



Research Article

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Albania and the Education Policies of Italy from the Beginning Until the End of the 30s of the Twentieth Century in Archival Documents and in the Albanian Press in General

Jani Sota

Prof. Assoc. PH.D.,
"Aleksander Moisiu" University,
Durrës, Albania

Lindita Lutaj

PH.D.,
"Aleksander Moisiu" University,
Durrës, Albania

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36941/ajis-2021-0066>**Abstract**

This paper is dedicated to the education policies of Italy for the expansion and consolidation of Italian schools in Albania, from the point of view of archival documents and the Albanian press at that time. The study focuses primarily on the efforts of the Italian government to organize the education system, establish schools, prepare programs and textbooks, equip schools with the necessary acts, etc., as an attempt to outline the European profile of education in Albania after 1912. As a part of the general analysis on the effects of the Italian schools on the life of Albanian society, would undoubtedly be the analysis of the "individual" type that it produced. On the one hand, the changes after the World War I generated a complex, renewed and more productive national education, but on the other hand, it was highly dependent on the Italian-Albanian education policies, and consequently, oriented towards a more open education system which promoted the cultural tendencies and aspirations of the Albanian nation. New democratic developments in Albania, gave us the opportunity to shed light on Italian-Albanian education policies within the context of the Italian-Albanian relations. Thanks to this, prominent figures left in oblivion, their work for the spread of new pedagogical ideas and the development of Western schools are given the acknowledgment that they deserve. The tendency to embrace and adapt those policies to the conditions of Albania of that time, reflect the important phenomenon of its developments and intellectual thought, so that the school could help more in the civilization and education of the Albanian society.

Keywords: education policy, strategy, educational activities, educational system, school, cultural society

1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to make a modest contribution in the field of history of education, pedagogical thought and educational policies in Albania. As the reader will notice, the object of analysis has been the period from the late 80s of the nineteenth century to the beginning of World War II. In

this paper we have tried to treat Italian-Albanian educational policies objectively both through the analysis of genuine bilateral relations and within the context of the Italian-Albanian relations.

To give a more complete idea of the impact of Italian education policy, the paper is preceded by an introduction, that shows the organization structure, which is based on unpublished archival materials stored in the Central State Archive, the methodology and forms of historical research, theoretical-comparative analysis, as well as the Albanian press in general and the press specialized in education.

Issues are addressed within the limits allowed by a scientific article, by combining the chronological criterion with the problem criterion. Conceived in two issues, the process analyzes its entire progress. At the epicenter of the first developments in this field is the comprehensive effort of the Italian government to contribute to the development of Albanian education and culture and to channel it as soon as possible in the annals of the European educational policy. This structure reflects the educational policies of Albania during these years, with all its conditions and consequences. It also records the most important developments and nuances in accordance with the general changes of each period, cooperation and mutual interference of the Italian-Albanian education system on the one hand and other political, economic and social factors on the other, etc. Secondly, it is pointed out the democratic role of the Albanian government, which, with the visionary policy of "open doors", performed a high act of civilization in the important field of education for the new generations of the Albanian nation. Catholic clerical institutions also played an important role.

Thirdly, it is emphasized the pro-Italian attitude of Albanian intellectuals, especially of the school youth, which with its momentum and energy, openly manifested sensitivity to new pedagogical ideas and developments in Western schools. In the late 20s, under the influence of progressive currents of pedagogy and other democratic and humanistic elements, these forces became the bearers of the national aspirations of the Albanian people for a national school with a strong European profile.

The paper is the result of a long research and study activity based on the best achievements of Albanian historiography, especially with the main works such as *"History of Albania"* (Tirana, 1983), *"History of education and Albanian pedagogical thought"*, (Tirana, 2003) as well as other works of researchers in this field. Thus, regarding the contribution of Italian schools in the education of the new generation in Albania and in general for the political background, in addition to the above mentioned texts, we based this paper on the works of Zoi Xoxi, Kristo Frashëri, Iliaz Goga, Vedat Islami, Jashar Rexhepagiq, Hajrulla Koliqi, etc., who give us a valuable contribution in this field from the 80s of the ninetieth century until the end of the third decade of the twentieth century. In addition, the studies of foreigners, especially those from Italy, have been used to see on a comparative level the progress of similar processes related, especially to the period of the 20s and 30s of the twentieth century.

In this study, which is the result of several years of collection and research work, we are mainly based on archival documents (Italian legation fund, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education, etc.) located in the Central State Archive of the Republic of Albania, in Tirana, and partly in the press of the time, which sometimes, replaces the lack of necessary resources. We also relied on some Albanian authors, who, having no fundamental problem with education, have touched it with talent.

After collecting archival documentation and historiographical literature related to the field of study, the paper is based on the following methodological steps: Descriptive or narrative method helps us give a theoretical overview regarding the field of study. This method prevails in the second and third issue of this paper. While the analysis of statistical data related to Italian schools in Albania, makes it possible to shed light on the knowledge of educational processes of the past and the main developments and trends, from the perspective of the interests of both countries. The breakdown of the most important factors that defined and modeled the policies pursued by the Italian and Albanian governments in the field of education and their consequences on the entire Albanian society of the time, constitute the main purpose of this paper.

Without claiming for an exhaustive treatment and convinced that further studies will enrich the achievements so far, the scientific article will serve to fill a gap in the genuine studies of this field, seen from the point of view of the archival documentation of that time.

2. The Educational Heritage and Policies of Italy Until the Creation of the New Albanian State (1920)

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, when the end of the Ottoman Empire seemed imminent, Italy made strategic claims in the Adriatic, but encountered the long-held *status quo* plans that Austria-Hungary developed a dense activity to strengthen its political, economic, religious and educational influence in the Balkans. Thus the Italian state began its penetration on the eastern shores of the Adriatic, especially in Albania, in fierce rivalry with the monarchy of Vienna.

One of the fields, in which both Great Powers of the tripartite were interested was education; the expansion and spread of the school network, in order to win over the Albanians, in order to open the way for the further anti-Russian front, until the creation of a new political situation in the Albanian territories.

The beginning of the official secular education policy in Albania was inaugurated by the Italian state in the academic year 1888-1889¹, when with the good intent to educate the children of Italian citizens in these areas, it established its state schools² in Shkodra, Vlora, Preveza and Ioannina. (Kastarti, 1963). Later on, the Italian government, by "opening a ray of light in the old structure of the protectorate and the Austro-Hungarian ecclesiastical one" (Kastarti, 1963), acted with energy to bring Catholic clergy to Albania and to establish different categories of ecclesiastical school institutions. All these schools were under the exclusive protection of the Italian diplomatic missions in these areas. In the curriculum of these schools the main subject was by the Italian language, religion and some practical habits. Girls, for example, learned to cut and sew. An Italian school was also opened in Arberesh of Zadar in 1893, which was attended by the Arberesh children there. This school was opened until 1915 (Rexhepagic, 1970).

"The role of these schools was extremely important, - says researcher Willy Kamsi, - "because, despite the countless difficulties, they spread culture among the people, because students became disseminators of such knowledge by transmitting Western culture to the environments in which they lived" (Kamsi, 2013). According to him, "these schools also formed capable young people with cultural predispositions, as well as with a tendency towards the use and delivery of the Albanian language" (Kamsi, 2013). This is also confirmed by the documents of the time, which testify to the daily life problems treated in the Albanian language, not only by the clergy but also by the laity.

