resources. However, non-tariff measures, like tariffs, can damage trade flows (Maskus, Wilson, & Otsuki, 2000). In addition, their evaluation is often more difficult because they are less transparent due to their qualitative and complex nature. Moreover, the diversity of regulations represents a significant international trade barrier as it generates transaction costs (Ederington & Ruta, 2016) Therefore, accurately quantifying the impact of non-tariff measures on foreign trade is a challenge for countries.

Numerous well-known scholars have advocated for free trade and argued in their own works against scholars with opposing views. Developing countries will develop faster if they are allowed to pursue their own policies, taking into account their own stage of development and other conditions. In the long run, this is beneficial for developed countries as well, as investment and trade opportunities expand, although, unfortunately, developed countries do not take advantage of this opportunity. (Chang & Gershman, 2003).

The paper "Economic Feasibility, General Economic Impact and Effects of the Free Trade Agreement between Georgia and the European Union" examines the economic benefits, feasibility and potential impacts of the Free Trade Agreement between Georgia and the European Union. The study emphasizes that in order for agro-companies which produce agriproducts to enter the EU market, this is especially true of Georgian wine, it is important to introduce modern production methods, raise the awareness of Georgian brands through proper marketing and for all agro-companies the starting point should be the implementation of EU regulations and compliance with modern quality standards. (Kudina, et al., 2008).

DCFTA allows Georgian products that meet non-tariff requirements to enter the EU market with zero customs tariffs. This fact pushes Georgian wine producers to improve the quality of products, to be able to diversify the types of products and, most importantly, to increase the export of products produced, thus contributing to the economic progress of the country. Norway, Canada, Japan and Switzerland are also on the list of export countries whose preferential systems can be used by Georgian producers. (Eisenbaum, 2007).

Georgian Wine Market Overview

Over the last decade, the wine industry in Georgia has experienced a strong growth in all key indicators, such as exports, turnover, employment and salary of employees.

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The financial situation of the sector during this period also looked quite impressive (Zarnadze & Kasradze, 2020).

In 2019, the average monthly salary of employees in the wine production sector amounted to 1046 GEL, and this figure increased by an average of 11.5% annually in 2011-2019. The average salary in the wine production sector has increased significantly compared to the average salary in Georgia - from 79% in 2014 to 93% in 2019 (Georgia Today, 2021).

In 2019, wine was the 3rd most exported commodity from Georgia (after copper ores and ferroalloys) and accounted for 8.2% of the country's total exports. The most significant increase in wine exports was recorded in 2017, when compared to 2016 it increased by 54.4%.

Export of Georgian wine (million bottles) and average price of 1 bottle (2011-2020)
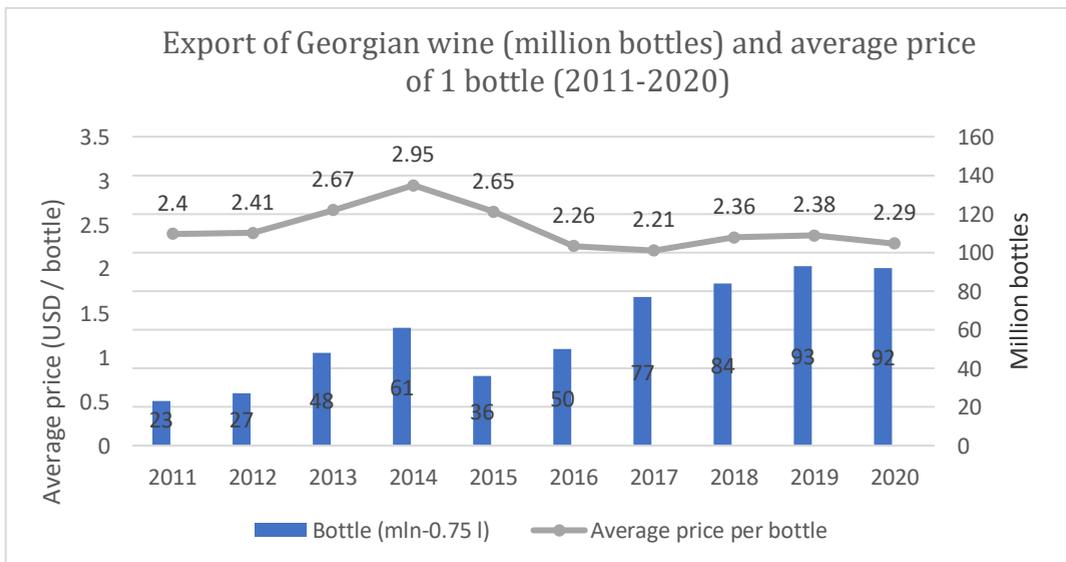
Source: National Statistics Office of Georgia

The average price of wine exported in 2011-2020 was $2.46 per bottle. From 2012 to 2014, the price increased significantly from $2.41 to $2.95, although in 2016 it dropped sharply to $2.26. In 2016-2020, the price stabilized from $2.2 to $2.4. For comparison, the world export price of wine in 2019 was $2.59, which is slightly higher than the average price of a bottle of wine exported from Georgia that year - $2.38. In 2011-2016, Georgian wine was more expensive than the average price in the world.

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Percentages of wine exports from Georgia by countries look like this:

Wine export from Georgia by countries in 2016-2020
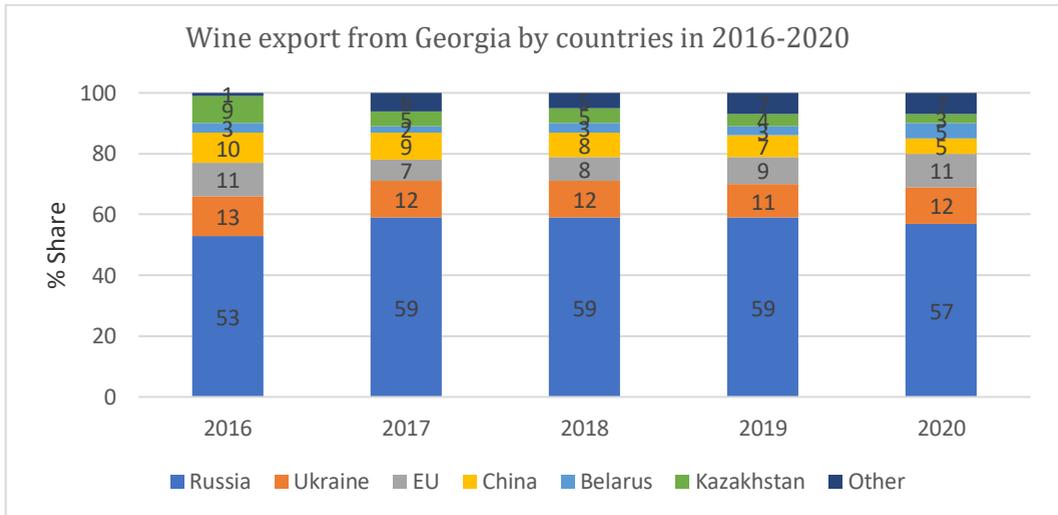
Source: National Statistics Office of Georgia

As the data shows, exports have been growing over the years, with only 2020 data showing a 5% decrease due to the pandemic compared to 2019 data, which is not really a large number considering other sectors of the economy. In 2020, compared to 2019, there is a 1% decrease in the amount of wine exported in bottles. In 2020, up to 92.4 million wines were exported outside the country. However, as the price of wine in the world market has fallen, wine exports in value terms have declined by 9% (National Wine Agency, 2020)

Export of Georgian wine to Russia, million USD
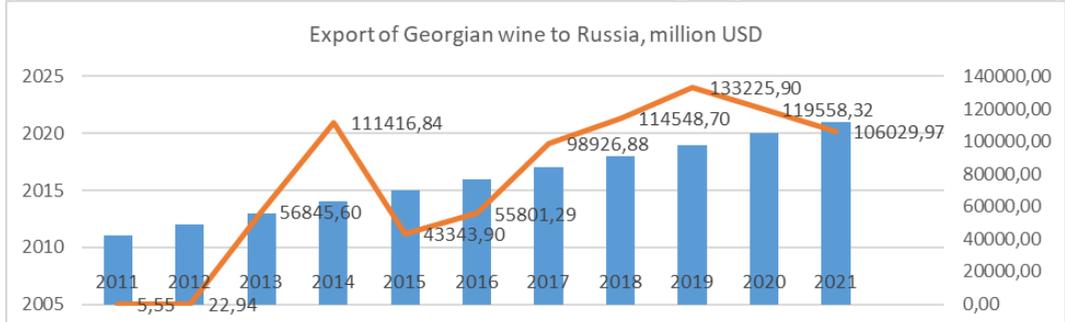
Source: National Statistics Office of Georgia

The year 2021 was especially important for the Georgian wine industry: the largest number of wines was exported in the history of independent Georgia. Georgia

exported 107 million bottles (0.75 l) of wine to 62 countries around the world, with revenues from exports reaching $250 million, which is also a record high (National Wine Agency, 2021).

Russia has been the main wine export destination since 2017, but there has been a significant increase in Europe as well.
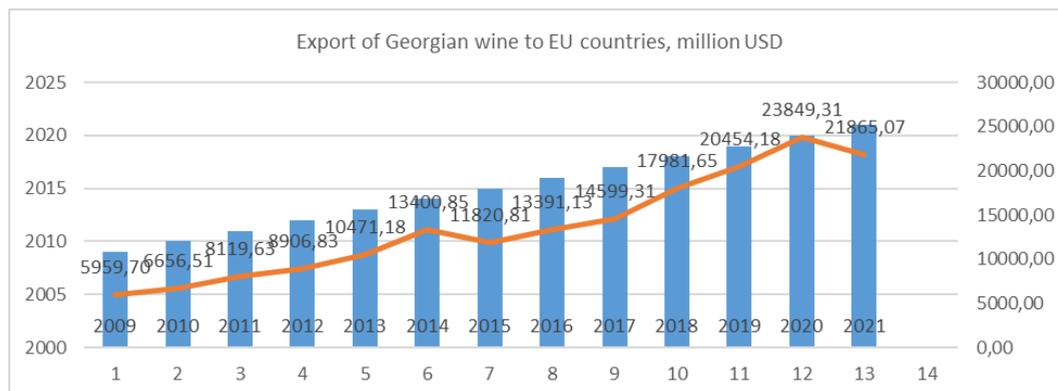
Source: National Statistics Office of Georgia

Export rates are growing every year in strategic European markets: Poland, UK, USA, Ukraine, France, etc. However, it should be noted that despite the bitter experience of the 2006 Russian embargo, unfortunately, the Russian market is still inalterable, especially for small and medium-sized wineries to export their wines. The main determining factor, however, is the difficulty of adhering to quality standards (Kasradze & Zarnadze, 2019). Small and medium-sized wineries do not have a large scale of production, they suffer from a lack of resources and qualifications, due to which their products do not meet the requirements of the EU market. It is easier to acquire the Russian market, because there are no such strict requirements for quality there. However, based on the past experience, such a high level of dependence on the Russian market poses a great risk to the country (Kasradze & Kapanadze, COVID-19 Pandemic - Challenges and Opportunities for Georgian Wine Industry, 2022).

Taking into account the requirements of local and international wine markets and, consequently, promoting the development of a competitive market remains a challenge for Georgian law. Creating favorable conditions for the export of wine locally and internationally, first of all, implies the existence of proper legal regulations.

Discussion of domestic and international norms regulating wine exports

In Georgia, wine production, processing, distribution and export are regulated by various legislative and sub-legislative normative acts in force in Georgia. There are requirements of normative acts for wine production in Georgia, such as registration

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of business operators, state control, internal system of traceability and threat control, labeling, standardization, metrology, hygienic certification, as well as obligations, rights and responsibilities of business operators.

Determining the designations of the origin of wine and including them in a strict legal framework is especially important for Georgia. It is a necessary precondition for the production of high-quality and valuable products in our country and to protect it from unfair competition.

In accordance with the ''Law of Georgia on Appellation of Origin and Geographical Indication of Goods" - Appellation of origin is a modern or historical name of a geographical place, district, region, country, used to denote goods originating in that geographical location; Whose exceptional quality and properties are, in whole or in part, determined solely by the natural environment and the human factor of this geographical place; Whose production, raw material production and processing take place within the boundaries of this geographical place.

The place of origin can be the village, the city, the region and the country itself. Thus, in accordance with the legislation of Georgia, the concept of a geographical indication is more general and fully includes the concept of appellation of origin. Any designation of origin is also a geographical indication, but not vice versa. The registration of the appellation of origin and geographical indication of the goods is carried out by the LEPL National Intellectual Property Centre of Georgia - Sakpatenti.

Decree #88 of the President of Georgia of 28 February 2002 "On the Measures Related to the Enactment of the Law of Georgia on Appellation of Origin and Geographical Indication of Goods" defines the procedures for determining, registering, using and controlling the appellation of origin of the wine. This Ordinance provides a list of wines with appellations of origin and conditional boundaries of specific viticulture zones for wines with appellations of origin and wine brands.

The Law of Georgia "On Vines and Wine" regulates the promotion and development of viticulture and winemaking as a priority sector of the country's economy, and the production and marketing of competitive grapes, wines and other alcoholic beverages of grape origin, and the protection of the consumer market from falsified and poor-quality products.

According to the Law of Georgia "On Vines and Wine", activities in the field of viticulture and winemaking are regulated by a legal entity under public law (LEPL), the National Wine Agency, which is controlled by the Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia. Certificates of Conformity and Origin are issued by the National Wine Agency in accordance with the rules established by the Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia. The Law of Georgia "On Vines and Wine" regulates the general requirements for the certification of alcoholic beverages. According to this law, certification of wines with appellations of origin is mandatory.

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Certification of the table and regional wines, as well as strong spirits, is voluntary. For certification, it is sufficient to submit a declaration of conformity drawn up by the manufacturer of alcoholic beverages, based on the test protocol of an accredited examination laboratory, which provides information on the manufacturer's requisites, product origin and quality.

Tasting is mandatory to issue a certificate of conformity of wines with the appellation of origin intended for export. In other cases, wine tasting is voluntary and is carried out by a standing tasting commission set up by the National Wine Agency on an order basis. According to the same law, the export of wines with the appellation of origin is allowed only in bottled form.

Order #2-221 of 2003 of Minister of Agriculture and Food of Georgia on "Certification System of Alcohol Drinks", "Rules for Certification of Alcohol Drinks", "Issuing Certificate of Origin for Alcohol Drinks", and "Rules for Writing off Wines" regulates the issues of certification of alcoholic beverages and spirits of grape origin. In order to make a decision on issuing a compliance certificate, three necessary conditions are considered: the results of the analytical examination; the results of organoleptic testing and the results of state control over the observance of the rules and regulations for the production of alcoholic beverages.

The state strictly controls the compliance of export wines and certificates of origin issued. In order to inspect the samples submitted by the exporter, the National Wine Agency and the LEPL National Food Agency are authorized to take samples from the relevant certified batch, submit them for laboratory testing and compare them to the samples submitted by the exporter no later than 3 working days after the prior notification of the business-operator by the National Wine Agency. It is not allowed to export the certified batch or place it on the market otherwise before the expiration of this period.

The Code of Administrative Offenses of Georgia (Art. 1794) provides for punitive sanctions, in particular: forgery of a wine laboratory test report by a testing laboratory, forgery of a wine certificate by a certification body is punishable by a fine of 5,000 GEL, in repeated cases 20,000 GEL; Placing or exporting non-compliant products specified in the wine certificate to the export party shall be punished by a fine of 10 000 GEL, in repeated cases - 20 000 GEL (Art. 1795).

It should be noted that the state requirements for the wine to be exported are different for the EU and CIS countries. Only the analysis of the forms of certificates of origin allows us to see clearly the difference between the legal regulations of the EU and the CIS countries when it comes to the quality control of exported wine.

Under the legislation of Georgia, which is consistently in line with EU regulations, if certified wine is intended for export to EU countries, it must be accompanied by a

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Form VI 1 Certificate of Compliance, which is fully compliant with EU regulations and legislation issued by the National Wine Agency.

In the case of wine export to Russia and Ukraine, the agency issues another type of certificate of origin - CT1 form. We want to note here that in this case too, the legal regulations for the export of wine are conditioned by the bilateral agreements between Georgia and the Russian Federation and the state of Georgia and Ukraine.

We will briefly review the requirements for both deep and comprehensive free trade agreements with the EU, as well as the requirements for certificates of compliance to be issued under Georgian law in the context of the above-mentioned bilateral agreements on wine exports.

The Georgian-Russian Free Trade Agreement (Agreement, 1994) is used for trade with the Russian Federation and the Free Trade Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Georgia and the Government of Ukraine (Agreement, 1995) is used for trade with the Ukraine. The terms of the agreements are identical for both countries. According to the first article, 1. "Sides to the agreement do not impose customs duties, taxes and charges having equivalent effect on export and import of commodity originated from the customs area of one of the Sides and designated for delivery to the customs area of another Side."

According to Article 2, "Sides will not impose local taxes or charges directly or indirectly on goods, covered by the present agreement, at the rate that exceeds the level of relevant taxes or charges imposed on analogous goods of the local production or those produced in third countries; Sides will not introduce special restrictions or demands towards export and/or import of goods, covered by the present agreement, that in similar cases are not used towards analogous goods of the local production or those produced in third countries;

However, the free trade regime with the Russian Federation, unlike other countries, provides for exceptions, in particular, the removal of certain goods from the free trade regime.

It should also be noted that under Article 1 of the Treaty the peculiarity of using the trade regime to agree on the nomenclature of goods between the two countries are formalized in annual protocols which is an integral part of this Agreement. Which allows the parties to revise these terms.

The contracts do not contain details about either the quality or the special requirements related to the labels.

We have a different reality in the case of wine exports to EU countries. Currently, under this agreement, 18 geographical names of Georgian wines are protected in the European Union. In addition to geographical indications and appellations of origin, the issue of labeling in relation to wine quality protection regulations within the

framework of Georgia's Association Agreement with the European Union is noteworthy.

The Law of Georgia on Vines and Wine complies with EU standards and sets requirements for mandatory information on the label.

According to the Law of Georgia on Vines and Wine, Art.31. The label of a product bottled for the market shall include the following necessary information:

a) Name of the product;

b) Nominal volume;

c) Actual alcohol content;

d) name of protected appellation of origin and geographical indication, as well as an indication "controlled appellation of origin" or "protected geographical indication" (should be sequential), which may be replaced by sign or abbreviation of controlled appellation of origin or protected geographical indication approved by the agency;

e) In the case of special wine – the name of the appropriate category; the name of the manufacturer country of the product;

f) Name and address of the manufacturer of the product, name and address of the bottler, if the manufacturer and bottler of the product are different persons, and in the case of wine or drinks imported to Georgia – name and address of the importer;

g) Lot number;

h) Noting "contains sulfites", if the content of sulfites in one liter of the product exceeds 10 milligrams.

In addition, the law permits placing the following information on the label (article 32):

a) Trademark;

b) Name of vine species if the product is produced at least 85% of grapes of the mentioned vine species;

c) Year of harvest if not less than 85% of the wine is produced from grapes harvested in that year; according to the production method: in case of Georgian wine – designation "Georgian wine";

d) In case of sparkling wine – designation "traditional method", if the sparkling wine is produced by the bottled method;

e) In case of wine – designation of fermentation and/or aging in a wooden barrel if the wine was fermented and/or aged in a wooden barrel.

Any information that does not mislead the customer regarding the quality, place of origin, year of harvest, manufacturer, type, style and/or other characteristics of the

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product is permissible. To include nutritional and/or health claims on a wine label is not obligatory, to include environmental claims on a wine label is not obligatory

Any information that does not mislead the customer regarding the quality, place of origin, year of harvest, manufacturer, type, style and/or other characteristics of the product is permissible.

Conclusion

Recently, Georgia has signed new types of trade agreements with the European Union and various other countries, in which the emphasis has shifted from traditional tariffs and quotas to non-tariff quality assurance measures. These agreements, on the one hand, allowed Georgian products, including Georgian wine, to enter and establish themselves in new markets at competitive prices, and, on the other hand, the non-tariff measures provided for in these agreements became a special challenge for Georgian winemakers.

The practice has shown that the DCFTA has contributed mainly to the growth of exports of raw materials which are less affected by non-tariff measures, but have not had an economically significant positive impact on the growth of the agri-food and manufacturing sectors. Moreover, the SPS and TBT measures of the EU have a significant limiting impact on Georgia's export potential to the EU. On the other hand, there is a tendency to focus on the CIS and Asian markets, which have much lower requirements in terms of non-tariff measures.

Experts agree that the growing dependence of Georgia on the Russian market is alarming given the lessons of the recent past. The main challenge today is the quality of Georgian wine. It is possible to export relatively low-quality wine to Russia and that is why Georgia is actively cooperating with it. In order for Georgian wine to achieve serious success in Europe and other countries, producers must first improve its quality. Since the 2006 embargo, Georgia has diversified its wine markets, though insufficiently. Since 2013, Georgian wine exports to Russia continue to grow.

Although there was already a bilateral free trade agreement in 2006 that included dispute resolution mechanisms in line with international practice (Agreement on the establishment of a free trade zone, 1999), the Russian authorities, without any hesitation, unilaterally used the politically motivated decision on the embargo.

The Russian market is obviously highly attractive. However, at the same time, it is dangerous, unsustainable and creates many risks, especially of a political nature. Because there is a temptation for Georgian wine producers to return to the production of low-quality and falsified products, which they will sell freely in the Russian market (which again makes it possible for the embargo to be repeated multiple times due to political motives).

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Given that Ukraine has also signed the Association Agreement with the EU and the DCFTA, in the near future this means the modernization of the Ukrainian market and rapid harmonization with EU standards, which in the future will lead to the revision of bilateral agreements and the establishment of EU standards.

The EU market is attractive, first and foremost, only to producers of high-quality products and services. Differentiation of products and services helps to diversify markets for Georgian exporters. Moreover, this is the only way to develop our small open economy (Tea Kasradze, 2018).

If high-quality wine is ensured, in the presence of free trade agreements with different countries it will inevitably have an impact on the growth of wine exports. Quality, authentic Georgian wine has a great potential to acquire new strategic markets. To achieve this, companies need to consider the needs of local and international markets. It is especially necessary to harmonize the local regulations related to wine quality with the EU regulations and strictly adhere to them, which will help increase the international reputation of Georgian wine and increase its demand in foreign markets, improve the financial performance of the wine industry, there will be further increases in employment and salaries of employees in the industry (Kasradze & Kapanadze, COVID-19 Pandemic - Challenges and Opportunities for Georgian Wine Industry, 2022).

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Albania in the last decade of the Ottoman occupation according to French diplomacy during the years 1901 – 1911

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Abstract

France in the first decade of the twentieth century, will be very active in European and Balkan events. At the same time, French diplomatic documents reflect a complete picture of Albania in the first decade of the twentieth century, in the context of the occupation of the Ottoman Empire. The interests that Austria and Italy have in particular are analyzed by the side of a state that was in the opposing camp, the Triple Alliance camp. But in the French documentation it is clear that one of the most delicate conflicts between Austria and Italy was the influence that each of these two countries of the Central Bloc sought to influence the Albanian territory. Albania was seen as a springboard to the southern Balkans and the only thing that prevented Austria and Italy from entering the conflict was the preservation of Albania's status quo and the influence of Germany seeking at all costs to keep the Central Bloc in cohesion. France through its diplomacy sought to damage the Central Bloc, to stimulate the connection of new alliances in Europe, wanting to promote rapprochement between Italy and Russia, but the latter's high interests in the Balkans, made Russia create for itself agreement with Austria, really worrying France. Interesting is the fact of diplomatic treatment by France of the situation in the Balkans and the opinion that French diplomats have about Albanians. Being more pro-Slavic in the diplomatic side, she sees critically how the Austrians were using the Albanians to oppose the Balkan peoples, mainly the Serbs. On the other hand, French diplomats criticize the Ottoman attitude, which maintained a mild attitude towards Albanians, explaining it with the fear that the Sultan himself has, given that part of his guard was Albanian. Thanks to this period and the French diplomacy which does not have a direct involvement in the Albanian issue, we see with great interest not only a panorama of the Albanian situation but also of the hidden European interests, which emerge through the influence on the Albanian territory as a strategic position.

Keywords: French diplomacy, Albania, Ottoman Empire, Triple Alliance, Central Bloc.

Introduction

Knowledge of the history of Albanian territories during the last decade of the Ottoman occupation of Albania, is very valuable if seen from the side of French diplomacy. The French who are not directly interested in Albanian lands, give us a clear description and analysis of all the main protagonists, who have direct interests in this western area of the Ottoman Empire.

The clearest interest that emerges from these documents is the interest of the Austrians, which within this last Ottoman decade, only grows, passing from the general Balkan interest, to direct territorial interests for the Dualist Monarchy. As early as the 1900s the French realized that the Albanian area was the only area in the Ottoman Empire where the Austrians could extend direct interest. This was also due to the orientation that the main state of the Central Bloc, to which Austria also adhered, Germany had left in the direction of exerting influence, as in other areas towards Eastern Europe, the latter needed to extend to vete. The Albanian part of the Balkans increasingly began to take on a strategic importance for Vienna after the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, giving it two important favors; first: control of the Otranto canal, as an entry point into the Adriatic Sea, and second, an intermediate point towards the road to Thessaloniki.

The French documents show that the Austrians, in connection with the importance of the area, are trying to bring the Albanian population into the Novi Pazar sanjak, as a support population for Vienna, wanting to separate the Slavic population of Montenegrins from the Serbs, seeing how a connecting cordon with the Bosniaks he had under occupation.[1] The Austrian interest is even greater than that of the Russians during the conflict that may have occurred between the Ottoman Empire and Montenegro in 1911, by the French. For the fact that for Austria Albanian lands are a direct interest, while for the Russians they are seen as an interest in maintaining a balance in the Balkans.

The Austrians use propaganda mostly to gain their own interests and to follow the Albanians. They send military attachés to the city of Ioannina and measure and analyze the area in terms of geographical relief and the maritime area. Even in this city in terms of propaganda has entered into conflicts with the Italians who also seek it for themselves. But the best propaganda is the one made through the water lines by the Austrian sailing company Lloyd. This company has connected every Albanian naval pier with the ports of Europe, although it has a great cost for the budget of Vienna, but the propaganda and political importance that is in the foreground, does not allow it to stop this activity.[2] Apparently the French see that through these actions,

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[1] M.A.É., "Origines De La Guerre De 1914 Documents Diplomatiques Français (1871-1914) 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome XIII (26 octobre 1910-30 juin 1911)", Paris: L'Europe Nouvelle, 1955., doc. 358.
[2] M.A.É., "Origines De La Guerre De 1914 Documents Diplomatiques Français (1871-1914) 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome IV (5 octobre 1903-8 avril 1904)", Paris: L'Europe Nouvelle, 1932., doc. 269.

the Austrians make an analytical study of Albanian territory, trying to highlight how useful it can be for their economic interests.

The French documents also show the use that Austria is making of the religious side of the Albanians. Despite the fact that Albanians were part of two religions divided into four religions, the latter in each religion know how to behave, bringing them in favor of their own interests. Southern Albanians in the Islamic faith, especially those in the Ioannina area, are lured by money,[1] while in the north Catholic Albanians are used and propagated to defend themselves against the Ottoman Empire. However, wanting to preserve and protect Muslim Albanians, in order to bring them closer to their side, they are risking a Catholic transition to Italian influence, Paris notes.

Austrian actions were not always direct in fulfilling their goals. Not infrequently Austria used other states to achieve these goals, as was the case of Montenegro. During the uprising in the mountains of northern Albania in 1911, a deeply Catholic area that had had mutual support with the Austrians, within the Great Powers, French diplomats, also informed by the Serbs, said that Austria encouraged Montenegro to support Albanians. Montenegro held several thousand Albanian highlanders inside fleeing its province after the anti-Ottoman uprising, and presented itself as a mediator with the Ottoman Empire to bring peace between them. On the other hand their maintenance required large expenditures, from which the French thought that King Nicholas of Montenegro was supporting them with Austrian money.[2] By doing so, the Austrians were seen as cooling down Montenegro's relations with Serbia, keeping it tied behind their backs, somewhat isolating it from Italian influence.

But Vienna's influence over Albania extended as far as Istanbul, where French diplomats note that the intervention of the Austrian ambassador to Istanbul, Pallavicini, was so frequent that it was often seen as an insult even by the Ottoman foreign ministry. But the Austrians used this method because they knew that an Albanian uprising at the time of the post-revolutionary riots of the Young Turks would further weaken the Ottoman Empire.[3] But despite the great support from the Austrians, the French notice that there is a rift, in which Archduke Franc Ferdinand himself gives a great and persistent support to the Albanians and Count Aehrenthal, tries to have a reservation from the open support. , not wanting to upset the balance with Italy.

The Austrian position in the Kosovo area was also criticized. The French are worried about the support that the Austrians are giving to the Albanians of this province, to be harsh towards the Serbs of this area. It can even be seen that the Austrians are

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[1] M.A.É., "Origines De La Guerre De 1914 Documents Diplomatiques Français (1871-1914) 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome XI (15 mai 1907-8 février 1909)", Paris: L'Europe Nouvelle, 1950., doc. 336.

[2] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome XIII (26 octobre 1910-30 juin 1911)", doc. 229.

[3] M.A.É., "Origines De La Guerre De 1914 Documents Diplomatiques Français (1871-1914) 3" Série (1911-1914) Tome I (4 novembre 1911-7 février 1912)", Paris: L'Europe Nouvelle, 1939., doc. 255.

encouraging the Kosovars to rise up even against the respect of the sultan in order to bring instability so that he can intervene later. When it came to Serbs and the behavior of Albanians, the French maintained a position with the Russians, who had more direct interests in their defense, and where the Russians were the first informants of Austrian actions against the Serbs, through the Albanians. The support of the Albanian attack on the Serbs was also noticed in the territory of Bitola. The French even note that for their own purposes Austria in Kosovo, given that there is a dominance of the Islamic faith among Albanians, supports this group more even in the face of Albanian Catholics, even when the latter are wronged by the Ottomans, or Albanians of the Islamic faith.[1] The French also justify the Serbian concern that very soon Vienna to cross to Thessaloniki will not pass from Mitrovica but from Belgrade, where the Serbs can not resist for more than a month.

Meanwhile, regarding Ottoman policy in Kosovo, Vienna is trying to intervene. The Austrians feared that the unrest in Kosovo could lead to an uprising against the Ottomans as early as 1903, so in that case Vienna would have to intervene.[2] At the same time in the Mürzsteg Agreement between Austria and Russia, to undertake some liberalizing reforms in the Ottoman Empire on October 2, 1903, the Austrians said that the Kosovo Albanians did not welcome this, although the Austrians themselves did not want the Kosovo area to be affected. fort from reforms.[3] In fact, the Albanians had not accepted these reforms because they demanded that Christians not be included in the Ottoman army, even protesting in Mitrovica led by Isa Boletinini. While 7 years later in the general uprising that took place in Kosovo, Austrian support for the Albanians was seen by the French as very low. French diplomats note that since the takeover of Bosnia by the Ottomans in 1908, the Austrians have been more cordial with Istanbul. Through this, the French also explained the lack of interest shown by Vienna in the Kosovo uprising in 1910, leaving without support an area that had invested to incite it against the sultan 7 years ago.[4]

Another city that the French see as an expansionist influence in Albanian lands was Skopje. This city, which was included in the accounts of the Macedonian cause, was a good strategic point for the Austrians. It was seen by the French as the end point of the invasions that went from Bosnia to Prizren and stopped in Skopje, as well as an exit point from Skopje to the Shengjin pier on the Adriatic coast. But even here he was exerting influence through the Albanians, through the Austrian schools and the expulsion of the Serb population, and above all by stimulating the Albanian Catholic

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[1] M.A.É., "Origines De La Guerre De 1914 Documents Diplomatiques Français (1871-1914) 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome II (2 Janvier-31 Decembre 1902)", Paris: L'Europe Nouvelle, 1931., doc. 401.

