



RESEARCH NOTE

Albania in Transition: Values and National Identity

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Introduction

The article submitted is a modest attempt to cast a glance in the value system that characterises the current Albanian society, which after emerging from one of the most totalitarian communist regimes of East Europe at the beginning of the 90's, continues to «wander» in a prolonged state of problematic transition. The article is mainly based on the evidence of several surveys conducted during the period of 1995-2000. Concretely: a) a survey conducted at the end of year 1995 with 1000 respondents in 8 districts of the country; b) a survey on the value system in Albania, conducted in the spring of 1998 with about 1100 respondents in 26¹ out of 36 districts of the country²; c) a survey with about 1100 young school people conducted in 1999 on the values of school youth in several secondary high schools in the country³; d) a survey with about 800 youngsters conducted by the Debate Center in 2000 in 12 districts of the country, concerning the value system amongst youth⁴. The article takes into consideration other evidences published in the bulletins of the Bank of Albania and of the INSTAT (Institute of Statistics) as well as conclusions from the studies «Between the cultural void and enlivenment»⁵ and «Needs assessment and memorization»⁶.

Under these circumstances, where there is only one survey in national level concerning the value system in Albania⁷, it would be comfortable that conforming to the evidence of this survey to give a static presentation of the value table in Albanian society, because this will be very valuable for future studies⁸. But if we attempt to give a dynamic model of this table, we need to make comparisons, that is to make use of other evidence, be it partial as well. In this framework the author has deemed it useful to make use of

¹ Currently, Albania functions through the administrative division in circuits (qarqe) (12), municipalities and communes.

² The survey was conducted in the framework of a cooperation project of Department of Philosophy&Sociology in the University of Tirana with the Department of Sociology in the University of Geneva (1996-1998), a part of the results of which are disclosed in the publication of the Department of Philosophy&Sociology of UT "Albania in transition and values", SOROS, 1999.

³ Study carried out by Dr.Zyhdi Dervishi and the students Philosophy&Sociology Branch in the University of Tirana.

⁴ For all these surveys the author of this article has the relevant database, but only for the survey on the value system of 1998 and that of the school youth of 1999 has published materials.

⁵ Sociologic study on the educational and psychocultural formation of the youth in Albanian rural areas, carried out in 1998 by the Albanian Center of the Analysis of Social Interaction and Communication published as brochure.

⁶ Study on the needs assessment of former politically persecuted, carried out during the period of 2000-2001 by the Albanian Center for the Rehabilitation of the Survivors from Torture in cooperation with RCT-Copenhagen and published in book form "Needs Assessment and Memorization *Rehabilitation and reintegration status of former politically persecuted in Albania*", ARCT/RCT PROJECT, 1999-2001.

⁷ In compiling the sample of this survey evidence on the distribution of population by districts, cities and communes with main variables of sex and age group was taken into consideration, as the only trustworthy and available at the time when the survey was conducted. Concerning the other important variables (such as level of education, profession etc.), the solution has been occasional. The sample was compiled for 1100 respondents and was carried out for 1077 respondents spread in 26 out of 36 districts of Albania. Diversity of subcultural areas was taken into account in the survey's geographical distribution through an axis Northwest - Southeast.

⁸ In the time line it occupies "zero point", on the basis of which, with the evidence of a similar survey conducted at a different time, the difference of values may be worked out, so useful to calculate social and political influence. The best would be to have such pictures at least for three years or different year groups to clearly capture the tendency of the dynamics of their change. In the space line such picture enables comparisons with evidence from other similar surveys carried out in different countries, serving as a basis to explain phenomena that occur in the area where the surveys on value system were conducted.



evidence, although somewhat disputable⁹, from several other surveys not of the level and dimension of the first.

According to a postmodernist perspective we need to build a specific value model for the current Albanian society. And in order to be even the more valuable, such a model would better be of the dynamic typ, so that it would make possible the evaluation of the reciprocal influence between the changes in the value system and the economic, political and social developments. For the aforementioned reasons, it is impossible at present to build a dynamic *specific optimal* value model for the Albanian society. This is one of the reasons¹⁰ that the author of this article has deemed it as useful that, by loaning value models or hypothesis from one of the most remarkable authorities of in the domain of value studies, R.Inglehart¹¹ to aim *to the best of the abilities* to give a dynamic value table of the current Albanian society. Of course, their use in the current Albanian society, under the present circumstances where some complete studies on the value system occupying the «vertical” line (time) are non-existent, may not be entirely appropriate¹². But being unable to find a better solution, their use is considered as somewhat an acceptable solution, since it allows to interpret the partial evidence on value profiles of special social groups build in different years to approximately suppose tendencies of possible developments of a value profile (picture) of Albanian society in its entirety.

