THE POLITICS OF 'EURO-ATLANTIC ORIENTATION': POLITICAL IDENTITIES INTERESTS AND ALBANIAN FOREIGN POLICY 1992-2007

by

ODETA BARBULLUSHI

A thesis submitted to
The University of Birmingham
for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Centre for Russian and East European Studies
College of Social Sciences
University of Birmingham
September 2009

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

University of Birmingham Research Archive

e-theses repository

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the shifts and continuities in the construction of security in the post-communist period. The thesis provides an insight into the reasons and the ways in which the dominant discourse of security and foreign policy of the Albanian state shifted in 1997 from a an emphasis on the 'nation' and 'national sovereignty' into a liberal discourse which emphasised the 'economy' and the 'region'. The overarching question of the thesis is why did the Euro-Atlantic orientation become the hegemonic discourse of Albanian foreign and security policy in the post-1997 period? In order to find the answer for this question I will concentrate on the meanings that the Albanian political elites—and more specifically the two main governing parties, the Democratic Party and the Socialist Party— have attached to the notions of 'national question' and 'Euro-Atlantic orientation'.

The argument of the thesis is that the different articulations of 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' and of the 'national interest' have relied upon the political elites' ideological repertoires. Through these repertoires, the political elites translate the basic identity narratives of the Albanian nation and state into hegemonic discourses of security.

The thesis builds on Discourse Theory and particularly the approach developed by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (1985) By incorporating notions of 'identification strategies', 'interpretative repertoires' and 'myth' into the framework of Lene Hansen and Ole Waever (2001), the thesis reveals the intricate interplay between the construction of state identity and of political identities in post-communist Albania.

To my parents, Satber and Shemsi Barbullushi.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DP	Democratic Party
EC	European Communities
EU	European Union
EUMIK	European Union Mission in Kosovo
ICO	Islamic Conference Organization
KFOR	Kosovo Force
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
PLA	Party of Labour of Albania
SP	Socialist Party
SMI	Socialist Movement for Integration
UNMIK	United Nations Mission in Kosovo

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1.Introduction

This study explores the practices of Albanian political elites of constructing a post-communist state identity through the foreign and security policy of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation'. To this end, it investigates the meanings that the post-communist elites have attached to the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' of the Albanian state during and after experiences of structural and social dislocation, such as 1991-1992 and 1996-1997.

The thesis argues that the political elites have constituted the subjectivity of post-communist Albania in ways which are favourable to their identity and interests. They have translated the basic identity myths of the National Renaissance through their political lenses of statehood and of democratic governance.

1.1.1. The Object of Study and Level of Analysis

At the beginning of his mandate in July 2005 the Albanian Minister of Foreign Affairs appraised the foreign policy line pursued by his Socialist predecessors, which he summarized as the 'course of bringing Albania closer to the West or as the ″Euro-Atlantic orientation″ of Albanians' (Mustafaj, 10 October 2005). The Minister interpreted the foreign policy line of the past eight years, i.e. from the coming to power of the leftist 'Alliance for the State' in June 1997 until the electoral victory of the Democratic Party in July 2005, as an uninterrupted sequence of moments which had sustained the Western vocation of Albania and Albanians. This interpretation presupposes the idea that there was in fact an alternative option available for the Albanian decision-makers to take.

Judging from the discourse of the main political parties in the post-communist period, two alternatives stand out: firstly, ethnic nationalism and irredentist tendencies with regards to the national question in the Balkans; and secondly, religious radicalization, particularly in the

post September 11 context. Nonetheless, both alternatives failed to materialize. The West in general and the project of integration in NATO and the EU did not represent a security threat to either the dominant conception of statehood or Albanian national identity.

The question, then, is why alternative options were not taken up by the Tirana elites. Furthermore, why did the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' become the hegemonic discourse of Albanian foreign and security policy in the post-communist period and particularly after 1997? In order to find the answer for this question I will concentrate in the identity and interests of the Albanian political elites, and more specifically of the two main governing parties, the Democratic Party and the Socialist Party.