[2] M.A.É., "Origines De La Guerre De 1914 Documents Diplomatiques Français (1871-1914) 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome III (3 janvier-4 octobre 1903)", Paris: L'Europe Nouvelle, 1931, doc. 155.

[3] Rahimi, Shukri. "Lufta e Shqiptarëve për Autonomi 1897 – 1912", Mitrovicë: Progres, 1980., pg. 118.

[4] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome XIII (26 octobre 1910-30 juin 1911)", doc. 52.

clergy, which was like an enclave between an Orthodox and Islamic area.[1] Although at first sight aid to Skopje was seen as aid to the Bulgarians, in fact Skopje was becoming more and more an Austrian city.[2] The Austrians even opposed the Ottomans, who had left the areas of Skopje or Bitola, during the elections in the Ottoman Empire of 1904, to be controlled by its silent rival, the Italian state.

The attitudes and interests of the Italian state over the Albanian vilayets are very well expressed in the analysis of French diplomacy. The Italians had similarities to Austrian politics and even often held the same attitude or used the same tactics as the Austrians, but only for their own interests. The Italians are also seen by the French as not wanting any Slavic state, especially Montenegro and Serbia, to approach the Adriatic coast in the Albanian part.[3] Among the Italians there are two groups related to interests in Albania, one is for the growth of economic interests, but maintaining the status quo of Albanians under the Empire, while the other group wants to be more active and wants either Tripoli or Albania to be invaded for the interests of tire. The Italians also wanted at all costs to establish themselves in Albanian territories, not leaving it alone under the influence of a single large European power, as seen in Austria. French diplomats even noted that Albania would take on greater importance for Italy if German influence in the Hellenic state led to a strengthening of relations between the Ottoman Empire and Austria. At such a moment the Italians would sacrifice Tripoli for Albania.[4] Albanian territories and the conflict with the Ottomans began to interest more and more Italians, during the time that Italy went to war with the Ottoman Empire, because it wanted to create instability within the empire. Such a thing was noticed a lot after 1910 by French diplomats. So Rome began to become more active in helping the Albanians with weapons, in the uprising.

Like Austria, Italy in 1901 began to consider investments in Albanian territories, starting with the telegraph to connect the Albanian coast, but also including it in the agenda of the Italian Parliament. Even in front of Istanbul, through her ambassador, she demanded that reforms be taken, as in the Vilayets of Kosovo and Bitola, as well as in the Vilayets of Shkodra and Ioannina, vilayets that had direct interests of Italian diplomacy.[5] Even the French consul from Ioannina in 1904, says that in this area the Italians are paying attention to the Albanians of the Islamic faith, seeing them as more militant to promote them and use them in the side of their own interests. It is seeking political support from Albanians through the creation in the future of an Albanian principality with a prince under Italian influence, and it mentions the Spaniard

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[1] M.A.É., "Origines De La Guerre De 1914 Documents Diplomatiques Français (1871-1914) 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome I (2 Janvier-31 Decembre 1901)", Paris: L'Europe Nouvelle, 1930., doc. 526.
[2] M.A.É., "Origines De La Guerre De 1914 Documents Diplomatiques Français (1871-1914) 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome XII (9 février 1909-26 octobre 1910)", Paris: L'Europe Nouvelle, 1954., doc. 601.
[3] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome I (2 Janvier-31 Decembre 1901)", doc. 4.
[4] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome XI (15 mai 1907-8 février 1909)", doc. 63.
[5] M.A.É., "Origines…", 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome II (2 Janvier-31 Decembre 1902)", doc. 522.

Alehandro Castrioti, of Albanian origin from the family of Gjergj Kastriot. On the other hand, Italy is trying to use the influence of the Italian-Albanian colonies in Calabria and Sicily, who are interested in the fate of the Albanians of the Ottoman Empire.[1]

But Italy tried to be fruitful in the field of education, to increase its influence on Albanians. This is done openly and secretly. The French consul in Shkodra (center of the vilayet of Shkodra), Mr. Alric, was secretly asked to open an Albanian school in Mirdita, with Italian subsidies and to use the Albanian language. This secrecy was required, due to the fact that France had influence and opportunities to act in Mirdita, and on the other hand did not want to oppose its ally Austria which was interested in Catholic areas. The insistence was so great that Italy undertook to pay the individual debts of the French consul if it managed to issue such a permit.[2] Another area where Italian influence was coming through education was Vlora and Ioannina, where Italian vocational and art schools were opened in these cities, where they were maintained by the Italian state budget and had a high attendance, which was growing from year to year. for the arasim investments in the albanian vilayets, the French noticed.

Germany, the main country that kept the Tripartite Alliance alive, is seen by French documents as having a weak and indirect interest in Albanians. Even the French ambassador to Germany, Mr. Bohourd, says that in a meeting in Berlin, the German ambassador in Istanbul called the Albanians wild,[3] which showed that they did not even have sympathy for the Albanians. The Germans were even afraid of the Albanians with their attitudes towards the Empire because the Albanian uprisings could require new talks between Tripala's allies. However, in 1911 the Germans also acknowledged that the Albanians were a factor in the international aspect, as long as the events in Albania influenced the Moroccan issue, where Berlin was involved with interests.

They had the most interest in helping the Austrians in the Albanian areas. Germany had given its support that after the Congress of Berlin in 1878, it should extend to the southeast, towards Bosnia and the lands further south. Reforms in the Ottoman territories seemed absurd to Germany, but it tried to support Austria in its interests within this empire.[4] Berlin even wanted to agree with Italy to give it Sarajevo, only for the latter to give up its interests in Albania.[5]

But the Germans seek to maintain at all costs balances in the interests between its allies Austria and Italy in Albanian territories. It never seeks to establish a hegemony

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[1] M.A.É., "Origines De La Guerre De 1914 Documents Diplomatiques Français (1871-1914) 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome V (9 avril-31 décembre 1904)", Paris: L'Europe Nouvelle, 1934., doc. 21.

[2] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome I (2 Janvier-31 Decembre 1901)", doc. 505.

[3] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome III (3 janvier-4 octobre 1903)", doc. 365.

[4] Pllana, Emin. "Kosova dhe Reformat në Turqi, 1839 – 1912", Prishtinë: Rilindja, 1978., pg. 169-170.

[5] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome XI (15 mai 1907-8 février 1909)", doc. 448.

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of Austrian politics in Albania, putting the Italians out of the game.[1] Berlin often made its statements public in the German press in order to resolve the situation and to send messages to the two allies, stating that despite the interests of the two allies, the alliance between them was strong. The Germans also tried to soften the rivalry between the allies by restraining to some extent the Austrians when they became more diligent in their interests in Albania.

French diplomacy carefully observes that the relations between Italy and Austria are not so synchronized between them in the Albanian territories, even though they belong to the same camp. The Italians try to act as an antithesis of Austrian actions in the country. Rome since 1901 demanded that the telegraphic communication it had with Montenegro be extended to Shkodra, although this will not be well received by its ally. Paris even thinks that the deceptive Austrian policy was making Italy lose a lot in the Albanian territory, because Austria was acting through propaganda and the use of the Catholic clergy.[2] Italy did not receive support from the Catholic clergy because it supported Austria, but from Albanian intellectuals who had begun to lose faith in the Austrians.[3] At the same time another area of rivalry was Epirus, where the Austrians sought to take precedence even in education in this area, wanting to have control of the Otranto canal, the strategic point that both allies expressed rivalry actions in this area for this reason.[4] The Austrians, even if they did not express it in diplomatic actions, often attacked Italy in their press for their behavior in Albania. Thus expressing a dissatisfaction with their presence in these vilayets.

The Italians themselves, in order to avoid the open conflict, had expressed their neutrality in Albania in 1901, trying not to create incidents between the allies. The French diplomats even openly expressed to the Italian ambassadors that Austria is an enemy in your interests, both in the Julian Alps and in the Albanian territory. In the event of a conflict in the East, Austria would rely on Germany and would not support the Italians.[5] But this conflict, which fluctuated between silence and behind-the-scenes work, often worried the German Foreign Ministry, which for a decade tried to call on both sides to bring them closer to their interests in the Albanian area. During the period 1909 - 1911, when the Albanians began to get involved in strong opposition and uprisings against the Ottoman Empire, French diplomacy saw that these two countries accuse each other of inciting Albanians without their knowledge.

Very interesting is the point of view of French diplomacy, after recognizing the facts of the silent conflict between Austria and Italy. For the French diplomats in Vienna, the relationship between the two countries varies between hatred and distrust, to any

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[1] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome II (2 Janvier-31 Decembre 1902)", doc. 236.
[2] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome I (2 Janvier-31 Decembre 1901)", doc. 12.
[3] Buxhovi, Jusuf. "Kosova Vëll. II Perandoria Osmane", Prishtine: Faik Konica, 2012., pg. 372.
[4] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome V (9 avril-31 décembre 1904)", doc. 21.
[5] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome III (3 janvier-4 octobre 1903)", doc. 129.

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event or exceeding of competencies in Albania, it seems to them a casius belli to start a conflict between them.[1] French diplomats even predict that Italy would be puzzled if Austria crossed from Novi Pazar to take all of Albania and leave for Vlora (a city that had a direct connection to the closure of the Otranto Canal). The French ambassador in Paris, Barrere, had spoken directly to the Italian foreign ministry, saying that the Austrians flatter you, and act for themselves. Such behavior and statements by the French are undoubtedly a diplomatic way of enticing, to make the Italians side with the French, but many of these predictions will come true, only a few years later.

The French make an accurate description of the German role and actions to orient its allies to avoid conflict. They say that Germany wants both Austria and Italy to maintain the status quo in Albania, because an autonomous Albania would increase rivalry between them. Really the only moment when the rivalry between the two calmed down, happened when both these countries agreed to maintain the status quo of Albania under the Ottoman Empire. The main goal, which Italy wanted to maintain the status quo, was only not to gain more in an Albanian autonomy Austria. She even vehemently opposed this as early as 1901, stating that never a state, which is composed of citizens of Islamic and Christian faith, can ever be able to govern itself.[2] Justification through religious danger, made the behavior of Vienna insecure, since it within the empire in the Albanian vilayets was responsible for the protection of Catholic Christians.

However, both of these countries were aware of each other's strength and the damage they would suffer, so for almost the entire decade they maintained peace only by maintaining the status quo over the Albanian vilayets. Despite the fact that Albanian pro-Italian groups in Italy tried to encourage the Albanian people to demand autonomy, the Italian state tried to curb these initiatives.[3] Even the tendencies for an open autonomy, the French see expressed between the two allies only in 1906, when it is hypothesized that if there will be dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, then there will be an autonomous Albania.[4] The non-realization of this maneuver for the whole decade under consideration, French diplomats see as connected with the financial difficulties that Vienna has. Not being able to invest in such a moment, she fears that it will be exploited by Italy and its interests will be ruined.[5]

Austria did not remain fully loyal and cooperative to Italy when it came to the policies to be pursued on the Balkan Peninsula. She knew that one of the main states with high interests and quite active on the peninsula was especially Russia. The closest political reconciliation between the two countries would be after the Mürzsteg Agreement on

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[1] M.A.É., "Origines..." 3" Série (1911-1914) Tome I (4 novembre 1911-7 février 1912)", doc. 161.

[2] M.A.É., "Origines..." 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome I (2 Janvier-31 Decembre 1901)", doc. 365.

[3] M.A.É., "Origines..." 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome II (2 Janvier-31 Decembre 1902)", doc. 201.

[4] M.A.É., "Origines De La Guerre De 1914 Documents Diplomatiques Français (1871-1914) 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome X (10 avril 1906-16 mai 1907)", Paris: L'Europe Nouvelle, 1948., doc. 372.

[5] M.A.É., "Origines..." 3" Série (1911-1914) Tome I (4 novembre 1911-7 février 1912)", doc. 161.

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reforms in the vilayets where the majority of the population was Albanian. Cooperation even goes so far as to ask Istanbul to bring Ottoman armies over Albanian areas to allow the implementation of these reforms. But more than a co-operation was a Russian tactic, according to the French pursuing Vienna. Paris was amazed at how Russia allowed it to penetrate so deeply into the Epirus area, Austria with its influence. But Austria used two favors, the first being the confidence it had received from the Russians after the Mürzsteg agreement, that just as Moscow and Vienna were simultaneously seeking reforms in the Balkans, so they were willing to cooperate. And the second element was the Austrian opportunism which took advantage of the moment when Russia was engaged in fighting in the Far East,[1] not having many opportunities to directly influence or oppose the Albanian territories. But the Austro-Russian influence and relations for the Albanian territories had also worried Istanbul. The sultan himself had demanded new reforms in these territories during 1905, from British financiers, in order to remove this action from the hands of these two allies.[2] However, both Moscow and Vienna never stopped communicating together and drafting reforms for the Albanian vilayets and presenting them to Istanbul, projects which remained unanswered and without approval. But Albanians also began to feel disappointed by Vienna, especially after the takeover of Bosnia in 1908 by Austria, where it was said that Russia itself had allowed it, in exchange for the silent surrender of any Albanian part to the Balkan states that supported Russian interests.[3] The Russian attitude starting from 1901 and going towards the end of the decade of Ottoman occupation, intensifies more and more in the Albanian problems. In early 1901 and during the early years Russia was more preoccupied with Orthodox religious problems amid its dominance through bishops that it would establish in Serb-influenced Orthodox centers such as Mitrovica, even though it was an Albanian-majority city. Mitrovica is counted in the territories where Russia wanted to exert influence over the Serbs through the establishment of the metropolis, although the Serbs themselves oppose this. The situation continued in Bitola or Skopje, where in order to maintain its dominance in Skopje, Russia sought to establish a Serbian metropolis, removing the Bulgarian one, whom it did not trust as its own.

But the full influence and interest of the Russians in the documents of French diplomacy is more noticeable during 1909 and onwards. As early as 1909, the Russians drafted a plan which received the approval of the High Gate, to dry up the fields around Lake Shkodra, where it was attempted to gain a large area of agricultural land from both the Albanian and Montenegrin sides.[4] From the way the events unfolded in the next three years in the conflict situation that was created by

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[1] M.A.É., "Origines..." 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome V (9 avril-31 décembre 1904)", doc. 207.

[2] M.A.É., "Origines De La Guerre De 1914 Documents Diplomatiques Français (1871-1914) 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome VI (2 janvier-6 juin 1905)", Paris: L'Europe Nouvelle, 1935., doc. 100.

[3] Buxhovi, Jusuf. "Kosova Vëll. II...", pg. 371-372.

[4] M.A.É., "Origines..." 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome XII (9 février 1909-26 octobre 1910)", doc. 264.

Montenegro and until the occupation of the city of Shkodra by the Montenegrins during the First Balkan War in November 1912, it can be seen that this plan was well thought out. The Russians through this sought to inject their influence and an investment into an area of one of its allies such as Montenegro.

However, the French see them as reserved in the direct involvement of the Russians in the Highlanders' uprising of 1911, seeing the Albanian conflict with Istanbul as an internal affair of the Ottoman Empire. When in fact the Russians saw that it was not a relationship except between the two sides, she knew that the Montenegrins were advised by the Austrians to support the Albanians. The French understood that Russia also wanted to get involved in this situation, but there are fears of direct involvement from the Austrians, who were also taking Montenegro's safe ally on their side. But the Russians are already realizing that Albanians are becoming an international factor not only in the Balkans but also in Europe through their insurgent war. Russian diplomats told their French counterparts that if the conflict between the Ottomans and the Albanians was not resolved by March 1912, the event would involve the Balkans and Europe.[1]

Through French diplomacy we also understand the relations beyond the European blocs between the states when the common interests approached. This time we can analyze very well the agreements between Italy and Russia when it came to Albania's problems. Throughout the decade, Italy tried to compromise Russia in its interests in the Balkans, when it was impossible for it to openly oppose Austrian interests in Albania. To the French, the Italian diplomats themselves had stated that they would rather see Russia on the Adriatic coast than Austria in Albania.[2] This is also related to the strategic territory that Vienna required in the Albanian area, having also the area of the Otranto Canal, where the sea neck of Italy was. But the French themselves welcomed Italy's rapprochement with Russia, and through it with the Entente camp. They stated that if Italy severed relations with Austria due to Albanian interests, it could form a New Alliance in the Balkans with Russia, or even Serbia, where it could unite the issue of Bosnia or the Albanians who were under Austrian influence.

Whereas in 1909, at a time when any kind of interest or connection between the parties in interests began to intensify, between Russia and Italy in the conversation between the foreign ministers of the two countries Izvolsky and Tittoni it was accepted that no clause of the Triple Alliance, prevented the establishment of an agreement between the two countries to maintain the status quo in Albania. The rapprochement between Italian and Russian interests occurred when both sides sought to exclude from the reforms in Macedonia the vilayet of Shkodra and Ioannina, where were the interests of Italy but also that of Kosovo and Bitola, where there were

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[1] M.A.É., "Origines..." 3" Série (1911-1914) Tome I (4 novembre 1911-7 février 1912)", doc. 393.
[2] M.A.É., "Origines..." 3" Série (1911-1914) Tome I (4 novembre 1911-7 février 1912)", doc. 294.

interests of Serbia, and for which Italy was gave support.[1] Through French diplomacy we also understand the interests of the Russians that are hidden behind the Italians. Russian Minister Izvolsky himself stated to the French ambassador in Saint Petersburg, Louis, that in case the status quo is not maintained, we are to make territorial changes to help the Balkan states, while the Italians want the border between the nationalities to be preserved. This Italian policy, although it seems somewhat outdated, for the Russians it is in the interest of keeping Italian politics close, it is enough to exclude Austria.[2] This suggests that the Russians were using the Italians only to divide the Central Bloc, and that Italian interests in guarding ethnic Albanian borders were of no value to Russia.

But the French ambassador in Rome also welcomes the rapprochement between Italy and France. The French even predicted that a rapprochement of a nationalist line that could bring Germany and Austria closer together could well bring Rome closer to Paris. This could happen without fear on the part of the Italians, knowing that the French had no direct interests in Albanian territory, especially when Austria turned Italy into a second-hand power in the Adriatic.[3] The French themselves thought that Russia's rapprochement with Italy to split the Vienna-Rome relationship would disappoint the diplomats in St. Petersburg, but on the other hand sought to get closer to the Italian plans in Albania. These plans, although not at all close to French interests, were approved by Paris in the hope that they could influence new groupings of continental powers in Europe, [4] which meant influencing the cooling of the axis between Rome and Vienna. France always saw Italian politics in the hope of bringing it closer, and it was even against the support that the Russians began to give to the Austrians in the area of Manastir during the 1904 parliamentary elections in the Ottoman Empire. This is also due to the fact that they began to see the first rapprochement between the two powers with direct interests in the Balkans.

French diplomacy also feels dissatisfied with Austrian policy in the context of the religious protection it provided to Albanian Catholics in the context of the cult protectorate. The French are worried that if a French priest in the Albanian area were to stand trial, should she wait for this French Catholic priest to be defended by Austria, this action seems quite insulting to remain in the hope of Austria. Also the French ambassador in Istanbul, indirectly accuses his foreign minister of never intervening to be more active in regaining the protection of Catholics who had had it centuries ago than the Austrians within the Ottoman territories. Another criticism was given to the Austrians in Albania for the fact that Vienna gave the Albanian Catholics only religious protection, but never gave them a general or political protection, as the French had

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[1] Buxhovi, Jusuf. "Kosova Vëll. II…", pg. 441.
[2] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome XII (9 février 1909-26 octobre 1910)", doc. 340.
[3] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome V (9 avril-31 décembre 1904)", doc. 212.
[4] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome III (3 janvier-4 octobre 1903)", doc. 278.

given them throughout the time they were defending the province of Mirdita.[1] On the other hand, they see early on that Albania for Austrian interests will become a Tunisia of the Balkans,[2] giving the same values that Tunisia has for French interests on the North African coast, and as a result the French saw the support of Balkan interests as positive. Russians to the Austrians, although St. Petersburg for years cooperated with Vienna, yes for Balkan interests.

In French diplomatic documents, there is always an opinion about Albanians that they are very militant. The French openly state that they would feel insecure if French soldiers were stationed in an Albanian constituency to maintain order in 1904. On the other hand, also in talks with German diplomats during 1911, they say that the conflicts started by the Albanians in The Ottoman Empire, could set fire to the East.[3] France also sees the involvement of Great Britain in the problems of the Ottoman Empire in relation to the conflict that exists with the Albanians as a haste. She thinks that should be left first to be resolved between countries that have these problems for decades under consideration, such as Austria and Russia. Whereas the demands of England to the Ottoman Empire for education, weapons and fiscal taxes to be liberalized towards the Albanians are seen as untimely, because some of these have been regulated by the parties themselves. While other requirements that England requires such as the provision of water communication channels, is not seen as an Albanian requirement, it is even thought that Albanians are not interested in navigation channels to be included as a requirement. French diplomats think that after the Albanian demands, the British seek to introduce their interests, even in the Albanian area.[4]

Relations between Albanians and the Ottoman Empire are not infrequently seen as benevolent. The French in diplomatic correspondence between them, complained that the sultan treated the Albanians well. He treated them kindly and did not attack them, even for the reforms that the Ottoman Empire approved in 1901, they say that the sultan himself paid for the monastery of Deçan in Kosovo to the Serbs.[5] When in fact it is not at all so. As early as 1902, the Ottomans brought troops to Kosovo to quell any dissatisfaction among the Albanian population with the reforms that benefited most Serbs there. He even asked the clerics of the Islamic faith to persuade the Albanians of the Islamic faith to stay away from national actions, because they were threatened by Christians.[6] French diplomats personally linked the sultan's reluctance during the first months of 1903 to send troops to suppress the uprising in Kosovo to

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[1] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome XI (15 mai 1907-8 février 1909)", doc. 579.

[2] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome III (3 janvier-4 octobre 1903)", doc. 270.

[3] M.A.É., "Origines De La Guerre De 1914 Documents Diplomatiques Français (1871-1914) 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome XIV (1er juillet-4 novembre 1911)", Paris: L'Europe Nouvelle, 1955., doc. 353.

[4] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome XIV (1er juillet-4 novembre 1911)", doc. 372.

[5] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome II (2 Janvier-31 Decembre 1902)", doc. 539.

[6] Rahimi, Shukri. "Lufta…", pg. 115.

the sultan's conduct. They linked him for two reasons: first, because he saw them as the most devout subjects of the Islamic faith towards him,[1] and second, he was afraid of causing resentment among a people whose main door guards of his palace were Albanians.[2] This meant that he was afraid of the assassinations against him that the Albanians could do. But the sultan soon overcame his insecurities and, as he told French diplomats, when he was sure he could completely defeat the Albanians in the area from Prizren to Gjakova, he sent 27 battalions with 5 artillery batteries, ordering their arrest and deportation to Asia. Small up to 300 people from resistance leaders.[3] But the Kosovo Albanians were against it like the upper strata of the beys because it would deprive them of some of the privileges they had, as well as the new bourgeois or simply commercial strata because in these reforms they saw the raising of taxes on them.[4] While the French diplomats had created a panorama that the Albanians were already avoiding any imperial obligation and that the Albanians obeyed and depended only on the local beys, while in fact writing and books in the Albanian language were not allowed until 1909, and that personalities acting against the Ottoman Empire had to emigrate outside the Ottoman territories because they could be imprisoned.[5] French diplomacy has a very interesting prediction since 1908, regarding the relationship between young Turks and Albanians. Although the delegate of the Macedonian financial commission, Mr. Steeg, describes an enthusiastic atmosphere from Skopje that Albanians show in Skopje after the announcement of the new Ottoman constitution, the forecast for the future is sadder. He thinks that the young Turks deceived the Albanians by using their enthusiasm, for whom the constitution meant autonomy, so in the first moment that the young Turks will seek to make a new and centralized administration in Albanian lands, the latter will be disappointed and start the conflict.[6] Very soon this will be true, when the first clashes will take place between the Albanians and the new Ottoman administration, even though the new Ottomans had relied on coming to power, in the hatred that the Albanians had for Sultan Abdul Hamid II.[7] The interests of the Balkan states are best found in the French diplomatic documentation, not to mention her emotional feelings for the interests of the states that she might sympathize with the Balkan mosaic. Bulgarian interests in Albanian lands are seen in many ways. Bulgaria is involved in all diplomatic relations in the Balkans. It finds itself in the early 1900s, in the religious problems between the domination of Bulgarian-style orthodoxy over the Serbian one, in the Macedonian area. Although the whole game of religious domination took place in Albanian-

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[1] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome III (3 janvier-4 octobre 1903)", doc. 164.

[2] *Ibid.,* doc. 164.

[3] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome III (3 janvier-4 octobre 1903)", doc. 195.

[4] Pllana, Emin. "Kosova…", pg. 174.

[5] Swire, Joseph. "Shqipëria Ngritja e një mbretërie", Tiranë: Dituria, 2005., pg. 78.

[6] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome XI (15 mai 1907-8 février 1909)", doc. 419.

[7] Shaw, Stanford. "History Of The Ottoman Empire And Modern Turkey, Vol. II: Reform, Revolution, and Republic: The Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808-1975", Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976., pg. 265.

majority cities such as Bitola and Skopje. A conflict that will only end with the support of the Istanbul Patriarchate, which recognizes Serbian domination, given the Bulgarians a closer look at Austrian influence, as it had interests in turning the two cities on its side. As for the interests in the Macedonian issue, Bulgaria is doubled between the two countries that have the most influence on Albanian lands, between the support of both Italian and Austrian policies.

During the years 1904 - 1905, Sofia, due to the increase of Austrian domination, especially after the reforms in the Albanian vilayets, tried to cross over to Italy, asking it to remove the Austrians from the domination in the Albanian lands, and not to be interested only in the areas. southern Albanians leaving the Austrians free in the areas of Kosovo and Bitola.[1] Bulgaria has been reflecting this concern in its European and European press all this time. Meanwhile, during the beginning of the Albanian uprisings in 1910 - 1911, seeing that the Austrian influence was growing not only within the Albanians, but especially in decision-making moments in the Ottoman Empire, Sofia's policy pays attention to Vienna diplomacy. The Bulgarians, informed by the Macedonians about the insurgent behavior of the Albanians at the end of 1911, about an uprising in the spring of 1912 (which was talked about and expected to start by the Albanians, all over the Balkans), inform the Austrians that they support it. any Albanian nationalist movement, but demand that the area from Pirot in Serbia to Strumica be annexed to Bulgaria as assigned to it in the Treaty of St. Stephen (1878).[2] The diplomatic behavior of the Bulgarian King Fredinand I, on the one hand, demanded that the Austrians see Bulgaria as an ally on the side of the Albanians, and on the other hand, in the moments of the division of the Ottoman Balkan map, to take a coveted part long ago.

While French diplomats see Romania as very calm and even cold, regarding the Albanian situation throughout the decade under consideration. Bucharest was not afraid of Albanians in the first years of the twentieth century, but a revolution in Istanbul, which could overthrow the entire Balkans. Their only interest in the Albanian areas was that in any form of administration that could be established on Albanian lands, the Kutzo-Vlach community, which was of origin and with ethnic and spiritual ties to the Romanians, be treated well. While at the end of the decade, their only concern was the support that Italy was giving to Montenegro, which was interfering in the affairs of Albania, that if added would upset the balance, leaving room for more intensive intervention by the Austrians.[3] The most accurate picture that can be made by French diplomacy for a Balkan state, which has its own interests in Albanian lands, is undoubtedly the Serbian state. This is due to the fact that France provided support to Serbia, and at the same time the direct relations and diplomatic relations between the two countries are very intensified. Serbia itself, after Russia,

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[1] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome VI (2 janvier-6 juin 1905)", doc. 468.

[2] M.A.É., "Origines…" 3" Série (1911-1914) Tome I (4 novembre 1911-7 février 1912)", doc. 181.

[3] M.A.É., "Origines…" 3" Série (1911-1914) Tome I (4 novembre 1911-7 février 1912)", doc. 283.

saw France as the power that gave it support, reporting in every detail on the Albanian area. Serbs occasionally complain to the French about how Austria uses both Bulgarians and Albanians to clear Serb areas. The incitement of these two peoples to create conflicts with the Serbs occurred because Vienna wanted to play the first conciliatory role between the parties, to use them in favor of the policy of influence,[1] and this meant that the Serbs had to be guarded as by the Albanians. as well as by the Bulgarians.[2] Serbs are so concerned about relations between Albanians and Austrians that their plan was to invite Albanian Catholics, after Serbia's agreement with the Vatican, to leave Austrian influence and to cooperate with Serbs against the Ottomans.[3] On the other hand, it was declared to the French ambassadors that the Albanian vilayets should not be excluded from the reforms of 1903-1904, because these brought development. In the conditions when the Albanians themselves had demanded the exclusion at all costs, this showed that the Serbs were interested in the Albanians being in conflict with both the Austrians who had proposed them and the Ottomans who would implement them, consequently this would bring a rift. between Albanians and Austrians.

During 1909 the Serbs declared to the Austrians that they accepted the annexation of Bosnia by Vienna, but on the condition that it allow the Serbs to take over the sanjak of Novi Pazar as well as Skopje, finally removing Bulgarian influence in the city.[4] This was the next Serbian negotiation in the period when the Bulgarians themselves had returned from the Austrian side, anticipating that Austrian diplomacy would be strengthened in the Balkans of Albanian lands, so they sought at all costs to support it, but also to be able to derive benefits. without heating up the situation. The French did not see the benefit of the Serbs in the Albanian lands from the Austrian tolerance, but in the opportunities and spaces that the Ottomans themselves were giving to the Serbs. This is expressed in two ways. First, the Serbs exercised their influence on the Albanian lands through the Serbian metropolis of Pristina and Skopje, the latter they had managed to take from the Bulgarian influence since the beginning of 1900, after the intervention of Istanbul to pass it into the hands of the Serbs. On the other hand, they are allowed to occupy the territories from the Drini River to Lake Ohrid, so much so that the Serbs themselves admit that they have traveled a long way in the geographical borders of Albanian lands.[5] Serbs found on the side of the Ottomans, and being favored by Istanbul, often expressed to the French the concern that, like Bulgaria, Montenegro was falling on the side of Austro-Hungarian politics. The Serbs had started a conflict with Montenegro, because the former did not support the policy that Cetigne was pursuing on behalf of Vienna, keeping the Albanian highlanders as

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[1] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome I (2 Janvier-31 Decembre 1901)", doc. 125.

[2] M.A.É., "Origines De La Guerre De 1914 Documents Diplomatiques Français (1871-1914) 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome VII (7 juin-28 septembre 1905)", Paris: L'Europe Nouvelle, 1935., doc. 313.

[3] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome VII (7 juin-28 septembre 1905)", doc. 322.

[4] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome XII (9 février 1909-26 octobre 1910)", doc. 186.