The implementation of the Italian government's education policy in Albania raised concerns in both Vienna and the Turkish government itself. Despite the measures taken by the multinational monarchy of Vienna, intervening with both the Turkish and Greek governments, Italian primary schools were initially put in rivalry with both Greek and Turkish schools (Sinani, 1970). Despite the political and administrative difficulties that arose at the beginning of the practical implementation of Italian school policy by other interested countries in Albania, it also had favorable circumstances, because the Austrian schools in Albanian lands, together with religious and Catholic institutions in the Italian language, favored Italian politics. Although a few years later the Italian school intervention experienced a temporary halt and for internal reasons some Italian schools were closed, in the city of Shkodra, where the strongest confrontation took place between Vienna and Rome, the Italian schools continued their activity as they used to, despite the significant reduction in the number of students

The beginning of the new century marked an increase in efforts for general Italian penetration, especially in the field of culture and religion, in strong rivalry with Austro-Hungarian politics.

¹ *The Italian language was introduced in Albania in 1852, when the Catholic religious order of the Jesuits was established in Albania and started to open its schools in Italian. (Taken from: Sota, J., (2012). History of schools and ideas for education in the world: From the beginning until eighteenth century, Tirana: "Extra", p. 302.)*

² *Schools were complex educational and sanitary institutions. These included kindergartens, a 5-grade elementary school (for boys and girls), and an night school for adults. There were also ambulances for various health services. (Dedja, B., (1972). "Notes on the history of Albanian pedagogical thought", Tirana: "Mihal Duri", p. 86.)*

The tendency of the Italian government to spread its influence in Albania includes several other companies. Thus, an important role played the effort to attract Albanian students to Italy, the re-establishment of the Albanian language department at St. Adrian's College, the special importance given to this institution after that, the establishment of the Albanian language department at the Oriental Studies Institution in Naples, publications about Albania, etc. (Sinani, 1970).

In all these cultural activities that aimed for the spread of new educational ideas in Albania, the Italian government had as unquestionable support the Catholic clergy (with all its institutions) who, with all the connections with the Habsburgs, helped outline the European profile in the Albanian tradition. This came as a result of the foreign policy of Italy, which spoke out against the exclusive protectorate of Austria and began to place in Albania orders and Italian congregations as well as to open its own schools with clerical staff. The Austrian diplomatic representatives in Albania themselves have been forced to accept the "great commitment of the Catholic clergy" (Myzyri, 1996) to work and support the Italian government.

The fact that the Catholic Church in particular has supported the Italian government's influence in Albanian territory and in the Balkans shows how strongly Italy has been associated with religion in designing its plans. The Turkish invader could not close the schools, which were motivated by the need of the presence of religion. In this regard, one of the issues of the cultural magazine "*Leka*" of 1929 reads literally: "Who would have the courage to say anything about the opening of schools in the Italian language in the first decade of the twentieth century? It took the power of Italy to impose on Turkey the opening of Albanian schools only for Catholics, under the pretext of religious schools"³.

At first Italy helped the schools in the Italian language, but starting from 1890 it started to contribute materially to the schools in the Albanian language. Referring to an Austro-Hungarian consular report, it turns out that in the Shkodra, in 1909, the Italian government helped fund 6 schools, while on the eve of the World War I the number of funded schools increased to 21⁴.

Italy also spread its influence through school literature, which was published in Rome. At first texts and brochures were published in only Italian, and in 1900 in Albanian. Even today some texts are preserved, such as: "*Libro di lettura per le Scuole popolari italiane. Parte I*", published in Rome in 1895 (Prendushi, 1974). This reading book has been used in Catholic schools in Albanian territories. The first Albanian language books were written, according to the example of this textbook and were published in Rome. Books such as - primers, reading books, grammars and other texts - were used in schools until 1915 and during the World War I.

This publishing and school activity is best illustrated by the official act of the Montenegrin consulate in Shkodra, dated February 15, 1900, which states that "in Shkodra a brochure, a newspaper and a calendar are being secretly distributed free of charge in the Albanian language. [...] The authors are Italianophiles: the Abbot of Mirdita, Father Zuba, the two priests don Marku Shllaku and don Nikolla. They have their own committee, which compiles all kinds of books in the villages. Teaching continues in the school of Mirdita, and also in Zadrime where there are schools for boys and girls. 13 new schools are planned to be established - all under the pretext of clergy houses. [...] The current Turkish government has no idea about this. "It is true that the clergy will say that they will teach their children only the science of religion, and nothing more"⁵. At the end of the letter, the representative of the consulate L. Mijuskovic writes: "This movement of schools through the villages is a new system of royal propaganda, which, as I think, can be very important to develop royal influence in these parts,

³ *Leka*, Issue 3 - 4, cultural periodical every two months, body of the L.E.K.A. Society, Shkodra, 1929, p. 63.

⁴ Haus und Hof Staats Archiv, Wien, Politisches Archiv, Albanien (hereinafter: HHStA,PAA), in the Archive of the Institute of History, Tirana, Vj. 28-3-453. Report of Consul Lazar Mijuskovic sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome on February 15, 1900.

⁵ Haus und Hof Staats Archiv, Wien, Politisches Archiv, Albanien (hereinafter: HHStA,PAA), in the Archive of the Institute of History, Tirana, Vj. 28-3-453. Report of Consul Lazar Mijuskovic sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome on February 15, 1900.

and therefore I am announcing it to you"⁶.

Italy's partial assistance in opening Italian and Albanian language schools in Albanian and Southeast European territories cannot be explained solely by religious and cultural reasons alone. The primary role in this point of view has been played by the economic and political moments. *"For Italy, the Albanian territories from the military-political point of view, - emphasizes the academician Jashar Rexhepagiq, - have been a favorable field for new conquests, thus, since the end of the nineteenth century its propaganda has been tried, with the help of open consulates in these territories to benefit from the Albanian princes for their own political purposes and has helped to open schools with teaching in the Albanian language"* (Rexhepagiq, 1970).

Italy's intention to use the school and the teaching staff for its own political purposes is best evidenced by its assistance in teaching the Albanian language in Arberesh of Zadar, even in the Normal School, the Civic School for boys and girls, as well as in the private school "Lega Nazionale". In these schools, teaching was never conducted in the Albanian language, but was taught as a special subject for the children of the Arberesh of Zadar, from 1901 to 1918 (Koller, 2012).

Albania's declaration of independence marked an important turning point for national education as well. It ended that long period in which the Albanian language and school were banned by the Ottoman invaders; where for the sacred issue of the spread of Albanian education many patriots, teachers and prominent thinkers were martyred. On the other hand it opened a new era for the organized development of national education.

The Provisional Government of Vlor⁷, headed by Ismail Qemali, with Minister of Education Luigi Gurakuqi and other patriots, such as Lef Nosi, Aleksandër Xhuvani, Jani Minga, Sotir Peci, Sali Gjuka, Mati Logoreci, etc., even in very difficult circumstances of that time, gave a valuable contribution in outlining the European profile of the Albanian school. They were educated in developed Western countries: Italy, France, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, etc. and learned in those schools not only solid and modern culture, but also recognized the models of those schools. It is normal that they would like these models and would find it even easier to implement or adapt them to the conditions of the Albanian school. Therefore, the sensitivity to the new pedagogical theories of the developments of the Western school was a progressive tendency, which turned into a current, which year after year became stronger, directly affecting the outline of the European profile of the Albanian school.

Favorable historical circumstances should be added to the educational activity of Italy, which together with the Albanian activists, tried to preserve, but also to expand the network of its schools in Albania.