Contrary to widely-held views, I will argue that the crisis of 1997 led to a shift in the construction of security and of the Albanian state identity from a territorially-based, traditional security discourse to an economic framing of security and foreign policy. However, this shift cannot be captured by a paradigm of transition from a 'nationalist' to an 'Europeanist' or 'integrationist' foreign policy. The nationalist option of 'unification' and the ethnic conception of statehood never did gain a hegemonic position in the foreign and security policy discourse in the post-communist era. This was the case, despite the emphasis placed by the Democrat leader and former President Sali Berisha in particular and the centre-right more broadly on 'national sovereignty', 'nation' and 'national interest' during 1992-1997. Furthermore, despite membership in the Islamic Conference Organization in 1992, the priority of the Albanian foreign policy remained integration in the Euro-Atlantic institutions. Therefore, 'alternatives' to the Euro-Atlantic orientation simply remained political strategies to de-legitimize the opponent domestically and externally.

Yet, the Euro-Atlantic integration has been imbued with different notions of security: either in terms of economic survival and prosperity or in terms of national sovereignty. I will argue that the different articulations of Euro-Atlantic integration have relied upon the elites'

different conceptions of self, that is, of Albanian state identity and of what constituted Albanianism.

My analysis focuses particularly on moments of dislocation, when the identity discourses of the state and the state elites are de-stabilized. A moment of dislocation happens when 'words are no longer stably attached to concepts, and the need for the articulation of a new order becomes an urgent political task' (Torfing, 2002). I suggest that both 1991-1992 and 1996-1997 constitute such experiences of 'social dislocation'. It is during these experiences of rupture, that the actors will resort to political myths. Despite my focus on the post-communist period, I will draw on the basic national identity myths of the National Renaissance period and discuss their ideological interpretation during the communist period. The communist discourse of the nation and of the West provides thus the ideological riverbed of the identification practices of post-communist political elites. [1]

Myth in the context of this thesis refers to highly stabilized and institutionally entrenched identities, which offer a solution and a sense of coherence and order following moments of dislocation and crisis. *Discourse* denotes 'systems of meaningful practices that form the identities of subjects and objects' (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000: 4).[2] In this respect, discourses are concrete systems of social relations and practices that are intrinsically political; furthermore, their formation involves the construction of antagonism and the drawing of political frontiers between 'insiders' and 'outsiders' (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000: 4). My understanding of *power* here follows a poststructuralist understanding of the

---

[1] For an insight into the importance of legacies of communism in determining political action in the post-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, see Ekiert, G. and S. Hanson (2003).

[2] Discourse Theory's approach towards discourse claims to depart from Michel Foucault's emphasis on discourse as 'an object as any other'. See interview of Paul Bowman with Ernesto Laclau (Bowman, 1999). Also Foucault (1989). However in both understandings, discourse does not manifest a pre-constituted subject, but constitutes the speaking subject. Whereas for Foucault the notion of 'dispersion' of elements/statements is crucial to the discursive construction of the subject, Discourse Theory emphasizes 'chains of signifiers' and practices of signification. As Norman Fairclough notes, discourse is imbued with different meanings even by authors who have played a decisive role in theorizing and introducing it across a wide range of disciplines, such as Michel Foucault. According to Fairclough, Foucault has treated the notion of 'discourse' 'sometimes as the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements' (quoted in Fairclough, 2003:123).

notion in terms of the capacity to 'articulate' and to make those articulations not only 'stick' but become hegemonic and pervasive (Wetherell, 1998: 393).[3] The thesis combines the conceptual vocabulary of Discourse Theory, particularly the approach developed by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (1985), with notions from Critical Discourse Analysis and Discursive Psychology, such as 'interpretative repertoires' (Wetherell, 1998: 128) [4] and 'identification strategies'. This combined approach aims at grounding Discourse Theory in the context of the specific conditions and 'texture' of social practices in post-communist Albania.