[5] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome XIII (26 octobre 1910-30 juin 1911)", doc. 270.

refugees, after the anti-Ottoman uprising of 1911. Because the extension of Austrian influence in the Montenegrin area to that Albanians closed the coast to Belgrade.[1]

Montenegro's attitude and political maneuvers are also in the spotlight of French diplomacy. Montenegro since the beginning of 1902 is seen as having annexation goals for the Shkodra region, although there are ethnic differences with the local population.[2] The French even see as ridiculous the appearance in the Montenegrin press of the claim of the Montenegrin princely family for the throne of Albania, but they understand the need for the northwestern Albanian areas, Montenegro. The latter is also seen as concerned as Serbia, about the penetration of Austrian influence in Kosovo, but the support to stop it, which he did not find in his son-in-law, the King of Italy, he occasionally hoped to get from Germany itself, where in 1908 went directly to meet him for this work. While Italy, for its part, according to French documents, used Montenegro, also as a family link between father-in-law and father-in-law, to obtain information from Cetigne on Albanian areas, where this country was a good connoisseur of Albanian lands.[3] However, the rapid dynamics of events in the Balkans, made Montenegro like other countries to change direction and orientation, in favor of their own interests. Montenegro is mostly seen by the French in connection with the events of 1911, and with the support it gave to the Albanian highlanders against the Ottomans. The French see that Cetigne is playing a double game with both the Ottomans and the Austrians, but supports the latter. The Ottomans themselves declare to the French that it was the Montenegrins themselves who supported the Albanians, forcing Istanbul to send troops[4] when the French complained in favor of the Montenegrins about the presence of armies on the Ottoman-Montenegrin border. However, the French admit that the Montenegrin game is run from Vienna and with Vienna money, for Albanian purposes.

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[3] M.A.É., "Origines…" 2" Série (1901-1911) Tome X (10 avril 1906-16 mai 1907)", doc. 440.

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Fight Against Corruption, Albanian Case

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Abstract

The phenomenon of corruption has existed since the times of antiquity. Modernization of life and developments in all its areas has led to an increase of the levels of corruption. High levels of corruption are more evident in countries with low levels of GPS. The embedding of the principles of justice and the non-acceptance of bribes in these countries seem to be still far away from the standards established by consolidated democratic countries. Corruption has been a wound of Albanian society since the beginning of democracy. The use of public duties for personal enrichment continues to be the Achilles heel in Albania. This has brought to the enrichment of a small stratum of society. The purpose of this article is to explain the importance of the fight against corruption and how to make this fight effective. Proper establishment of institutions is essential in the fight against corruption. For this reason it is necessary to follow the examples of countries that have been successful in the fight against corruption. Only by establishing efficient structures, selecting staff with high integrity and being consistent in this fight the results can be positive. It is up to politics to make the right choices and to give the necessary priority to the fight against corruption.

Keywords: fight against corruption, efficient institution, corruptive cases, society, policy

Introduction

Corruption "has existed and has been a problem since the beginning of human history[1]"." It is "a crime as old as time[2]" and was "ubiquitous" in ancient Egypt, Israel, Rome and Greece[3]. In Roman law, a bribe taker "soils" his hands as a bribe was "filth" and bribe money in both Latin and English was "dirty". "Greasing the wheels" was a

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[1] Jon S.T. Quah, "The Normalization of Corruption: Why it Occurs and What can be Done to Minimize it" (Paper prepared for the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, New York, December 2015), p.9

[2] Leslie Holmes, *Corruption: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 1

[3] Stephen Moore, *Power and Corruption: The Rotten Core of Government and Big Business* (London: Vision Paperbacks, 1997), pp. 14-2K

widespread custom in antiquity and corruption was commonly practised in Greece "the cradle of democracy [1]" during the 5th century. After the end of the Cold War and the advent of globalization corruption has become a serious problem all over the world. The British Broadcasting Corporation in 2010-2011 and the Worldwide Independent Network/Gallup International in 2013 indicate that corruption is now the "world's no. 1 problem[2]".

The globalisation of corruption has contributed to an overriding concern among governments and international organizations on how to combat corruption in many countries. Corruption is a threat to democracy, good governance, and fair competition, sustainable economic, social and political development of a country. It seriously impedes economic growth, creating a system of inequality, prejudice and nepotism, undermining people's trust in their state, therefore the fight against corruption is presently one of the primary challenges of any state with a democratic culture, vision and high integrity.

Social problems are "wicked" because they are "ill-defined", "rely upon elusive political judgment for resolution" and are "never solved"[3]. Corruption is a wicked problem in many countries in spite of their anti-corruption efforts during the past six decades. The governments have and will firmly continue to have unshaken will in the fight against corruption through preventive actions, punitive measures and public awareness raising activities.

Corruption exacerbates poverty in a country by reducing investment and economic growth and increasing income inequality as lower levels of corruption are statistically associated with lower levels of income inequality[4]. Hence, it is not surprising that corruption has been identified as an important global issue affecting development[5].

In this regard "policy advice is needed to better inform the policy decisions taken and to try to ensure that the prospects for policy effectiveness are maximized and the risk of policy failure minimized[6]".

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[1] Seymour Manin Lipset and Gabriel Salman Lenz. "Corruption. Culture, and markets,'' in Lawrence E. Harrison and Samuel P. Huntington (Eds.l. *Culture Matters: How* Values *Shape Human Progress* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), p. 112

[2] Holmes, *Corn1ption.* p. xiii

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It is important that policymakers enhance their political will to minimize corruption, to draft and to implement effective measures to fight corruption. The lessons for combating corruption in problematic countries might also be useful for policymakers in other countries if the contextual differences are taken into account.

Methodology

Quantitative methodology is used in this research. In order to make a comparison between the countries of the region Montenegro, Serbia, Croatia and Albania and to identify the best country model in the fight against corruption it is used the quantitative methodology. During the discussion section are presented the institutions models describing their functionality and the results achieved by this institutions. At the end of the research it is given the conclusion on the best model functioning in the fight against corruption.

Discussion

The high level corruption is a phenomenon shown not only in Western Europe or the EU, but it is also evident in many pour countries around the world. No doubt can be brought to the harsh effect of corruption on the fundamentals of the democratic principles (such as rule of law, openness, transparency and democratic accountability and equity in dealing with citizens[1]).

Corruption also undermines fragile democratic systems, by fuelling popular disillusionment with politics. Political apathy is widespread in most liberal democracies, but it is far more destructive in Eastern Europe where the growth of an active civil society is crucial to ensuring that democratic norms take root[2].

In the following sessions it will be presented an overview of the corruption in the countries of the region. In order to better understand how has evaluated corruption in these countries in this session will be explained in details how it is organised the organisational scheme in the fight against corruption in region and in Europe.

3.1 Montenegro

Referring to the Progress Report of European Commission of 2021 for Montenegro, in the field of fight against corruption Special Public Prosecutor's Office (SPO) in 2020, opened investigations into criminal offences of high-level corruption in eight cases against 35 persons and 8 legal entities (2019: six cases against 15 individuals and one legal entity). In the first half of 2021, eight investigations against 28 individuals and

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[1]https://www.raisee.org/php_sets/uploads/2020/11/Integrity_and_Resistance_to_Corruption_of_the_Law_Enforcement_Bodies_in_South_East_European_Countries-Survey_Report.pdf, V. Alistar, E. Calistru, I. Coşpănaru, M. Măroiu, 2011, TI Romania for RAI and RCC, pp 7

[2]https://www.raisee.org/php_sets/uploads/2020/11/Integrity_and_Resistance_to_Corruption_of_the_Law_Enforcement_Bodies_in_South_East_European_Countries-Survey_Report.pdf, V. Alistar, E. Calistru, I. Coşpănaru, M. Măroiu, 2011, TI Romania for RAI and RCC, pp 8

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seven legal entities were opened. Further high-level corruption cases are in the phase of preliminary investigation. The investigated cases concern inter alia privatisation, fraud in relation to investment and development loans, tax fraud and misappropriation of coastal land. Suspected individuals include former ministers (one currently serving as MP and another one as ambassador), high-level public officials, majority owner of a commercial bank and the bank's CEO, a judge and director of a public company. Three indictments (2019: 5) were lodged for the criminal offence of high-level corruption against 18 persons and three legal entities in 2020, and further two indictments against eight individuals and one legal entity in the first half of 2021. The financial investigations have been launched in four cases against nine persons in 2020 and in four cases by mid-2021 against 30 individuals and two legal entities (2019: 4 cases against 29 persons). In the 'envelope affair', the High Court initially accepted the part of the indictment against the businessman involved in the case and five other persons for creating a criminal organisation engaged in money laundering. The indictment against the former Mayor of Podgorica and the adviser to the President of Montenegro in the same case was subsequently confirmed upon appeal by the prosecution. Three final and enforceable judgements (2019: 4) were issued for high-level corruption in 2020, resulting in two convictions of three persons. In 2021, one conviction based on a plea bargain agreement became final and one further convicting judgment was issued in another case but is not yet final. In December 2020, Montenegro sent a new request to Serbia for the extradition of the former President of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, after the reply to its request from April 2019 had not been answered[1].

The intern leading institution in the field of fight against corruption is the **Agency for Prevention of Corruption (ACA)** with administrative investigative powers. It was set up in January 2016. The Agency is responsible for implementation of measures for prevention of conflict of public and private interest, restrictions in the exercise of public functions, collecting and checking the reports on assets and income of public officials, receiving and acting upon whistleblower reports, protecting whistleblowers, and other issues of importance to the prevention and suppression of corruption, in accordance with the Law on Prevention of Corruption.

The Agency is also responsible for implementation of the Law on financing of political entities and election campaigns and the Law on Lobbying. It also gives opinion on draft laws and conducts research in the field of anti-corruption. The Agency is an independent and autonomous body.

The Agency's IT system which includes an electronic case management system and a system for electronic submission of reports is in place and is being upgraded continuously. It provides direct links to databases of other institutions (Central Registry of the Commercial Court, the Vehicle Registry, the Weapons registry, the

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[1] file:///C:/Users/erjola.xhuvani/Downloads/Montenegro%202021%20report.PDF, pp25

Central Registry of Citizens, the Real Estate Administration, the Tax Administration, the Central Depositary Agency, and the Registry of Criminal Records). This links make it possible to, for instance, cross-check data in real time and automatically detect potential incompatibilities of functions. Montenegro is encouraged to make illicit enrichment a criminal offence. Out of 11 GRECO recommendations on the ethics and integrity of MPs, prosecutors and judges, 5 are considered to be fully implemented, and 3 partially implemented, while 3 recommendations have not yet been implemented.

3.2 Serbia

The Progress Report of European Commission for 2021 evaluated that Serbia has some level of preparation in the fight against corruption. Serbia continued to implement the law on the organisation and jurisdiction of government authorities in suppression of organised crime, terrorism and corruption. In relation to highlevel corruption, based on indictments from the Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime, the courts rendered first instance judgements against 22 individuals in 2020 (compared to 30 in 2019, 21 in 2018). There were final convictions against 11 persons. The Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime ordered the conduction of investigations against 21 persons, and issued 19 indictments (compared to 20 in 2019, 41 in 2018 and 50 in 2017). There were no cases with final confiscation of assets (compared to three in 2019). Serbia still needs to show a convincing track record of confiscating assets in corruption cases. In 2020, the special departments for combatting corruption in the higher prosecution offices received 2 936 criminal complaints (compared to 3 577 in 2019). They ordered 189 investigations, and against 23 persons parallel financial investigations were initiated. A total of 470 indictments were issued (compared to 583 in 2019). The courts rendered judgments against 230 persons at first instance based on indictments from these departments (compared to 399 in 2019). There were final convictions against 195 persons. Other prosecutions (not specialised departments) issued 22 orders to investigate in relation to corruption and economic crime offences, and filed 136 indictments. The courts convicted 186 individuals at first instance, and 114 individual at final instance. A final confiscation of assets took place in three cases[1].

The institution responsible for the fight against corruption is **Anti-Corruption Agency**. The role of the Agency is to supervises implementation of the National Strategy for Combating Corruption (hereinafter "the Strategy"), the Action Plan for Implementation of the National Strategy for Combating Corruption (hereinafter "the Action Plan") and sector action plans, institutes proceedings and pronounces measures for violation of this Act, performs tasks in accordance with the law governing financing of political parties, and/or political entities, issues opinions and directives for enforcing of this Act, launches initiatives for amending and enacting

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[1] file:///C:/Users/erjola.xhuvani/Downloads/Serbia-Report-2021%20(3).pdf, pp 28

regulations in the field of combating corruption, gives opinions related to implementing of the Strategy, Action Plan and sector action plans, monitors and organises coordination of the state bodies in the fight against corruption, keeps a register of property and income of officials (hereinafter "Property Register"), extends expert assistance in the field of combating corruption, in collaboration with competent state bodies monitors international cooperation in the fight against corruption, performs other tasks set forth by law.

In order to better prevent and address corruption at local level, the Anti-Corruption Agency developed and provided local authorities with a model anticorruption action plan, including guidelines for adoption, implementation and monitoring.

3.3 Croatia

On 22.12.2021 the Council of Europe published GRECO Fifth Evaluation Round Compliance Report on Croatia, which deals with preventing corruption and promoting integrity in central governments (top executive functions) and law enforcement agencies. In this report, GRECO concluded that Croatia has implemented satisfactorily or dealt with in a satisfactory manner none of the seventeen recommendations contained in the Fifth Round Evaluation Report. Eight recommendations have been partly implemented and nine have not been implemented. With respect to top executive functions, the draft Law on Conflict of Interest Prevention appears to go in the right direction in order to remedy a number of recommendations. It foresees new mechanisms to increase the integrity of PTEFs, notably a mechanism for disclosing conflicts of interest, the annual reporting of assets and the provision of a cooling off period. In the report GRECO mentioned that measures to increase the capacity of the Commission for the Resolution of Conflicts of Interest are noted and will be further assessed. Concerning law enforcement agencies, GRECO welcomed that measures necessary for abandoning the practice of fines being paid in cash directly to police officers are underway and the launch of a corresponding pilot project in the traffic police are steps in the right direction. In the report it is mentioned that a revised code of ethics for the police, which should serve as the basis for police training throughout, is yet to be adopted, a comprehensive risk assessment of corruption prone areas in the police - on which the future code is to be premised, is to be carried out and possibilities to further improve appointment and promotion processes within the police, with a view to improving the objectivity and transparency of decisions, are to be further explore[1].

The organizational scheme in the fight against corruption in Croatia is composed of the Independent Anti-Corruption Sector in the Ministry of Justice and the National Council for monitoring the anticorruption Strategy.

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[1] https://rm.coe.int/fifth-evaluation-round-compliance-report-on-croatia-adopted-by-greco-a/1680a4f0f6, pp 12

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The National Council is a special parliamentary committee with the purpose of coordinating the implementation of the Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan. It is charged with evaluating corruption risks and proposing and designing preventative measure.

3.4 Albania

Although Albania has undergone significant reforms during the past years, corruption still represents an issue of concern. Different outstanding challenges remain, while the share of citizens who distrust their government's abilities to address this problem is on the rise[1]. Refering to the Progress Report for Albania 2021 the number of corruption cases sent to court was 413 in 2020 (643 in 2019), including 53 by the SPO. 270 persons (mid and high-ranking officials) were convicted at first-instance (262 in 2019) and 87 at appeal and final level in 2020 (246 in 2019). The overall number of referrals to the prosecution decreased slightly to 3 016 in 2020 (3 167 in 2019). On convictions of high-level state officials, 73 cases were opened against high-level officials in 2020 (98 in 2019) and 11 indictments were issued involving 20 persons (compared to three indictments involving 10 persons in 2019). One defendant involved in high-level corruption was convicted with final prison sentence by the anti-corruption and organised crime courts. SPAK conducted criminal proceedings in several high-profile cases (one former Prosecutor General, nine former judges of the High Court and the Constitutional Court, one former Judge of the Special Appeals Chamber, a Deputy Chief of the State Police's Power of Law Operation, 20 election commissioners accused of electoral crimes during the elections of 24 2017 and a former Minister of Defence). Investigations have so far not resulted in a substantial number of final convictions of high-ranking state officials. On asset declarations by high-level state officials, 12 cases were referred by the High Inspectorate for the Declaration and Audit of Assets and Conflicts of Interest (HIDAACI) to the prosecution in 2020, none of which resulted in a conviction. In 2019, there were seven cases referred to prosecution that resulted in a conviction and a dismissal. In total, HIDAACI referred six low- and mid-ranking officials to prosecution services in 2020. No final convictions occurred. In 2019, there were 12 referrals and 12 final convictions. Investigation of 33 Conflict of Interest cases were performed in 2020, compared to 42 in 2019. Seizure and confiscation of criminal assets are ordered and carried out more coherently in corruption-related cases since the establishment of SPAK. Risk assessments have increased within the central administration and a corruption risk assessment methodology has been approved. Some progress was made in setting up an interface between the different electronic case management systems of the police, prosecution and courts. A system to manage the follow up of denunciations of corruption is being set-up by the Ministry of Justice. Implementation

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[1] https://europeanwesternbalkans.com/2021/10/05/ewb-interview-kosta-the-fight-against-corruption-in-albania-remains-one-of-the-main-challenges-of-society-and-governance/

of the Law on whistle-blowing and whistle-blower protection continued. In 2020, nine external reporting cases were registered and investigated by HIDAACI, compared to 14 in 2019. On internal control mechanisms, the Anti-corruption Task Force was less effective in 2020. In 2020, 214 cases including 317 officials were referred to the prosecution compared to 250 cases involving 474 officials in 2019[1].

The institutional scheme in the fight against corruption referring to the Order of Prime minister no.128, 8.11.2021 is organized in a general directorate of anticorruption within the Ministry of Justice. The general directorate of anticorruption has two directories.

By Decision of the Council of Ministers no.618, date 20.10.2021 it is approved the establishment and functioning of the coordinators network in the fight against corruption. The mission of the coordinators network is gathering, analyses, coordination, verification and investigation of all the information on the corruptive cases, abusive and arbitrary practices, carried mainly by the coordinator itself or responsible structures against corruption in the Ministry of Justice or by request of every public authority or third party. The aim of the establishment of coordinators network is the prevention and fight against corruption in the public institutions, risk assessment against corruption and proposal of measures, regulations and procedures for risk management.

For the first time on November 2021 the structure responsible for the fight against corruption is organized in a general directorate within the Ministry of Justice. Previously the anticorruption administrative structure has been organized as a directorate within the general directorate of policies and programs in the field of justice. The aim of the government was to reinforce and empower the anticorruption structure by giving investigative competences and proposing recommendations to the national coordinator against corruption. The position of national coordinator against corruption is held by the Minister of Justice.

Conclusions

After a comparative overview regarding the institutional scheme in the fight against corruption between the countries of the western Balkan, Montenegro, Serbia, Croatia and Albania, it can be mentioned that only Albania has a structure for fight against corruption within the public administration institutions.

This approach is not efficient because the fight against corruption especially in small and fragile countries the political influences undermine the mission of the anticorruption structures. It seems that the only interest is to have the institutions established without paying attention to the fight against corruption.

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[1] file:///C:/Users/erjola.xhuvani/Downloads/Albania-Report-2021%20(2).pdf

The other western Balkan countries has established the structure of anticorruption as an independent institution, not part of the government because the role of this institution is to investigate and denunciate the corruptive cases. This work cannot be done if the institution responsible for fight against corruption is part of the government. Only an independent institution free from influences of the people who conduct corruption in the public institutions can really exercise its duty to fight corruption and contribute to minimize it.

Although the governments of the region are trying to work in the frame of the establishment of a secure institutional scheme in order to fight corruption, it is very import the law implementation and execution of the duty with integrity by the public officials. In this regard it is of great interest that this study is deepen and analyzed in the future.

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The Elderly and Leisure Activities: A Case Study

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Abstract

Studies on the ageing population are increasing in number, aiming to find strategies that allow this life cycle's phase to be lived with quality. The practice and development of leisure activities is an important factor of life's quality, since it contributes to a better state of mind and, in the case of older people, it may be a strategy to mitigate the effects resulting from the ageing process. Despite, and according to some studies, the elderly do not give leisure a great importance in their lives, often due to their life history, which did not provide them with good conditions and opportunities to develop these activities. Even for elderly people who have no leisure time habits, the fact is that, when they reach a certain age, these activities can become a structural element of their daily lives. This study aims to ascertain what type – and with which intensity – of leisure and free-time occupation activities the elderly perform, as well as the impact of the pandemic on the performance of these activities. This descriptive research uses a questionnaire as a data collection tool, divided into four parts: the first part involves a set of sociodemographic data; the second part, based on the "Leisure Activities Index" by Rosa Martins (2016), includes a set of nine questions; the third part integrates a question to understand the elderly's perception of their leisure time use; and, finally, the fourth part includes a set of questions on the impact of the pandemic on the performance of leisure activities. The non-probability convenience sample included a set of 33 older people attending a Day Care Centre and a Home Support Service in central Portugal.

Keywords: Ageing; leisure and free time; pandemic and free time; healthy ageing

Introduction

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Introduction

Currently, when we speak of quality of life in ageing, we are not only referring to the state of physical and psychological health, but also to social involvement and to the capacity and opportunity to develop activities to continue the process of personal cherishing.

The practice and development of leisure activities are of crucial importance, and, in the elderly's case, it may mitigate the effects arising from the aging process. Despite, studies show that, recurrently, the elderly do not attribute great importance to leisure.

Such feeling may arise from the lack of conditions, opportunities or the inexistence of leisure habits and practices throughout their lives. It needs to be held in mind that today's elderly people belong to a generation in which work was considered the core of their lives, and leisure was often seen as an unnecessary time off and it could even be despised. However, and in opposite senses, it was this generation that experienced the invention of free time and retirement. It is, therefore, a generation of transition, which often only experiences leisure and free time when it reaches an advanced age.

For Chen and Fu (2008, p. 872), leisure activities may have several positive effects, since "participating in social activities significantly increases life satisfaction, psychological well-being, happiness and physical functions" and, simultaneously "decreases mortality". Thus, we consider it essential to identify the type and intensity of leisure activities practiced by the elderly.

In this study, we focus on play and leisure activities as an important dimension for the well-being of individuals at later ages. These activities are moments in life where one can enjoy pleasure, tranquility and rest (Diaz, 2009). Professionals working in this area should be able to help older people use leisure time to contribute to their quality of life, supporting them to become more active and providing them with more potential for personal growth and empowerment.

Leisure and free-time activities in ageing

Many variables/factors influence older people's perception of quality of life. According to the research of Wilson and Cleary (1995), the authors Halvorsrud et al. (2010) identified a set of quality of life's dimensions regarded as important by older people: having energy, being happy, having senses that work well, and having no pain. In the same year, the studies of Molzahn et al. (2010) obtained similar results regarding the most valued dimensions by the elderly.

Nevertheless, it is known that the influence – and even the importance – given to each of these factors vary from one elderly person to another, and according to their social, cultural and, among others, economic context. Despite this variability and individuality, studies show that preventive measures and leisure activities developed

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during the aging process have a positive impact on aging, namely on improving the quality of life (Silva, 2009; Santos, 2003).

In his 2007 book, "Animação de idosos", Luís Jacob analysed a series of studies on the elderly's quality of life and concluded that it depends on a set of factors, among which he highlighted: autonomy to perform daily activities, the presence of regular family and/or social relationships, the existence of economic resources to meet their needs and, finally, the capacity to develop playful and recreational activities.

There are several forms of leisure, and according to Lee and Bhargava (2004), they can be grouped into passive, active and social activities. In turn, Dumazedier (2001) classifies them into physical, artistic, social, intellectual and practical.

João Teixeira Lopes (2000), in a study on urban cultural practices, presents a categorisation of leisure and free time activities, grouping them into: i) domestic space activities, where it integrates domestic and creative practices, domestic expressive practices, practices of interaction and sociability, domestic receptive practices, practices of consumption and/or fruition and, domestic practices of abandonment; ii) activities in the public space, where it incorporates public expressive practices, public participatory practices; iii) activities in the semi-public space, in which are found the semi-public expressive practices, the semi-public receptive practices and the semi-public routine practices; iv) activities in the associative space (organized semi-public), in which the author considers to belong the creative associative practices and the expressive associative practices; and v) the activities in the space of cultivated/overlegitimised culture, in which we find erudite creative practices and the receptive and informative practices of cultivated publics.

In a study carried out by Maria João Valente Rosa (1999) on Pensioners and Leisure Time in Portugal, the author found that 53% of the pensioners preferred to spend their leisure time at home, 17% outside home and 30% inside and outside home. In the case of at home activities, it is the women who assume, in this study, greater expressiveness. Concerning the leisure activities practiced, it was found that the majority of both men and women chose "watching television". Men replied that they also go to the café or tavern, listen to the radio, read newspapers or magazines, frequent plazas or gardens, and, with less expressiveness, they play cards and other games, go to religious events, to shopping centres or markets. Women, in addition to watching television, dedicate themselves to religious activities, listen to the radio, go to the market or to shopping centres and, with less expressiveness, they answered that they read newspapers or magazines.

Regardless of the type of leisure activity, it is generally agreed that its practice is "an important ingredient in the 'recipe' for achieving a successful old age. Initially formalised as 'Activity Theory', this perspective holds that high participation in an active lifestyle is an antidote to the loss of 'productive' roles that results from the transition to retirement" (Silverstein and Parker, 2002, p. 528).

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Leisure activities have numerous advantages for older people, namely in preventing and combating problems in the elderly, since these activities can compensate for deficits in other areas of their lives (Silverstein and Parker, 2002) and mitigate the impact of social, functional and cognitive declines. In addition, it combats sedentary lifestyle, which, as Dogra and Stathokostas (2012) warn us, may compromise the health of adults.

Methodology

This study aims to ascertain what type – and with which intensity – of leisure and free-time occupation activities the elderly perform, as well as the impact of the pandemic on the performance of these activities. It will also try to understand the possible relationship between the development of free time activities, social responses and gender.

This descriptive research uses a questionnaire as a data collection tool, divided into four parts: the first part involves a set of sociodemographic data; the second part, based on the "Leisure Activities Index" by Rosa Martins (2016), includes a set of nine questions, ranging from very little, a little, neither a lot nor little, quite a lot, and a lot; the third part integrates a question to understand the elderly's perception of the use of their free time; and, finally, the fourth part aggregates a set of three questions on the impact of the pandemic on the performance of free time and leisure activities.

Data was processed through a simple descriptive statistical analysis.

The non-probability convenience sample included a set of 33 older people, 19 of whom receive Home Support Services (HSS) and 14 attend a Day Care Centre (DCC), in a rural area of central Portugal. The requirement was to attend the above-mentioned social services, to be able to collaborate in the interview and to accept and sign the informed consent.

Presentation of results

The questionnaire was applied to 33 elderly people from a rural area in central Portugal, 19 of whom were using HSS and 14 attended the DCC.

The average age was 79, being that the youngest subject was 52 and the oldest 93, both from the HSS. The average age at the HSS was 77 and the average age at the DCC was 81.

The sample was composed of 19 women and 14 men. Although these data cannot be interpreted in a generalist way, our sample is in line with the national data: with a feminization of old age, explained by the differences in the physical and metabolic decline between men and women, which leads to a greater longevity of women, which has also been related to other risk factors, such as occupational accidents, smoking and alcohol use, as well as differences in the way of facing diseases and disabilities (Mazo; Lopes; Benedetti, 2009).

With regard to gender by social response, we found that, in our sample, the DCC is mainly composed of women (10 out of 14 users, 71.4%), while in the HSS there is a balance with 9 women and 10 men. Although no data were collected to justify this difference, we can assume, based on the existing literature, that men have greater difficulty in participating in group activities (Ferreira, Izzo, Jacob, 2007).

In what concerns academic qualifications, our sample reflects the reality of the country, since compulsory education did not exist when they were young and the opportunity to attend school for several years was scarce, especially in rural areas, as is the case of the geographical context of our respondents. Thus, in the sample, we have as maximum school qualifications the 2nd cycle (corresponding to 6 years of schooling) with 3 elderly (2 female and 1 male); followed by the 1st cycle (of 4 years of schooling) with 13 elderly, 7 women and 6 men; the 1st cycle incomplete with 10 elderly, equally distributed between men and women; and, finally, 7 elderly (5 women and 2 men) never attended school and can neither read nor write.

The profession they exercised is related to the qualifications of the sample and to the rural context where they live. Thus, 11 elderly, of which 6 women and 5 men were farmers, 5 elderly (3 women and 2 men) were factory workers, 5 elderly worked in the hotel industry, of which 3 women and 2 men. These were followed by construction workers (3 men), domestic workers (3 women) and, with 1 elderly person each, office workers (1 man), cellar workers (1 woman), drivers (1 man), medical auxiliaries (1 woman), cleaners (1 woman) and fishmongers (1 woman).

Reading is an activity that, in our sample, is little valued, with 22 older people (66.8%) who read little, very little or not at all. Only 4 older people (12.1%) consider that they read quite a lot or a lot. These data are understandable if we take into account the low level of education of our sample.

When comparing the two social responses, we found similar reading habits, although with less intensity among the older people in the DCC. Of the 19 elderly people in the HSS, 57.9% (11) read little, very little or not at all, and only 10.5% (2) read a lot. In the DCC, 78.5% of the senior citizens (11) read little, very little or not at all and 2 elderly people read quite a lot or a lot (7.1%, 1 in each).

In the analysis of reading habits by gender, it was possible to verify that women are the ones who read the most, with 3 women stating that they read a lot quite a lot and only 1 man considering the same (15.8% of women against 7.1% of men). In contrast, women are also the ones who admit that they read little, very little or not at all, with 15 women against 7 men (78.9% of women and 50% of men).

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Graph 1 - Reading Habits - HSS/DCC

Graph 2 - Reading Habits/Gender
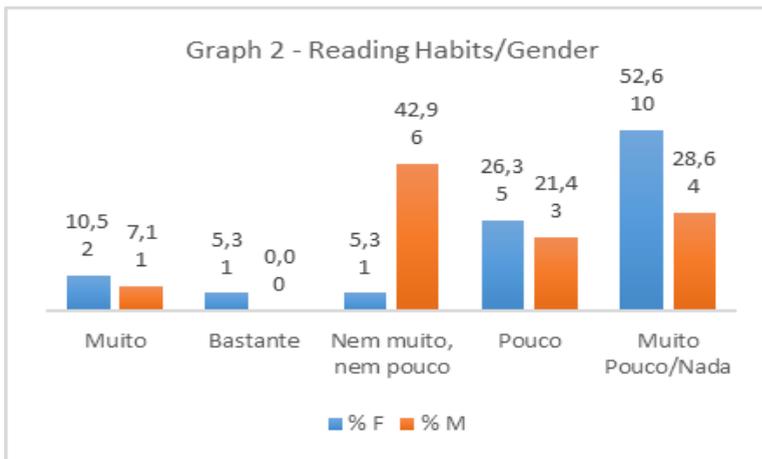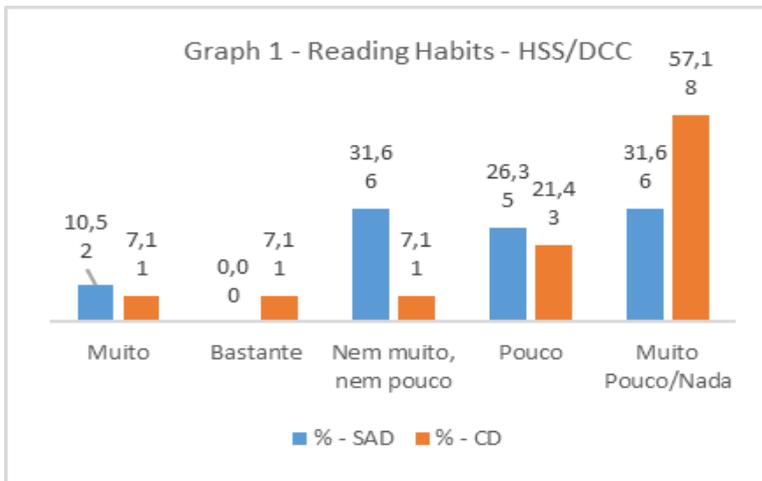
The habit of watching television is the most expressive in our sample, with 54.5% (18) of the elderly considering that they watch a lot (15, 45.4%) and quite a lot (3, 9.1%) of TV. On the other hand, 15.2%, corresponding to 5 older adults, consider that they watch neither a lot nor a little TV and 10 older adults (30.3%) consider that they watch little, very little or no TV (7, 21.2% little and 3, 9.1% very little or not at all). These data are in line with national studies, namely the study by Rosa (1999), which concluded that, in Portugal, the most expressive leisure and free time activity was "watching television".