The great and active propaganda, the use of numerous financial means on the one hand, and the direct or indirect support of some representatives of the intellectual strata as well as of the Catholic clergy, on the other, favored Italian educational policies. In addition to the schools of Shkodra, Durres and Vlor^a, it was decided to establish a boys' school in Tirana. At the same time, Italian primary schools were planned to open in Kavaja and Shijak, a secondary school in Shkodra and several vocational schools in other areas⁸. The number of students in Italian schools in Durres and Vlor^a also increased significantly. In addition, the Italian government had awarded scholarships to 50 students to continue

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ The Provisional Government of Vlor^a was the first government established by the Assembly of Vlor^a on 4th December 1912. Its creation was decided by the National Assembly of Vlor^a, which at the request of Ismail Qemali determined the composition of the government. Ismail Qemali, in addition to the post of Prime Minister, also held the post of Foreign Minister. The Assembly also elected the Elders, who functioned as an advisory and supervisory body to the government. [...] Many provinces joined the Provisional Government of Vlor^a recognizing it as the government of all Albania. The government achieved significant results in establishing the state apparatus and in creating a judicial system according to European models. (Taken from: Dervishi, K., (2012). The prime ministers and ministers of the Albanian state in 100 years. Tirana: Publishing house "55". p. 273.)

⁸ HHStA, PAA, Vj. 28-3-453. Report of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Vienna "Our school action in Albania", dated January 29, 1914

their studies in Rome and other Italian cities. Meanwhile, 20 Albanian boys attended Italian military schools⁹.

From the press of the time they are treated as the most effective way to increase students' knowledge and change their mentality. This process had a special importance, because according to the newspaper "Dielli" the Italian teacher had "in hand one of the most delicate aspects of social reconstruction in Albania, [...] the moral reconstruction of the Albanian society"¹⁰. Based on this concept, the newspaper "Dielli" evaluates the Italian educational policy: "It is Italy that, when its people are further immersed in the depths of knowledge, seeks to fill Albania with Italian schools to enlighten the children of the world. But even further: it gives us our children food, clothes, money and books. [...] even these hoarders made us to create new intelligence with the origin mainly from the intellectual class and its allies"¹¹. Ambition seems to have pushed the Italian leadership towards costly roads, for a small and underdeveloped country like Albania.

However, the unfavorable historical factors, which hindered the normal development of the life of the newly formed Albanian state, did not sufficiently promote the normal functioning of the teaching process in the Albanian schools of that time. Despite the weaknesses and gaps, they played an important role in educating the population and in keeping alive the patriotic spirit and outstanding traditions of the National Renaissance.

Without going away from the subject of this paper, during this period Italy began to provide scholarships especially to children belonging to different social classes. This was another way of influencing the cultural-educational state of Italy, educating them in the educational institutions of Rome. In other parts of Italy, too, some Albanian students kept attending schools. From a document of the time, sent in October 1912 from Vlora, the following can be seen: "Abroad, in Italy, 12 Albanians were educated - Catholics from Vlora, Shkodra and Durres, but also from Prezren, Gjakova, Peja and Skopje, Italian scholarship holders"¹². Some Albanians studied in 1913 in Italy, especially in Rome, during the World War I and after 1918. On January 10, 1918 they formed the "Society of Albanian Students of Rome"¹³, which was generally concerned with the development of Albanian schools and language issues.

During the World War I, Albania fell into the hands of foreigners. Thus, "The Greeks, after occupying a part of Southern Albania, got closer to Berat. [...] On June 26, Austria-Hungary occupied Shkodra, whereas on June 11, 1915 the Serbs occupied Tirana. [...] Italy first landed in Vlora with a sanitary mission, then with military troops landed in Southern and Southwestern Albania. [...] After four months, the Treaty of London would give Italy the protectorate over the future Albanian state" (Dervishi, 2006)¹⁴.

The military forces of the XVI Corporation Command started the implementation of the educational policy program in the occupied area (in the prefecture of Vlora and Gjirokastra). The Italian government provided the direction of education through the organization "Secretariat of Civil Affairs of Albania" (SPCSH) on which depended the "Education Offices". There were such offices near both

⁹ Central State Archive of the Republic of Albania (hereinafter: AQSH), Italian Legation Fund in Albania (1913-1939) - no. 163, V. 1913, D. 2, p. 7-8.

¹⁰ Dielli, No. 226, Albanian American Newspaper Devoted to the Intellectual and Cultural Advancement of the Albanians in America, Boston, Mass, 9 January 1914, p. 3.

¹¹ Dielli, No. 367, Albanian American Newspaper Devoted to the Intellectual and Cultural Advancement of the Albanians in America, Boston, Mass, 12 October 1914, p. 2.

¹² AQSH, The found of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1912-1944) - no. 151, V. 1922, D. 39, p. 115. Report from Vlora, on 13.10.1912.

¹³ AQSH, p. 151, V. 1918, D. 57, p. 15-16.

¹⁴ See also: History of Albania, Volume II, publication of the State University of Tirana & Institute of History and Linguistics, compiled as a text by Buda, A., Frashëri, K., Pollo, S., Alibali, J., Plasari, N., Tirana: "Mihal Duri", 1965, p. 426-432; Frashëri, K., (2008). History of Albanian civilization (From ancient times to the end of the World War II), published by the Academy of Sciences of Albania, Tirana: "Grant Prind", p. 244-249.

prefectures and sub-prefectures, where Albanian officials did not perform managerial functions, but performed a simple administrative job or worked as translators (Siri, 1965)¹⁵.

After organizing the education administration with Italian leaders and inspectors, the Italian government launched a contingent of Italian military teachers in Albania. Thus, "in January 1917 the first group of 40 people arrived in Saranda"¹⁶. After that, "the number of Italian teachers in Albania reached 200 people"¹⁷. These teachers were described by the XVI Corporate Command as "Apostles of Christ, who brought to these places the work of Italian goodness and civilization in a country where civilization is being born"¹⁸. According to the political concept, and especially in the conditions of occupation, this motto makes sense: "Italianism of education and school in Albania".

Italian teachers were located throughout the southern and southwestern part of Albania, taking over the running of schools everywhere. Among them were Arberesh teachers. The ratio between Albanian teachers and those who came from Italy, during the school year 1917-1918 was 128: 20 in favor of the Italians. Of these, 99 Italian teachers and 67 Albanian teachers were appointed in Vlora, 101 Italian teachers and 61 Albanian teachers were employed in Gjirokastra (Dedja, B., at. Al., 2003).

In those schools where there were teachers from both sides, the division of subjects was done according to the skills, "the Italian teacher taught other subjects besides Italian, history and geography, due to the lack of qualified local teachers. Albanian teachers were usually left with the subject of the Albanian language. "They received a satisfactory salary and were generally appreciated by their superiors"¹⁹.

Rome gave great importance to the expansion of the network of schools in the region of Vlora, Himara, Tepelena, Gjirokastra, Saranda, Permet, Leskovik and Erseka by specialized staff for work with foreigners. According to Italian sources, "in the academic year 1916-1917 the number of primary schools reached 133 with 6,123 students"²⁰. In addition, "a civic school with a commercial profile was set up in Gjirokastra and a civic (agricultural) school in the village of Babica in Vlora"²¹. A year later the number of Italian primary schools reached 180²², which shows Italy's intention to expand the school network in Albania. To expand the spread of Italian and general Italian influence, "a professional evening course for clerks and small traders was opened in Vlora. "Such courses were also opened in Gjirokastra, Himara, Dhermi and Karbunare"²³.

The opening and operation of a large number of schools at the time by various scholars has been seen more as a demagogic and propagandistic goal. This cannot be ruled out. But there are plenty of facts that speak to the sincere attitudes of certain Italian officials, whether military or diplomatic. This can be seen in the constant demands for the normal functioning of schools, but also in the tendencies towards new pedagogical ideas and the development of Western schools, as well as the tendency to embrace and adapt them to the conditions of Albania.

The schools of the southern and southwestern territories of Albania (where the Italian XVI Military Corporation operated), worked with the programs of the Italian schools, "Programmi scolastici" ("School Programs") prepared by specialists of this army. In the space of 1916-1919 these programs were republished several times.

¹⁵ See also: Dedaj, B., (2003). *History of education and Albanian pedagogical thought, publication of the Institute of Pedagogical Studies, Tirana: "Mother Theresa"*; Koliqi, H., (2002). *History of education and Albanian pedagogical thought, publication of the University of Pristina, Pristina: "School Book"*.