Tendencies of Value Dynamics

The value model that characterised the Albanian society at the beginning of the 90's, as a society that was emerging from a communist regime, should we follow the R.Inglehart hypothesis¹³ for the former socialist countries, would be that of "Values of shortage". We may also reach this hypoythesis by following two key hypotheses, that of *shortage* and *hypothesis of socialism*, that Inglehart uses in his study on intergeneration cultural shift¹⁴. According to the *hypothesis of shortage*, the value priorities of an individual reflect the socioeconomic environment, which means that more subjective value is laid on those things that are scarce. It goes without saying that in Albania, as one of the less developed former socialist countries, material welfare of individuals left a lot to be desired. That is why, it was expected that at the beginning of the transition, Albanian individuals aspired for a higher economic welfare, especially for higher salaries, price stability, security, and economic development. Thus, the dynamics of value profile of the society attempted to outline the so-called "system of survival values".

In the above-mentioned line, we can venture to give a model for the current Albanian society as well. Thus, let us take Inglehart's model of values of shortage as basic hypothesis to explain the value profile of Albanian society in the beginning of the transition. Further, let us accept as additional supposition that from that beginning onwards there have been no essential changes that threaten the value profile of this society. Naturally then, we may suppose that, to present in value optics the dynamics of the present structuring of the Albanian society, the tendency model of the predominance

⁹ Since much of these evidence pertain not to complete surveys on value system in the Albanian society, but to special social groups.

¹⁰ Another reason is that, models build by Inglehart are the best in this domain, and there is no doubt that they will serve also as basis to build specific models to explain the dynamics of the current Albanian society from the point of view of value profile, if conditions are ripe to build these models.

¹¹ Being unable to use any of his nonographs in book form, I am mainly concentrated on two article published lately in *Washington Quarterly* - "Globalization and Postmodern Values" 23.1 (2000) and in *American Sociological Review* - "Modernization, Cultural Change, and the Persistence of Traditional Values", 2000, Vol.65 (February:19-51), in this latter co-author with Wayne E. Baker.

¹² R.Inglehart has formulated these hypotheses to interpret the evidences of some surveys on the value system carried out in a considerable number of countries of the world, *but excluding here Albania*.

¹³ Dossier : *De la modernité à la postmodernité*, Sciences Humaines, n°73, juin1997.

¹⁴ R.Inglehart, *Globalization and Postmodern Values*, The Washington Quarterly, 23.1 (2000), p.220.

of the "survival" values, in a nutshell, of the system of *values of physical and economic security*. Under the dichotomic value optics of Inglehart¹⁵, we may speak otherwise for a tendency of the predominance of the so-called "*materialistic values*" as well. *Supporting or reinforcing* these hypotheses¹⁶ we bring below a good deal of evidence and arguments, that relate to indicators of "survival" values. As such indicators, we have taken those items that Inglehart and Baker use to build the dimension of the "survival" values as opposed to "self-expression"¹⁷, as well as some additional relevant items that according to them correlate to the former¹⁸. For different reasons, we have followed this path because in some of the questions of the Albanian questionnaire is different from the standard one¹⁹, the space that the article occupies obliges one to restrict in number and also for the reason that maybe it is not necessary to bring evidence for all the articles in question because of the modest aim that this article has.

Let us now confront these evidences with a hypothesis of Inglehart and Baker from which, just like in the hypothesis of "values of shortage", we can deduce the **model of tendency** of the predominance of "survival" values, selected above to characterise from a value perspective the present Albanian society during this state of prolonged transition. It goes without saying that such confrontation would be a test for this very model. The hypothesis in question asserts that «*The survival/self-expression dimension taps a syndrome of trust, tolerance, subjective well-being, political activism, and self-expression that emerges in postindustrial societies with high level of security. At the opposite extreme, people in societies shaped by insecurity and low level of well being, tend to emphasize economic and physical security above all other goals, and feel threatened by foreigners, by ethnic diversity and by cultural change. This leads to an intolerance of gays and other out groups, an insistence on traditional gender roles, and an authoritarian political outlook*»²⁰.

If we refer to the "survival" values group in the framework of the respective dimension, it includes among others, the consideration of the respondent him/herself *not really happy* as one of the indicators of the low level of the so-called "subjective well-being". From the evidence of the survey conducted in 26 districts of Albania in 1998, it resulted that **49.6%** of the respondents felt themselves as *not really happy*. Whereas, if we take into account the whole specter of the percentage of the respondents, regarding the degree of *happiness/unhappiness, or satisfaction/dissatisfaction* from life that they instantly filled out, we can build the Inglehartian indicator of subjective well-being²¹, which results in «**-0.2**»²². According to this Albania rates, in the respective map provided by Inglehart dhe Baker, over Bulgaria, Russia, Belarus and Moldavia, but below Lithuania, Georgia, Estonia, Letonia and Azerbaijan among former socialist countries, and further below the countries with a low level of income such as India and Nigeria²³. This is another fact that reinforces the Inglehart finding that «*Communist rule had huge costs-not only materially, but also in terms of human happiness*»²⁴.