The elderly who are at home and receiving HSS are the ones who watch TV the most. So, when compared, in the HSS 12 seniors (63.1% of the 19) consider that they watch a lot and quite a lot of TV whilst at DCC we found 6 elderly people (42.8% of the 14). At the other end of the spectrum, there are 4 seniors (21%) in the HSS who watch little, very little or no TV, compared to 6 seniors (42.8%) in the DCC. This situation

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may be related to the time that these elderly people spend inside their homes, often isolated, having the TV as their daily companion.

In the TV watching habit, we found many similarities between genders. Comparing men and women, the tendency in the sample to watch a lot and quite a lot of TV is very similar.
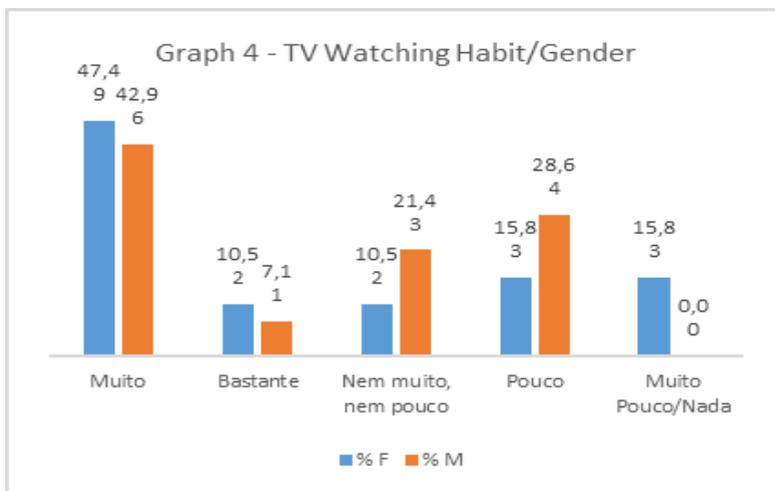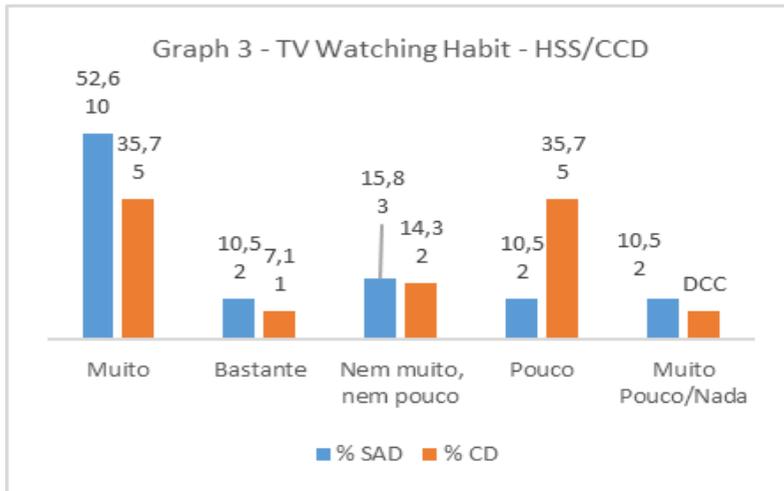
Graph 3 - TV Watching Habit - HSS/CCD

Graph 4 - TV Watching Habit/Gender

Concerning the habit of listening to music, we found that it is not a highly valued activity. Only 9 older people (27.3%) listen to a lot of music, 5 older people (15.1%) listen neither a lot nor a little, and the majority, 19 older people, 57.6%, listen to little, very little or no music at all. When comparing the two social responses, we found that it is the older people with HSS who listen to music the most.

In our sample, men are the ones who usually listen more to music. Of the 19 women questioned only 5 (26.4%) listen to a lot of music and the majority, 11 (57.9%) rarely or never listen. This situation refers to the fact that men listen to radio more and, consequently, have the possibility of listening to music during the broadcasts, between news and other programmes.

Graph 5 - Habit of Listening to Music - HSS/DCC

Graph 6 - Habit of Listening to Music/Gender

Concerning the habit of listening to music, we found that it is not a highly valued activity. Only 9 older people (27.3%) listen to a lot of music, 5 older people (15.1%) listen neither a lot nor a little, and the majority, 19 older people, 57.6%, listen to little, very little or no music at all. When comparing the two social responses, we found that it is the older people with HSS who listen to music the most.

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When questioned about whether they gardened, most of the elderly, 24 (72.7%), did little, very little or none, and only 5 (15.2%) did quite a lot or a lot. Although this is a population which is used to "working the land", their age may be a factor for this activity to have so little expressiveness.

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Once again, the type of response that the elderly attend does not influence the habit of gardening, since we have similar numbers of elderly people who usually do it – 3 in HSS and 2 in DCC – and those who don't – 15 in HSS and 9 in DCC.

This activity is more carried out by men: 21.4% (3) of men do it a lot or quite a lot, against 10.6% (2) of women. The number of those who rarely or never do it is similar between genders, with 73.7% of women (14) and 71.4% of men (10).
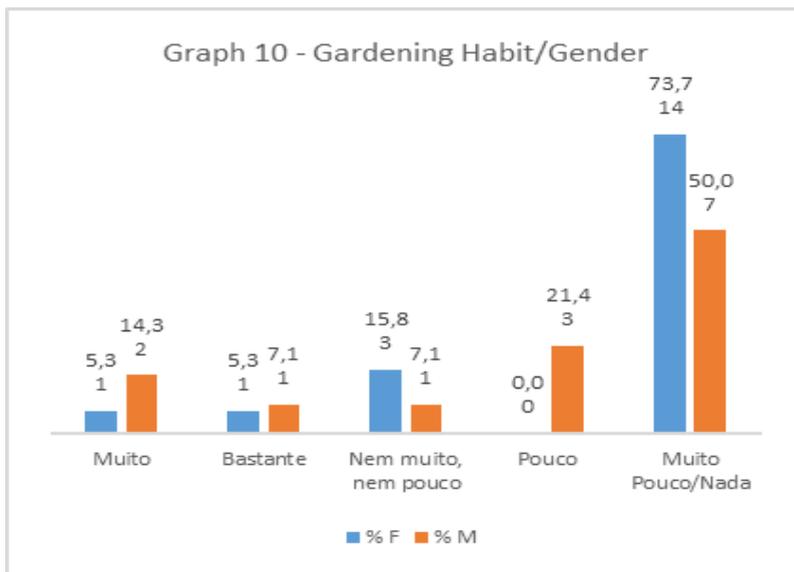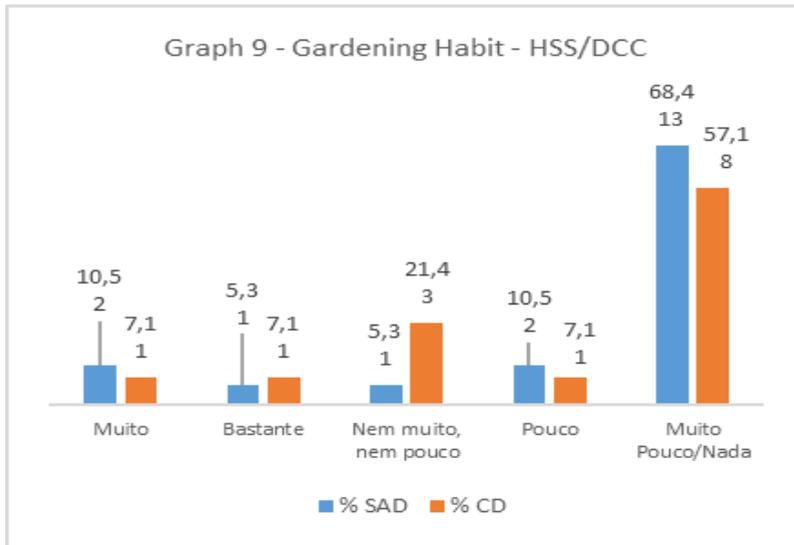
Horticulture is developed regularly by 12.1% (4) of the elderly and 72.7% (24) do it rarely or never. When distinguishing between the social responses, it is not possible

to find significant differences, since the number of older people in HSS (3) and DCC (1) who engage in horticulture, as well as those who do not, is similar.

The difference in the practice of vegetable-growing by gender is not significant in the sample. With a regular practice we found 2 women (10.6%) and 1 man (7.7%) and with inexistence or infrequent practice we found 15 women (78.9%) and 9 men (96.2%).

Graph 11 - Horticulture Habit - HSS/DCC

Graph 12 - Horticulture Habit/Gender
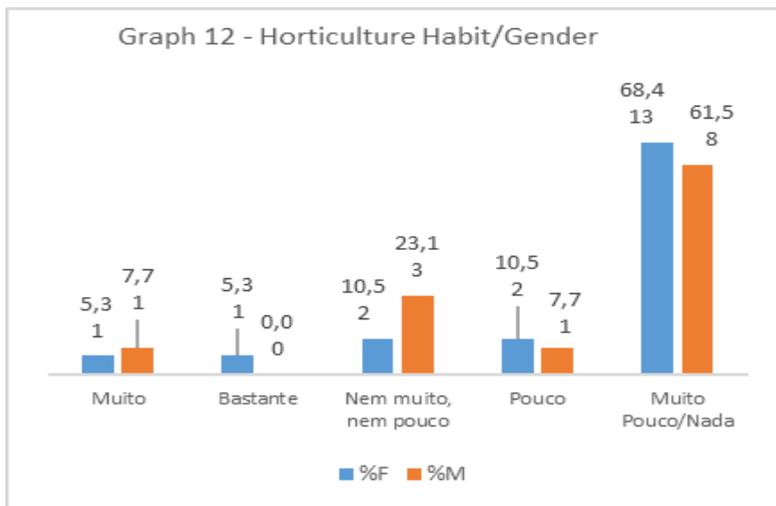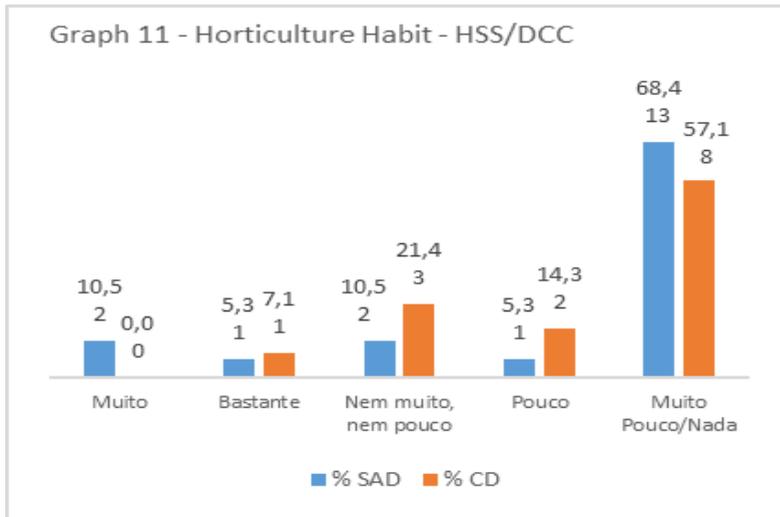
Although knitting is a practice very much associated with women, it is not very well represented in our sample. We found that it is an activity that no one does frequently and only 1 woman (3%) considers that she knits neither very much nor little. The

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overwhelming majority of 32 older people (97%) rarely or never knit. As can be seen in the following graph, the difference between the social responses is not significant.

Graph 13 - Knitting Habit - HSS/DCC

Graph 14 - Knitting Habit/Gender
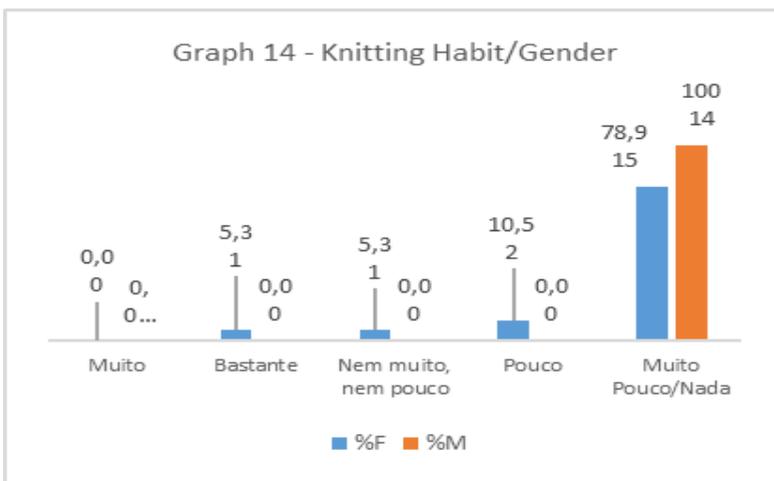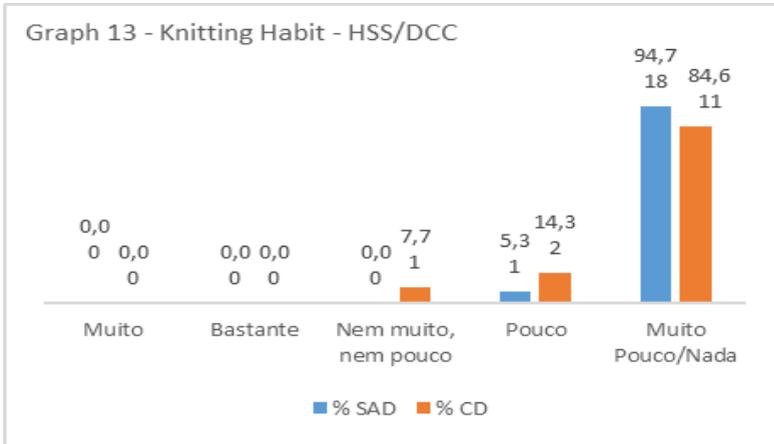
Playing cards is also an infrequent or not frequent practice (32 elderly people, 97%). Only one elderly person (3%), from HSS, considers that he plays neither a lot nor a little. All the women rarely or never play cards.

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Graph 15 - Habit of playing cards - HSS/DCC

	Muito	Bastante	Nem muito, nem pouco	Pouco	Muito Pouco/Nada
%	0,0 / 0	0,0 / 0	5,3 / 1	5,3 / 1	89,5 / 17
%	0,0 / 0	0,0 / 0	0,0 / 0	7,1 / 1	92,9 / 13

Graph 16 - Habit of playing cards/Gender

	Muito	Bastante	Nem muito, nem pouco	Pouco	Muito Pouco/Nada
%F	0,0 / 0	0,0 / 0	0,0 / 0	0,0 / 0	100 / 19
%M	0,0 / 0	0,0 / 0	7,1 / 1	14,3 / 2	78,6 / 11

The habit of talking is the second most pointed out in the study: 6 elderly people (18.2%) consider that they talk a lot and 6 (18.2%) admit that they talk neither a lot nor a little. Of the remainder, 16 (48.5%) consider that they talk a little and 5 (15.1%) consider that they talk very little or not at all. Contrary to what one would expect, none of the seniors from the DCC consider that they speak a lot, and only 2 seniors consider that they speak quite a lot. Most of the seniors who consider that they speak very little or not at all frequented the DCC.

Women are the ones who talk the most, being the ones who consider, in 5 of the cases, that they talk a lot, against only 1 man.

Graph 17 - Talking Habits - HSS/DCC

Graph 18 - Talking Habits/Gender
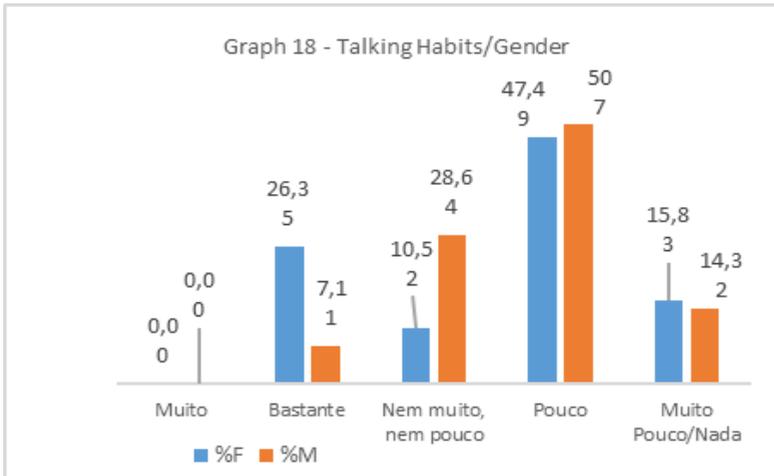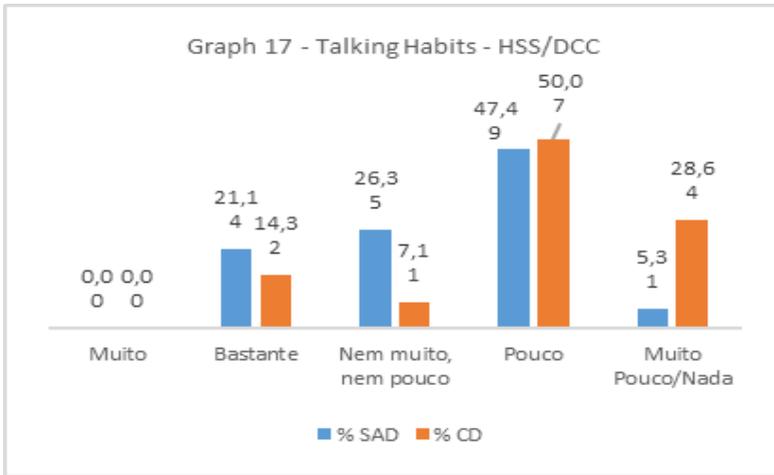
When questioned whether they felt that they used their free time for leisure activities and activities that give them pleasure, we found that most of the elderly (17, 51.5%) are satisfied, 5 older people (15.2%) consider that they are more or less satisfied and 11 (33.3%) consider that they do not make the best use of this time.

There is no significant difference in the answers given to this question by men and women, nor by social response.

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Graph 19 - Free time - HSS/DCC

Graph 20 - HSS/DCC Free time/Gender
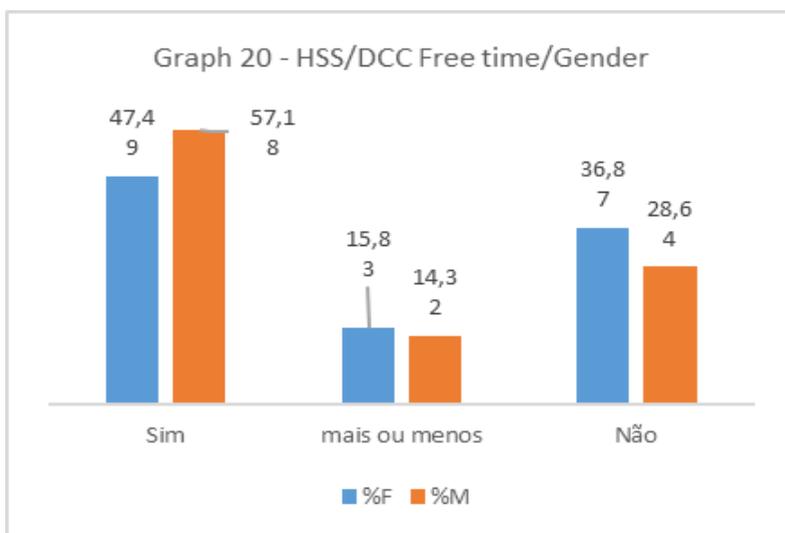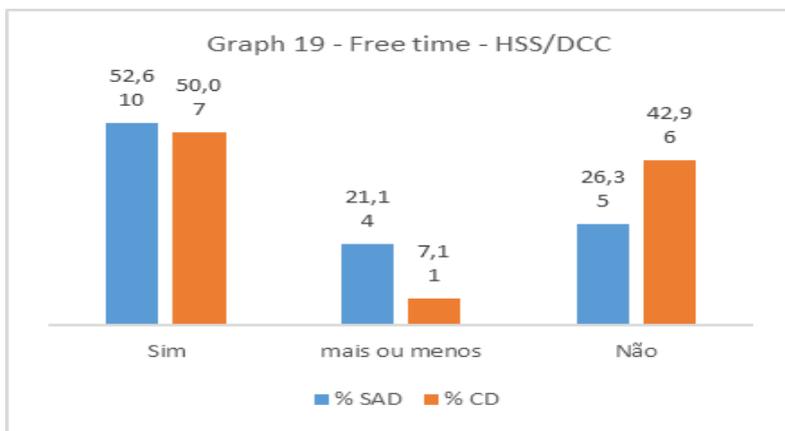
In the third part of the questionnaire we tried to understand the impact of the pandemic on leisure and free time. When questioned about whether the pandemic had changed the way in which they spent their leisure time, it was possible to verify that, for the majority, there was no change – 23 older adults (69.7%), 13 from HSS and 10 from DCC. Only 10 elderly people (30.3%) consider that their leisure time was affected by the pandemic, 6 from the HSS and 4 from the DCC.

These data were contrary to expectations, since, during the pandemic, the elderly in DCC had a long period when they could not attend the centre, so it would be expected that all considered that the pandemic changed the leisure activities they performed. However, only 5 reported this fact. This may be related to the lack of memory of the activities they carried out before the pandemic or to the fact that, at that time, they were not involved in the activities that were developed in the DCC, where they could have watching TV as a priority action.

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Of the 10 elderly who consider that there have been changes, we found that the activities that they no longer do are: going to the Day Care Centre (3 men from the DCC), going to the Senior University (1 woman from the HSS), going to the swimming pool (1 woman from the HSS), playing games (1 man from the HSS), going to church (1 man from the HSS), fishing (1 man from the HSS), going to the gym (1 man from the DCC) and socializing (1 woman from the DCC).

When questioned whether they started doing any new activity in the pandemic, only 2 women from DCC replied having started the activity of cutting and sewing and 1 woman from HSS started going to the library. The remaining 30 elderly people, 90.9%, did not start any activity. This shows that this is a population with few leisure habits and/or leisure opportunities.

Conclusions

The data presented allow us to understand that the elderly in the sample do not have leisure habits. The most expressive activity was "watching television", which is the way they occupy their free time. We highlight that this activity is more expressive among the elderly in HSS and is equally distributed between men and women. The second most representative activity is "talking", although the numbers are low for those who do it very regularly. Here, and contrary to what one might assume, it is the older people in HSS who talk the most. Taking into account that these elderly people remain at home, we supposed that they could have a greater sense of isolation when compared with the elderly people who attend the DCC, but this was not the case. Women are the ones who most value the act of talking.

The remaining activities presented show a low or even zero adherence by the elderly. The least developed are "knitting" and "playing cards", where almost all elderly rarely or never do it. This is followed by gardening and horticulture, where 24 elderly people (72.7%) do not do this activity or do it rarely. With a low level of practice, we also found "reading" and "listening to music"; of the few older people who developed these activities, the majority were from the HSS; and in the case of reading, women stood out, and in music, men.

Although our sample is integrated in the rural environment, with a life totally or partially linked to agriculture, the fact is that the number of older people who practice gardening and/or horticulture in their leisure time is residual. This situation may be related to the advanced age of the sample.

If we take into account Lee and Bhargava's (2004) division of leisure activities, we may conclude that most elderly develop a passive leisure activity. If the reference is the categorisation of Lopes (2000), we may verify that the majority of the sample develops activities in domestic space, followed by activities in semi-public space – in which we find talking to acquaintances. Activities in public space, activities in

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associative space and activities in space of cultivated/overlegitimised culture were left out.

We cannot, however, separate leisure from the social context, since it is itself an expression of culture and depends on the lifestyle of each individual. We point out that the fact that the elderly present economic difficulties limits the possible participation in some leisure activities, since the reduction in income associated, in most cases, with a significant growth in health expenses, promotes the increase in dependence and limits life options.

Old age, most often associated with retirement and a substantial increase in free time, represents a break with professional life and, consequently, with social habits and practices. Thus, free and leisure time could be an excellent opportunity for the elderly to interrelate and develop practices they enjoy. Despite, in our sample it was clear that there is a reduced habit of developing leisure activities, and a satisfaction with their free time use – most of the sample is satisfied with the way they occupy their free time, both in men and women and in both social responses. It needs to be held in mind that today's elderly people belong to a generation in which work was considered the core of their lives, and leisure was often seen as an unnecessary time off and it could even be despised.

We point out in the results that the fact that the elderly were in DCC was not mirrored in leisure habits. Here, we may have as a limitation the fact that the elderly were questioned at the time of the pandemic and their answers were related to their immediate memory and not before. However, these same elderly, when questioned if the activities they performed in their leisure time had changed with the pandemic, considered that they had not. This situation makes us wonder if the responses developed in the DCC are those most appreciated by the elderly.

We highlight as limitations of this study the low number of older people surveyed, the fact that we used a predetermined set of activities – necessarily leaving out others – and, finally, the fact that the older people were surveyed during the pandemic period, which may have influenced the answers given.

Leisure and free time occupation may be considered as one of the components for a better quality of life in ageing and integrates various activities, which are willingly developed. Janke, Davey, and Kleiber (2006) consider that these activities influence the physical and psychological well-being of the elderly, since they promote active participation and the feeling of group belonging. In addition, the studies developed by Newall et al. (2013, p. 921) showed that leisure allows for the development of positive emotions and "will undo the negative effects of negative emotions", which may arise as a result of the changes at this stage of life. This perspective is also advocated by the studies of Santos et al. (2003) and Silverstein and Parker (2002) who concluded that leisure and leisure activities help older people cope with negative life events/factors, namely loneliness and depression.

In this sense, this study demonstrated the urgent need to rethink the type of leisure activities proposed to the elderly and the need to find strategies to motivate and involve them in and for these activities. The classic model of gerontological care (based on the treatment of the consequences of ageing) is definitely exhausted given its limited nature in the way it views ageing. It is urgent to make the elderly active and participative players in a process of healthy and quality ageing.

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Mixed Methods in Business, Management and Accounting Research: an Experimental Design in the Entrepreneurship Domain

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Abstract

All research strategies suffer from some weaknesses. Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches might offset some flaws. Recently a growing methodological trend arose from the acknowledgement that mixed methods may increase the value of several research projects. With this background, the paper analyses trends of mixed methods in the business, management and accounting area during the last twenty years. The analysis highlights domains where mixed methods are not frequently used, such as entrepreneurship, and presents ongoing research based on mixed methods on the Italian community enterprises, a set of collective entrepreneurial initiatives working for sustainable regeneration in their territories. These enterprises are elusive since they are neither easily identifiable nor extractable from databases. A fixed and sequential mixed method approach turns out to be effective for investigating these evolving enterprises. The work is relevant for novices to mixed methods research and provides meaningful insights to analyze a type of organisation that is very important in depleted contexts.

Keywords: Mixed methods, business management and accounting research, literature trends, entrepreneurship, community enterprise.

Introduction

Starting a scientific study implies several research decisions or design dilemmas to face. Indeed, there is not a set of choices that ensures maximum results, as there are goals that are difficult to match (for instance, the generalizability of results and realism of contexts). Therefore, it can be argued, as stated by McGrath (1981, p. 179), that "all research strategies and methods are seriously flawed". Nevertheless, the methodological triangulation may mitigate some limitations (Dezin, 2009; Turner *et al.*, 2017), as one method can compensate for the weaknesses of another (Jick, 1979), and support the growth of understanding of a phenomenon and the advance of the knowledge frontier.

However, it is worth saying that mixed methods are not a solution to all problems. Echoing the words of Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004, p. 17), it is important to

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remember that: "In some situations the qualitative approach will be more appropriate; in other situations, the quantitative approach will be more appropriate. In many situations, researchers can put together insights and procedures from both approaches to produce a superior product".

In other words, although some weaknesses cannot be completely overcome, when the combination of different methods in a study is performed effectively, new avenues for knowledge creation arise (Hurmerinta-Peltomäki *et al.*, 2006).

This is a reason why mixed methods have achieved a certain success in several fields, such as organisational science (Molina-Azorin *et al.*, 2017), to the extent that they have been recognised as "the third major research approach or research paradigm" (Johnson *et al.*, 2007, p. 112). However, there are still fields or areas of research where they are taking hold more slowly. In this perspective, the study addresses the following question: do mixed methods represent an emerging methodology in business, management and accounting research? In this vein, to promote their use, the paper illustrates the design of ongoing research concerning Italian community enterprises, which adopts the mixed methods approach to address some specific research complexities.

To this end, the paper is organised as follows. The next section offers background information on the mixed methods approach and a brief description of the community enterprise concept together with some elements characterizing Italian community enterprises. The following section depicts the methodology adopted to analyse the mixed methods research in the investigated areas. In addition, this section provides some information on the methodological features concerning the application case. Then, the paper describes the results of the analysis and presents how the mixed methods approach has been fruitfully used in the application case. Finally, the discussion section proposes some reflections on the literature trends, and the conclusions section illustrates some future issues and limitations of the work.

Mixed methods: literature backgrounds

For many years, researchers have integrated qualitative and quantitative methodologies, but until the 1980s there was no conceptualisation of this way of doing research (Bryman, 1988). Subsequently, mixed methods gained more recognition and were frequently adopted, at least in certain research areas, such as education, health science, sociology (Denscombe, 2008; Molina-Azorin *et al.*, 2017).

For those new to the subject, it is relevant to distinguish between multi-methods and mixed methods, since the former approach concerns the use of either multiple quantitative methods or multiple qualitative methods in the same study, while the latter involves – as indicated in the research methods map proposed by Sage

Publications[1] - to mix that crosses the quantitative and qualitative boundary in inquiries by combining two or more methods within given research.

However, adopting mixed methods is not so easy and may present obstacles because, as Mason (2006) pointed out, it requires thinking outside the box. In practice, researchers may face perceptual and epistemological obstacles (Tunarosa and Glynn, 2017). From this point of view, as highlighted in Howe (1988), who endorses the compatibility thesis, some authors (see for instance Smith, 1983; Smith and Heshusius, 1986) think that the compatibility between qualitative and quantitative methods is unlikely. Indeed, these methodological approaches have different goals and use different techniques. Theory testing is usually the primary objective of a quantitative study (Dezin and Lincoln, 2005) and, in this perspective, it analyses hypotheses deductively, operationalizes (independent and dependent) variables, gathers data by trying to reach a representative sample and demonstrates statistical significance. Whereas, theory building is typically the goal of a qualitative study. In this type of study, the adopted approach is inductive and the analysis is developed on archival data or data collected through interviews, case studies and other field research methods. In addition, there are divergences from an epistemological point of view, as quantitative studies tend to refer to the positivist paradigm, whereas qualitative studies embrace the interpretivist paradigm; therefore, these studies have discordant postures and this implies differences in the way of knowing and in research questions. These features represented obstacles to methods integration, even if many authors considered it positively (Cresweel *et al.*, 2003).