¹⁶ *L'Albania*, No. 6, *Organe bimensual de défense des intérêts albanais*, Lausanne, 1916, p. 240.

¹⁷ *La Scuola in Albania (provincia di Valona e di Argirocastro 1916-1918)*, Valona, *Tip. italiana*, 1918, p. 4.

¹⁸ *L'Albania*, No. 6, *Organe bimensual de défense des intérêts albanais*, Lausanne, 1916, p. 241.

¹⁹ *La Scuola in Albania (provincia di Valona e di Argirocastro 1916-1918)*, Valona, *Tip. italiana*, 1918, p. 5.

²⁰ *AQSH*, p. 163, V. 1917, D. 5, p. 3.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *AQSH*, p. 163, V. 1919, D. 9, p. 17. See also: Dielli, No. 1509, *Albanian American Newspaper Devoted to the Intellectual and Cultural Advancement of the Albanians in America*, Boston, Mass, 28 april 1919.

²³ *Ibid.* p. 18.

In the "*Curriculum for schools of Albania*" of the school year 1917-1918 it was foreseen that Albanian students would learn: moral education and civic education, Albanian language, Italian language, arithmetics, studying objects, history, geography, calligraphy, physical education and agriculture. The teaching of religion, although figured as an optional subject, morality and religious education were present and primary in the content of all subjects taught in the school²⁴. The secularization of the content of teaching in the Albanian school was seen as an acceptable progress, because in Italy in those years, the scientific content of learning had become predominant.

In these schools, which worked according to Italian curricula, Albanian teachers used as textbooks the textbooks left over from 1912. Although there were some variants of school grammars for learning the Albanian language, prepared by Albanian authors, the Italian military authorities published the textbook of Arberesh Marko La Piana "*Short lessons of Albanian grammar for II class*" in Italian and Albanian, in 1917. The same author published in the Italian typography in Vlorë the book titled "*Lingua albanese. Sillabario Albanese-Italaino con notesullapronuncia e l'orthography. Primo corso*" ("*Albanian language. Albanian-Italian primer with views on spelling and orthography. Part one*"), 1918 (Pastorelli, 1970).

Italian Methodists also recommended that Albanian teachers obtain data on the history of Albania from the text of the author A. Galanti. This recommendation was made due to the fact that in this area there were no books in Albanian language. Meanwhile, another Italian author R. V. Ratti drafted a textbook "*History for schools and people*" (Pastorelli, 1970).

Following this policy, by order of the "Secretariat for Civil Affairs of Albania", Professor Roberto Almaxhuia prepared the textbook "*Geography for primary schools in Albania*", where students learned general concepts on the physical geography of Italy and Albania, especially in III and IV grades (Pastorelli, 1970).

Another form used by the Italian military forces to win over the Albanians was the enrichment of the school library book fund with pedagogical literature for children, with didactic materials for the concretization of the lesson and with the establishment of sports fields for the gatherings of young people in their spare time.

Not many days after the establishment of the "Secretariat for Civil Affairs of Albania" and the "Education Offices" in the prefectures and sub-prefectures in the area of Italian occupation, the superiors set to work to create an organization that would deal with the problems of qualification of Albanian teachers. In August-October 1918, at the insistence of the "Education Offices", "Qualification Courses" were organized in Vlorë and Gjirokastra, which were quarterly and were attended by 135 trainees²⁵. According to the program, the following subjects were taught to the new trainees: Italian language, Albanian language, arithmetic, elements of sciences, history of Albania, geography of Albania, principles of pedagogy and didactics, agricultural and cheese knowledge. Teaching was conducted in Italian, although this language was not spoken by most of the trainees.

Italy, like Austria-Hungary, subsidized some media outlets addressing Albanian public opinion. An example for this was the newspaper "*Kuvendi*", published in Rome during the years 1918-1920. This newspaper became the "spokesperson" of Italian politics in Albania. This line was also transmitted by two other Italian newspapers: "*Corriere delle Puglie*" ("*The Messenger of Puglia*") and "*La giovane Europa*" ("*New Europe*")²⁶, which constantly propagated the development of education in the southern and southwestern areas of Albania, where many Italian teachers worked, as a humanitarian action, they were carrying out for the benefit of the development and progress of the Albanians.

The "Secretariat for Civil Affairs of Albania (SPCSH)" tried to give teachers the deserved place in the society of the time and a satisfactory economic treatment. The truth is, despite its best efforts, not much was done for this issue. Teachers' salaries remained among the lowest in the approved pyramid;

²⁴AQSH, *The Found of the Ministry of Education (1911-1944)* - no. 195, V. 1918, D. 2, p. 16-17.

²⁵AQSH, p. 195, V. 1918, D. 2, p. 26.

²⁶Albania, No. 19, *Weekly newspaper of the National Political Party in New York, Worcester*, 23 March 1919, pp. 4.

this was probably due to their lack of proper education. For its part, the SPCSH tried to compensate for this by providing food and clothing assistance. Among the dozens of letters sent for this issue, we are analyzing one of them which was written by Jani Minga in October 1919. "The teachers of the villages of Vlora have come to me with many complaints about the difficulties of living, because in this area things are expensive. Their complaints seem reasonable to me, especially in terms of the expensive food. So there are some teachers, for whom the monthly salary is not enough to pay for the necessities of life for themselves and their families. [...] It would be good for the Supreme Military Command to give orders to buy clothes and daily food for its employees of Vlora, who should be an example for students even in their appearance"²⁷. Under the conditions of war and general poverty, it was impossible for the economic situation of the teachers to improve, therefore their demands and the efforts of the SPCSH to raise their salaries continued all the time.

However, the educational policy of Italy in this period does not have the same form and a single axis in terms of unfulfilled standards for the Albanian school. It fluctuated between two extremes: its influence on the schools it had opened in the Albanian territories, rivaling the educational policy of Austria-Hungary on the one hand and the outline of the European profile of the Albanian educational tradition on the other. But, the common denominator is that the preservation of influence or "protection" of the new state created after the Congress of Lushnja, in 1920, is always treated with great interest by both poles.

All this happened and took place depending on the moments and on the different protagonists of Italian foreign policy. Thus, especially until 1920, Italian education policy towards Albania resembles a zigzag that touches the plan of concrete opportunities and effective interests, but in the end it does not diminish the usefulness of education in Albanian, which, however, was in his first steps. Albanian schools saw satisfactory development for the time that will leave traces for a long time afterwards.

3. The Effects of Italian Educational Policy on the Expansion and Strengthening of Italian Educational Institutions - Part of the Political Changes in Albania During the 20s and 30s of the Twentieth Century

Starting from the second half of 1919, the distrust towards the government of Durres and the dissatisfaction with it had increased a lot. In these conditions, in Albania there was a need to replace the Government of Durres with a new government which would pursue a more determined national policy (Fischer, 1995).

The power that emerged from the Congress of Lushnja (January 26-31, 1920), from its social composition represented mainly the political alliance of the bourgeoisie and the landlords with pro-Italian orientation, where the positions of the former were relatively strong (Naska, 2000). Peaceful economic-financial interventions, together with efforts for educational and cultural interventions, constitute the axis around which the Italian penetration on the eastern shores of the Adriatic revolved during these years.

In this new tactic of the Italian government, one could not ignore the broad national movement that was strengthening in Albania, which was directed primarily to the Italian pre-orientation. During the period 1920-1924, education would occupy a central place in the political-social movement, which aimed to pave the way for the development and progress of Albania on a bourgeois democratic basis (Veizi, 1959).