The thesis argues that the basic national identity discourse is translated into the foreign and security policy discourse of 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' through the interpretative repertoires and ideological lenses of the main political parties. The meanings attached to the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' capture the relationship between the Albanian nation and state but also the relationship between state and society. Therefore, the discourse of 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' is at once a discourse of external relations as well as internal democratic governance. As such, the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' is domestically a contested discourse.[5]

In the first part of the chapter I will discuss the state of the literature on Albanian foreign and security policy as well as the poststructuralist approaches on the interplay between identity and foreign policy. The second part introduces the research question and the key findings of the empirical analysis which will be elaborated in the subsequent chapters. The third part provides the context for the shift in the security discourse in the post-1997

---

[3] In this respect, following the work of Michel Foucault (1989), power and resistance are understood as 'forces working in opposition to one another to fix and dissolve or construct and deconstruct social identities' (Widder, 2004: 411) This understanding of power transcends Steven Lukes' three-dimensional notion of 'power'. According to Lukes' 'three-dimensional' conception, 'the supreme exercise of power is to get an other or others to have the desires you want them to have' […] (Lukes, 1974: 23). As such, Lukes' work sets more emphasis on causality and agency than Foucault. For a critique of Lukes' and Foucault's conceptualizations of power, see Clegg (2002), pp. 13-17. For an insight into the use of the concept of 'power' in the constructivist literature in International Relations, see Stefano Guzzini (2005). Guzzini conceptualizes 'power' as a signifier whose meaning is not neutral and which 'does' things. Therefore, he suggests that a conceptual history of the term should starts with its performative function, i.e. with what it does and what identities/subjectivities it constitutes, before then moving to the conditions of acquiring such meaning.

[4] For the application of the term 'ideological repertoires' in the case of political actors' reproduction of Kemalism in Turkey, see Demirtas-Bagdonas, O. (2008).

[5] For a conceptualization of 'contested concepts' in political science, see Connolly (1983) For an application of Connolly's notion of 'essentially contested concepts' see Diez (2001).

period. The last part of the chapter outlines the basic methodological tools deployed during the empirical and analytical research.

1.2. State of the Literature

The political elites' construction of the Euro-Atlantic orientation as a matter of 'national security' is a largely neglected dimension of post-communist Albanian politics. Recent studies have pointed to the manipulation of EU norms and the manipulation of the Europeanist vocation on the part of Albanian post-communist elites (Elbasani 2004; Vickers and Petiffer 2007). There is a consensual understanding among post-communist scholars of Albania that the process of Euro-Atlantic integration has been hindered or slowed because of the fierce political conflict between the two main political forces, the Socialists and the Democrats (Bogdani and Loughlin 2007; Elbasani 2004). As such, the Euro-Atlantic integration is juxtaposed to domestic politics and political elites' interests. However, little attention is given to the importance of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' discourse in constructing identities and interests of political actors. Likewise, little attention is paid to the interplay between different constructions of the West and of Albanian state identity on the one hand, and the main political parties' interests and identities on the other. What does a strong Europeanist discourse, for instance, of the Socialists from 1997 onwards tell us about the centre-left administration's framing of the 'national interest'? Furthermore, in the context of the Socialists' specific articulation of the 'national interest', how possible was it to formulate a different Kosovo policy? These are some of the questions which are left unanswered by the existing literature on Albanian post-communist politics and foreign policy. Through a close and contextualized reading of official foreign policy and political discourse from 1992 to 2007 this study aims to make a contribution towards filling these gaps.

1.2.1 Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy

There is no substantial study which systematically explores the relationship between domestic politics and foreign policy and even less so the politics of speaking the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' discourse. Two approaches dominate studies of post-communist Albanian foreign policy and EU integration: the neo-realist and the neo-liberal approach.

The neo-realist approach focuses on the structural conditions of the international system and the limitations it imposes on small and unstable states such as Albania (for example, Kola, 2003; Bumci, 2001; Lani and Schmidt 1998). This body of literature often suggests that the Albanian state was incapable of following a more assertive policy in the Balkans because of its dependency on Western aid. The key weakness of this literature is that it neglects the national elites' interpretative processes of these structural conditions. In this thesis, 'structural' or 'contextual' factors such as 'state smallness' or 'economic weakness' are approached as elements of broader discursive practices which constitute the subject/identity of the Albanian state domestically and externally. I also suggest that the articulation and reproduction of identity narratives of the nation and representations of the state is inextricably linked to power relations between a so-called centre, Brussels or Washington, and the periphery. However this power relation is not static and objective; it is constantly reproduced by domestic elites in Albania and in turn it reproduces both 'centre' and 'periphery'. As Merje Kuus has rightly noted, geopolitical/security discourses are constantly constructed within the East European countries by the national political elites (Kuus 2004: 2-4). [6] Hence, in order to be able to grasp such a process of local domestication of dominant Western discourses of the nation and of the state, of 'centre' and 'periphery', a more embracing approach of agency of domestic actors and practices of security is recommended.