In the first attempts, the combination of two different types of methods resulted from a hierarchy of them, as authors considered one type of method as an extra part with a completing function. For example, several quantitative studies employed qualitative analyses to provide detailed information about the context of reference. This practice cannot be considered as an effective integration if anything a *collage* of methods, so much so that the subordination of the qualitative method to the quantitative method has met with some criticism (see, for instance, Jick, 1979).

As noted in the introduction, some situations and motivations suggest the adoption of mixed methods. Green *et al.* (1989) provided a non-exhaustive list of non-mutually exclusive cases aiming at the following purposes:

the identification of convergences and for confirmatory goals (triangulation),

the use of the results of one method for the description and interpretation of the results achieved through the other (complementarity),

the identification of contradictions to refine or even to reframe theory (initiation),

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[1] The map is available at the following link: https://methods.sagepub.com/methods-map.

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the use of the results of one method for the determination of the elements characterising the second (development),

the use of different methods to increase the level of detail and/or the breadth of the analysis (expansion) and,

the use of different methods to reveal the different aspects of a given phenomenon (diversity).

To maximize the potential benefits of mixed methods, suitable choices have to be made in the research design phase. In particular, they concern not only the selection of the type of technique employed (case study, survey, focus group, simulation, etc.) but also the weight assumed in the combination (qualitative dominant, equal status, quantitative dominant) (Johonson *et al.*, 2007) and the application order (concurrent or sequential). Consequently, those who opt for this type of methodological approach are called upon to construct a specific pathway to reduce complexity and facilitate the rearrangement of information. To systematize these choices, Figure 1 shows the mixed-methods design matrix presented in Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004).

Figure 1 – The mixed-methods design matrix

Source: Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004)

Notes: qual=qualitative; quan=quantitative; +=concurrent use; →=sequential use; capital letters=dominant status; small letters= lower relevance

However, although mixed methods have a large literature and their use is progressively increasing, there are areas where they are relatively nascent, as in the case of management studies (Harrison *et al.*, 2020), or not fully established, as in accounting (Grafton *et al.*, 2011). Concerning the latter, even if mixed methods are

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potentially relevant to different strands of research, they have only been used in some of them, like in management accounting studies (as they are more prone to qualitative methods). In this case, however, the degree of integration between the methods was sometimes low, as the qualitative methods served to complement contributions (Tucker and Hoque, 2017).

Community enterprises: peculiarities hindering analysis and gaps in the Italian case

Community enterprises are usually bottom-up collective entrepreneurial initiatives aiming to attain economic, social and environmental goals for the well-being of the community of reference (Johannisson, 1990; Peredo and Chrisman, 2006; Somerville and McElwee, 2011). They usually grow in depleted contexts, namely in territories characterised by depopulation, low-income levels, lack of services and job opportunities, trying to counter and reverse these negative trends. For this reason, community enterprises are initiatives to be analysed carefully, not so much for the economic dimension they achieve, but for the regenerative capacity, they show in depleted contexts. In addition, if one considers that these enterprises also operate in urban areas (not necessarily marginalised areas), then their significance and the plurality of their implications become evident. As a consequence, several studies and reports have been published on this topic, but some gaps persist.

For example, on the subject of entrepreneurship, very few studies have been conducted in recent years. Nevertheless, some meaningful pieces of evidence arose in the work of Buratti *et al.* (2022), which showed that these enterprises tend to have a humane entrepreneurial posture (Kim *et al.*, 2018; Parente *et al.*, 2018). Similarly, except for a few countries (where specific plans have been launched to promote and support this type of enterprise), there are not many analyses of the phenomenon on a national scale and almost no studies or comparisons on an international scale. Suffice it to say that even literature reviews are scarce, the last one was published about eight years ago (Pierre *et al.*, 2014). In light of this, the following application case is derived from an ongoing research project aiming to represent Italian community enterprises through the adoption of mixed methods.

In the Italian case, community enterprises mainly take the form of cooperatives (Buratti *et al.*, 2022) and in the various regions of Italy there are regulations governing community cooperatives (CCs), but at the national level, there is no law recognising them as a type of enterprise. Therefore, it can be argued that the label community (or cooperative) enterprise may represent status and not a recognised type of company (Alleanza delle Cooperative Italiane, 2018). This is relevant from the researcher point of view, because CCs are elusive organisations as they are difficult to detect in databases as community enterprises. Hence the unavailability of a national picture of the phenomenon and the need to design an analysis to face this gap. In the light of these difficulties, research based on a mixed-methods approach proved to be a cost-effective option. Therefore, the paper describes the application case both to

show how a mixed-methods approach can address certain research complexities and to promote this method in fields where it has been little used.

Methodology

To analyze mixed methods literature trends in the investigated domains, the work collected data from the Scopus database. To this end, following the Scopus classification, the analysis selected the subject areas of business, management and accounting (BMA) and, as a term of comparison, social sciences. Concerning these areas, the paper considered English-language articles published between 2002 and 2021 that had the term mixed methods in their title or keywords. To identify these documents, the search was carried out at the end of January 2022 through specific queries on the Scopus database.

Then, to highlight (as far as possible) the most frequent subfields and the quality of journals that published the selected articles, the analysis gathered data from the Scimago database. In particular, based on the SCImago Journal Rank (SJR) and journal categorization, the paper shows the quartile[1] in which the publication outlet was ranked in 2020 and the thematic categories of the BMA area with which the journal is linked.

The application case concerns the Italian context where, since it is difficult to identify CCs, there is no up-to-date national picture of this type of enterprise. Following Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), the application case adopted a fixed mixed-methods approach, as this choice was made at the research design stage and not afterwards. In addition, considering the mixed methods design matrix (Figure 1), the adopted approach can be placed in quadrant 2, as it places qualitative and quantitative methods on the same level and applies them sequentially. The order of application is in line with Morse's suggestion (1991) for research on topics that cannot be considered mature and/or where there is a need for more knowledge.

Mixed methods research in Business, Management and Accounting area

Figure 2 clearly shows how mixed methods have found wider application in the area of social sciences than in the area of BMA. Indeed, although in the early 2000s the number of articles was similar, already by the end of the first decade one can see an increased use of mixed methods in the social sciences. For example, in 2010, the number of mixed methods articles published in the area of BMA was only 16 (39 considering keywords), whereas almost 90 (119 considering keywords) articles were published in the area of social sciences. This gap has gradually widened to the present day, so that mixed methods articles in the area of BMA number less than 140, whereas those published in the area of social sciences exceed the threshold of 810.

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[1] The set of journals have been ranked according to their SJR and divided into four equal groups or quartiles.

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However, if one considers the articles that have the term mixed methods in their keywords, one notices that the gap is narrowing - although not by much - and this might suggest that researchers in the area of BMA are starting to use this methodology more.
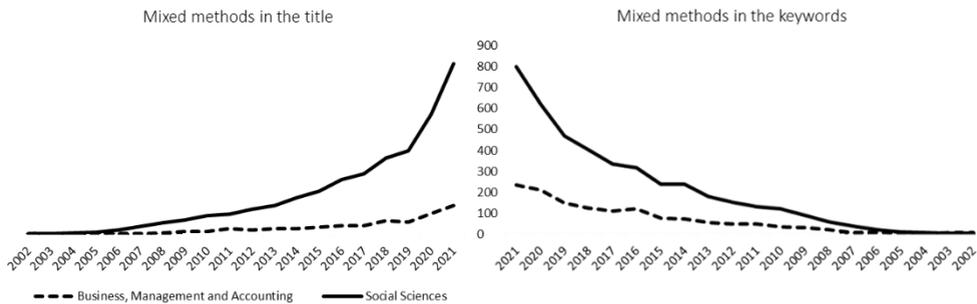
Figure 2 – Literature trends of mixed methods research in the selected areas

Source: direct elaboration on Scopus data

BMA scholars have published their research in different journals. However, the journals that have given the most space to the mixed methods articles are (see Table 1): *International Journal of Production Research*, *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *International Journal of Production Economics*, *Evaluation and Program Planning* and, *Journal of the Operational Research Society*.

Overall, the journals publishing mixed methods articles are of a good standard, as they are in the top two quartiles in most cases (see Table 1). In addition, to provide an overview of the research strands to which the selected articles can be linked, the thematic categorisation of the BMA area was considered. In this respect, there are few journals related to accounting; whereas journals related to the categories strategy and management, business and international management and marketing show a greater interest in mixed methods research. Again, a certain degree of openness emerges for the category related to management information systems.

Table 1 – Main journals publishing mixed methods articles

Journal ranking	N° of articles	Category in the subject area of Business, Management and Accounting	Ranking in the category according to SJR (quartile; 2020)

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Mixed methods in the title	01) Evaluation and Program Planning	34	Business and International Management Strategy and Management	Q2 Q2
	02) Electronic Journal Of Business Research Methods	19	Business and International Management Strategy and Management	Q4 Q4
	03) Journal of Business Research	15	Marketing	Q1
	04) Tourism Management	12	Strategy and Management Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality Management	Q1 Q1
	05) Journal of Cleaner Production	10	Strategy and Management	Q1
	06) American Journal of Evaluation	6	Business and International Management	Q1
	07) Journal of Health Organization and Management	6	Business, Management and Accounting (miscellaneous)	Q2
	08) Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	6	Marketing	Q1
	09) Journal of Travel Research	6	Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality Management	Q1
	10) MIS Quarterly Management Information Systems	6	Management Information Systems	Q1
Mixed methods in the keywords	01) International Journal of Production Research	126	Strategy and Management	Q1
	02) Journal of Cleaner Production	56	Strategy and Management	Q1
	03) International Journal of Production Economics	48	Business, Management and Accounting (miscellaneous)	Q1

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04) Evaluation and Program Planning	37	Business and International Management Strategy and Management	Q2 Q2
05) Journal of the Operational Research Society	34	Management Information Systems Marketing Strategy and Management	Q1 Q2 Q2
06) Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods	25	Business and International Management Strategy and Management	Q4 Q4
07) International Transactions In Operational Research	22	Business and International Management Management of Technology and Innovation Strategy and Management	Q1 Q1 Q1
08) Journal of Advanced Transportation	22	Strategy and Management	Q2
09) Journal of Business Research	20	Marketing	Q1
10) Transportation Research Part E: Logistics And Transportation Review	17	Business and International Management	Q1

Source: direct elaboration on SCImago data

The selected articles deal with a variety of topics, among the most frequent ones are analyses concerning social interaction, innovation and environment, while papers concerning corporate social responsibility, intellectual capital, entrepreneurship or other meaningful topics are fewer in number. Given this, to promote the adoption of mixed methods in studies concerning entrepreneurship, this paper describes a pilot research project on community entrepreneurship in Italy.

Application case

The pilot research project was designed to answer several questions such as a) when did CCs originate and in which areas of Italy did they become more widespread? b) What are their distinctive features? c) What is the type of entrepreneurship that characterises them? d) What activities do they carry out? e) On average, how much wealth do they produce and how many employees do they have? Due to space constraints, it is not possible to present the results of an extensive research project in

this contribution. Therefore, considering the aim of the work, the paper merely illustrates the adopted approach to answer the above-mentioned questions effectively and efficiently.

The research on Italian CCs started with the conduct of seven case studies selected considering different reference contexts (rural/urban) and life cycle phases. In particular, through face-to-face interviews, information was collected on different aspects, including the birth of the CC, its mission, strategy and business model, governance, etc. This qualitative analysis allowed the researchers to detect the basic characteristics and typically distinctive features of an Italian CC. This represented a key result because it allowed the researchers to recognise just under 250 CCs in the Italian Register of Cooperatives, which gathers all active Italian cooperatives (at the beginning of 2022 their number will exceed 110,000). Subsequently, the email contacts of these CCs were searched and this task triggered the design and administration of a questionnaire. The second part of the research made it possible to depict the phenomenon on a national scale, both by using archival analysis on economic data of the sample, and by delving into various topics through the questionnaire, which included not only the themes of the face-to-face interviews but also new questions concerning, for example, the factors that triggered the entrepreneurial initiative, the obstacles met (for example, in terms of education and training), the relationships with the context of reference, the ways to communicate the results to the stakeholders, etc. The results obtained are more than satisfactory since, considering that a valid email contact was not available for all CCs, the number of responses exceeded 24% of the sample. Thanks to all the data collected, the research project is now completing the analysis of CCs in Italy and preparing the related report.

Discussion

The literature trends revealed some interesting elements, e.g. focusing on the articles in which mixed methods are considered as characterizing elements (namely those with the term in the title). In this perspective, if one compares the number of articles in the selected subject areas to the respective total production of English-language articles in the Scopus database, it emerges that:

mixed methods have a limited impact since in the years 2002, 2010 and 2021 they usually did not exceed 0.3% of the total scientific production;

considering these years, researchers from the social sciences area have contributed more to mixed methods research than BMA researchers. Indeed, although starting from a lower percentage of articles (in 2002, in the social sciences area it was 0.007% of the total scientific production, whereas in the BMA area it was 0.023%), in 2021 the percentage has increased since in the social sciences area it is close to 0.3% and in the BMA area, it is just over 0.166%.

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As for the BMA area, it is clear from Table 1 that the contribution of accounting research to the diffusion of mixed methods is limited and this is in line with what Grafton *et al.* (2011) noted.

This might be influenced by branches of accounting, such as financial accounting, which are less predisposed to mixed methods, as they are traditionally linked to quantitative methods. In general, however, as Cameron (2011) pointed out, several barriers might have influenced the trends shown, those being philosophical (deriving from incompatibility of paradigms), cultural (prejudices against mixed methods), psychological (more confidence in a specific methodological approach), practical (preference towards routines and methods already known). Some of these obstacles are also increasing in importance because of the pressure on researchers to be productive (publish or perish). This is not good. Indeed, as Marchi (2021) noted, hyper-specialisation and the tendency to avoid certain types of research (probably the least profitable) do not benefit the growth of the scholar.

To promote mixed methods, it might be useful if widely recognized journals showed more interest in mixed methods articles. Indeed, although the ranking of the journals in the various categories of the BMA area is appreciable (Table 1), it is evident that this type of research has not been widely published in elite or distinguished BMA journals (such as *Academy of Management Journal*, *Academy of Management Review*, *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, *The Accounting Review*, *Accounting Horizons*, *Contemporary Accounting Research*), nor in leading practitioner journals (such as *Academy of Management Perspectives*, *MIT Sloan Management Review*).

As for the application case, it was useful for the author to describe this pilot experience, not only to promote mixed methods in the domains where they were least used, but also to highlight the chance of achieving multiple purposes with this methodological approach. Indeed, since mixed methods can have non-mutually exclusive purposes, the presented experimental design is a good example of the way mixed methods can achieve different purposes. In particular, the research project described achieves the aims of:

development, since the interviews supported the design and administration of the questionnaire;

expansion, since the response rate and the diversity of the analyzed topics contribute to expanding the knowledge of CCs in Italy, and

complementarity, as the results of qualitative and quantitative analyses and secondary data (archival analysis on economic data) were combined to produce a realistic picture of Italian CCs.

Conclusions

The paper presented the development of the literature on mixed methods in the last twenty years in social sciences and BMA areas. The analysis showed that in the latter area this methodological approach is not very widespread and proposed some determinants. However, these answers are not definitive, since it would be necessary to carry out a structured literature review. This represents a limitation of the work, but it should also be noticed that a structured literature review is a complex task, even if limited to a specific domain such as accounting, as noted by Grafton *et al.* (2011). This is certainly a future issue, but along with this, it is hoped that there will be an increase in the adoption of mixed methods in different research fields such as in analyses concerning social enterprises, corporate social responsibility, intellectual capital, integrated reporting, business model or entrepreneurship. To promote research in this direction, the design of a research project adopting mixed methods was briefly presented. By effectively integrating the methods adopted, it benefited from the strengths of each method and filled a gap in the current state of knowledge of community entrepreneurship in Italy.

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Democracy in Central Eastern Europe and European Union

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Abstract

Some of the countries in the region have contributed through assistance programs to develop and align their democracies with what the EU itself lobbies. EU aid to CEE is seen as a phenomenon of EU-perceived responsibility in the interaction of new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe. This paper will create a genuine study of the perceived responsibility for the development of democracies in these countries. It paints a clear picture of the development of democracy and the need for CEE countries to be under EU assistance. The assistance coming from this institution has given and continues to contribute to developing a democracy with strong executive foundations for society and beneficial to the region. In this way, the EU manages to achieve its objectives of achieving a federal union. When we say federal union we mean a Europe with the same democratic values and executive standards. In this paper the EU's responsibility for the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe is seen in activities with EU programs to enhance institutions above democratic values. Having access to the issues facing the democracies of Central and Eastern Europe, the Council Acquis provides an overview in the field of democracy. The paper gives us the opportunity to look more closely at democratic forces in countries where the latter is still developing, aiming not only at the analysis of democracy, but also at the analysis of the European common market. We will look at these two EU phenomena in the context of the EU's perceived responsibility for the interaction of new democracies in CEE. The EU has undertaken this responsibility in the context of strengthening, developing and maturing new democracies on the European Continent. Giving its contribution through various programs designed in the form of grants, which are given to countries that are in the process of maturation, in the form of programs that pave the way for development. The question that arises at this stage is: Does democracy help in a market economy?

Keywords: market economy, Acquis, council, democracies, Central-Eastern Europe

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Introduction

1. The notion of Democracy.

The nature of democracy: "Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives. Everyone has an equal right to access public services in his country. The will of the people is the basis of state power; this will must be expressed in periodic and free elections, which must be general and equal voting, as well as by secret ballot or according to the equivalent procedure of free voting ".

Democracy is a form of government in which state authority derives from the people. The word "democracy"[1] comes from the ancient Greek word "demos" which means people and "kratos", which means power. The principles of modern democracy have been gradually developed by the religious movements of Calvinism during the seventeenth century, especially in Scotland, England and the Netherlands where communities began to support and share not only religious but also political ideas. The philosophy of freedom and equality was further enhanced during the Enlightenment period, which would later be recognized as the core values of democracy.[2]

The first democratic state was established in the USA, while France was the first European state established on democratic principles, after the French Revolution. After 1945 there was a spread of Western democracy in Europe and around the world, which replaced authoritarian forms of government. After the defeat of fascist governments, it seemed that the crisis that democracy experienced during the twentieth century was overcome. The long process of decolonization in which the right to self-determination was recognized by Western countries resulted in the advent of democracy in their former colonies The dictatorships in Spain, Portugal, Greece, Argentina and Uruguay all became democracies in recent decades.[3] With the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of the Stalinist system in Central and Eastern Europe, it was seen that democracy had indeed triumphed. However, not all countries that theoretically support democracy as a form of government do not respect democratic principles or the life of democratic practice. This rather as a

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[1] Kuci K., 2011, "Political Philosophy", UMSH Tirana, p. 29.

[2] Two basic principles of the French Revolution are the principle of freedom and that of equality. These principles are exactly what later became the basis of democracy. So, democracy works on these two principles today.

   This is a small comparison between states that toppled their dictatorial system in the last years of the twentieth century.

[3] Fischer L., "*The Essential Gandhi: An Anthology of His Writings on His Life*", Work, and Ideas, 2002, fq 203

paradoxical development demonstrates that maintaining a critical debate on democracy and democratization is a necessity.

"My notion of democracy is that the weakest should have the same chance as the strongest."[1]

With regard to the essential elements of modern democracy it must be stated that it is difficult to measure what a democratic society is like. Yet a number of key elements constitute the foundations of any democratic society. To better understand these elements, education and learning at all levels play an essential role.

a.Equality - the principle of equality means that all human beings are born equal, should enjoy equal opportunities, participation in the political life of the community and equal treatment before the law. This also includes social and economic equality between women and men.

b.Participation - democracy is meaningless without participation, participation in the community and policy issues is a prerequisite for building a democratic system. Democracy is a form of participation, sometimes participation is a broad concept and contains not only strong political implications, but also social and economic ones. But participation alone cannot guarantee democracy.

c.Majority rule and minority rights Although democracy is defined by "people rule", it is in fact "majority rule". It also implies a majority obligation to take into account the different rights and needs of minority groups. The degree to which obligations are met is an indicator of the further increase of democratic values in society.

The question arises: What does democracy include as a notion? According to the reasoning, but also according to various literatures, democracy includes the rule of law, the electoral system, good governance, the sovereignty of the people and the conditions for free elections. So the nature of democracy is diverse. We will analyze each of the above concepts to better understand the diversity of democracy.

With regard to the rule of law, we must first clarify which terminology we must accept: the rule of law or the rule of law, terms that are widely used today in the political and legal literature. Both terms have the same meaning, express the same concept, that of the close and reciprocal connection between the state and the law. The definition of the rule of law varies by authors and eras. The rule of law is first and foremost a theoretical model of the organization of political systems. It has become a fundamental topic of politics as it is considered one of the main characteristics of a

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[1] Fischer L., "*The Essential Gandhi: An Anthology of His Writings on His Life*", Work, and Ideas, 2002, fq 203.

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democratic regime, but it is not necessarily a democratic regime. Generally a rule of law is not necessarily democratic, but any democratic state is a rule of law. The rule of law thus seems like a first stage in the formation of a democratic state. Its opposite is despotism or police regime, where arbitrariness and regime of violence reign. It happens that the notion of the rule of law is opposed by the notion of the Reason of the State.

According to an old definition,[1] the rule of law is an institutional system in which public power is subject to the rule of law. It is based on the essential principle of respect for the law, everyone is subject to the same right, whether this individual or public power. So in a special case

the actions of the state or of a political leader may be challenged if they are deemed not in accordance with the law. The Austrian jurist Hans Kelsen[2] redefined this concept of German origin in the early twentieth century, as a "state in which legal norms are hierarchical so that its power is limited." In this model, each rate gets its validity in accordance with the above rates.

The rule of law can be summarized according to the formula: "No one is above the law". In general, this regime groups a set of legal norms that protect citizens from arbitrary forms of (executive) power. For a state of law to exist, the obligations arising from the state must be formal, impersonal, binding and sanctioned. In other words, the laws must: 1) be made public, 2) no one can escape them, 3) they must be realistically enforced, and 4) the violation of the laws must lead to sanctions.

The rule of law is closely linked to the observance of the hierarchy of norms, the separation of powers, the equality of subjects of law before legal norms, the existence of independent jurisdictions and the guarantee of the civil and political rights of individuals. These are the basic conditions that a Rule of Law must meet.

2. Electoral system and democracy.

Much of the constitutional creation has emerged in relatively recent times: the worldwide movement towards democratic governance in the 1980s and 1990s has stimulated a new urgency by exploring sustainable models of government of respective representation, along with the assessment of fresh electoral systems. This process has been encouraged by the widespread logic that the choice of institutions can have a significant impact on the wider political system - for example, it is increasingly accepted that an electoral system can help to "engineer" cooperation and integration into society. Separated. The creation of the electoral system now accepted as relevant to major governance issues, and arguably as one of the most influential, of all political institutions.

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[1] Bashkurti L., "Public International Law", ILIRIA Prishtina, 2009, p. 109.
[2] Bashkurti L., "Public International Law", ILIRIA Prishtina, 2009, p. 109.

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By providing this detailed analysis of selections and consequences, and by showing how electoral systems have worked in a democratic world, we hope to achieve two things:

o expand knowledge and illuminate political and public discussions;

o enable the drafters of the constitution to make a selection with information, thus avoiding some of the effects of dysfunction and destabilization of the selections of special electoral systems

At the most basic level, electoral systems show that in general elections votes are cast in seats won by parties and candidates. The main variables are:

1. the electoral formula used (i.e. whether it is a majority or proportional system, and what mathematical formula is used to calculate the allocation of seats)

2. the size of the region, not how many voters live in a region, but rather how many members of parliament are elected in that region.

3. Good governance and democracy.

Derived from micro-economic theory and Anglo-Saxon administrative science, the notion of "good governance" was introduced in the 1990s by the World Bank as a necessary condition of development policy. For the World Bank, governance includes the norms, traditions, and institutions through which a country exercises its authority over the common good in the optics of development. Good governance also includes the capacity of government to effectively manage its own resources and to implement appropriate policies, as well as the existence of democratic control over the agents charged by the authority.[1] For the World Bank[2], good governance is "the way power is exercised in managing the economic and social resources of a developing country." Governance, according to the IT Governance Institute, "aims to provide strategic orientation, ensure that objectives are achieved, risks are properly managed and that resources are used responsibly." It takes care with priority to respect the interests of those "who have rights" (citizens, public authorities, shareholders, etc.) and to make their voices heard in the conduct of affairs.

So good governance is related to the functioning of public authorities. The "manner of exercising power" must respect the following principles:

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[1] Non-paper Harnessing the transition experience in EU's external relations: From policy to implementation. Non-paper by the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovak Republic, and Slovenia. Available at
http://www.mzv.cz/file/591175/non_paper_on_the_transition_experience.pdf, accessed 2 Shkurt 2011.

[2] World Bank official site, shiko për më shumë: World Bank official site, Prill 2009.

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- The principle of transparency which means freedom of access to administrative documentation, freedom of information, guarantee of an administrative justice and motivation of decisions taken.

- The principle of accountability which means the responsibility of decision makers, controls over administration, control over public markets, administration of public money, etc.

- The principle of participation which means giving opportunities to all actors to participate in the development process.

In Western societies governed by liberal democracy, governance refers to interactions between the state, political bodies, and society, including lobbying systems and coalitions of public and private actors. Good governance aims to make public action more efficient and closer to the public good and the common interest, as well as more legitimate. It aims to make societies easier to govern and more balanced, so that they do not overuse their resources and are able to renew them.

The European Commission has registered its notion of governance in the White Paper on European governance.[1] Thus, the term European governance defines the rules, processes and behaviors that influence the exercise of power at European level, especially in terms of openness, participation, responsibility, efficiency and coherence. These five "principles of good governance" strengthen those of subsidiarity and proportionality. This definition is also included in the Lisbon Treaty.

Good governance can be seen as an ideology of Social-State non-engagement, even as a theory of state decomposition, which has been in operation since the neoliberal turn of the 1980s. The abandonment of the term "government" and its use can be denounced. of the term "governance", explaining that it is a demolition of the decision-making power of the state, as a guarantor of popular sovereignty, replacing it with participatory democracy, which has no real political attribute. The slide from government to government shows that it passes from a civilization of popular sovereignty embodied in republican constitutions, a guarantor of the general interest, into a pragmatic, particularist and utilitarian society, the guarantor of special economic interests, in which the notion of the good of joint no longer has room.

4. Nationalism and democracy.

Nationalism can be seen as an integral part of consolidating the identity of a new state.

Whatever the reasons, the fact is that after the end of the Communist Party rule in the world an increase of national movements and national feelings was witnessed in post-communist Europe. Nationalism has been used as a tool of political mobilization and

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[1] Europian Commision, për më shumë shiko:
http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/strategies/2011_white_, 2011

support so that in a number of countries, the rhetoric and symbols with the greatest electoral appeal were national.[1] The nationalist idiom had orientated an important place in the cultural repertoires of actors and had given meaning to post-communist transformations.[2]

More specifically, Brubaker[3] distinguishes between types of nationalism, which have interacted to destabilize new or restructured states in post-1989 Europe. Thus we mention "national minority nationalism" that seeks to prevent and eliminate discrimination and exclusion. Further another type of nationalism is "foreign homeland nationalism", which sees itself as responsible for the welfare and fate of the non-citizen co-accused, ethnic minority in another state and intervenes on its behalf. This kind of nationalism does not protect national problems. It is about ethno-nationalism. This kind of nationalism can be a major obstacle to democratization in post-communist states because "post-communist governments give the impression that they do not represent the citizens, but the nation." All this suggests that in light of the nationalism that marked the political scene in Central and Europe Eastern after the fall of communist regimes, in

countries with significant ethnic minorities, the population will be slower in the process of democratic consolidation, thus reluctant to affirming the rights of ethnic minorities and their interests in societies where nationalism is prevalent will be an obstacle to democratic consolidation. European Nationalism and Euroscepticism for new EU members.

The phenomenon of Euroscepticism became apparent in the 1990s. This is because we have a change in the governing system and the demand of many states to become part of the community. History has shown that the term appeared in Great Britain when it was preparing for European integration.[4]

There are several definitions for this phenomenon and there have always been different views regarding the definition of this phenomenon. Some argue it as a negative signal of a gap between politicians' desire (to be part of the EU) and ratification of treaties. Many times some treaties have failed in their first vote by the

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[1] Verdery. K., "Transnationalism, Nationalism, Citizenship, and Property: Eastern Europe since 1989", 1998, fq 294.

[2] Brubaker . R., "*Nationalism Reframed*: *Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*",1996, fq 68.

[3] Brubaker. R., "*Nationalism Reframed*: *Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*", 1996, fq 7.

[4] The Oxford English Dictionary defines the Eurosceptic as "a person who has doubts or reservations about the benefits of cooperation that should be enjoyed by EU member states", p. 323.

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people, but this did not happen in the second vote and the existing treaties have been ratified, but always with the consent of the people.[1]

However it is important to recognize that Euroscepticism can have positive attributes. These will be understood as awareness, interest, critical capacity of the people, in the sense that the European people remind the political elite that can not govern without the consent of society. The political elite here has less of a superior position than the people they elect.

But why are EU member states more skeptical than those who want to be part of it?

Member states are more skeptical because they have the opportunity to see up close how the EU works as an organization aiming to move towards a federation. Those within the Union are more inclined to lean towards non-functioning as a federation, so they are skeptical of this issue. This comes as a result of a Europe with history and the fear that this Europe may be extinguished if it is decided to proceed with the creation of a single state ex novo.

At the current stage of the sui generis organization, which is the European Union, it should be noted that each member state is a different nation from the others and none of them speaks or is represented as European.

It is the peoples, the different cultures that each state carries that do not allow the creation of a federal state because we have a clash of cultures or a clash of civilizations. The creation of a European Federal State would mark a new world order for international relations on a global scale.[2]

If we compare it with the USA, it would be said that: "The USA is compact with the states that make it up. Its institutions are formed, mature, developed and the American Parliament (to compare it with the European Parliament) or the Senate as it is otherwise known, makes decisions for all states only in the presence of senators of member states, without requiring the vote of the people. . Stay with the institutions because their importance appears when they represent the US as the only one in the international arena. The result of this process is that they do not have an individual past or culture as European countries do, they simply produce and market it. The US, has a Constitution while the EU failed in its attempt to create one. The explanation for this is a consequence of what I argued above. The Constitution failed and with it failed any attempt towards a Europe state. In the ensuing Lisbon Treaty, the term Foreign Minister was also replaced by the High Representative for the Common Foreign and

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[1] Gfeller A., "*Building a European Identity*", France, The United States, and the Oil Shock, Berghahn Books, New York, 2012, fq 123.

[2] Picture or reflection. The term framework is used in giving arguments on the goals of a phenomenon or a process. In our case we distinguish between the phenomenon that is globalism and the process that is globalism.