During this 4-year period, a wide activity took place in the field of education that, despite the difficulties and objective obstacles of the time, brought very important results. During these years, three educational congresses²⁸ were held, which on the one hand showed the concern of the

²⁷ AQSH, p. 195, V. 1919, D. 2, p. 26. Report of the Vlora Education Office to the Government of Durres, dated 16.10.1919.
²⁸ The Albanian educational congresses held in Lushnja in 1920, in Tirana (1922, 1924) as well as the prominent teachers Aleksandër Xhuvani, Ahmet Gashi, Sali Ceka, etc. helped a lot in the development of national education. (Taken from: Repishti, Xh., (1987). "Education Congresses during 1920-1924", in: Historical studies, No. 2/1987, Publication of the Institute of History, Tirana: "Mihal Duri", p. 61-76.)

progressive democratic circles, and on the other hand, each according to its own decisions, promoted the general development of the Albanian school. So, during the democratic movement, education in Albania took quantitative and qualitative steps forward, especially for the unification and democratization of the school.

Under these conditions, Italy could not make an open intervention in Albanian education, as it did in the economic field. Italy could penetrate in this field directly only for those categories of Italian schools, which were required for the needs of the children of Italian citizens in Albania. With the great events of 1920 (related to the Vlora War²⁹) the school of Vlora, which belonged to that category, was closed, so immediately, in November 1920, Rome asked the diplomats in Shkodra and Vlora to find the opportunity to the reopening of the Italian primary schools there, "the premises, the teachers, the spiritual appropriateness of the moment to the public"³⁰. After continuous efforts in October 1921, when Salvatore Meloni came to Vlora as consul, it is confirmed that "the opening of the city primary school in Vlora enabled some of the Italian citizens to enroll their children in this school"³¹.

The newspaper "Fjal' e lirë", which was published in Vlora at that time, in an article dated November 20, 1921, which noted the good propaganda intentions of foreign schools, also wrote about the Italian primary school of Vlora and called it, openly a humanitarian type school. "With this step of the Italian government", said the editor of this newspaper, Agjah Libohova, "we see that there are other humanitarian goals, because why else would they spend 20,000 lire per month, only for 9-10 children who would attend that school, which is about 2,000 lire per student"³² Likewise, the newspaper "Populli" that was published in Shkodra, in its article "Italian School in Vlora", gave a positive point of view to the functioning of this school and praised the Italian primary school of Shkodra, which was opened by the Catholic clergy during 1922. "Albanians, - says the well-known journalist Nikoll Ivanaj, - need outpatient clinics (ambulances - J.S.) and especially for foreign schools. [...] "We have to admit that we know foreign schools as a model, and we know that those who open schools are honored for the greatest civilization they can teach us"³³.

During the period 1920-1923, persistent efforts were made by the Italian Legation in Durres and especially by the consulate in Shkodra, to support the educational and cultural activity of the Catholic ecclesiastical institutions. "With the withdrawal of Austria-Hungary from the historical scene, - said Italian Minister Fortunato Kastoldi, - it was natural and inevitable that Italy would try to fill this gap with great speed, and therefore it decided to undertake the subsidization of Catholic clerical institutions in Albania. [...] I think from a moral point of view as well as from a cultural point of view there were and are more than enough reasons to do it, and that indeed, if we were to be drawn from this moral and cultural heritage and even more political, our prestige and interests for the civilization of Albania would have suffered incalculable losses"³⁴.

Also in the documents of the time, attention is drawn to the aid that was to be given to the Salesian Order, we think that Castold had narrowed it only to the school field. Thus, he proposed to

²⁹ The War of Vlora in 1920 was a series of battles between Italian forces and Albanian patriots in region of Vlora for the conquest of the city of Vlora. The war lasted three months and was a great move to defend the city of Vlora from the total disintegration that the Italian invaders would do. [...] In this war we should also mention Captain Hodo Zeqiri who was one of the heroes of the legendary leader of this war. [...] On September 3 1920 after many unequal battles, the Albanian forces entered the city of Vlora victorious, forcing the Italian invaders to leave not only from Vlora, but also from Saranda, Durres and Shengjin. (Taken from: Agaj, A., (2002), War of Vlora, Tirana: "Toena", p. 14-368.)

³⁰ AQSH, p. 163, V. 1920, D. 10, p. 18-19. Lettera del Ministro degli Affari Esteri d'Italia Tommaso Tittoni indirizzata ai consolati italiani in Albania, No. 5197 del 28.11.1920.

³¹ AQSH, p. 163, V. 1921, D. 2, p. 4. Relazione del Console Salvatore Meloni inviata al Ministro degli Affari Esteri d'Italia Tommaso Tittoni No. 948 del 16.9.1921.

³² Fjal' e lirë, No. 33, Vlora, October 20, 1920, p. 1.

³³ Populli, No. 1, Shkodra, January 18, 1922, p. 2.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁴ AQSH, p. 151, V. 1922, D. 39, p. 115. Report of the Minister Fortunato Kastoldi, No. 9216/33, dated 6.9.1922.

Rome that this religious order "open elementary female courses in Shkodra and assist in the normal functioning of a professional clerical school in that city, that it be maintained by the Catholic clergy"³⁵. He stated, "it seems to me that Salesian priests should be encouraged to open primary schools not only in Shkodra, but also in other cities of Albania, such as Durres and Elbasan, where there are no other foreign schools"³⁶. All these clearly show the advantages that the Italian government gave to the issues of education in Albania in this period.

In its domestic policy, the Catholic clergy tried, in the new conditions, to strengthen their positions and secure as many privileges as possible in the new Albanian state. This would be achieved, on the one hand, by participating in the political life of the country, on the other hand by expanding the school network in Albania. The driving force behind the opening of clerical schools became the well-known clergyman Gjergj Fishta. As an MP, in early November 1920, Gj. Fishta had received the consent of the government of Tirana for the opening of a high school in Shkodra by the Franciscan Order³⁷. This high school, which was founded in Shkodra, in terms of the Italian language being widely used there, the programs, the general teaching and educational process as well as the direction and qualification of the teaching staff, was another step in outlining the European profile of the Albanian school.

The coming to power of Ahmet Zogu brought changes in the political life in Albania. His reign lasted 14 years, 3 months and two weeks. On January 21, 1925, the Republic of Albania was proclaimed. In the economic and diplomatic plan, it relies mainly on cooperation with Italy, which made many concessions. On October 8, 1925, Albania was proclaimed a Constitutional Monarchy, with King Ahmet Zogu I (Frashëri, 2008).

During this period (1925-1939), after overcoming the political conflicts in Albania, favorable circumstances were created for the establishment of the Albanian state, according to the European experience. Thus, in 1925, the "*The Fundamental Statute of the Republic of Albania*"³⁸ was approved. After the *new Albanian criminal code*, based on the principles of the Italian criminal code, the Albanian Parliament, in 1929, approved the *new civil code*, according to the French and Swiss model (Xoxa, 1938). According to it, "all male and female citizens are guaranteed equal rights" (Luarasi, 2014). In 1932 the *first code of trade* in Albania was approved according to the Italian experience; the army was reorganized, etc. (Ibid.) On February 18, 1929, *The Synod of the Albanian Autocephalous Orthodox Church* was established (Anastasi, 1993). These were the first efforts for the independence of the Albanian Orthodox Church. According to the scholar Ilir Ushtelenca, "the religious beliefs: Muslim, Orthodox and Catholic, which were recognized and received for the first time protection by the state, began to exercise their activity freely without interfering in its internal affairs. For the first time the *Albanian Red Cross* was created" (Ushtelenca, 1997). At the same time, the Albanian state focused on the organization of the national education system, according to the European experience.

Once the legal framework was in place and economic penetration was secured, the "great ally" of the overseas (Italy) came to give its experience in the field of education and culture, to the "little friend", after having given much help in the economic field. But what made Italy a claimant was the fact that in the "Italian-Albanian agreements"³⁹ for Italian financial and economic aid, the Albanian government

³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 116.