---

[6] For an insight on the importance of geopolitical factors for domestic Albanian elites' imagining and intrumentalisation of 'Europe' see Brisku (2009).

The neo-liberal literature on Albanian foreign policy and EU accession process lays heavier emphasis on the agency of domestic actors. Its main presumption is that domestic actors use the resources of the international structures in general or of the EU in particular in order to establish their political or economic power (for example, Bogdani and Loughlin, 2007; Elbasani, 2007). Therefore, they conclude that political elites have either followed the logic of consequentiality in complying with the EU norms or have not complied at all (also Noutcheva, 2007). In this context, domestic actors' interests are the decisive factor for non-compliance. However, interests are only conceptualized as economic and as following pre-constituted subjects. In this respect, the interests of the 'political class' arise outside the political/social practices of the agents. This thesis refutes this view and suggests that identities are not exclusively material and that they are to a large extent linked to questions of legitimacy and recognition, both internal and external. A strictly materialistic understanding of interests builds on the premise that the actors are already subjects, that is, their identities are fixed prior to action/policy. On the contrary, I suggest that political identities are co-constitutive with policy.

Both approaches emphasize the dependency of Albania and of the domestic actors upon the West. In so doing, these studies tend to differentiate between the 'Western vocation' of Albania and its 'national question'. The findings of this thesis attest to the contrary: that the dichotomy between the 'national question' and the 'Western vocation' is implausible in the case of Albania. Furthermore, both strands of literature differentiate clearly between identities and interests. While the former are commonly taken as unproblematic, the latter are merely confined to the material interests or to the interest of staying in office. In contrast with this approach to interests and identities, I contend that identities are not exogenous but endogenous to the interests of the actors. Not only are interests derivable from identity in the sense that 'an individual's identity implies his interests' (Hopf, 2002: 16), but they can also play the decisive role in triggering the process of identity change (McSweeney, 1999:127).

Whereas identity and change are not adequately theorized in the 'domestic' approaches, the Europeanization framework seeks to capture processes of identity change in candidate or member states in the context of enhanced EU cooperation and integration. The model of fit/misfit (Borzel and Risse, 2000:15) as drawn by Tanja Borzel and Thomas Risse has already been operationalized to capture the progressive absorption and adaptation of national identities of four member states with elements of an emergent European identity (Marcussen et. al. 2001). A more critical approach to Europeanization has been developed by Claudio Radaelli who stresses the importance of domestic actors, problems, resources, style and discourses at the domestic level as 'by using time and temporal causal sequences, a bottom-up approach checks if, when and how the EU provides a change in any of the main components of the system of interaction' (Radaelli, 2004:4).[7]

However, neither the bottom-up nor the top-down approaches can fully theorize issues of legitimacy and of power which are entangled in these communicative and interactive processes between the nation-states and the EU. Moreover, 'fit' and 'misfit' are contested concepts that can be interpreted in different ways and subsequently are object of political conflict (see also Agnantopoulos, 2006:8). Therefore, they cannot be objectively established (Dyson and Goetz quoted in Agnantopoulos 2006:8) and cannot be rendered as politically neutral. Likewise, the term 'Europeanization' is not apolitical. On the contrary, the articulation of 'Europe' or of 'European Integration' entails conflict and struggles for fixing the meaning of the term (Diez 1999; 2001). The same holds true for integration in the EU and NATO; although they are both constructed in the official discourse as pillars of the Albanian foreign policy orientation, I will suggest that the discourse of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' of the Albanian state is inherently political and as such it is inextricably linked to questions of power and authority.

---

[7] Literature on Europeanization is very broad and the meanings attached to 'Europeanization' are many. For an insight on the state of literature on the uses of the concept see Radaelli (2000) and Olsen (2002).

My analysis locates the process of state identity construction (of subjectivity) at the level of national elites—the key political actors, that is, of those who speak in the name of the Albanian state. It is these actors who produce and reproduce national identity narratives and articulate them as elements of the Euro-Atlantic orientation of the Albanian state. The national elite of the time (for example, the party or the coalition in power) seeks to monopolize the process of the Euro-Atlantic integration; in this regard it is essential that the elite/group/party's discourse of the West and of the 'national interest' becomes the hegemonic discourse of the Albanian state. In this respect, I suggest considering Europeanization as neither a framework for analysis nor a policy orientation but rather as a discourse which allocates different positions of authority from which academics, policy-makers and politicians interpret 'Europe' and draw various criteria of legitimacy.