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Security Policy. Precisely to avoid any misunderstanding in this regard. There is also no article dealing with EU symbols such as the flag or anthem.

On 1 January 1999 the Euro starts as the common currency in banking transactions. 11 member countries adopt the common currency. Three countries such as Denmark, Sweden and Britain decide to delay the decision. The coin did not succeed from the beginning. During the year its value fell by about 30% compared to other major world currencies. According to federalist theory, to impose integration, a full-fledged political system is needed, such as the federal government in the US.

As stated above, the EU is not an end product. Merger is in a dynamic process of change and what the final form it will take is difficult to predict. The EU institutions have competencies in several areas and pursue objectives set out in the treaties. This means that they are not free to choose their objectives in the same way as a sovereign state does, and that they are unable to cope with the challenges that sovereign states face today.

To return to Euroscepticism, we mention the fact that perceptions of the EU in the UK have changed more dramatically than in many other Member States.

The undisputed proof in this regard is the exit of this country from the European Union. It should be noted that this is the first experience of a country leaving the European Union.[1]

On the other hand it must be said that leaving the European Union was not a surprise to anyone. This is because in 2004 there was a relatively low level of confidence and a relatively negative image of the EU. Calculations in% clearly show that "citizens do not tend to trust the EU", from 2004 which was 48% in 2012 went to 80%.[2]

Dominated by a constant fluctuation between national interests and the partially integrative interests that favor national ones, Britain has always been considered a difficult partner of the EU. The Conservatives' rise to power in 2010 gradually began to re-expose the government's stance on Eurosceptic ideas. These attitudes would also be reflected in the public speech on Europe, by the Prime Minister of Cameroon. The political ideas presented in this speech repositioned Britain again towards a choice option: negotiating a new agreement with the EU, and in case of failure a popular referendum to decide on leaving, or staying in the EU.

The referendum held years ago suggests for the first time a concise, clearly stated question about leaving or staying in the EU and is considered to have been one of the boldest promises that carries in itself a multifaceted risk, exposing it unnecessarily. Britain in the face of isolationist situations. In parallel with this political initiative, Britain confirmed that it would not participate in the reform of the EU Economic and

[1] Titulluar Brexit.
[2] European Council On Foreing Relations, the Continent-Wide Rise of Euroscepticism, 2012.

Monetary Union, as well as stated a consideration for withdrawal from EU Justice and Home Affairs. British dissatisfaction has also been expressed in other areas affecting relations with the EU. Despite the bold promise of holding a referendum, the ideas expressed in Cameroon's speech address a range of issues. One of the main reasons is estimated to have been Britain's fading role in the EU, as the financial and economic crisis has significantly highlighted the role of the eurozone in the EU. The focus on a deeper integration of the euro area, has become an engine of integration, causing the latter to take the lead in other political areas, such as that of further economic and political deepening, with federalist tendencies.

This highly-argued scenario over the UK materialized with the UK's exit from the EU.

Attitudes towards the EU in Finland are[1] a bit contradictory as the level of support for Finnish membership and for the single currency is high, while the levels of support for Finnish membership and trust in the EU are very low. The economic crisis has polarized Finns, but growing criticism of the EU has somewhat strengthened pro-European sentiment.

Association Agreements with the EU are a first step on the path to full membership in the European Union. Most importantly, this process has caused the alignment with the acquis communautaire, the EU legislation, with the legislation of these countries.

The signing of EU Agreements with Central and Eastern European countries will have an impact on the democratic consolidation of these countries. EU pressure and monitoring a country's imminent opportunity to meet EU criteria should help a country stay on track for the democratic project. Therefore, we must see that, ceteris paribus, the sooner a country gives the signs of the EU Agreement, the faster its democratic consolidation

Conclusion

Regarding the study, the focus of this study is Central and Eastern Europe and the relationship with the EU, where the link to the interaction needs of democracies is direct and reciprocal. Being a very broad topic, and addressing the perceived responsibility of the EU with the interactions in the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe is seen as a whole it has been chosen to focus on the problematic of how this democracy affects the execution of aid programs. in this region by the EU. International factors have influenced the democratization of Central and Eastern Europe, providing assistance in the form of programs. The fall of the dictatorial system in this period is seen as a revolution characterized by two important features: The first feature is characterized by the dissolution of the Soviet Union, a peaceful dissolution. The second feature of this dissolution marks the re-world order. In this feature it is clear that we are ahead of the development of a society based on

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[1] Or have been for the eight countries that joined the EU in 2004.

democratic principles.The key questions already posed in the political debates are: what impact do aid programs have on the development of democracy? How the EU perceives responsibility through programs helper it offers? These are the main questions that guide the structure of this paper and the requirements for recognizing a wide range of issues that provide us with a complete overview and as close as possible to concrete and accurate conclusions. This paper analyzes and explains a wide range of political interactions between these countries with the EU, its main actors, the respective governments with their statements and positions, etc. This range of interactions includes cooperation, confrontation, and individual games in the interest of meeting the goals of each party.

Today, democracy has reached an important point in the development of Central and Eastern Europe. Democratic institutions are more widely accepted in this region. Today more Europeans live in democracies. Recognizing the development of democracy in the region in question, we see that there is distrust in political institutions, as well as in participation in free and democratic elections.

The study aims to analyze the EU's responsibility for the interaction of democracies in CEE. This objective can not be achieved without considering a number of other aspects related to it, starting from the historic moment of the creation of communities and to the conditions that led the countries of Eastern and Central Europe towards EU membership.

The main problem of the study is the study of the consolidation of democracy in Central and Eastern Europe and the way of influence of democracy in the development of the region. Functional consequences and democratic performance are considered more important, combining it with the responsibility that comes before the EU, to help these countries to recover through aid programs. These programs are made available to countries with short-lived democratic experience.

The EU presents the democratic performance of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe in the form of the so-called Copenhagen criteria, regarding the ability to take on the obligations of membership. These conditions, which are economic-political, require democratically defined standards by meeting the criteria of a free economy. The problem in this case lies in the implementation and commitment of states to these criteria.

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Anglicisms in the Dictionaries of the Albanian Language

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Abstract

This paper aims at providing an overview of the quantity and the typology of the English-impacted words and phrases identified in the Dictionaries of the Albanian Language published in the 20th and the 21st century. Previous researches and papers on Anglicisms and Pseudo-anglicisms in the Albanian language have already documented the presence, the increasing quantity and the typology of the English borrowings in the Albanian language mainly in the language of the media - newspapers, radio and TV, social media, etc. - and in different lexical areas like sport, politics, fashion, electronics, economy, etc. The English impacted words and phrases codified in the Dictionaries of the Albanian Language published by the Academy of Sciences of Albania include adapted and unadapted borrowings, semantic loans and loan translations. Pseudo-anglicisms of Albanian language are also included as they are considered as neologisms coined in Albanian under the influence of English language. The identification of Anglicisms in the Dictionaries of the Albanian Language and the growing trend of Anglicism number, observed from the earliest dictionaries to the most recent ones, is a crucial indicator of the indirect language contact between the English and the Albanian language.

Keywords: Anglicisms, Pseudo-anglicisms, Albanian Language Dictionaries, language contact, morpho-semantic aspects

Introduction

Anglicism is a term used to label a word which is English in form (spelling and/or pronunciation) but is accepted in the vocabulary of the borrowing language, thus excluding other forms of borrowing such as calques and adaptations (Görlach 1994; 2003).

In the globalization context and in an indirect language contact situation, where English language influence is mediated via cultural events, translations of literary work, social media, technological inventions, etc., there is a space needed also for the English-impacted words and phrases, i.e. the adapted or partially adapted loans, the loan translations, etc. The latter, although containing native elements and no English ones, point directly to their English origin or connote English reference.

Thus, Henrik Gottlieb's definition of the term Anglicism is a wider and more inclusive one: "any individual or systemic language feature adapted or adopted from English, or inspired or boosted by English models, used in intralingual communication in a language other than English" (Anderman and Rogers 2005: 163).

'Anglicisms in the Albanian language' is a topic scarcely treated by Albanian linguists even though borrowings in general or 'foreign' influences on the Albanian vocabulary and structure have been discussed considerably in the last twenty years. As 'in disguise' Anglicisms in Albanian have been recorded in dictionaries, since the first one published by the Academy of Science of Albania in 1954 till the most recent one, published in 2020. The trend has definitely been in increase; however, their inclusion in the dictionaries, in particular in the most recent one, reveals a contradiction in terms of their codification form – how they are recorded in the dictionary – and how they are used in various written media. The media records most of them in their unadapted form, while the dictionaries record them following the rules of the Albanian language – spelled as they are pronounced in the Donor Language.

Background of the Anglicism studies and researches in Albanian

In the absence of a linguistic corpora for the Albanian language the only two studies conducted in the context of PhD research theses are Këçira's 2003 study – a rather limited count of Anglicisms (100 Anglicisms) in the Albanian of the 1920s, extended in four years of the publication of 'Laboremus' newspaper published in English and Albanian; and Kapo's 2013 study –covering 30 Albanian newspapers and magazines published during 1990-2013 and resulting in 511 Anglicisms. Both works conclude with observations regarding phonetic, morphological and semantic aspects of English borrowings in the Albanian language.

Görlach's Dictionary of European Anglicisms (DEA, 2001) contains 3,800 anglicisms present in 16 European languages, 410 of which are recorded for the Albanian language and more than 200 Anglicism entries in the DEA fail to include the Albanian language.

The most recent count of Anglicisms and Pseudo-anglicisms in the Albanian language has been conducted in the framework of GLAD project (Global Anglicism Database Network - https://www.nhh.no/en/research-centres/global-anglicism-database-network/background/) containing more than 2000 English/English impacted words and phrases in Albanian. It is an interactive database, continuously updated, a fact that justifies the changing number of Anglicisms reported in different publications. The GLAD wordlist for Albanian comprises adapted and unadapted Anglicisms, hybrids, semantic loans and loan translations.

Methodology

The dictionaries under consideration are the 6 editions published by the Academy of Science of Albania until the present: the dictionaries of 1954, 1980, 1984, 2002, 2006

and 2020. In the absence of electronic data they were manually searched for English borrowings – adapted and unadapted ones, counted and included in graph no. 1 and graph no. 2.

The first graph introduces the number of English borrowings *per se*, not in relation to the total number of entries per each dictionary.

Figure 1 Number of Anglicisms *per se*
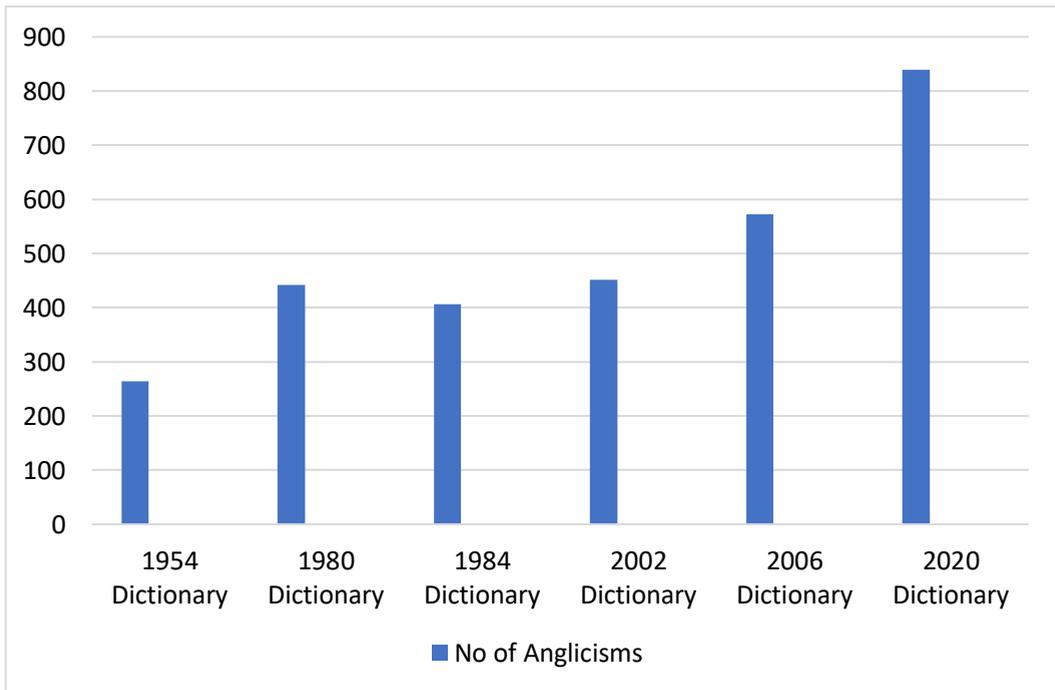
In concrete figures the number of Anglicisms goes from 264 in the 1954 edition, to 442 and 406 Anglicisms in the 1980 & 1984 editions, 451 and 572 Anglicisms in the 2002 and 2006 editions, and 839 Anglicisms in the 2020 edition. The editions in the closest years are grouped as they reflect slight changes in the number of Anglicisms as compared to the other more-distant-in-time editions.

Furthermore, Figure 2 introduces the number of Anglicisms per each dictionary in relation to the total number of dictionary entries.

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Figure 2 Number of Anglicisms in relation the total number of Dictionary entries
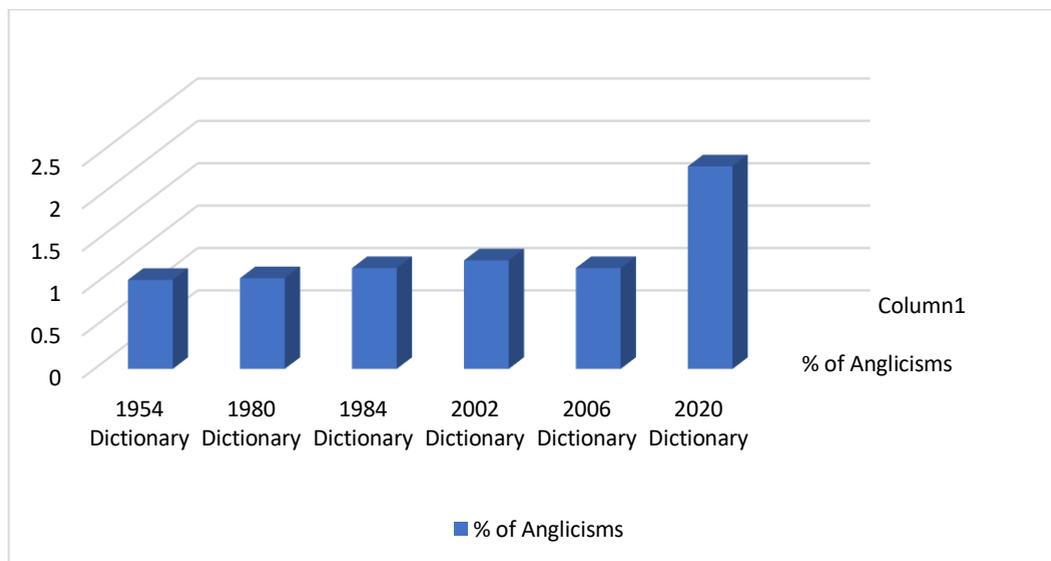
While Table 1 introduces the exact number of entries in each of the Dictionaries and the corresponding percentage of English borrowings in the respective years of edition.

Table 1 Percentage of English borrowings in the Dictionaries of the Albanian Language

Dictionaries of Albanian and their year of publication	Total number of dictionary entries	Percentage of Anglicisms
Dictionary of Albanian Language, 1954	25,069	1.05%
Dictionary of Modern Albanian Language, 1980	41,000	1.07%
Dictionary of Modern Albanian Language, 1984	34,000	1.19%
Dictionary of Albanian Language, 2002	35,000	1.28%
Dictionary of Albanian Language, 2006	48,000	1.19%
Dictionary of Albanian Language, 2020	35,000	2.39%

Although the percentage of English borrowings is the same for the 1980 and 2006 edition the number of total entries differs and the type of borrowings each of the

editions contains is also different. However, there is an obvious increase in the percentages to come to the highest one documented in the 2020 edition.

Discussion of the extracted data

Typology of English borrowings appearing in the Dictionaries of the Albanian Language

This section lists types of English borrowings and some of their features as they appear in each of the dictionaries. For this purpose, a certain number of adapted and unadapted English borrowings is selected per each dictionary edition.

The Albanian Language Dictionary of 1954: The graphic form of most of the English borrowings recorded in this edition is a mixed version between the English spelling and the Albanian pronunciation, for example: akcent (for the English *accent*), akcion (for the English *action*), kross (for the English *cross*), eruptiv (for the English *eruptive*), cirkus (for the English *circus*) and bojkot (for the English *boycott*). These examples illustrate also the alterations borrowings generally go through in the process of their adaptation in the Albanian language, as is the *c* to *k* or *y* to *j* alteration, the simplification of double letters into one or the drop of the *e* at the end of some English words, etc. However, there are other examples of unadapted English borrowings, part of this dictionary: *blond, eventual, smoking*, etc. The pseudo-Anglicism *smoking,* present in many other European languages, appears only in this 1954 edition and not in the others, to remain in use only in the oral layer.

The two Albanian Language Dictionaries of the 1980ies contain a considerable number of English borrowings, particularly in the sports area:

The adapted borrowings: basketboll (for the English *basketball*), boksier (for the English *boxer*), nokaut (for the English *knock out*), krol (for the English *crawl*), pas (for the English *pass*), penallti (for the English *penalty*), ligë (for the English *league*), futboll (for the English *football*), tenis (for the English *tennis*), etc.

The unadapted borrowings: set, start, stop, ring, sport, etc.

The pseudo-Anglicism boks (for the English *boxing*), rekordmen (for the English *record holder*), etc.

The loan translations: çerekfinale (loan translation for 'quarterfinal', gjuajtje e lirë (loan translation for 'free kick', etc.

The hybrid *pasoj* (for the verb to pass + the Albanian suffix -oj), etc.

Other English borrowings belonging to other semantic fields are introduced in these two dictionaries for the first time: anglo-amerikan (for the English *Anglo-American*), anglosakson (for the English *Anglo-Saxon*), biznes (for the English *business*), ekstrakt (for the English *extract*), the pseudo-Anglicism *foks* (for the English *foxtrot*), etc.

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The fact that these two dictionaries were published during the communist regime has affected those few hybrids coined with English and Albanian language elements, as well as the meaning these hybrids have acquired in the Albanian language of this period of isolation. The four examples that have undergone 'degradation of meaning' are:

amerikanatë – n. 1. An action that violates the rules of behavior in a society; a debauched behavior; a fuss-creating adventure. 2. (disapproving) explicit music[1]

amerikanizim – n. (Americanize + the Albanian suffix *-im*)

amerikanizoj – v. (Americanize + the Albanian suffix *-oj*)

bojskaut – n. (for the English *boy scout*) 'a member of the groups of children and young people established in some bourgeois countries pretending to conduct sport activities, discovery and exploratory trips in unknown territories, etc., but in reality, have political and military objectives'[2]

The Albanian Language Dictionaries of 2002 and 2006 include a variety of English borrowings, adapted and unadapted ones, a higher number of hybrids and even loan translations and pseudo-Anglicisms.

Adapted borrowings: ekstensiv (for the English *extensive*), faks (for the English *fax*), mis (for the English *miss*), ekzakt (for the English *exact*), kasetë (for the English *cassette*), videokasetë (for the English *videocassette*), hobi (for the English *hobby*), stres (for the English *stress*), kongresmen (for the English *congressman*), paund (for the English *pound*), videokonferencë (for the English *videoconference*), evropjan (for the English European), etc.

Unadapted borrowings: motel, AIDS, feminist, human, parking, poster, printer, snob, supermarket, etc.

Pseudo-anglicisms, mainly ellipses: master (for *Master's Degree*), analist (for *political analyst*), flirt (*the act of flirting*, not corresponding to its meaning in the *Donor Language: a person who flirts with a lot of people*), etc.

Hybrids: v. evropianizoj (Europeanize + the Albanian suffix -oj), v. flirtoj (flirt + -oj), v. globalizoj (globalize + -oj), n. menazhim (manage + -im), v. menazhoj (manage + -oj), n. parkim (park + -im), v. parkoj (park+ -oj), v. stresoj (stress + -oj), n. trajnim (train + -im), v. trajnoj (train + - oj), etc.

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[1] AMERIKANATË – *f. sh. -A, -AT keq.* 1. Veprim që shkel rregullat e sjelljes në shoqëri, sjellje e shturur; aventurë për bujë. 2. Muzikë e shthurur. Dictionary of Modern Albanian, 1984, p. 18.
[2] BOJSKAUT – I *m. sh.* -Ë, -ËT. Anëtar i grupeve të fëmijëve e të të rinjve që krijohen në disa vende borgjeze gjoja për veprimtari sportive, për udhëtime zbuluese e hulumtuese në krahina të panjohura etj., por që në të vërtetë kanë synime politike e ushtarake. Dictionary of Modern Albanian, 1984, p. 97.

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Loan translations: n. fundjavë (for the English *weekend*), n. mbidozë (for the English *overdose*), etc.

In these two editions are introduced for the first time some borrowings from the Information Technology semantic field: kursor (for the English *cursor*), v. printoj (print + -oj), n. printim (print+ -im), etc.

The Albanian Language Dictionary published in 2020 marks the peak of Anglicisms, in terms of quantity but also referring to the constituents of each of the pre-defined groups.

Adapted borrowings: aifon (for the English *iPhone*), aiped (for the English *iPad*), akses (for the English *access*), haker (for the English *hacker*), imeil (for the English *email*), fastfud (for the English *fastfood*), dixhei (for the English *DJ*), badigard (for the English *bodyguard*), bajpas (for the English *bypass*), bejzboll (for the English *baseball*), etc.

Unadapted borrowings: alien, bonus, desktop, draft, editor, landfill, laptop, mister, minibar, modem, monitor, sprint, risk, virtual, etc.

Pseudo-anglicisms, mainly in the form of ellipses: flesh (for *flash drive*), skoç (for *scotch tape*), çip (for the English *microchip*), etc.

Hybrids: n. çatim (chatt + -im) – for the English n. *chatt*, v. çatoj (chatt + - oj), n. digjitalizim (digitalize + -im) – for the English *digitalization*, v. digjitalizoj (digitalize + -oj), n. implementim (implement + -im) – for the English *implementation*, v. implementoj (to implement + -oj), n. lobim (lobby + -im), v. loboj (lobby +-oj), v. riskoj (risk + -oj), v. startoj (start + - oj), n. startim (start + -im), etc.

Loan translations: maja e ajzbergut (tip of the iceberg), mi (mouse – of the computer), ndërfaqe (interface), etc.

A number of Semantic loans are also introduced in this recent edition of the Albanian Language Dictionary: dëgjesë (with the semantic extension of *a hearing*), tabletë (with the semantic extension of Tablet PC), etc.

In addition to the above-mentioned types of borrowings in the 2020 edition it is to be emphasized also the increasing number of the English loans related to the IT and social media discourse, such as: n. postim (to post + -im), v. postoj (to post + -oj), selfie, bajt (for the English *byte*), onlajn (for the English *online*), klikim (click + -im), maus (for the English *mouse*), pasuord (for the English *password*), etc.

Conclusions and recommendations

The Academy of Science of Albania has included English borrowings in the Dictionaries of Albanian Language published from 1954 to 2020.

The number of Anglicisms (including adapted and unadapted borrowings, loan translations, semantic loans and pseudo-anglicisms) has been increasing from 1954

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to 2020; the highest figure is recorded in the 2020 edition and the lowest during the isolation period of the communist regime.

English borrowings productivity is noticed in the considerable number of word families coined with Albanian language affixes. This was seen in the many instances of hybrids listed in each of the dictionaries above.

The category of Pseudo-anglicisms although "statistically perhaps of marginal relevance" (Furiassi 2010: 116), as it is confirmed not only for Italian but for many other languages with either a direct or an indirect contact with English, is present also in Albanian language and in a few numbers also in the Dictionaries of the Albanian language. All the Pseudo-anglicisms identified in the dictionaries belong to the world class of nouns. As Sebastian Knospe (2015: 106) denotes "this is not astonishing, but easily explicable, because they primarily label objects or entities, making use of the prestige of English".

Unlike most Anglicisms in other European languages the Anglicisms of the Albanian Dictionaries are written according to the Albanian language writing rules, based on their pronunciation, even though in advertisements, the media or in the newspapers they are found in their unadapted form (spelled as in the donor language).

Business, Information Technology, Culture and Social media are among the main lexical areas the Anglicisms of the Albanian Dictionaries belong to.

 As Béjoint (2000: 140) explains, while "old-time lexicographers did not ask who the users were and what they wanted [...] The trend has now been reversed, with lexicographers trying to find out who their users are and what they need." "Thus, modern lexicography has overcome the dilemma between exhaustiveness and representativeness by tailoring the size of the dictionary to the needs and expectations of the target audience" (Pulcini 2006: 316). Béjoint and Pulcini's elaboration on dictionary corpus length and content support also the highest number of English loans included in the last edition of the Academy of Science of Albania; the users nowadays need to be continuously updated and in touch with the latest developments in technology, fashion, media, business, etc. something they expect to find in the dictionaries published by the main Albanian language institutions. However, in the future editions of the Albanian Language Dictionary, is expected a certain level of coherence between the graphical form the unadapted English loans appear with in the media and the dictionaries.

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Manufacturing Sino -Egyptian Commune as Smart Hackathon Project of Advertisement and Distributing Animation Products for Graduated Youth

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Abstract

The Sino-Egyptian smart Hackathon commune project is to endorse Dr./ Dina Ali Mohammed El-Besomey, the Primary founder & pioneer& leader(with 100%) For a post-doctoral mission under the mission Call 2022-2023. The purpose of the post-doctoral mission is applying Sino -Egyptian commune project of advertisement and distributing animation products for graduated youth. The importance of the mission is this Applied study for Future Chinese –Egyptian Electronic Education vision 2020 - 2030). This project is as scientific mission of my post- PHD. This project focuses on the contemporary Chinese animation industry, especially The Role of Demography in the Distribution of Advertising Animation Products via the Experience of Chinese Communes with smart hackathon and how to apply it in Egypt. As the Demography of Advertising Animation Products via Chinese Communes, and the impact of them on the contemporary Chinese industry. Also on another hand explain that many of the Egyptian animation companies suffer from such problems as the production reduction ,the expensive costs ,to produce animation films with high quality ,so Chinese and Egyptian companies should be concentred with the post- production stage to achieve profits . So I suggest to build this project in Damanhour,El-Behira Government, Egypt. And there is a discussion with El-Behira Government where it will be build and distribute Demography This Sino-Egyptian commune project in Damanhour, and also distribute Advertising Animation Products to the output of this project in his first stage to build one Sino-Egyptian commune to distribute his Advertising Animation Products, like: video tapes, DVD, video games, posters, stickers, comics, magazine, school tools, toys, electronic games, children clothes, masks, and interior designs.[1]

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[1] This research is introduced as worksheet to publish my post- PHD researches in EJMS (European Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies) for the 27rd International Conference on Multidisciplinary Studies (ICMS XXVII – Brussels): "Recent Ideas and Research", organized at the venue of Brussels college,

Overview and Background

This is the National Project for manufacturing Sino - Egyptian Communes and distributing it Demography for sustainable development in Egypt as these are Distributing the Advertisement Animation Products and others . According to studding this project the contemporary Chinese & Egyptian animation industry vs. the international industry .

The roadmap of my many years in research of Asian animation industry especially Chinese and Japanese animation industry and also south east Asian -the Asian tiger countries- animation as North &south Korea, Philippine, Malaysia, Indonesia, sangfora as I participated at many Chinese- Egyptian conference, which held by Chinese and Egyptian centre at Helwan university and also I published many researches in this field. So I hope my National project of manufacturing Sino - Egyptian Communes and distributing it Demography for sustainable development in Egypt to be accessible for a relatively broad audience of academics. It will provide a clear and succinct picture of my short and long term programmatic project goals.

Introduction

The purpose of the post-doctoral mission is applying Sino -Egyptian commune project of advertisement and distributing animation products for graduated youth.The importance of the mission is this Applied study for Future Chinese –Egyptian Electronic Education vision 2030 - 2020). This research is as scientific mission of my post- PHD.

This project focuses on the contemporary Chinese animation industry, especially The Role of Demography in the Distribution of Advertising Animation Products via the Experience of Chinese Communes. As the Demography of Advertising Animation Products via Chinese Communes, and the impact of them on the contemporary Chinese industry . Also on another hand explain that many of the animation companies suffer from such as the production reduction, the expensive costs ,to produce animation films with high quality ,so Chinese and Egyptian companies concentred with the post- production stage to profit.

There is the summary for the present purposes of many years' research goals and strategies, incorporating the following axes of the research plan:

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This project focuses on the recent and latest technology of Asian manga &anime production via multimedia at the Asian tigers countries (south East Asia) like: (Japan-china-Korea).and how to utilize from that to develop the Asian animation production vs. the international market. And it discusses Asian animation at different fields of multimedia, like: the prints as journals, magazine, manga and other terminology of Asian prints :(Tankōbon, Aizō-ban, Kanzenban, Sōshūhen ,Bunko-ban ,Waido-ban ,and Shinsō-ban. This explained the meaning of them in this research. Also there is other field of multi-media like: cinema which called in Japanese "Doga", TV, internet and the wide spread of webtoons, mobile, tablet, ipad...Etc. this is depending on two important factors, including the following:

The labor market Participates in skills' development and vocational & artificial & technical training of the mechanisms of Chinese animation industry with specialized educational institutions:

Computer graphics began in the animation education industry in China in the late of seventies and expanded considerably since the last ten years. Universities across the country are using computer graphics in her programs, in addition, there are training courses for students at universities, academic training and education centers in universities in China to get a university degree in animation and provide job opportunities and training seminars for teachers of computer graphics and researchers. They usually form part of the curriculum for a more general article (usually computer science). Also, many universities offer degrees in animation, design the illustration as well as cinema techniques. which helps professional life in that area.

Creation the largest nursery for engineers and researchers in the world.

The reconstruction of the Chinese university education structure was one of the most important great achievements in the era of Deng , after the disaster that hit the Cultural Revolution. In 1970, the year of the setback was found in China 48000 university student, and this number rose up in 1997 to 3.2 million, and until 2000 to 5.6 million. in the era of Mao was the "Red loyalty" rather than efficiency is the deciding factor for accepting students in the university study during the seventies, but in the time of Deng, it has been approved the method of entrance examinations .The Chinese elite universities in Beijing, such as (Beida University) in Shanghai is considered by the quality of students - and to some extent the quality and competencies of the faculty staff. As china builds the largest nursery for engineers and scientific researchers in the world

Research importance

The importance of this project depend on the direct Distribution Demography of Advertising Animation Products via the sino-Egyptian Communes production vs. the international market . Also the project supports the importance of post-production stage –this is puzzle solve at the Chinese and American animation industry to save job

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opportunities for international creative qualification designers, animators, Anime directors, and producers.

The project Objectives

The roadmap of this project depending on many years of Chinese –Egyptian research is accessible to a relatively broad audience of academics. It will provide a clear and succinct picture of my short and long term programmatic research goals. There is the summary for the present purposes of my project goals, objectives and strategies, as the following:

The project study is determined in the Similarities and the differences of manufacturing the sino-Egyptian Communes to save job opportunities & achieve the profits for its companies

Recognized the Mechanisms of implementation & the technology of Asian manga &anime production via multimedia, like: the prints as journals, article magazine, cinema, TVs, web, mobile, all of that at china & America.