³⁶ *Ibid*.

³⁷ AQSH, Gjergj Fishta Found (1744-1950) - no. 17, V. 1920, D. 2, p. 34

³⁸ *Official Gazette*, No. 8, Tirana, March 7, 1925, p. 16-56. See also: *The Fundamental Statute of the Republic of Albania*, Tirana: 1925.

³⁹ Ahmet Zogu signed two agreements with Italy. The first agreement was the "*Treaty of Friendship and Security between Italy and Albania (First Pact of Tirana)*", which was signed in Tirana on November 26, 1926. The second agreement was the "*Treaty of the defense alliance between Italy and Albania*" (*Second Pact of Tirana*), which was signed in Tirana on November 22, 1927. (Taken from: Frashëri, K., (2014). *Ahmet Zogu. Historic Point of View*, Tirana: "M & B Publications", p. 110-112.)

was committed to "undertaking in full agreement the spread of the Italian language and culture, teaching staff and pedagogical systems"⁴⁰.

The influence of Italian education became all-encompassing, including every link of the Albanian education system, trying to impose step by step the educational policy of the Albanian state. Based on this policy, one month after the end of the Second Pact of Tirana, in December 1927, the Ministry of Education submitted to the government a project to restrict high schools of general culture. Whereas, two months later, in February 1928, it sanctioned the establishment of high schools in the big cities of Albania such as Tirana, Gjirokastra, Korca, Shkodra, Durres and Vlora⁴¹.

Meanwhile, the preference towards vocational secondary education and the position drawn in the development of general secondary education were determined not only by the difficulties of growth, but also by political reasons. The Albanian government, based on the aim for economic development of the country and meeting the needs for staff, conceived vocational education as a priority.

On June 28, 1928, an agreement was signed between the Italian and Albanian governments for the establishment of Italian vocational schools in Albania, with Italian personnel and material base. The main objectives of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which administered these schools, were: "To prepare artisans and technicians for the immediate needs of the country (Albania - JS) mainly with the tools and programs of schools in Rome, increasing the number of skilled workers and the consciousness of Italian civilization"⁴². In the summer of 1928, the specialist Plinio Luraski came to Albania and made several visits to different regions of the country to see closely the condition of schools in different regions of Albania, and as he himself stated, "remained satisfied with this tour"⁴³. The main purpose of this tour was to determine the places where future schools would be established. At first, he presented a comprehensive blueprint according to the needs of the country "to open about 9 Italian vocational high schools"⁴⁴.

Based on the agreement concluded with the Albanian parties, in the first phase 4 such schools would be established in Berat, Gjirokastra, Korca and Shkodra (Sota, 2011). On December 1, 1928, a new section for Italian vocational schools was established at the Ministry of Education. While in February 1929, was created the appendix of the decree law of organic education, which, among other things, sanctioned the creation of the section in question. It was envisaged that this section would be headed "by a foreign organizer", and would have "a secretary in charge, who would also perform the task of translator, who should be Albanian". It is a fact that from the very beginning, P. Luraski was definitely in charge of this section, who was assisted by two other Italian specialists. Later, by royal decree, Luraski was appointed general organizer of the Ministry of Education⁴⁵.

On January 3, 1929, the first Italian vocational school in Albania was established in the city of Gjirokastra⁴⁶. In January of that year, the vocational school of Berat was also established⁴⁷. While on March 1, teaching started in the industrial school of Korca. A few months later, on October 1, 1929,

⁴⁰ AQSH, *The Found of the Council of Ministers (1913-1944)* - no. 149, V. 1927, D. 51, p. 46-48. Document, No. 21147/123, dated 12.4.1932.

⁴¹ AQSH, p. 195, V. 1928, D. 14, p. 43.

⁴² AQSH, p. 154, V. 1933, D. 18, p. 7.

⁴³ AQSH, p. 195, V. 1929, D. 26, p. 20. Document No. 93/II, dated 14.2.1929.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁴⁵ AQSH, *The Found of the Royal Court (1928-1944)* - no. 150, V. 1928, D. 7, p. 152. Decree No. 3552, dated 3.10.1928. See also: AQSH, p. 151, V. 1930, D. 148, p. 21-31. Report of the Italian Legation in Albania by Ugo Solas sent to the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome (Document no. 2115/136, dated 11.12.1930).

⁴⁶ AQSH, p. 195, V. 1939, D. 269, p. 19-20. See also: Sota, J., & Puka, E., (2011). "The Role of Italy in the peony and Subsidy of Italian Schools in Albania before and after April, 1939", in: *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences (MJSS)*, Vol. 2, No. 3, September 2011, Publisher: MC SER - Mediterranean Center of Social and Educational Research, Rome, Italy, pp.209-2015.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

opened its doors the new industrial and applied arts school in the city of Shkodra⁴⁸. It should be noted that "Gjirokastra and Berat schools were 4-year vocational schools, which were attended after primary school. The first year was preparatory. The main direction of the schools was industrial-craft: for mechanic (adjuster, electrician, blacksmith) and carpenter. There were also courses only for practical mechanics without theory lessons, so-called "appendices"⁴⁹.

The schools of Korça and Shkodra were fully vocational with 8 years of primary education. The teaching process took place in two cycles with 4 years of teaching. The first year of the lower cycle was the preparatory level. The elements that would attend these schools were also prepared for geometry, and those that would go to Shkodra for radio techniques.

The theoretical pedagogical basis of Italian vocational schools was the pedagogy of the "knowledge gained from work", which had begun to spread from the beginning of the twentieth century, as a counterweight to the "old school". Meanwhile, they were equipped with cabinets and laboratories. For practice purposes, workshops were set up with departments of jewelry, metal cutting machines, blacksmithing and carpentry. The workshops and laboratories were distinguished for a rich inventory of various tools and equipment. Small power plants were set up next to them, for the normal development of work practices.

Another field of Italian influence, perhaps the most important, was the establishment of several Italian primary schools. These "de jure" institutions were set up for the children of Italian citizens in Albania, but their aim was to include as many Albanian children as possible. According to archival documents, "in the academic year 1928-1929 two primary schools were established, one in Tirana and another in Durres"⁵⁰. Also during this academic year "two Italian primary schools in Shkodra and in Vlora were opened, which were maintained by the institutions of the Catholic Church"⁵¹. Later, in 1934, an Italian primary school was opened in Kuçova⁵² and later in 1935 one in Shijak⁵³.

Nevertheless, for the orienting values of the Albanian school, we take the example given by the Italians which introduced the teaching of the Italian language. In September 1929, the Italian charge d'affaires in Tirana, Pietro Kuaroni, received the approval of the Minister of Education, Abdurraman Dibra, to introduce Italian in high schools. He informed the Italian consulate in Shkodra about this, and we quote: "This (the Minister - J.S.) has shown me his intention to introduce the teaching of Italian in all high schools in Albania"⁵⁴. On the same day, he notified Rome about the political purpose of this new Italian initiative. "Your Excellency, you will see that another great step is being taken in the spread of the Italian language in this country, - wrote Kuaroni, - starting from this year Italian will be taught in all high schools which somehow, they will not feel united with the Italians through the linguistic connection"⁵⁵. As he noted, "according to the program of King Zogu I, the Albanian national defense command has forced all Albanian officers to learn Italian"⁵⁶. Furthermore, Kuaroni stated: "the need for general knowledge of our language comes as a natural conclusion of the important and coordinated effort made by the Italians in the last two years in the civil, economic and military field"⁵⁷.

Here is the opportunity to point out that the high school students have had large spaces to know

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ *Gazeta Shqiptare*, No. 258, Tirana, October 30, 1930. See also: *Zani i Popollit*, No. 46, Shkodra, November 15, 1930.