If we attempt to follow a time line of the evolution of the feeling of satisfaction or dissatisfaction from the life that one leads, taking as reference the evidences from the survey in 8 districts of the country (by the end of 1995), to further compare them with

¹⁵ if we consider the application of this model acceptable for the present Albanian reality.

¹⁶ Not pretending their " verification " , which is practically impossible according to the Popperian concept.

¹⁷ Table 1, *Modernization, Cultural change, and the Persistence of Traditional Values* , American Sociological Review, 2000, Vol.65 (February : 24)

¹⁸ Idem, Table 2 (February: 26) and Table 3 (February: 27).

¹⁹ ie, that is used in three waves of surveys in different countries of the world during the period of 1981-1998.

²⁰ R.Inglehart, W.E.Baker, *Modernization, Cultural change, and the Persistence of Traditional Values*, American Sociological Review, 2000, Vol.65 (February: 25-26)

²¹ R.Inglehart, *Globalization and Postmodern Values*, The Washington Quarterly, 23.1 (2000), p.217.

²² For the capital this indicator was 23,4%.

²³ Idem, Fig.3 (p.217) and Fig.7 (p.227).

²⁴ Idem, p.218.



those of the survey for the value system in Albania (1998), the result is as follows. The question "How do you live compared to 3-4 years ago?" was answered:

Survey	Much better	Better	Not worse	Worse	Worst
In 8 districts	20.7%	53.3%	15.5%	7.7%	2.3%

If we group the answers, we will find out that in 1995 as compared to years 1991-1992, 74% of the respondents lived "much better" and "better". Whereas respectively -10% "much worse" and "bad" and - 15.5% "not worse"

We may say that the above figures, although direct, provide evidence from judgements relating to the standard of living, and also witness not directly for the level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction from life.²⁵ That is why, in our opinion, they may be used to make general comparisons with the figures that report the level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction from life in the value study of in Albania in 1998²⁶. Under these circumstances, if we make such a comparison it will come out that from 1995 until 1998 we have a decrease of the level of satisfaction from life that the respondents lead and an increase of the respective level of dissatisfaction. Thus, as an attempt to explain this decrease tendency, we may provide a hypothesis that takes as a starting point Inglehart idea²⁷ about the correlation between the income and the satisfaction from the life lead. More concretely the hypothesis asserts, *that from 1995 until 1998 we have a decrease of average income per capita in Albanian society, or at least a decrease of the level of income increase during this period.* To test this hypothesis, let us refer to the evidence in the following table, where the level of GDP growth during 1991-1999 is provided.

Year	1991	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999 ²⁸
GDP Growth	-11.7%	+11%	+13.5%	+20.1%	-7%	+8%	+8%

In the table we see that when we pass from 1991 (with negative GDP growth) to 1995, there is an increase of the level of GDP growth in absolute value by 25.2%, or 2.15 times. Whereas, when we pass from 1995 to 1998, there is a decrease of the level of GDP growth in absolute value by 20.5%, or 1.52 times. And this decrease is present from 1997, the year in which a negative growth by "-7%" is registered.

To observe what is the ratio between this tendency of decrease in the level of GDP growth and the respective tendency in the decrease of the level of satisfaction from the life we lead, reported by the respondents of the two surveys taken into examination here, we will turn once again to the evidence of the surveys in question. For the value system of 1998, we have the level of *satisfaction* at 39.1%, *dissatisfaction* at 28.9% and average condition at - 31.1%. So, compared to 1995, there is a relatively significant decrease of the level of satisfaction from life, which amounts to nearly 1.9 times and increase of the level of dissatisfaction and the average condition which amounts to nearly 2.9 and 2 times. Thus, when we pass from 1995 to 1998, decrease of the level of GDP growth is nearly 1.5 times, decrease of satisfaction and increase of dissatisfaction from the life we lead are respectively nearly 2 and 3 times. That is why, maybe such changes of the level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction from the life we lead can not be explained only

²⁵ Such a correlation is supposed, because there were no relevant factors in Albanian society at that period to hinder it.

²⁶ From the value study of year 1998, it resulted that 39.1% respondents were "satisfied" and "very satisfied" from the life they led, whereas 28.9% were "little" and "not at all satisfied".

²⁷ R.Inglehart: "As one would expect, rising income levels go with rising levels of happiness and life satisfaction." *Globalization and Postmodern Values*, The Washington Quarterly, 23.1 (2000), p.218.