This thesis is about the politics of speaking the discourse of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' of the Albanian state. In this respect, it focuses not so much on the content as on the processes of formulation and political legitimization of foreign policy. I suggest that the discourse of 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' captures the symbiosis between the process of constructing a democratic state identity on the one hand, and the process of legitimization (external and internal) of domestic elites or key state actors, on the other. What I aspire to do in this thesis is not simply to challenge the analytical boundary between the domestic and the foreign, but also to deconstruct the rigid differentiation between policy and politics which underlies the discursive formation of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation'. In addition I will suggest that it is through this differentiation between the two that the hegemonic discursive formation of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' is sustained.

1.2.2. Discourses of the Nation, the State and the West

When asked about the main criteria of foreign policy at present, Albanian politicians stress the primacy of welfare, security and democratic governance However, those

components of the 'new planetary vulgate' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 2001:1) of a post-Cold War world come in different wrappings or layers of identification for each case study. They can all be articulated and used interchangeably as the 'national interest'. Like the notion of the 'national interest', they are filled with different meanings depending on certain basic identity narratives which structure the foreign policy debate (Hansen, 2006:52). Building on the premise that identities are ontologically linked to policy rather than causes of it, scholars affiliated with the so-called Copenhagen School of security, such as Lene Hansen and Ole Waever have sought to demonstrate how certain understandings of the 'state', 'nation' or 'people' set limitations upon choices of different patterns of cooperation in the international sphere, and specifically upon the formulation of the Northern European countries' European policies (Hansen, 2006; Hansen 2002; Waever 2002). I build upon this work, by adding that these basic conceptions of state and nation are translated through the ideological lenses of the political elites. In this context, the actors' practices of fixing the identity of Albanianness are privileged over structures of identity.

This study shares with sociological constructivism the relational and social understanding of identities as opposed to the referential (also Hansen, 2006:23-28). Alongside sociologist constructivists, I argue that state identity is constructed from within states as much as from the interaction of the state with other states (Hopf, 2002:10). What sets this study apart from the sociological constructivist literature is its emphasis on strategies of identification and interpretative repertoires rather than on 'identity' as such (also Brubaker and Cooper, 2000). In this respect, this thesis privileges practices of identification and of stabilizing the identity of the state and of political actors; it regards 'identity' not as a structure or context but as an articulatory practice of the actors. This position distinguishes this thesis from the liberal and constructivist studies of ideas, culture or (national) identities as causal variables of foreign policy (for example Katzenstein, 1996; Goldstein and Keohane, 1993) and emphasizes practices and agency over structures, whether institutional, ideational

or discursive (also Doty, 1999). I argue that state identities and interests are the product of domestic struggles among national elites to attach meaning to key notions of debate such as 'national interest', 'national security', and the 'West'.

The contribution of the thesis is threefold: Firstly, this study fills an important gap in the actual literature on post-communist Albania by exploring and systematically theorizing the neglected relationship between domestic politics and foreign policy. Secondly, by exploring the domestic political elites' reproduction and usage of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' discourse, it elucidates various aspects of Albanian post-communist politics, focusing particularly on the interrelation between interests and political identities of the main political parties, the Socialists and the Democrats. The relationship between political (domestic) interest and state interests gains particular pertinence in light of the EU's construction of 'political dialogue' between the two main Albanian political parties as a precondition to the process of integration. Thirdly, it contributes to poststructuralist approaches to the study of foreign policy. It does so by introducing the notions of 'practice', 'agency' and 'interpretative repertoires' into the context/layers of identity discourses. Finally, this thesis contributes both to broadening the research agenda of Eastern and South Eastern European studies to include an under-studied country such as Albania, and to reconciling Area Studies with Critical Theory in general and poststructuralist approaches in particular.