Utilize from the pioneer& creative ideas of the Chinese Animation production for developing the Egyptian animation industry technical& Produce via publishing& marketing &distribution locally and regionally vs. the international market.

Studding how the Dumping of the Chinese animation products will be increased the ten coming years, like: movies, series on dvd ,school tools, electronic games, toys the markets of Egypt ,Middle East, Arab World, European & international market in this period and the necessity of Address it.

Research problem

The problem of Research determine in Manufacturing Sino -Egyptian commune as smart Hackathon project of advertisement and distributing animation products For graduated youth and how to utilize from the technology of Asian manga &anime production via multimedia at the Asian tigers countries(south east Asia)like: (japan-china-Korea) for developing the Asian animation production vs. the international market.And supporting the technology of Asian manga &anime production via multimedia ,like: the prints as journals ,article magazine ,cinema ,TVs, web ,mobile, all of that at the Asian tigers countries (south east Asia), especially (japan-china-Korea) and the pioneer& creative ideas of developing the Asian animation production vs. the international market. And how the importance of post-production stage –this is disappear stage at the Egyptian animation industry, and the results of saving job opportunities for international creative qualification designers, animators, Anime directors, and producers.

Research methodology: **Applied & futurism Study**

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Research limits:

The place limits: Egypt, and china

The time limits :(from 2022 to the future 2099).

The terminology of the project plan

The concept of Chinese communes

The **people's commune** (Chinese: 人民公社) was the highest of three administrative levels in rural areas of the People's Republic of China during the period from 1958 to 1983, until they were replaced by townships. Communes, the largest collective units, were divided in turn into production brigades and production teams. The communes had governmental, political, and economic functions during the Cultural Revolution. The people's commune was commonly known for collectivizing living and working practices, especially during the Great Leap Forward. The scale of the commune and its ability to extract income from the rural population enabled commune administrations to invest in large-scale mechanization, infrastructure, and industrial projects. The communes did not, however, meet many of their long-term goals, such as facilitating the construction of socialism in the rural areas, liberating women from housework, and creating sustainable agriculture practices in the countryside. They ranged in number from 50,000 to 90,000.

Communes began as amalgamations of collective farms; but, in contrast to the collectives, which had been engaged exclusively in agricultural activities, the communes were to become **multipurpose organizations for the direction of local government and the management of all economic and social activity.** Mao tse-tung said, in 1958, that the commune "includes industry, agriculture, culture, trade. Military affairs...include the people of all professions and trades...the people's commune is different in nature from the agricultural cooperative ...referring to the urbanization of the countryside, the ruralisation of the cities, we imply that new changes have come to the society as a whole". This introduces the Chinese commune as a large comprehensive unit of social organization. Contrary to what many people have assumed, the commune in china has not replaced the family as the basic social unit, but it has given the peasant the sort of security he never knew in the past: the commune guarantees him food, clothes, fuel, funeral expenses, and education for his children. In order to understand the commune plays in china today, it is necessary to trace its origins in the struggle of the peasant to free himself from rural oppression.

What is the experience of Chinese commune

The Chinese commune concept

This experience is creating products and their market according to his studies and marketing mechanisms through the instruction of communes (smart small sales shops) to distribute the product in demographic areas in accordance with the Urban

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Planning of the State and to study populated places in a target plan of the domestic market and also the government sponsors the street vendors not only During those communes, But in accordance with street vendors and some owners of crafts and services through supplying them these goods to sell and distribute them in those inhabiting places by people as well as outside the country to dump the global market as well as open market for them abroad via international exhibitions.

The Chinese Communes Mission in Cities

The mission of communities in cities, as explained by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China to operate that:

As a tool to repair ancient cities and establish new socialist cities

A complete regulator of production, exchange, distribution, luxury, traders, students and soldiers in one format where government power and communes integrate into a single unit.

Due to the citizens of the cities and their business, the communes cities should vary some of the organization and ownership of their countryside.

Chinese communes role in Chinese animation industry

It is recently observed during the third millennium booming the animation industry in China, where China is a modern China's animation industry, therefore it proved to be a leading and Frequent Chinese industry despite the severe competition which it suffered from. Recent Statistics show that the Chinese people are more than six hundred million people, and china has turned into the most active animation markets in the world. And According to the universal Forum of chinese Cultural Industries 2008 that:" the Chinese animation production in 2007 has been overshadowed a hundred thousand minutes on four national animation television channels , and 33 Republic channels. and Their audience is more than six hundred million person . This evolution of the high rate of viewing, resulting from the high rate of adult viewers . since 2005, new animations are tried to attract the new audience of ages ranging from 16 years and 30 years.

Chinese communes role of Chinese animation industry requires:

Renovation and expansion of handicrafts to be basically for local industries

Distribution of Chinese communes demography according to the current administrative division in China onThe Basis of three levels: provinces, govenments and suburbs

Hackathon history brief

On June 4, 1999, **Niels Provos** coined the work hackathon when OpenBSD organised a cryptographic development. In the event, around ten developers participated to

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develop the cryptographic software ensuring to stay under the regulations of the US for the software. There have been a number of hackathons devoted to improving government, and specifically to the cause of open government. One such event, in 2011, was hosted by the United States Congress. Starting in 2012, NASA has been annually hosting the International Space Apps Challenge.

In 2014, the British government and Hacker Nest ran Dementia Hack, the world's first hackathon dedicated to improving the lives of people living with dementia and their caregivers. The series continues in 2015, adding the Canadian government and Facebook as major sponsors. The Global Game Jam, the largest video game development hackathon. often includes optional requirements called 'diversifiers' that aim to promote game accessibility and other causes.

Van Hacks is an annual hackathon that is part of Vancouver Startup Week. The focus of the hackathon is creating solutions for local non-profit organizations from the Vancouver area over the course of 36 hours. VanHacks was created in 2016 by TTT Studios. In March 2020, numerous world-wide initiatives led by entrepreneurs and governmental representatives from European countries resulted in a series of anti-crisis hackathons Hack the Crisis, with first to happen in Estonia, followed up by Poland, Latvia, and Ukraine.

Hackathon Concept

The word hackathon is a portmanteau of the words hacker, which means clever programmer, and marathon, an event marked by endurance .

The hackathon (also known as a hack day, hackfest, datathon or codefest; a portmanteau of hacking marathon) is a social coding event and a design sprint-like event, in which often computer programmers and others involved in software development, including graphic designers, interface designers, product managers, project managers, domain experts, others collaborate intensively on software projects, and other interested people together to improve upon or build a new software program.

Crypto hackathon Concept

Hackathon is a competition that is held for IT-specialists to find the most professional and widely prepared developers and to reward them

Hackathon project Concept

Hackathon is a type of programming marathon in which participants who are not professional developers attempt to build a new computer program during a fixed period of time. Programming events are often designed to create a specific programming project to work on, or the projects can be self-chosen

The Common Types of Hackathons

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Coding Competition. Hackathon, by looking at this word which is "Hack" plus "Marathon", you can immediately link it with intensive coding competition. ...

- Datathon

- Hackathon

- Business Case Competition

The hackathon purpose and goal

Various hackathons have been held to improve city transit systems. Hackathons aimed at improvements to city local services are increasing, with one of the London Councils (Hackney) creating a number of successful local solutions with a two-day Hackney-thon. There have also been a number of hackathons devoted to improving education, including Education Hack Day and on a smaller scale, looking specifically at the challenges of field work based geography education, the Field Studies Council hosted FSCHackday. Random Hacks of Kindness is another popular hackathon, devoted to disaster management and crisis response. The Port instead is a hackathon devoted to solving humanitarian, social and public interest challenges. It's hosted by CERN with partners from other non-governmental organizations such as ICRC and UNDP.

What is the experience of the Sino-Egyptian smart Hackathon commune project?

The Sino-Egyptian smart Hackathon commune project concept

This experience is creating products and their market according to his studies and marketing mechanisms through the instruction of communes (smart small sales shops) via **smart Hackathon** to create functioning software or hardware by the end of the event to distribute the product in demographic areas in accordance with the Urban Planning of the State and to study populated places in a target plan of the domestic market and also the government sponsors the street vendors not only During those communes, But in accordance with street vendors and some owners of crafts and services through supplying them these goods to sell and distribute them in those inhabiting places by people as well as outside the country to dump the global market as well as open market for them abroad via international exhibitions.

The Sino-Egyptian smart Hackathon commune project purpose and goal

The purpose and goal of The Sino-Egyptian smart Hackathon commune project is to create functioning software or hardware by the end of the event for the instruction of communes (smart small sales shops) to distribute the product in demographic areas in accordance with the Urban Planning of the State and to study populated places in a target plan of the domestic market and also the government sponsors the street vendors not only During those communes, But in accordance with street vendors and

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some owners of crafts and services. Hackathons tend to have a specific focus, which can include the programming language used, the operating system, an application, an API, or the subject and the demographic group of the programmers. In other cases, there is no restriction on the type of software being created.

The main axes of the project plan

The first axis: The impact of demographic planning on the Chinese& Egyptian animation industry

The second axis: study the concept of the experience of Chinese communes on advertising animation products and applied it in Egypt.

The third axis: Study of samples of the experiences of Chinese communists in the distribution of advertising animation products and the similar and different factors

The fourth axis: the development of artisanal industries related to advertising animation products

Fifth axis: study the Chinese & Egyptian media used to compete with the global animation industry.

Sixth axis: strategic marketing of the computer industry, graphics ,Advertisement and animation products in the Chinese & Egyptian communes

Seventh: The role of the Chinese and Egyptian countries in the adoption of legislative and parliamentary decisions in support of the Chinese animation industry and attracting foreign investment to establish an information empire.

Technical output and Impact

Here we take the manga and its publications as a form of Asian print art and anime industry and distributing and producing it as new and different concepts of what we know in Egypt, our Arab societies in general, or even on the global analogues.by exploring the new in Asian Advertisement and print arts, especially Japanese and south east Asian- the Asian tigers countries- of print arts, which used for Advertising. At the end the project's results &recommendations, introducing experiments in which Japanese & Chinese Advertisement and print arts progressed the anime industry in china &Japan& Asia, they also progressed in Egypt . All of these products and more produce and distribute in one place that is the aim of our project Sino-Egyptian communes.

There is two kinds of the Technical output of this project and their Impacts

The first kind is the instruction of the Sino-Egyptian communes and distributing it demography. Its impact is Unemployment reduction and achieving profits for companies suffering the lack of production & profits, especially adapters, advertising, animations, entertainment and multimedia companies

The second kind is These publication Terminology of the advertisement animation products and its development of Asian experience artistic style

- Japanese Cartoons " TOBA-E"

- Chinese glypls

- Tankōbon単行本

- Aizō-ban愛蔵版

- Kanzenban完全版

- Sōshūhen総集編

- Bunko-ban文庫版

- Waido-banワイド版

- Shinsō-ban新装版

- the origin of the Japanese word manga and anime

- Manhua

- DOGA

The impact of the second kind is Entering the Egyptian market , this new distinct quality of entertainment and educational works which develop artistic, creative and mental skills at different ages, especially children and teenagers. As The quality of the technical work is also characterized by the quality of technical and scientific content with the lack of production costs and a strong attraction for both children and teenagers and has a popular market and followed by all ages, that is making it appropriate and worthy to apply indeed in the Egyptian market.

First: The smart Hackathon

Shape (1) photography of techcrunch hackathon

Second:The people's communes illustration drawings

Shape (2) the graph of the instruction process of Chinese communes

Shape (3) the Chinese communes illustration drawings

Shape (4) the Chinese communes illustration drawings

Third: The Products of the post-production stage of Chinese animation

Shape (5) Products of the post-production stage of the movie The Goat and the Great Witch

Gantt chart - Annex 1

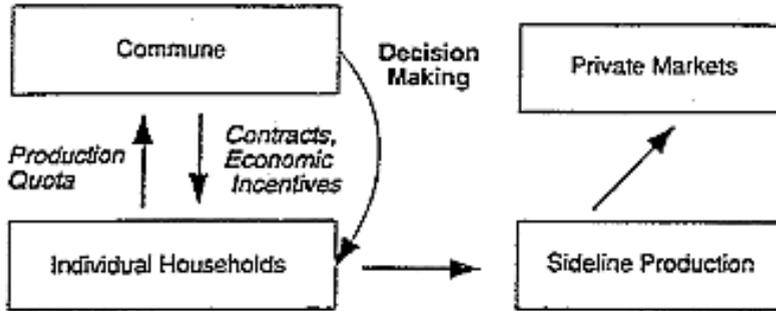| Task NO.		Title of Task/Sub-task	Start Date	End Date	Duratio	12 months												Expected measurable outcomes of successful implementation of the task
						M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12	
1		Manufacturing Sino - Egyptian commune parts	1/1/2023	1/7/2023	6 M	�												
						(yellow M1–M7)												100%
	1.1					(green M1–M3)												
									(green M4–M6)									
	1.2										(red M6)							
2		Building the instruction of the Sino -Egyptian commune in a square	1/7/2023	1/12/2023	6 M							(yellow M7–M12)						100%
	2.1												(green M8–M11)				100%	
	2.2													(green M9–M12)			100%	
	2.3																(red M12) 100%	
3		The production and distributing the Advertising Animation Products,like:Japanese Cartoons " TOBA-E" ,Chineseglypls,Tankōbon 単行本 ,Aizōban 愛蔵版 ,Kanzenban 完全版,Sōshūhen 総集編 ,Bunkoban 文庫版,Waidoban ワイド版 ,Shinsōban 新装版 ,the origin of the Japanese word manga and anime ,Manhua ,DOGA,video tapes, DVD ,video games, posters ,stickers ,comics ,magazine ,school	1/10/2023	1/12/2023	3 M										(yellow M10–M12)			100%
	3.1																(green M10–M12)	
	3.2																(green M12)	

		tools, toys, electronic games, children clothes ,masks ,and interior designs.															
Finish																	

Results & Discussions

(Expected Project Outcomes and Impact)

This project is exploring the new in contemporary Chinese animation technology and its stages. At the end the project's results & recommendations, introducing experiments in which could be progressed this industry in china & Egypt.

Transferred technology, innovation and creativity between Egypt, china, and America will make us up-to-date with the latest innovations all over the world to get develop and progress ourselves.

The exchange of technological Experience and scientific Missions will increase the coming twenty years between all sides of Egypt, japan, china, especially at the field of the technology of manga& anime production.

The impact of the technology of manga& anime production will increase and reflect on the Egyptian animation industry.

The Egyptian animation industry should be up-to-date with the latest version of Asian computer graphic and animation, also with the recent events in Asian cinema, multimedia and animation industry to develop the global industry.

Animation film has many stages to produce ,start with idea, storyboard ,design characters and backgrounds ,animation ,inking, coloring ,composing ,and Montage & Mixage .finally its ended with production stage ,but there is an important stage which called "After production stage ,"the problem solving , why some animation companies didn't achieve a good profit and loss . This stage depended on animation products ,like :video tapes, DVD ,video games, posters ,stickers ,comics ,magazine ,school tools, toys, electronic games, children clothes ,masks ,and interior designs .

It's possible, the post-production stage achieves high profit for special companies ,so the Egyptian government should support the Egyptian animation as national industry ,which has the same case in china, so we should utilize from the Chinese experiment by comparing it with local Egyptian market ,the role of government to

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give the Egyptian animation industry a percent from the national income ,which will return with more profits in the country national income

Probably the ten coming years will be increased the Dumping of the Asian animation products, like: movies, series on dvd ,school tools, electronic games, toys the markets of Middle East ,Arab World ,European & international market in this period and the necessity of Address it

Transferred technology, innovation and creativity between Egypt, china, and America will make us up-to-date with the latest innovations all over the world to get develop and progress ourselves.

The necessity of exiting Computer & Network Engineers , Programmers developer of Graphic& computer animation software at the teamwork of animation & video games with computer to create private programs, applications, and multimedia for every studio to make Egyptian national industry at this field ,like the Asian& international industry of cinema, computer graphic, video games.

Egyptian companies of programming & developing video games should have the opportunity to make animation and video games with the national characters.

The necessity of using multimedia technology in education &tourism and hologram documentary to express about Egyptian Encyclopedic civilization, like: the scene of ancient Egyptian civilization as the pyramids, sphinx, opened area templates, the attractive view of its beaches as what happened in china.

We must put the value of belonging to the homeland in our children to protect the Egyptian identity in Egyptian animation, and to establish customs and traditions and Egyptian values as Gateway of transforming from local to global.

Conclusion

Finally, the research's results & recommendations, introducing new experiment in which could be progressed this industry in Egypt.

For the Financial feasibility ,I suggest to build this project in Damanhour, El-Behira Government, Egypt. And there is a discussion with El-Behira Government where it will be build and distribute Demography This Sino-Egyptian commune project in Damanhour, and also distribute Advertising Animation Products to the output of this project in his first stage to build one Sino-Egyptian commune to distribute his Advertising Animation Products, like: video tapes, DVD ,video games, posters ,stickers ,comics ,magazine ,school tools, toys, electronic games, children clothes ,masks ,and interior designs.

And the Socio-economic Impact and Sustainability of this project idea depends on what many of the animation companies suffer from such as the production reduction ,the expensive costs ,to produce animation films with high quality ,which

requested particular composer & script writer deal well with the ages introduced to her this animation ,also the quality of technology ,professional director, so there must be a solution to produce succeeding animation with its nationality ,which children love it and grow up their thoughts &sense , get them delighted ,with positive ideas and experiments .as the animation industry & each other nationality industries needs to profit to go on their way . And how this project help to employ graduated youth especially youth graduated from fine arts faculties& applied arts faculties.. And so on institution supporting arts .

So the instruction of the Sino-Egyptian communes and distributing it demography. Its impact is Unemployment reduction and achieving profits for companies suffering the lack of production & profits, especially adapters, advertising, animations, entertainment and multimedia companies. And this project achieves Sustainability and increasing the national income.

The impact of this project is Entering the Egyptian market, this new distinct quality of entertainment and educational works which develop artistic, creative and mental skills at different ages, especially children and teenagers. As The quality of the technical work is also characterized by the quality of technical and scientific content with the lack of production costs and a strong attraction for both children and teenagers and has a popular market and followed by all ages, that is making it appropriate and worthy to apply indeed in the Egyptian market

This project advertises and distributes the new of Asian Technology of Animation, The styles, features and prosperities of animation films. As Asian animation was sorted according to its subjects and techniques (2d) & (3d).Also, the tools which uses in the Japanese manga &anime& Korean manhua(which mean the Korean web comics)& sino-motion- the Chinese style of animation can be designed manually and digitally .Also This project advertises and distributes the new of manga and anime computer graphic and computer animation software which uses in in the manga &anime& manhua

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Unveiling the Harmony: Exploring Albania's Family Code and Religious Parameters of Matrimony

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Abstract

In this captivating study, we embark on a profound exploration of the integration of Islamic marriage rules within Albania's legal framework, uncovering the intricate intersection between these rules and national family laws. Our investigation delves into the crucial matter of gender equality in marriage and divorce as governed by Islamic law, placing a special emphasis on the protection of women's rights and interests. Through a human rights lens, we initiate our analysis by examining Islamic Law, and subsequently offer a descriptive examination of Albania's Family Law within the context of its secular state with a Muslim majority. Intriguingly, we venture into the realm of Albanian Muslim couples who, through their participation in Islamic marriage contracts, navigate the labyrinthine landscape of the national legal system during civil marriage registration and divorce proceedings. Our paramount objective is to identify the multifaceted legal challenges that may emerge in these scenarios, meticulously scrutinizing the Albanian legal framework encompassing marriage and divorce. Furthermore, we delve into the manner in which family law addresses Islamic Law principles pertaining to marriage and divorce procedures, while also delving into the intricate dynamics of gender relations in initiating divorce. A captivating aspect of our study lies in the exploration of the enforcement of mahr provisions – the husband's gift to his wife – as stipulated in Islamic marriage contracts, and the thought-provoking discussions surrounding the appropriate response of Albanian judges to such entreaties. Ultimately, our research ventures into the depths of assessing the compatibility of enforcing Islamic marriage contracts within the legal system, ensuring the preservation of constitutional rights and human rights.

Keywords: matrimony, catholic church, agreement, family law, Islamic Law, divorce

Introduction

The issue of gender equality stands at the forefront of contemporary debates, yet the Islamic perspective on this matter remains enigmatic, often misunderstood, and subject to misrepresentation not only among non-Muslims but also within Muslim communities themselves. When delving into the Islamic stance on gender equality, it is crucial to discern between the normative teachings of Islam and the diverse practices influenced by varying cultural attitudes across the globe. This paper embarks on a comprehensive exploration of the normative aspects of Islam concerning the role of women within the family structure and the notion of gender equality in the realm of marriage and divorce. By analyzing the compatibility of these teachings with human rights principles and their interaction with Albanian family laws regarding marriage and divorce, our study sheds light on the intriguing dynamics between the two normative systems: Islamic law and Albanian family law, particularly focusing on divorce procedures.

A primary objective of this paper is to challenge prevailing assumptions regarding the presumed legal inferiority of women vis-à-vis men in Islamic laws and societies. To achieve this, we commence with an exposition of Islamic rules pertaining to marriage and divorce. This section offers a comprehensive examination of the status of women in Islam, juxtaposing it with the principles of equality between women and men within the familial context during marriage and dissolution. Furthermore, we elucidate the rights accorded to married women as per Islamic Law, aiming to dispel misconceptions and broaden the understanding of their legal standing.

The subsequent section delves into the regulation of marriage and divorce within the framework of international human rights law, with a particular emphasis on the principle of equality and non-discrimination. We explore the intersections between these fundamental human rights principles and the teachings of Islamic law, seeking to identify potential points of compatibility or tension.

Transitioning to the Albanian legal landscape, the following part of our research provides a descriptive analysis of the Albanian Family Law concerning marriage and divorce, honing in on the intricacies of divorce procedures. Through this exploration, we aim to unravel the nuances and complexities of the Albanian legal framework as it relates to marriage and divorce, highlighting key provisions and their potential impact on gender equality.

The final phase of our study presents a comparative analysis, delving into the compatibility between Islamic law and Albanian Family Law regarding marriage and divorce. Through a human rights lens, we evaluate these two normative systems, examining their alignment with international standards and highlighting areas of congruence or divergence. Ultimately, our research endeavors to foster a more comprehensive understanding of the legal dynamics surrounding Islamic marriage and divorce practices within the Albanian legal framework, challenging preconceived

notions while illuminating the path toward gender equality from a human rights perspective.

Islamic Law on Marriage and Divorce: Decoding the Dynamics

The Status of Women in Islam: Unraveling the Tapestry

Within the realm of this paper, our analyses of Islamic Law are rooted in the Hanafi school, which stands as one of the four eminent Sunni Islamic schools of jurisprudence. This particular school holds significant sway within the Albanian Muslim community, thus shaping the Islamic jurisprudential framework underpinning our examination. It is important to note that this paper primarily focuses on the Hanafi interpretation and does not delve into the comparative analyses of other schools' interpretations regarding the status of women in Islam. Such comparative explorations lie beyond the purview of this study.

To truly grasp the role of women in Islam, we must embark on a journey back to the profound history of mankind's creation. As we traverse the pages of Qur'anic verses that narrate this sacred chronicle, a striking reality unfolds—one that champions equality between men and women: *'O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women.'* (An-Nisa, 4:1) This Quranic verse revels the story of the creation of mankind which started from Adam, the first men created, and then from his rib was created Eve or *Hawwa* in Arabic. According to Islamic history, Eve was created while Adam was sleeping from his shortest left rib. Both Jewish and Christian traditions also maintain that Eve was created from Adam's rib.

Besides reveling how the first man and woman were created, this verse of the Qur'an is the basis of understanding the status of woman in Islam. Prophet Muhammad used the story of Eve's creation from Adam's rib as a basis for imploring people to be gentle and kind to women:

O Muslims! I advise you to be gentle with women, for they are created from a rib, and the most crooked portion of the rib is its upper part. If you try to straighten it, it will break, and if you leave it, it will remain crooked; so I urge you to take care of the women. (al-Bukhari, 2020)

Both Qur'an's and the Prophet Muhammad's attitude prove the fact that according to Islam, woman is at least as vital to life as man and that she is neither inferior to him, nor of a lower species (Büyükçelebi, 2005)

When trying to understand the role of woman in a society, in this case in Islam, we should bear in mind the difference among the general notions of 'equity' and 'equality' which has a crucial importance. Equality promotes fairness and justice, but it can have its best results only if everyone has the same needs and is completely the same. (Arnesson, 2001, p. 133) While equity is giving everyone what they need to succeed.

People are not created identical, but they are created equally. It is impossible to find even two identical men, or two identical women (Büyükçelebi, 2005). With this distinction in mind, it is easy to understand that the woman is not inferior to man, on the contrary, she has equal rights and responsibilities as man have, but not necessarily identical ones since their rights and responsibilities are pursuant to their specific needs as women and men. By interpreting Islam, it is noticeable that the attribution of rights to men and women is mainly based on equity. Islam has given to women rights and privileges that they have never enjoyed before under other religious or constitutional systems (Büyükçelebi, 2005). As Büyükçelebi states: 'The fact that Islam gives her equal-but not identical-rights shows that it takes her into due consideration, acknowledges her, and recognizes her independent personality'.

Over the course of history, a multitude of scholars, researchers, and individuals have delved into discussions surrounding women's rights and their societal standing. In these dialogues, religious considerations have often emerged as a point of reference. One such figure, Matthew Henry, an esteemed English minister and Bible commentator, drew parallels between Christian traditions and their alignment with Islamic principles when discussing the role of women.

The woman was made of a rib out of the side of Adam; not made out of his head to rule over him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved. (Henry, 1964)

Sacred Unions: Delving into the Intricacies of Marriage in Islam

Marriage in Islam is considered as a contract. Hence, as a contract, it should consist of several elements in order to ensure that both parts of the contract, thus husband and wife, receive their rights. As in every other contract, also in Islam, the first and most important element of the marriage contract is the consent of both parties, in this case spouses. Every Muslim girl has the right to decide about her marriage, and her father or any other member of the family cannot impose her to marry someone without her consent, and ignore her decision. As the Prophet said: '*A virgin must be asked about herself, her consent being her silence.*' (Muslim, 2020) According to some transmitters, a girl went to the Prophet and complaining that her father had married her against her will, and the Prophet allowed her to exercise her choice.

Another condition of the marriage is the presence of two witnesses. The marriage should be announced and publicized (Büyükçelebi, 2005). The presence of a representative from the woman's family is also a condition. Both the man and the woman must be legally competent, thus they must be adults and sane. For the marriage to be valid, the Albanian doctrine of Islamic jurisprudence requires that it should be made in accordance to the legislation of the country in which the couple lives. This means that besides the religious marriage, the couple should make also the legal civil marriage in the country where they reside. Another condition of the Islamic marriage is the so called '*mahr*', a dowry paid by the husband, which is a way of

showing respect of the groom for his bride, his sense of responsibility and his desire to marry her. As it is stated in the Qur'anic verse: '*Give to the women (whom you marry) their bridal-due all willingly and without expecting a return.*' (An-Nisa, 4: 4)

The way the Qur'an describes the bond between husband and wife after marriage: '*They (wives) are your garments and you are their garments…*' (Al-Baqarah, 2:187) shows the equality among spouses and that each is the support and the protection of one another.

Untying the Knot: Exploring the Complexity of Divorce in Islamic Jurisprudence

'*Until death do us part*' The famous verse cited in every Christian marriage, does not apply to the Islamic marriage. While the Catholic Church promotes the indissolubility of marriage, Islam's approach is against extremities. Even though it considers marriage as a consecrate bond, it allows divorce if certain conditions are satisfied. This does not mean that divorce is preferred or normal in Islam but when there is no other way of solving the problems divorce is accepted. As the Prophet said: '*Among lawful things, divorce is most hated by Allah*' (al-Masabih, 2020) This means that even though lawful, divorce is the last resort, allowed only under unavoidable circumstances, when living together becomes a torture for both husband and wife, mutual hated has taken the place of love and compassion and neither of them can fulfill their marital responsibilities any more. In these cases separation is better, this stated also by the Qur'an: '*But if they separate, Allah will provide for each of them out of His abundance…*' (An-Nisa, 4:130)

Within the realm of Islamic divorce, a unique framework exists to provide spouses with an opportunity for reflection and reconsideration. This process unfolds in two distinct stages. Initially, when a man pronounces divorce, his wife continues to reside in their shared household for a customary period of approximately three months. This interim period serves as a crucial window for contemplation, fostering the possibility of reconciliation. Should the couple choose to reconcile during this period, remarriage becomes unnecessary, and their union is restored. However, should reconciliation elude them during this waiting period, they are considered divorced, granting each individual the freedom to enter into new marriages or, intriguingly, even remarry each other. It is important to note that should the couple remarry and subsequently divorce again, the husband is prohibited from remarrying his former wife, unless she enters into marriage with another individual and subsequently dissolves that union through divorce.

Embedded within the divorce procedure is the vital appointment of two arbitrators, entrusted with the responsibility of mediating the conflicts that arise between spouses. To ensure impartiality, one arbitrator is selected from the husband's family, while the other is chosen from the wife's family. In circumstances where this arrangement proves unfeasible, alternative individuals may be designated as arbitrators. The primary objective of these arbitrators is to diligently seek a

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resolution to the dispute, with a strong emphasis on reconciliation between the estranged partners. However, should reconciliation appear unattainable, the arbitrators bear the duty of effecting the separation between the spouses. Drawing from the Sunnah, a report chronicled by Ash-Shafi'i in his esteemed work, Al-Umm, recounts an incident involving Ali ibn Abi Talib. In this account, Ubaidah As-Salmani narrates that: "A man and woman came to Ali ibn Abi Talib and each of them had a group of people with them. Ali ordered them to appoint a male arbitrator from his family and one from her family. Then he said to the arbitrators: 'Do you know what your responsibilities are? If you find that you can bring them back together, then do so. If you find that they should be separated, then do so.'

In accordance with the principles of Islamic Law, divorce without a valid and legitimate cause, as well as without exhausting all possible avenues for reconciliation, is deemed impermissible. It becomes evident that divorce is not a hasty process to be swiftly concluded within a single day; rather, it traverses various stages before reaching the ultimate dissolution of the marital bond. Such a practice serves the greater welfare of humanity. It is not within the ordinary course of affairs for the disintegration of a family to be determined in a mere gathering or through a single decision. Spouses ought to be granted a certain period of time to introspect upon their choices and endeavor to resolve any disputes or disagreements that lie between them. This approach encompasses the essence of providing an opportunity for reflection, ensuring that decisions are made with careful consideration and thoughtful contemplation.

Following divorce, a woman is obliged to observe a prescribed waiting period, the duration of which varies depending on the circumstances. Once this waiting period has elapsed, the woman is vested with absolute autonomy in her decision to enter into a new marriage. None can impede her from selecting the person with whom she wishes to unite in matrimony. Thus, the divorced woman retains complete freedom to exercise her agency, exercising her choice to marry or remain unmarried, and determining the individual she deems compatible as her life partner. No external entity possesses the right to interfere with her prerogative or infringe upon her freedom to embark upon a new marital journey. It is incumbent upon the ex-husband to part ways with his former spouse amicably, demonstrating kindness and refraining from any further intrusion into her life after the divorce has been finalized. As Allah says in the Qur'an: '*Either retain them in kindness or part with them in kindness...*' (At-Talaq), '*Then (either) retain her in honor or release her with kindness...*' (Al-Baqarah, 2:229) and '*For divorced women a provision (shall be made) in kindness, a duty for those who are conscious of Allah.*' (Al-Baqarah, 2:241) This also means that the ex-husband should keep confidential every kind of information that, if made public, may damage her interests. The same obligation applies also to the wife about her ex-husband.