²⁸ *Social Indicators Yearbook*, INSTAT 2000, p.2.

with the *decrease* of GDP during 1997 and *decrease of the level of its growth* during 1998 – 1999. We can state as *additional explaining hypothesis* that from the social turmoil of 1997 there is decrease of the standard of living of the individuals in the Albanian society, which cannot be wholly expressed by GDP as a global index. Which means, there is a polarization of well-being in social groups and stata becoming always smaller and of poverty in broader stata of the present Albanian society. In general, the price increase index²⁹ of the period 1997-1999³⁰ may bear testimony of it, which by entries is as follows:

Entries	Health services	Groceries	Services	Fuel and energy
Index	+40.83%	+20.6%	+20.8%	+32.66%

For the exacerbation of the standard of living from 1997 – 1999, the increase of mortality rate among abult may account for indirectly, which amounts to 14.4% for the 80+ age group, and 4.8% for the 75-79 one. In accordance with the Inglehart supposition that *«the early phases of economic development seem to produce a big return, not only in terms of life expectancy but also in terms of human happiness»*³¹, we must analyse the change life expectancy index for the period in question. But because there is no such index in the INSTAT and të Bank of Albania bulletins, we made use of the above evidences, which are not direct.

On the other hand, these evidences lead us to suppose that even after 1999 the decrease tendency of the subjective well-being index may persist, which if we use Inglehart terms, *“ make an alarming fact”*³², in our opinion, in the sense of an indicator of a fact, which not only is influenced *but also influences in turn in the exacerbation of the social and political situation in Albania*. That is, it will be a factor that will *present* and at the same time *favour* political and social instability in the country. We may provide here some indicators from the sirvey conducted in 2000 with about 800 young people in 12 districts of the country, which support indirectly the supposition relating to the tendency of the decrease of the subjective well-being index. From this survey, it results that nearly 35% of the respondents assert that their parents are out of work, in social security, or on pension, 10% - in part-time jobs³³ and 50% - in full-time jobs. In the meantime, the 50% of the full-time working parents in greatly “depreciated” if we take into account the fact that only nearly 9% of the respondents consider that their parentsw are *well-paid*. Thus if we take into consideration that 60% of the respondents who state that their parents work, it results that less than 6% of those are considered *well-paid*. The others do not receive a good salary. Naturally, similar figures do not bear testimony for for satisfaction with the present life, but for the opposite direction. As a matter of fact, we may say that the degree of dissatisfaction that is “read” through them as least would not be lower that that of 1998 (28.9%). Signs are, on the contrary, that it will be higher, supporting the supposition on the negative tendency of the subjective well-being³⁴. If we add to it the fact that many Albanian citizens conceal the weapons that were looted from military arsenals during the social turmoil of 1997 and that many of them do not intent to

²⁹ We were limited in this indicator for several reasons relating to the level of performance and transperancy of the evidence from the relevant institutions, the level of emancipation in political Albanian culture etc., there are no complete evidences for synthetical indicators of the standard of living.

³⁰ *Albania in Figures*, INSTAT, Tiranë, Shtator 2000, p.17.

³¹ R.Inglehart, *Globalization and Postmodern Values*, The Washington Quarterly, 23.1 (2000), p.219.

³² *Idem*, p.226.

³³ Here we may add the percentage of those who have a temporary, unhealthy, or dangerous job etc, (they amount to 20%) , which will contribute to increase the dissatisfaction from their life.

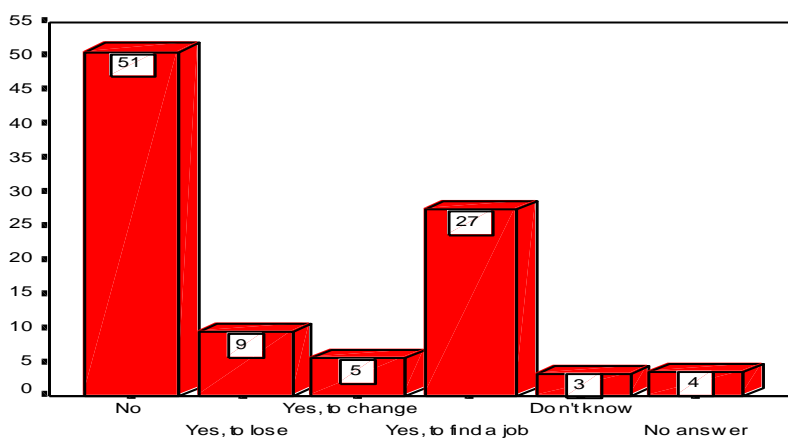
³⁴ Even the optimistic perception for the future in the same surveyes, only in the level of 18.4%, as well as accepting the identification of the respondents more often in state of thrill, undefined homour and sadness in the level of over 50% support our supposition.



hand them over³⁵, this will justify the concern for the potential decreasing tendency and the destabilizing effect that it will bring about.