⁵⁰ AQSH, p. 195, V. 1929, D. 18, p. 18. *School statistics for the academic year 1928-1929*, No. 93/II, dated 20.2.1929.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² AQSH, p. 195, V. 1936, D. 5, p. 41-47. *Report on the activity developed by the Ministry of Education during the years 1933-1934-1935*, no. 37/V, dated 25.8.1936.

⁵³ AQSH, p. 195, V. 1935, D. 26, p. 20. *Document No. 93/II*, dated 14.02.1929.

⁵⁴ AQSH, p. 195, V. 1929, D. 13, p. 6. *Reservation letter of Mr. Pietro Kuaroni addressed to the Italian consulate in Shkodra*, no. 1794/816, dated 7.9.1929.

⁵⁵ AQSH, p. 195, V. 1929, D. 13, p. 9. *Report of Mr. Petro Kuaroni addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome*, No. 1797, dated 7.9.1929.

⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 9-10

⁵⁷ Ibid.

and study the history of the Italian language. They have been constantly present in the curricula, since the lower grades of secondary education. The interest and appreciation for the Italian language is related to the needs of Albanian youth to absorb everything good from the Italian people, and eager to recognize the rich linguistic values of nations with very rich literary traditions. Which shows that Albanians have not had indifferent attitudes towards Italian culture and other cultures.

In order to give an even greater expansion to the spread of the Italian language and culture in Albania, outside the narrow field of high schools, in the early 1930s in a number of important cities of the country, a large number of different courses were opened for learning Italian. The first Italian language courses were opened in Albania in 1932 and especially in 1933 in Shkodra, Vlora, Gjirokastra, Tirana, Korca, Elbasan, not to mention the evening courses that were held at the Italian vocational schools (Koka, 1985). As a result of the policies pursued in 1939, 194 students were enrolled in schools in Durrës, Elbasan, Shkodra, Vlora, Tirana, while in Korca, Zogaj and Kruja about 1,649 students continued their education, of which 1,330 were boys and 319 girls⁵⁸.

However, "they had the biggest expansion and their most complete organization at the end of 1933, when the branch of the Italian cultural society "Dante Alighieri"⁵⁹ was established in Albania, in the framework of the plan of cultural cooperation between the two countries" (Koka, 1985). From the data of archival documents it appears that "in 1936, there were 8 open courses by "Dante Alighieri" in Albania with 440 boys and 60 girls⁶⁰. In 1937, in the city of Korça there were two-section Italian courses with 130 students in total, and these courses were by taught Prof. Zamput who had respectively 64 and 66 students"⁶¹.

For the education of Albanian youth, Italy used widely the scholarship system in all branches of Italian education. Special importance was given to the training of specialists in areas where the needs were greatest. After 1933, Italian funds for scholarships that were to be granted to Albanian students increased year after year. We are illustrating it with an example. In the total expenditures according to the budget of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for 1934, scholarships and specializations amounted to 939,607 lira. Compared to that of the previous year there is an increase of 563,471 lira⁶².

For a long time, the Italian government was very interested in attracting as many students as possible, firstly to prepare and specialize Albanian teachers⁶³. This is clearly reflected in the press of the time, we quote: "Since 1925, the Italian government has established in Perugia a university for foreigners. [...] This university was opened in July-October for foreigners of any nationality. In its courses of culture (Italian literature, art history, etc.) are held by university professors and prominent people in the political, scientific field"⁶⁴.

⁵⁸ AQSH, p. 195, V. 1939, D. 269, p. 18.

⁵⁹ The Italian Society "Dante Alighieri" was founded in 1889 in Rome by a group of Italian scholars, with the aim of defending the Italian language and civilization in foreign countries, but primarily to spread Italian culture within the mutual relations of Italy with states where there were Italian citizens, especially in backward countries that were Italian colonies or that were thought to become such. From its establishment until the eve of the World War I, the branches of "Dante Alighieri" spread in all continents of the world. Italian schools were established near these branches, libraries were set up, consulting offices were opened, etc. Respecting the great name of the great Italian poet, the society "Dante Alighieri" spread the Italian language and civilization in foreign countries in the context of peace and friendship. (Taken from: Milza, P., (2012). *History of Italy: From its origin until nowadays*, translated, Tirana: "Dituria", p. 735.)

⁶⁰ AQSH, p. 195, V. 1939, D. 269, p. 16. See also: Sota, J., & Puka, E., (2011). "The Role of Italy in the peony and Subsidy of Italian Schools in Albania before and after April, 1939", in: *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences (MJSS)*, Vol. 2, No. 3, September 2011, Publisher: MCSER - Mediterranean Center of Social and Educational Research, Rome, Italy, pp. 209-2015.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² AQSH, p. 151, V. 1935, D. 48, p. 24. Research paper of 1936, No. 186/65, dated 13.1.1936.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ *Demokratia*, No. 150, Gjirokastra, April, 17 1928, p. 4.

The problem would be perceived from the point of view of the interests of the Albanian state, whose students pursued higher studies in different western countries regardless of how small they were in number. This would affect the creation of a new image of the Albanian society in the 30s. In the light of the foregoing, many Italian teachers who contributed their work to education in Albania suggested to senior Italian officials financial support for the education of Albanian youth in Italy. Thus, the Italian language teacher at the Normal school in Elbasan, Arnaldo Forezi, asked the legation, and the latter announced to Rome, that scholarships for Italy be given to the graduates of that school. *"With little expense, - noted A. Forezi, - within 10 years primary education in Albania would be in the hands of specialists educated and trained in Italy"*⁶⁵. In this process, the contribution of Albanian teachers and specialists educated in Italian universities was considered very important and they were always committed to become part of the reform of the education system in Albania. Marquis A. di Soranja also considered it very convenient to provide scholarships for higher pedagogical schools in Italy. *"In order to outline the European profile of the traditional Albanian education, - wrote among other things A. di Soranji, - it is necessary to train Albanian teachers with the help of the Italian government. [...] Let's teach them to spend the summer holidays in Italy and to study Italian language and literature voluntarily, to bring them closer to Italy and Italian culture. In this way they will become nothing but propagandists of Italian civilization, close to all Albanian youth"*⁶⁶.

The Italian government was very interested in attracting Albanian students to Italian military schools as well. In August 1935, the military attaché in Albania, General Alberto Pariani, held a meeting with King Zogu I on this issue, where he received promises from him to send to Italy all those young Albanians who would choose a military career. On this occasion, in the report sent to the Ministry of War in Rome, Pariani stated that "Zogu I had told him that the merger between the two elements (Italian and Albanian) should become more and more voluntary in order for the Albanian youth, who have expressed a desire for a military career, will have to go to Italy to pursue studies at the military college and other previous schools, alongside their Italian peers"⁶⁷. The same general wrote that "every Albanian should stay in Italy for six or eight years, a period long enough to create a new culture and to determine a stable and determined orientation for life"⁶⁸. By this logic, Pariani recommended to senior Italian officials that "30 young Albanians should be sent to Italian military schools every year, so that within 7 years there would be about 200 Albanian students in Italian military schools"⁶⁹.

In order to avoid the difficulties of implementing the attraction of Albanian pupils and students in Italy, in addition to the amounts paid by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for scholarships in various civil branches, all different departments and businesses in Italy, under the auspices of which were the school-age children and young Albanians, allocated large sums for their accommodation and education. We are illustrating it with an example. An Italian diplomatic document from 1938 states that "scholarships were also awarded by special Italian businesses that were interested in the education of Albanians in Italy, such as the company AGIP, which during the period 1929-1938 deposited large amount of moneys which were to be used for scholarships"⁷⁰.