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The ex-husband, who has already divorced his wife, does not have the right, and is not allowed to prevent her from remarrying someone else. This is clearly stated in the Qur'anic verses:

And when you divorce women and they have [nearly] fulfilled their term, either retain them according to acceptable terms or release them according to acceptable terms, and do not keep them, intending harm, to transgress [against them]. And whoever does that has certainly wronged himself. And do not take the verses of Allah in jest. And remember the favor of Allah upon you and what has been revealed to you of the Book and wisdom by which He instructs you. And fear Allah and know that Allah is Knowing of all things. (Al-Baqarah, 2:231)

We explained until now the right of husband to divorce his wife and the procedures which should be followed according to the Islamic Law. But Islam does not prevent women to divorce men either. Also the wife has the right to divorce her husband and free herself from him if it is necessary. If the relation between her and her husband is such that she cannot bear to live with him anymore, the woman has the right to demand the divorce. In this case there is the condition that she should return to her husband the *mahr* (the marriage dowry) and the gifts that he has given to her according to their mutual agreement.

...And it is not lawful for you to take anything of what you have given them, unless both fear that they cannot keep (themselves) within Allah's bounds; and if you fear that they cannot keep (themselves) within Allah's bounds, it is no sin on either of them about what she gives up to get herself freed (from the wedlock) ... (Al-Baqarah, 2:229)

It is reported that one day, the wife of Thabit ibn Qays, one of the first individuals who converted in Islam during the Prophet's period, went to the Prophet and said: 'O Messenger of Allah, I do not reproach Thabit ibn Qays in respect of character and religion, but I do not want to be guilty of showing anger to him.' She was implying that even though he is a good man, she was unable to get along with him. The Prophet asked her about what she had received from him and she told that she had received a garden. He asked: 'Will you give him back his garden?' And she approved. The Prophet then said to Thabit that he should accept the garden and make the divorce. According to Islamic Law, a woman is allowed to seek divorce from her husband if she has met ill treatment from him or she has another acceptable reason for the separation.

However, the return of the *mahr* is not always a precondition for divorce. It is *haram*[1] for the husband to mistreat his wife in order to make her seek the divorce so that she will return him the property that he has given her during their marriage. If at the marriage contract they have agreed not to return the *mahr*, the husband cannot demand for it. The return of the *mahr* can be demanded from him only if the wife has

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[1] Arabic word for 'forbidden', commonly used in Islamic Law for actions or things prohibited by Islamic law.

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committed a clear immorality. The Qur'an explains the situation in this way: *'…And do not make difficulties for them in order to take [back] part of what you gave them unless they commit a clear immorality.'* (An-Nisa, 4:19)

While divorce is recognized in Islam, certain limitations have been set in place, primarily for the benefit and well-being of the wife. Islamic laws explicitly prohibit divorcing one's wife during her menstruation period, prior to the completion of postnatal puerperal discharge, or in the intermenstrual interval if the husband has engaged in sexual relations with his wife subsequent to her menstruation. These temporal boundaries serve as a safeguard, ensuring that divorce is not undertaken during periods that may impose physical or emotional vulnerability on the wife. By establishing such restrictions, Islamic law seeks to foster an environment of consideration, protecting the wife's dignity and affording her the necessary space and support during these sensitive periods. The reasons for these limits are because since sexual intercourse during menstruation is haram, the idea of divorce may come through the husband's mind during this period because of sexual frustration. (Qaradawi, 2013) Whereas divorce is not allowed between two menstrual periods if intercourse has happened because it is possible that the wife may have remained pregnant during the union, unless she is pregnant and the husband knows. In this case divorce is allowed if deep antipathy exists among them and it is impossible to continue the marriage. (Qaradawi, 2013)

Empowering the Union: Unveiling the Rights of Married Women in Islamic Law

In conclusion, as elucidated in the preceding discussion, every married woman possesses the inherent entitlement to reside within the marital household alongside her husband, receiving the necessary provisions to sustain a comparable standard of living. In the event of divorce, she retains the right to receive financial support from her former husband throughout the waiting period, encompassing both her own sustenance and the welfare of any children under her care. These entitlements remain unaffected by her personal financial circumstances or individual earnings. The underlying principle acknowledges the importance of safeguarding the well-being and livelihood of women, ensuring they are afforded the necessary financial backing and support during transitional phases such as divorce.

In addition to the aforementioned rights, it is crucial to acknowledge that every woman possesses the inherent prerogative to initiate divorce proceedings from her husband in accordance with the prevailing legal framework. She retains the right to seek divorce through the judicial system, availing herself of the avenues provided by the law. Furthermore, she is entitled to inheritance from her husband and children, in alignment with the laws applicable in her jurisdiction. Importantly, her earnings and property remain solely under her ownership, unless she expressly grants her husband the right to access or control them. A fundamental aspect of her rights is the expectation of confidentiality from her spouse or ex-spouse, particularly concerning

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personal information that may cause harm. This reciprocal right ensures the preservation of privacy and protects individuals from potential harm or undue exposure within the context of their relationship.

Marriage in International Human Rights Legal Framework: Harmonizing Equality Across Boundaries

The right to marriage and to found a family is guaranteed in the Article 16 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR):

Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.

Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

This provision guarantees equal rights to both men and women without any discrimination to marriage and to divorce as well.

Similarly, European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), in its Article 12, contains the right to marry and found a family. But, differently from the UNDHR, the dissolution of marriage is not mentioned. Even though the provision provides a negative right, the European Court of Human Rights, until recently, has interpreted it from a conservative/Christian perspective denying the right to divorce claiming that 'the stability of marriage is a legitimate aim which is in the public interest'. (EGMR 11329/85 - F. v. Switzerland , 1987)The Court has ruled that Articles 8 (Right to respect for private and family life) and 12 (right to marry) of ECHR

'*cannot be interpreted in a manner guaranteeing the right to divorce*' notably because '*preparatory works on the Convention clearly indicate the will of the High Contracting Parties to deliberately exclude this right from the field of application of the Convention'*. (Ivanov and Petrova v. Bulgaria, 2011; (Case of Johnston and Others v. Ireland, 1986)

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights calls upon State Parties to provide wide protection to the family and its establishment. It provides for special protection of women before and after childbirth:

The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize that:

The widest possible protection and assistance should be accorded to the family, which is the natural and fundamental group unit of society, particularly for its establishment and while it is responsible for the care and education of dependent children. Marriage must be entered into with the free consent of the intending spouses.

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Special protection should be accorded to mothers during a reasonable period before and after childbirth. During such period working mothers should be accorded paid leave or leave with adequate social security benefits. (Art. 10(1) and (2))

Similarly, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, has established the principle of non-discrimination and the principle of equality of rights and responsibilities of men and women for entering into a marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution:

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations and in particular shall ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:

(a) The same right to enter into marriage;

(b) The same right freely to choose a spouse and to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent;

(c) The same rights and responsibilities during marriage and at its dissolution;

(d) The same rights and responsibilities as parents, irrespective of their marital status, in matters relating to their children; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount;

(e) The same rights to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to enable them to exercise these rights; (f) The same rights and responsibilities with regard to guardianship, wardship, trusteeship and adoption of children, or similar institutions where these concepts exist in national legislation; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount;

(g) The same personal rights as husband and wife, including the right to choose a family name, a profession and an occupation;

(h) The same rights for both spouses in respect of the ownership, acquisition, management, administration, enjoyment and disposition of property, whether free of charge or for a valuable consideration.

2. The betrothal and the marriage of a child shall have no legal effect, and all necessary action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify a minimum age for marriage and to make the registration of marriages in an official registry compulsory

As a conclusion, except for the ECHR, the International Human Rights Law has incorporated in its provision regarding marriage also the possibility of dissolution of marriage/right to divorce.

Albanian Family Law on Marriage and Albanian Family Law on Marriage and Divorce: Dissecting the Legal Landscape

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Marriage and divorce procedures in Albania are regulated by the Albanian Family Code, law number 9062 adopted on May 8, 2003. This law is divided into three parts: General Principles, Spouses and Children. In this paper reference will be made to the second part of the Law, which refers to the principles of marriage, rights and obligations of the spouses, marriage and divorce procedures.

The Tapestry of Matrimony: Understanding Marriage in Albanian Family Law

As one of the fundamental human rights, the right to marriage is prescribed by the Albanian Constitution. '*Everybody has the right to get married*' (Article 53). As such, it is a right that is acquired at birth and is undeniable.

Marriage, as a legal cohabitation, is founded on the moral and legal equality of the spouses, in the mutual sentiment of love, respect and understanding, as the basis of unity in the family. Marriage and family enjoy special protection from the state. (Omari, 2007)

The first article of the Albanian Family Code describes the notion of marriage as a legal bound between the spouses. The definition highlights the principle of equality and the principle of protection from the state as two basic principles under which marriage is based. Based on the principle of equality, both spouses are equal in their family relations, meaning that they have equal rights and responsibilities before the law.

In Albania, the legal age for entering into matrimony is set at 18 years old, as stipulated in Article 7. Hence, attaining adulthood stands as a primary prerequisite for the validity of a marriage within the country. Nevertheless, there are exceptional circumstances wherein marriage under this age may be permitted, subject to a court decision, under compelling justifications. Moreover, for a marriage to be legally recognized, it necessitates the unequivocal and voluntary consent of both prospective spouses, as stated in Article 8. This emphasis on consent underscores a fundamental tenet of marriage, highlighting the significance of free will. By designating free will as the cornerstone of marital unions, it becomes apparent that marriage is a matter of choice rather than obligation. Every individual possesses the liberty to exercise their autonomy in deciding whether to enter into the institution of marriage or not. Equally crucial is the freedom to select one's prospective spouse. These rights exemplify the remarkable degree of freedom enshrined within the legislation pertaining to marital bonds.

The legal framework in Albania views marriage as a contractual arrangement. In accordance with this perspective, the act of marriage must take place in the presence of a civil registration clerk, as specified in Article 28. The clerk assumes the responsibility of publicly announcing the union, while the spouses formalize their commitment through a notarial act. This act serves as a declaration, allowing the spouses to determine the administration of their financial resources, earnings, and property, exercising their complete volition (Article 69). Within this context, spouses

hold the prerogative to choose the regime that governs their marital property. They may opt for a system of community property, separated property, or even a combination thereof, based on mutual agreement (Article 69). To ensure the validity of the marital contract, it is imperative that both parties possess mental capacity, enabling them to comprehend the implications and significance of entering into matrimony (Article 12). By framing marriage as a contractual bond, the Albanian Family Law establishes a framework that upholds the principles of consent, public declaration, and autonomy in the management of financial matters for married couples.

Unraveling Divorce: Navigating the Terrain

Within the Family Code of Albania, a significant section is specifically allocated to address the various forms of marriage dissolution, outlining the requisite procedures and the implications arising from divorce. The termination of a marriage reaches its definitive conclusion upon the issuance of a final judgment by a competent court. Either the spouses themselves or their authorized representatives are eligible to submit a divorce petition to the court, initiating the legal process. The Family Code lays down the procedural framework through which the dissolution of marriage is pursued, ensuring a systematic and regulated approach to handle such cases. By delineating the procedures and outlining the consequences, the Albanian legal system seeks to govern the divorce process and provide clarity for all parties involved.

Dissolving Bonds Amicably: Unveiling Divorce with Mutual Consent

One of the cases of divorce according to the Albanian legislation is the will of both spouses. If both of them agree to divorce, they can submit the request to the court for approval, together with a settlement agreement that stipulated the terms for the dissolution of marriage. (Article 125) It can be understood that in the case of reciprocal consent for the marriage dissolution, two legal conditions should be met: the mutual consent of the spouses, and the agreement between them about the consequences of the divorce. Obviously, before the signature of the mutual consent for the dissolution of marriage, a series of discussions should occur in order to leave time to the spouses to rethink about their decision. (FC, Article 134) During these court hearings, the court asks each spouse first separately and then both of them together about their will to end their marriage. (FC, Article 126) In the case of hesitation from either one of the spouses, the court dismisses the request for the divorce with mutual consent (Omari, 2007) Thus, during the hearings the court should verify whether the consent of each of the spouses is real, conscious and free and not under the pressure or blackmailing from the other spouse. Spouses can revoke their request for divorce at any stage and the court hearings. In cases when only one of the spouses revokes their consent, the court will address the spouses towards other forms of divorce.

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It is noticeable that the sole will of the spouses to dissolve their marriage is not enough for them to be considered divorced. The Albanian legislator has prescribed that for the divorce to be valid, first a public authority must verify the compliance of the necessary conditions for the marriage dissolution. For example, while considering the case of a divorce, the court must consider whether the spouses have or not minor children. In the first case, spouse should agree on how each of them will exercise their parental responsibilities against their children, by thus deciding who will live with the children, deciding about their growth and education and the way of keeping in touch with the other parent. (FC, Article 127-130) On the other case, when they do not have minor children, the dissolution of marriage is easier and if both spouse give the consent, the court has a less active role and there a lower opportunity to refuse the divorce.

In the case of dissolution of marriage with the consent of both spouses, the spouses do not have the legal obligation of proving in front of the court the reason of their divorce, thus preventing the exposure of their private life and giving the possibility to the spouses to separate with dignity and kindness. In this case, where a mutual consent to divorce exists, the motive of the divorce is considered as not important for the decision of the court. (Omari, 2007) However, despite being the most efficient way of ending a marriage, the case of consent of both spouses is very rare in practice in Albania (Omari, 2007)

One Spouse's Plea: Analyzing Divorce at the Request of a Party

In cases when spouses do not agree on the dissolution of marriage, each of them can file the request at the court. In this case there should be a cause for the acceptance of the divorce from the court. The Family Code enumerated a list of acceptable causes that can lead the court to decide on the divorce:

Either spouse can request the dissolution of marriage when, due to continuous quarrels, maltreatment, severe insults, adultery, incurable mental illness, lengthy penal punishment of the spouse or due to any other cause constituting repeated violations of marital obligations, a joint life becomes impossible and the marriage has lost its purpose for one or for both of the spouses (Article 132)

However, the list is not exhaustive, by thus leaving more space to the court to judge about the necessity of the dissolution of marriage case by case. In such cases of irretrievable breakdown of the marriage, the court can approve the divorce in any case that it believes that marriage obligations are violated by one or both of the spouses and that marriage has lost its purpose. The law prescribes the possibility to postpone the judgement about the divorce in cases when the spouse is pregnant, upon her request, up to one year after the birth of the child. (Article 137) In cases that spouses, after divorce decide to remarry, they must undertake again all the procedures of a new marriage. (Article 143)

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The Intersection of Islamic Laws and Albanian Family Laws: A Human Rights Perspective

The concept of indissolubility of eternity of the marriage, as supported and promoted by the Catholic Church has been considered by many modern scholars as a value of the civilization. (Omari, 2007) In this contest, it is universally accepted that the stability of the family as a result of marriage is a valuable condition for the growth and education of children. (Omari, 2007) However, from a human rights perspective, even though divorce is not promoted, neither is it prohibited, in certain cases when the continuation of marriage at any cost, causes the infringement of other human rights.

Contrary to the Catholic Church principle, human rights law, Islamic and Albanian laws allow marriage dissolution. Article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights acknowledges the possibility of dissolution of marriage by mentioning the principles of equality of rights and non-discrimination for getting married, during marriage and at its dissolution. Whereas the Article 12 of European Convention on Human Rights has omitted the right to divorce and does not include legislation about the dissolution of marriage. The European Center for Law and Justice, (ECLJ, 2014) emphasizes that the primary purpose of the right to marry is to provide a stable social framework for the founding of a family. According to van der Sloot, the authors of the ECHR omitted the right to divorce not because they were against granting of such a right, but because the scope of the ECHR was to provide a list of core rights and freedoms, not the dissolution of limitation of any of them. (Sloot, 2014) Currently, the principle of marriage dissolution is now considered an absolutely necessary institute in the legal domain of every country. In countries where the Catholic Church has had a very influential position in the state and society, it has been very difficult to reach to the adoption of laws that allow divorce. For example, Italy has approved the dissolution of marriage only in 1970, Germany in 1977, and Ireland only in 1997 (Bonilini, 2004). We must emphasize here that Albania easily adopted the law allowing the divorce not because it considered individual freedom as of fundamental value, but because as one of the former socialist countries, religious influence over legal principles and values was completely lacking. Article 37 of the Albanian Socialist Republic Constitution of 1976, which was in place until 1991, stipulated that "The State recognizes no religion, and supports atheistic propaganda in order to implant a scientific materialistic world outlook in the people". Despite of the different historical reasons and conditions, we must say that both Islamic and Albanian laws allow marriage dissolution, thus being compatible with fundamental human rights and freedoms in this regard. Dissolution of marriage with the consent of both spouses shows the compatibility of the Albanian Family Law and Islamic Law with the constitutional principle of individual freedom and also of international human rights, where the right of the individuals not only to decide to get married but also to end

their marriage is under the best interest of the individual and compatible also with the right to live in dignity.

Both Islamic Law and the Albanian Family Code share a common understanding of marriage as a contractual agreement between spouses. This mutual recognition emphasizes the importance of formalizing the marriage contract in the presence of competent witnesses. Similar to any contractual relationship, the marriage contract holds the potential for dissolution if it no longer serves its intended purpose. Adhering to the principles outlined in Islamic Law, Muslim couples residing in Albania are also required to comply with the legal marriage procedures prescribed by the country. This entails conducting a civil marriage ceremony in accordance with Albanian legislation to establish their legal marital status. By fulfilling these requirements, the spouses gain legal protection in the event of divorce, while also securing their rights and obligations as a married couple within the jurisdiction. Such rights encompass various aspects, including cohabitation rights, property rights, inheritance rights, rights concerning their children, and any other entitlements arising from the marital union.

However, it is crucial to note that while both Islamic Law and the Albanian Family Code permit divorce, this should not be misconstrued as a blanket approval without any restrictions or grounds. Both legal frameworks regard divorce as a final resort and necessitate adherence to specific and transparent procedures, which span multiple stages. This approach has been implemented to preserve the well-being of the family unit, affording the spouses an opportunity to reflect on their decision regarding divorce. Only when reconciliation proves unattainable does the formal declaration of divorce take place.

In contrast to Islamic Law, the Albanian legal system does not mandate the appointment of arbitrators to resolve disputes between spouses. Nevertheless, since Albanian law does not explicitly prohibit this practice, Muslim couples residing in Albania have the flexibility to employ this method as a means of reconciliation prior to pursuing official legal divorce proceedings. In both normative systems, either spouse has the right to initiate the dissolution of marriage. However, Islamic law imposes certain restrictions on when a husband can divorce his wife, with an emphasis on protecting the wife's interests. Conversely, there are no time restrictions on when a woman can divorce her husband. The sole limitation in this scenario pertains to the mahr, the gift given by the husband to the wife on the day of marriage. Should the wife request a divorce, she is expected to return the mahr to the husband. However, if the couple had previously agreed that the mahr would not be returned, there is no obligation to do so.

The concept of mahr is not recognized within the framework of Albanian laws. Since mahr is not established through a legal contract but rather through a religious or verbal agreement, it cannot be encompassed by the provisions governing the division

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of property following divorce. This is because Albanian property laws only validate written contracts, not verbal ones. Consequently, the contractual agreement regarding mahr in Islamic marriages cannot be deemed compatible with Albanian courts as a contract pertaining to property rights, specifically the property gifted to the wife by her husband. Consequently, the return of mahr cannot be legally demanded within Albanian courts. Both Islamic law and the Albanian Family Law grant ex-spouses the right to remarry each other or marry someone else of their choosing after divorce.

Conclusions

Despite the inherent variations that can be expected when comparing religious norms with legal norms, Islamic Law and Albanian Law exhibit numerous similarities in their treatment of marriage and divorce. These legal systems share fundamental principles that view marriage as a contractual agreement between spouses, necessitating the presence of competent witnesses during its formation. Consequently, similar to any contract, the marriage contract can be dissolved if it no longer serves its intended purpose. While differences between the legislations are to be anticipated, they do not result in incompatibility or conflicts between their respective normative rules. As a result, it becomes feasible for Muslim couples in Albania to fulfill their religious obligations concerning marriage and divorce, while simultaneously meeting their legal obligations under the Albanian Family Law and fully adhering to international human rights standards, all without violating any Islamic Law principles related to marriage and divorce.

By providing a comprehensive description and analysis of Islamic divorce procedures, this paper challenges prevailing assumptions that women in Islam are legally subordinate to men and financially dependent on their husbands. The existence of dowry traditions, the recognition of women's rights to engage in paid labor, and the clear division of property between spouses all serve as evidence that women are not regarded as inferior to men within Islamic teachings. These norms not only reflect the role Islam assigns to women in the context of marriage but also facilitate the divorce process. The unequivocal and stringent separation of property not only streamlines divorce proceedings but also empowers women with greater financial autonomy, enabling them to initiate divorce with greater agency. As Rapoport claims, (Rapoport, Marriage, Money and Divorce in Medieval Islamic Society, 2005) Muslim women obtaining economic independence, or bringing their husbands to court, or opting out of marriage undermines the general idea of domination of men over women in Islamic laws.

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Applied Data Science and the Open Innovation Strategies

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Abstract

Smart organizations that can successfully leverage value from their data gain unparalleled competitive advantages in an increasingly challenging and complex digital era. The use of the term "open" has increased exponentially, giving rise to concepts such as open data, open innovation, open science, open knowledge, and open education, among others (Corrales-Garay et al., 2019). A new paradigm of innovation presents a model that uses both external and internal sources of ideas and technologies. As organizations turn to digital transformation strategies, they are also increasingly forming teams around the practice of Data Science, that aims to understand and analyze the vast diversity of phenomena with data and can vary greatly from industry to academy. Applied Data Science busts ideas at the intersections between the digital and physical worlds. After a decade from the introduction of Open Innovation in the vocabulary of Management, the research stream has progressed along multiple paths, crossing the boundaries of the theories on innovation and technology where the concept was originally conceived. Today the combination of Applied Data Science and open innovation strengthens the decision support base and helps to develop new tools. This paper gives an overview of the possible contributions of Applied Data Science and the open innovation strategies to support a data-driven decision-making process. This synthesis of current research aims to help to drive innovation by assisting and inspiring effective applied data science strategy, as well as providing valuable insights for both practitioners and researchers in the field.

Keywords: Marketing Strategy, Data Analytics, Knowledge-Driven Societies, Smart Innovation, Data-Driven, Decision-Making, Smart Industry

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Prescription Trends of Drugs Used for Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia in Albania During 2010-2020

Laerta Kakariqi

Abstract

To describe trends in out-of-hospital utilization and prescribing of drugs used for benign prostatic hyperplasia in Albania using the Anatomic Therapeutic Chemical Classification-Defined Daily Dose (ATC/DDD methodology). The study was retrospective and we analyzed the prescription and consumption of this drug class in the primary health care. The data were assembled from Health Insurance Institute in Tirana (HII), Albania and analysed for the period 2010-2020. The data about the consumption of drugs were expressed as a number of Defined Daily Dose (DDDs) /1000inhabitants/day. We also collected and analysed the data of import and domestic production of drugs, which altogether represent the real consumption of drugs in the country. The consumption of drugs used for prostatic hyperplasia was 2.71-6.62 DDD/1000 inhabitants/day respectively in 2010-2020. The drugs included in the reimbursement list scheme were alfuzosin, finasteride, tamsulosin, terazosin. The agent most prescribed was tamsulosin 1.52-3.67 DDD/1000 inhabitants/day reflecting a specific increase of approximately 140%, followed by alfuzosin 0.48-1.24 DDD/1000 inhabitants/day 2010-2020. There can be noted a visible discrepancy between the consumption of these drugs and the prostatic morbidity data (cases/1000 inhabitants) which indicates that only a part of patients do benefit from the reimbursement scheme. It does exist a significant increase at national level in the use of prostatic drugs, but the values are still very low in comparison with developed countries. There exist differences between the consumption of these drugs among different regions of our country. The highest values of consumption are achieved in Tirana, with a substantial difference compared to other regions of Albania.

Keywords: drug utilization, DDD, benign prostatic hyperplasia

Stay and Employment of Aliens According to the New Albanian Law on Migration

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PhD

Abstract

In June 2021, Albania adopted a new law no. 79/2021 "On aliens[1]" which repealed the law no. 108/2013. The law regulates the regimes of entry, residence, employment and exit of aliens from the territory of Albania. The purpose of the law is to align as much as possible the Albanian migration legislation to the EU legislation, filling in the gaps identified during the *screening* process of the chapter 24 on "Justice, freedom and security"[2]. In addition to facilitating the procedures for obtaining a residence permit and improving the mechanisms for issuing electronic visas *on-line*, the new law foresees the provision of a unique permit, which guarantees a single procedure for aliens who want to work and stay in Albania, thus fulfilling one of the shortcomings of the previous legislation. The single permit is a new type of permit introduced, that shall comprise both the residence permit and work permit which previously were issued as two separate documents. It shall allow aliens to reside legally in Albania for working purposes. This paper aims to introduce the situation of the new legal framework and its implementation, on the staying and the employment of aliens. Therefore, through this paper we will try to provide information on the mechanisms that regulate the stay for employment purpose of aliens in Albania.

Keywords: aliens, immigration, EU legislation, Albanian migration legislation, residence permit.

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[1] "Alien" shall mean a person who, whether a citizen or a stateless person, is not an Albanian national (Art. 3).

[2] Këshilli i Ministrave, "Relacion shoqërues për projektligjin "Për të huajt", në:
https://www.parlament.al/Files/ProjektLigje/20210214210347RELACION%20-%20TE%20HUAJT.pdf

Psychomotor Aspects of Preschoolers

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Abstract

The problem of scientific research in motor activities in the first years of life is of particular importance, because in these years they are basic elements necessary for the formation of personality. With motor education of preschool age, the foundations are laid for an organic programming of pre-sports and sports activities, giving at the same time the essential elements of the life of the individual himself. Among the values of motor preschool education, there are great benefits in terms of physiological, psychological and social of the child, significantly facilitating regular learning in both school and pre-sports. The purpose of the study is to sensitize teachers, as the progress of pedagogy goes through the presentation of the methodology of body work during preschool education. Children aged 3-5 years were taken as the object of study, a very critical period, which coincides with the beginning of psychomotor elements. For the realization of our study, we have selected 4 kindergartens in the District of Tirana, alternating with control and experimental gardens as well as private and public kindergartens. 1200 children were tested (3 age groups x 400 children for each age group). Study period April-November 2021. All data analysis was performed using the statistical package SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences, version 20.0). The results for the ages were obtained in the tests: building the bridge, jumping forward from the place, static balance, throwing the tennis ball, placing the cubes, distributing the postcards, kicking the ball with the feet, etc. The results show the success and failures in each of the tests performed. The values of preschool psychomotor education are evidenced by the great benefits in terms of physiological, psychological and social of the child, significantly facilitating regular learning in both preschool and pre-sports.

Keywords: psychomotor, coordination, psychological, social benefit, pre-sport activity.

Physical Activity, Fitness After the Period of the Pandemic

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Abstract

Around the world, the years 2019–2020 were uncommon. Isolation as a result of the pandemic caught mankind off unprepared and terrified, forcing them to stay in isolation for an extended period of time. One of the first signs over worsened people's physical as well as mental states was a lack of activity. After this period, we performed a survey that we sent through a link with a focus on 18–45-year-olds, and 511 people were asked. The survey's purpose was to evaluate the rate of physical activity level in the population after the pandemic period. To create the survey and handle the data, we utilized the Microsoft Forms electronic platform. The poll received responses from 69.3% of females and 31.3 percent of males. The age group 18–25 years provided 88.8% of the responses, while the age group 30-45 years provided 12.2%. 93.2 percent of respondents said they were aware of the importance of physical activity's advantages. 25.7 percent of respondents said they were not physically active; 30.9 percent said they were active several times a month; 13.9 percent said they were active only three times a week; 15.9 percent said they were active five times a week, and 16.9 percent said they were active more than five times a week. The following is how they classified themselves in terms of physical fitness: 19.8 percent did "very well," 30.1 percent did "good," 31.3 percent did "average," 15.6 percent did "insufficient," and 8.2 percent did "poor." Running was the most popular type of physical activity, with 29.2 percent preferring it over walking, 25.4 percent preferring weight training, and 11.3 percent preferring other forms. As a result of our survey, which was conducted to see the rate of physical activity level after the time of the pandemic, despite a high result that claimed to know the importance of the benefits of physical activity, the study concluded that there was a low level of physical activity among the people. Data that is consistent with Eurostat and INSTAT's (2019) study, which shows that 80% of Albania's population is inactive.

Keywords: fitness, health, physical activity, physical exercise

Sensorineural Hearing Loss in Hemodialysis Patients

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Abstract

Chronic renal failure can affect all organ systems. Senses are not exception and hearing impairment is common, particularly the sensorineural hearing loss (SNHL). The object of this study is to put in evidence the presence of sensorineural hearing loss in hemodialysis patients that are presented to our department. This is a transversal study. In this study we have included randomly 29 patients that were under treatment with hemodialysis. The period of time is 2015. All data collected are elaborated with Microsoft office 2010. In this study 31% of patients were female and 69% male. 31% were 56-65 year old, 24% were 66-75 years old, 21% were 45-55 years old and 17% were over 75 years old. 41% of all patients were in the first year of treatment with hemodialysis, 31% were in the second year, 10% were in third year, 10% have 4th years, 4% have 5th year and 4% were 6 years under treatment with hemodialysis. In our study 17% of patients in hemodialysis had severe sensorineural hearing loss, 41% had moderate sensorineural hearing loss, 21% had mild sensorineural hearing loss and only 21% of patients had normal hearing. The hearing loss was more evident in high frequencies. In all patients with sensorineural hearing loss the hearing loss was bilateral. Sensorineural hearing loss is very common in patients with chronic renal failure undergoing hemodialysis (79 %). The hearing loss is more evident in high frequencies. The hearing loss was moderate sensorineural hearing loss in majority of cases.

Keywords: sensorineural hearing loss, Hemodialysis, chronic renal failure

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The Importance of Postural Awareness in Young People

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Abstract

For many years, posture has been one of the most studied health issues because of its consequences and its prevalence among young people. The body shape changes a lot throughout life and it is part of the natural development, but during puberty, period posture seems to be more flexible due to many factors. Posture is a physiological position in which the various body segments work together to maintain balance against gravity in everyday tasks such as standing, sitting, or lying down. Our research aims to look at the rising trend of young people becoming more conscious of their posture. For this study, we used Jab Ref 2.10 to collect as much scientific data as possible that was directly connected to the study's goal. We focused our analysis all over the research articles that stated data about the role of the posture background and its application in everyday tasks. In this context, our study revealed inconsistent data due to this possible correlation between posture awareness and its use in daily live tasks. Almost all of the scientific studies analyzed found that while young people are aware of posture, they do not completely appreciate it, resulting in back discomfort and a deterioration in numerous learning mechanisms, compromising their academic advancement considerably. It is still unknown what role postural awareness plays in everyday tasks and how it is used. In the future, further research is needed to clarify all of the inconsistencies found in this study regarding the association between posture awareness and proper posture in young individuals.

Keywords: posture awareness, posture background, poor posture, standing-sitting-lying position, young people.