Moreover, as it comes out from the study "Needs assessment and memorization", in the stata of the former politically persecuted during the communist regime, which amounts at present in nearly 150 000 persons or nearly 5% of the population of the country, *dissatisfaction with the present life* is supposed to be 71%, whereas *fear from the decrease of the standard of life* – 68% and the demand for a moral and penal break with the former communist society, as another indicator of the dissatisfaction with the present life, is 67%³⁶. It is worth mentioning here that only 34% of the respondents of this stratum give a positive answer to the question whether they think that to build a civil society and to perfect yourself it is important to learn to forgive. Whereas 37% of them say yes, but to a certain extant, and 29% are categorically against it³⁷. Also 47% of the respondents declare that they *are not morally rehabilitated*, as opposed to only 16%, or nearly 3 times less declare the opposite. So, we can say that this stratum constitutes another source for the increase of dissatisfaction and social tensions.

In the framework of the dimension of values survival/self-expression, another direction that lays emphasis on survival values is that the respondents give priority to economic and phisical security over self-expression and quality of life.³⁸ If we first take the main indicators of economic security such as fear of loosing the job position and fear of decrease of the standard of living from the evidences of the study of 1998 on the system of values in Albania, we would have the following outcome.³⁹ As far as the security of the job position is concerned, 50.7% of the respondents think they *will keep it*, 15% - they *will lose or change it* and 27.4% - they *will not find a job position* (see Graph.1).



Fear for losing or changing the use?

Graph 1

Whereas, for the security of the standard of living form the same source we have: 44.2% of the respondents fear that it will go down presently, versus 36.6% that do not have such fear (see Graph.2). We see that there exists a considerable insecurity not only to

³⁵ From the abovementioned survey it results that, nearly 28% of the youngsters have concealed weapons and only half of them thinks that they will hand them over. Also nearly 16.5% of them declare that they are slightly or deeply in conflict with the social or familial environment.

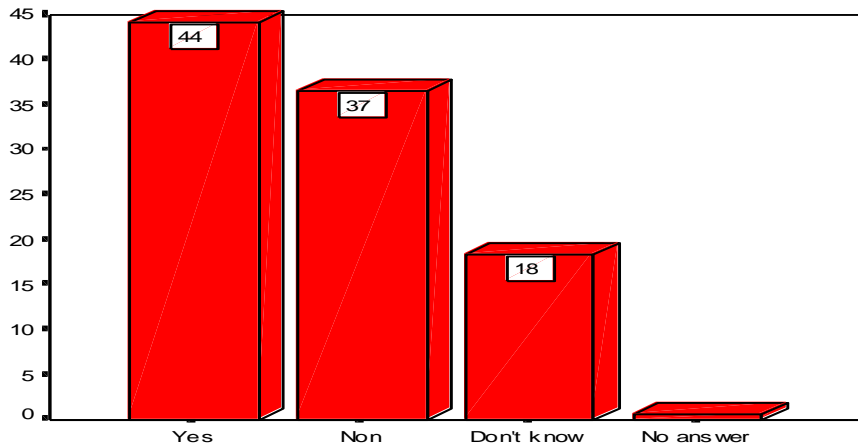
³⁶ "Needs Assessment and Memorization *Rehabilitation and reintegration status of former politically persecuted in Albania* ", ARCT/RCT PROJECT, 1999-2001, p.137-138.

³⁷ Idem, p.136.

³⁸ R.Inglehart, Wayne E. Baker, *Modernization, CulturalChange, and the Persistence of Traditional Values* American Sociological Review, 2000,Vol.65 (February: 24).

³⁹ A.Kocani, "Albanian society and value dichotomy ", *Albania in transition and values*, SOROS, 1999, f.116-117.

keep the job position but also to keep the standard of living. This insecurity demonstrates the concern of the respondents for such values as security of the job position and standards of living as integral parts of the economic security, that is, also for the system of values of «survival».



A decrease of your standard of living?

Graph.2

As other indicators of priority selection of values that have to do with physical and economic security versus those of self-expression and quality of life we have: a) the preference in the level of 73.6% for the option for a *strong economic increase* versus 4.1% for the option that it be made possible that for *people to express their own views*; and b) the statement by 61.6% for the option of *preserving the order in the country* and 24.4% for *fight against price increase* versus 6.1% for *guarantee of the freedom of expression* and 7.5% for the *participation of citizens in important government decisions*⁴⁰. It is obvious here that the ratio is from 3 up to 18 times in favour of values of survival.