Without claiming a significant increase in the quantitative level of preparation of the Albanian staff in higher education, it can be said that there were developments, although not those that were required. The official statements present a picture where many of the results are controversial. From the objective analysis of the documentation of the period it can be concluded that there is an increase

⁶⁵ AQSH, p. 163, V. 1932, D. 13, p. 9.

⁶⁶ AQSH, p. 163, V. 1931, D. 13, p. 9.

⁶⁷ AQSH, p. 163, V. 1935, D. 24, p. 48-51. Report of General Alberto Pariani, Italian military attaché in Albania, sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome "On some measures for the preparation of Albanian students seeking to pursue a military career", no. 3226, dated 29.9.1935.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ AQSH, p. 163, V. 1938, D. 107, p. 203. Information of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, No. 6217/2009, date 22.10.1938.

in the number of students, pupils and specialists (those who went for different specializations, for a long or short time). It is a fact that in the academic year 1924-1925 in Italy 27% of the total number of Albanian schoolchildren continued their studies⁷¹. For the academic year 1931-1932 the data appear to be higher in value. This educational category in Italy, reached 38%⁷². We emphasize that these calculations included all those who received state scholarships from Italy or Albania, as well as those who continued their studies at their own expense.

Given the importance of this process, new demands for Albanian scholars who would continue their studies abroad increased. Nevertheless, it remained a controlled process and within the "lines" set by the Italian and Albanian governments. During the first half of 1934, Rome set new criteria, depending on foreign policy, in providing scholarships to Albanians. Priority was given to those who went to university; secondly, to those who wanted to become teachers; thirdly, to those who wanted to continue their studies at the Universities of Padua, Pavia and Turin; then to, those who had successfully completed their studies at the Jesuit high school and vocational schools in Albania.

In one of the correspondences of the General Vicegerent of Albania with the higher Italian instances in the summer of 1939, it was obvious the concern that "although in essence they express a positive tendency, they were based more on the wishes of Albanian scholars to study in Italy"⁷³. In addition to the consideration for the Italian school, political motives undoubtedly played an important role, regarding the praise of the Italian schools during those years in Albania. This increase was influenced by various objective factors, such as the lack of high schools in Albania, the inability of students to study in other countries, the geographical proximity to Italy, the very small number of scholarships and study rights offered by other countries, as well children and young people that were studying at their own expense and that their families were economically and politically related to Italy.

A positive role in directing the flow of Albanian students abroad was played by the press, which assessed it as a very important step towards outlining the European profile of Albanian society. Numerous articles of the time emphasized especially the understanding and acceptance of Western culture by all the people. "*Albanian students who were in different parts of the world should be respected, - it was said in one of them, - but, in order to be respected and evaluated properly, it is necessary to be well understood not only by the officials of departments and high state institutions, but also by the people themselves, i.e. by every parent and child tutor*"⁷⁴.

The cultural and professional training of Albanian students who were educated in Western countries, different from the one that the Albanian state intended to achieve, was a serious problem, which the latter tried to overcome by undertaking a series of organizational, administrative and political measures. In the second half of the 1930s, more or less like in other Western countries were organized, institutions began to spread and to consolidate. The most common forms were quite general, such as press, radio, publication of theoretical works, political conferences, public manifestations on the problem of domestic and international politics, etc., which were used by the entire population, but there were also specific forms. The most common were political conferences for teachers, debate groups, seminars, etc. In the function of this process were placed the specialized press bodies for cultural problems, and works of literature, linguistics, history, folklore, economics, pedagogy, etc., such as the magazine "*Ilustrata shqiptare*", published since 1928, "*Leka*" and "*Shqiptarja*" which were published in 1929, the newspapers "*Mësuesi*", "*Normalisti*" etc., where in addition to professional problems an important place was devoted to the propaganda of the intellectual values of the educational staff educated abroad.

⁷¹ AQSH, p. 195, V. 1925, D. 63, p. 7-10. Report of the Ministry of Education, No. 2473/58, dated 14.9.1925.

⁷² AQSH, The Found of the Central Office of Statistics (1932-1944) - no. 188, V. 1935, D. 7, p. 2. Report of the Central Office of Statistics addressed to the Parliament, No. 2596/70, dated 10.10.1935.

⁷³ AQSH, The Found of the General Vicegerent of Albania (1939-1943) - no. 161, V. 1939, D. 63, p. 7-10. Report of the Ministry of Education addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rome, No. 6217/20, dated 18.11.1925.

⁷⁴ Gazeta shqiptare, No. 37, Bari, 7.2.1929, pp. 1-2.

4. Conclusions

Within the framework of economic and political changes that had taken place and were taking place in the Albanian society, the educational-cultural changes would occupy an important place. The end of the 80s of the twentieth century would mark the introduction of the Italian school in a new phase, during which a series of changes known as "activities of a civilized nature" were initiated.

In addition to the educational policy of the Italian state, as it is known, they had been active in this field since the beginning of the twentieth century (in the 20s and 30s), the American, British, French, etc. also increased their efforts. Based on archival documents, significant results were achieved by the Italians, who influenced the outlines of the European profile of education in Albania. This influence came and strengthened greatly in the space of the years until the beginning of the World War II, where Italy, supported by the leadership of the Albanian state and international conjunctures, laid and outlined the main lines, especially in setting up a dense network of schools for time. Many of the schools were opening for the first time.

Among its most prominent achievements were the establishment of appropriate educational bodies, such as the establishment of "Education Offices" in the prefecture of Vlorë and Gjirokastra, which depended on the "Secretariat of Civil Affairs of Albania" (SPCSH), during the years of World War I.

It provided the necessary staff and worked for the qualification, etc., through short summer courses.

The main principles of the content were reflected in the school documentation, which was drafted with the aim of ensuring the western formation of the youth. The unique plans, curricula and textbooks of Italian primary and secondary schools (general and vocational) constituted a precondition for the achievement of the same education of students with progressive Western ideas. This was the aim of every subject, of social or natural sciences. Also, direct subjects of Italian education were introduced, which helped more in the civilization of the new Albanian generation.

For the first time in Albania, Italian schools were provided with normative acts. As such we can take the examples of the Temporary School Regulations, the Inspector Regulations, the Teachers' Regulations and the School Boards, which helped a lot in schools. They served as the best model of documentation for other Albanian schools.

The above-mentioned values can be explained to some extent as development requirements, but also as the influence of Italian education specialists, in conditions when political tendency was expressed non-aggressively towards the assessment of prominent events and figures of Italian history and culture.

The difficult political and economic conditions, the miserable cultural heritage of Albania would necessarily leave their mark on the school activity of the Italians. Although some forms of organization were maintained that could attract and activate the views of the educational forces on the issue that outlined the European profile of the Albanian school, the democratic practice of the Albanian government that was installed during 1925-1939, accepted the Italian "intervention" in the field of education and allowed Italy to work for the Italianization of schools in Albania. With special laws and decisions, Ahmet Zogu supported the contribution of Italian organizers and instructors in Albania, the propagation of culture and learning the Italian language, the organization of extracurricular activities of youth, etc., bringing with his attitude a great innovation in pedagogical theories in Albanian schools and national education.

With the policy of national schools, Italian educational institutions in Albania became propagators of the best school models of Rome. At the same time, the staff of these schools, specialists and teachers, had in mind to implement or adapt it easier to the conditions of Albanian education. Therefore, the sensitivity to the new pedagogical theories of the developments of the Western school was a progressive tendency, which turned into a current, which became more and more powerful, more and more accepted year after year, influencing the outline of the European profile of Albanian education.

From a dual point of view, both in terms of results that were somewhat tangible, and in terms of

the experience accumulated by Italian specialists and teachers that stands out less, but still has its weight, the developments of Italian schools up to in 1939 they helped the process of emancipation of the Albanian society. On the other hand, all the developments in this field, represented a new educational stage that led to the hand-to-hand formation of a national intelligence which produced personalities who served Albania a lot.

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