68.4% of the respondents in 26 districts of Albania opt for a future Albania much attention is paid to order and security, 5.8% of them think that in the future much attention will be paid to individual freedom in Albania. Whereas 25.2% of the respondents opt for something in between. From the above evidence⁴¹ it results that *in the future* values of physical security will be preferred nearly 10 times more than that of individual freedoms.

Whereas in the present value selection, 46.9% of the respondents think the most important responsibility of the Government is the preservation of order, versus 14.7% that demand the respect of individual freedoms and 35.7% that opt for something in between⁴².

If we compare the above figures that refer to demands for the present and those of the future, we clearly notice an obvious tendency. In present preferences the ratio between the option for the order and security and the option for the respect of individual freedom is nearly 3.2 : 1, whereas that between first option (order, security) and in-between option – 1.3 : 1. In the future vision, the above ratio oscillates in figures from 10.2 : 1 up to 11.8 : 1 for the former and 2.7 : 1 for the latter. Thus we have respectively an

⁴⁰ A.Kocani, "Albanian society and value dichotomy", *Albania in transition and values*, SOROS, 1999, f.119.

⁴¹ Idem, f.114-115.

⁴² Idem.



increase by 3.2 – 3.7 times for the first ratio 2 times for the second. In a nutshell, in the future vision as compared with the present, it is clearly reiterated the preference for *order and security* as opposed to the other alternative option for *respect for individual freedom*. That is, we have a clear indicator of the increasing tendency for the so-called values of «survival”.

Another indicator of the system of «survival” values is the consideration of the leisure time as *not very important in life*. From the evidence of the 1998 survey on the system of values it clearly comes out the preference given by the respondents to *work* in comparison to *leisure time*. 66% of them support the first option, as opposed to only 8.6% who support the second, whereas 24.6%⁴³ support the in-between option. It is evident that the second preference is nearly 7.7 times smaller than the first, which demonstrates that this is an indicator of the system of the «survival” values.

Among the values that influence as a criterion for the selection of job position as a priority⁴⁴ in 60.4% it results that the consideration of a good salary is essential not to have money concerns. Whereas in the second place in 21.9% is the consideration of the security of the job position (with no risk of being made redundant)⁴⁵. Whereas the request to work with the people that you like is filled out by 13.3% of the respondents and doing a useful job – by 4.0% of them. It is evident that the ratio is 1.6 up to 15 times in favour of the first two options, which again is supported by the hypothesis of the «survival” values.

If we refer to the findings in the study “Between the cultural void and enlivenment”, mainly based on a survey on pupils of rural areas of Albania in 1998, we would have as following. About 47.2% of the youngsters consider success as one of the three most important values in a list of 10 values. And this figure is not influenced by social and regional affiliations of the youngsters which in the authors opinion demonstrate for a “*strong western contemporary profile*” of the psychocultural shping of the youngsters in rural areas⁴⁶. About 35.3% of the respondents consider getting rich as one of the three main values, versus 4.9% who consider as such the human rights and 1.4% - tolerance. The comment that the study authors make is: “*the present youngster of the rural areas, but as previous observations have indicated, also the Albanian in general as a social type, put in the first place the pragmatic success in his daily life, he wishes to make a fortune, to lead a comfortable life, to have knowledge and education that facilitate his daily life*”⁴⁷ [Notes in italic and bold are mine – A.K.]. Thus, as we can see the authors of this study consider that mainly the values that are included in the system of “survival” values, characterize the social type of the present Albanian in essence. But here as well, to a certain degree, we may cast a shadow of doubt. It is possible that the tendency toward success and getting rich may not be interpreted an an indicator of *survival values*, but as a product of the early communist propaganda on the capitalist system representing it as having for the “northern star” getting rich at any cost.

If we refer to the findings of the survey of 1998 on the system of values, relating to the attitude toward different categories of persons who are not preferred *to have as a neighbour*, we would have as following. People do not prefer to have as a neighbour:

⁴³ Idem, f.117-118.

⁴⁴ The primary evaluation is given to salary in the survey in question in some cases as in the evaluation of the present aspects of a preferred job position, as well as when we talk for aspirations for these aspects of the future job position.

⁴⁵ A.Kocani, “Albanian society and value dichotomy”, Albania in transition and values, SOROS, 1999, f.118.

⁴⁶ A.Fuga, Z.Dervishi, R.Gjoka, “Between the cultural void and enlivenment”, SOROS, 1998, f.43.

⁴⁷ Idem, f.42.

Formerly persecuted people	Drunkards	Drug users	AIDS-deseased people	Homosexuals	Foreigners
48.7%	58.3%	60.1%	41.9%	52.3% ⁴⁸	13%

As we can see, the first four categories offer figures that reinforce the hypothesis in question, whereas the last category gives a percentage that favours the so-called pole of "self-expression". At first look, it seems that the evidence, besides some other evidence⁴⁹, give a paradoxical picture. On the one hand, Albanian society is presented as positioned in the pole of *survival* values, on the other hand, it appears to prefer the values of the opposite pole, that of *self-expression*. In fact, the paradox appears if we study the Albanian society through a philosophical Parmenidian perspective⁵⁰, which takes the being in essence as sign of unity. But if we pass to a dialective perspective, be it Heraklitian, Hegelian or Basherlariane, in that case there is no paradox. Thus according to Bachelard⁵¹ the essence of being is characterized by complementary features, which applied to our case, it means that in the value picture of the Albanian society we would encounter not only values that pertain to the *survival* pole but also those grouped in the *self-expression* pole.⁵²

Another possible explanation of the abovementioned facts would be the supposition that perhaps in a great deal of cases where signs of self-expression pole appear we have a certain illusion of values. Because in Albanian society the aspiration to be integrated into Europe⁵³ is too strong, there may be a tendency to conform to parameters that structure the western European societies and that represent among others their own system of values. That is, it is likely that these parameters are not embodied in individuals from the Albanian society in the form of values, but they simply conform to them. That is why, it may not be in fact that individuals of the current Albanian society embrace values that pertain to the self-expression pole, but for that they, to a certain extent, display no such values, but respective norms to which they conform for the sake of the desire «to make Albania as the rest of Europe».

If we attempt to explain the relatively low percentage of exclusion of (not preferred as neighbours) foreigners, we may refer to an explaining hypothesis based on the traditional values of Albanian nation. According to them, the influence of the traditional values in which the foreign individual (but not foreigners as a *conquering power*) has a

⁴⁸ We think that this figure correlates with that given by the survey of youngsters of the Debate Center in 2000, in which a homosexual is considered "a *degenerate*" by 22.9%, as *deviant* – 8.4% and as *sick* – 21.1%.

⁴⁹ Thus from surveying the High School students in 1999, it resulted that 67.7% of the respondents prefer *enhancement of prestige* in society as opposed to 22.3% prefer *getting rich quick* and 67.6% assert that would prefer to select an *intelektuale low-income job*, as opposed to 17.3% that would prefer a *high-income-whatever job*. At the same time, the most important value in a list of 10 values, is occupied by first *sincerity* with 52.2%, second – *honesty* with 11.7% and only in seven place 2.6% - *richness*. These figures testify for the self-expression pole.

⁵⁰ Here we may take the confrontation between philosophical modern and postmodern perspectives. The former takes as sign for being the unity, whereas the latter – multiplicity (According to J-M.Besnier, *Les figures actuelles dela pens e*, Sciences Humaines, N 69, Fevrier 1997).

⁵¹ "...complementary characters must be registered in the essence of being, no connected to this silent belief the being in itself is always the sign of unity", G.Bachelard, *Le Nouvel Esprit Scientifique*, P.U.F., 1963, p.14.

⁵² Another possible explaining hypothesis would be that which starts from the philosophical postulate that the value profile of the individual or the social group is not an intrinsic feature of the them, but only product of the cooperation with the measuring subject during the survey. This in essence means that it will be determined by "value matrix" that is used to collect the data from the survey. Of course, to consider a similar hypothesis, a careful procedure during the survey is needed. The author of this article is at the beginnings of such an attempt.

⁵³ An similar aspiration was early expressed from the Albanian students, who with their demonstrations in December paved the way for the political pluralism in Albania. Whereas now it is publically expressed as one of the great objectives of all the political forces in the country.



special privileged status – that of the guest in the code of Albanian hospitality, status which was stipulated even in the different canons⁵⁴.

Another additional indicator on the value positioning of the current Albanian society is also that of the degree the individual has in the freedom to choose and the control over his life. From the survey on the system of values of 1998 it resulted that 21.8% of the respondents declare that they have little or no such freedom⁵⁵, 28.9% have a bit of freedom and 43.9% do have the freedom in a considerable or high degree. These figures speak more in favour of the *self-expression pole*. Here it is possible the explanation that the respondents were not clear about the meaning of the terms “freedom of choice” and “control over personal life”, which if it is this way, would make their answers not plausible. Or, that their responses reflect an individual freedom condition that accompanied the decline of the communist dictatorship and the entry in the path of a democratic society at the beginning of the 90’s. Naturally then, it results that even in this value component the Albanian society displays the *self-expression* aspect.

For the health condition indicator we have as follows:

Source	Very good and Good	Acceptable	Very bad and Bad
Survey on the value system of 1998	81.0%	15.9%	2.9%
Study for former politically persecuted	20.0%	38.0%	42.0%

From the table, it results only that, the respondents of the stratum of the former politically persecuted report health condition that is classified as an indicator of system of survival values. But, from the fact that this stratum is not significant from quantitative point of view, it is naturally that this stratum, from its bitter heritage, will report a graver health condition than the other strata of the society, it results that we have to accept this indicator of Albanian society as a whole does not “speak” pro survival pole.

As regards the place that *friends occupy in their lives*, the respondents in the framework of the study on value system assert that they occupy a *very important and important* to the degree 92.0%, as opposed to 7.9% - *little or at all important*. It is obvious that these figures clearly speak about the pole *self-expression*. A similar positioning can be explained through the strong influence of the traditional Albanian values that are related to the status or high consideration for the guest and hospitality. On the other hand, we think that this is difficult to be understood by individuals who are shaped in a traditional Protestant culture, in which the education of the individualism sentiment is much more emphasized than in other cultures, such as the muslim or orthodox ones, where the collectiveness and not individualism is the main tendency that characterizes the life style.

As far as participation in a boycott is concerned, the respondents of the survey on the value system assert that they will never do such a thing to the degree of 44.8%, as opposed to 24.6% that would do it, and 6.2% that have done it⁵⁶. The ratio is nearly 1.5: 1 in favour of the first option. That is why, we may say that these figures speak more in favour of the pole of survival values.

⁵⁴ A similar explanation is supported by the findings of the survey with the youngsters of the Debate Center in 2000, according to which the degree of hatred or disdain toward foreigners from western non-neighbouring countries amounts respectively from 1.5% and 0.4% up to 4.5% e 4.2%.

⁵⁵ Study on the former politically persecuted gives this option 47%, versus 37% for the opposite option. “Needs Assessment and Memorization *Rehabilitation and reintegration status of former politically persecuted in Albania*”, ARCT/RCT PROJECT, 1999-2001, p.99.

⁵⁶ As regards signing a petition, 37.0% of respondents assert that they *will never do* such a thing as opposed to 29.4% who assert they *would do it* and 12.0% who *have already done it*.

Finally, we will mention as an indicator of the «survival” values, the consideration that in a far future the technical progress will help the humanity. The Albanian respondents support this option in nearly 60 %, as opposed to nearly 4 % for the opposite option (the in-between evaluation is nearly 20 %). Here the ratio is obviously (15 : 1) in favour of the pole of «survival” values.

Conclusion

The questions arisen at the beginning of this article, on what the value model would be that would better capture the dynamics of the present Albanian society in transition, we think by now that we have given an answer. Concretely, if we consider as aiding hypothesis for the interpretation of the evidence relating to the values that characterize this society that presented by Inglehart and Baker for the dimension of *survival/self-expression* as our predictions as presented above, then we may say that the value picture of this society in most of its components attempts toward the “colour” of *survival*. But, it is natural that such an assertion will not be taken for granted. This be in the selection of indicators, presented as test for the hypothesis in test may not be fully justified⁵⁷. But we may rightly suspect, following the line of C. Brooks and J. Manza⁵⁸, that a somewhat different formulation of the questions of the questionnaires and surveys taken into consideration, we might have had a different picture from the one presented here. Or, for the reason that we find it difficult to bluntly accept that those that are displayed as values of self-expression or survival, are really as such and not a conforming tendency of Albanian individuals towards the essential features of the western European society, or the product of their perception for this society. Thus, it is difficult to differentiate between the real values of self-expression or survival and respective norms, to which Albanian individuals conform in the framework of the aspiration to integrate Albania into Europe. That is why, even the conclusion on the tendency of “value profile” mainly toward the one based on system of “*survival values*” should not be taken fully for granted.

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⁵⁷ It is worth mentioning that in exploiting the evidence from different surveys a difficulty in comparing them arises. This for the simple fact they, except for one, are not based on standard questionnaires that test the value system in its entirety in the Albanian society. As we can see from the above explanations, other surveys even when investigating the values, have done so not for the system of values in general, but for specific value groups and specific social groups. Thus it was difficult to build a complete explaining model for the dynamics of the value system that characterizes the present Albanian society. In some cases, even the formulation of the questions that test a value or belief in different surveys was such that posed a difficulty in making use of the results of the questions or to make comparisons. But these were the conditions under which we attempted to build an explaining model of the dynamics of the value system in question. Thus the issue here was to retain a model that gives a simple static value picture from which one cannot draw anything significant or to attempt to build a dynamic value model, but not with the desirable parameters. In this framework, the author of this article deemed that something could be done for the dynamic model be it in uncomfortable conditions, simply getting the impetus from the idea of C. R. Popper that after all, everything is disputable in science.

⁵⁸ Which gives the idea that in the case of a replicate for the Inglehart’s survey with other methods, one can notice that in the most of cases you find at the same person a mixture of the materialistic values with the postmaterialistic ones. *Raisons de vivre. Raisons d’agir*, p.32, Sciences Humaines, No 79, 1998.



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