1.3. Research Question, Research Design and Findings

The main research question of this thesis is: what are the continuities and discontinuities in the national political elites' articulation of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' and of 'national interest' in post-communist Albania 1992-2007? My initial assumption is that both differences and continuities are primarily political and a product of the political elites' attempts to obtain recognition from the West and/or domestic legitimacy, rather than a product of departure or discontinuity in foreign policy orientation. The analysis of texts from

1992 to 2007 shows that the discourse of integration in the EU and NATO has been underpinned by a domestic (in)security discourse. In other words, the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' discourse has served as the basis for domestic political struggles. Political actors have sought to project onto their adversaries 'deviations'[8] from the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation'. These deviations have been categorized at times as 'nationalist' at times as 'communist' and at times as 'Islamic fundamentalists'. Yet, as the empirical analysis shows, such 'deviations' never materialized and are unlikely to materialize in the future. Despite the occasional radical nationalist tones in the political/electoral discourse or the usage of 'religion' on the part of the government to legitimize the membership in the Islamic Conference Organization, once in power, the main political parties and the key political actors all adhered to the moderate, pragmatist orientation of 'following the West'. This contradiction shows that it is only through the projection of 'deviations' from the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' of the Albanian state onto their opponents that the political actors seek to forward and make dominant their notion of 'national interest' and 'national security'. This is because their notion of national interest is co-constitutive of their own identities and interests. As suggested in the following chapters, while the Democrats often equated the notion of 'national interest' with the 'national question', the Socialists framed the 'national interest' primarily in economic terms. Both these different meanings stemmed from the two main parties' and their political leaders' political identities and interests. At the same time, both meanings of 'national interest' were quite compatible with the official foreign policy discourse of 'Euro-Atlantic orientation'.

The discursive formation of the debates I analyze is the security and foreign policy of Albania. The meaning of different foreign policy discursive signifiers such as 'national interest', 'national sovereignty', 'democracy', and 'security' are fixed by some key (or

---

[8] For a similar discussion on foreign policy 'deviations' and 'orientations' in the case of Turkish foreign policy, see Demirtas-Bagdonas (2008).

master) signifiers which structure the debate; these signifiers are called the nodal points of a discourse (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985:113). Nodal points are 'privileged signs, around which the other signs are ordered; the other signs acquire their meaning from their relationship to the nodal point' (Jorgensen and Phillips 2004: 26). Jorgensen and Phillips further elaborate this argument with the example of medical discourses, where 'the body' is a nodal point; other signs such as 'symptoms', 'tissue' and 'scalpel' acquire their meaning by being related to 'the body' in particular ways. 'Democracy' is a nodal point in political discourses, and 'the people' is a nodal point in nationalist discourses (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2004: 26). However, in the same way as discourses of democratic governance or democratic order stem from some basic discourses of the national self, so are the nationalist discourses translated through ideological lenses of the relationship between state and society, or of democratic governance.

This thesis suggests that a foreign policy discourse and particularly a discourse of foreign policy orientation is both a political discourse and a discourse about the nation, that is a discourse of national identity. As such it strives to capture both the 'national question' and the aspirations of democracy as materialized in the final objective of integrating in the EU and NATO. However, the meanings of democracy and of the national question rely on the political elites' visions of the people—or the national community—and the West. Although there are different understandings of political elites, its usage here denotes a group of people who occupy key positions in state institutions as well as in the main political parties' hierarchy. I imply the party or the coalition in power, whenever I refer to 'state elites'.

Post-communist elites have attached various meanings to the West as well as to the Self (Albanian state), which are re-articulated from older discourses into new political ones. As will be argued in the following chapter, certain identity narratives of the National Renaissance are incorporated in the new discourses of security after moments of crisis, in order to stabilize the subject position of the political actors. In this respect, the legitimacy of post-communist foreign policy has been measured against the criteria of fulfilling Albania's

Western identity and of solving the 'national question'. As will be discussed below, a large bulk of the literature on post-communist Albania works within the same identity narratives and uses them as explanatory variables of Albanian foreign policy. Contrary to this approach, this study contends that the domestic political actors re-interpret and re-articulate elements of these identity narratives in new contexts and in ways which advance their hegemonic struggles within the discursive/political field.

This study reveals and explains the shift from the hegemonic discourse of 'national security' and 'national sovereignty' during 1992-1997 to the hegemonic discourse of 'economic security' and 'regional cooperation' in the post-1997 period. These two hegemonic discourses constitute different political subjects and different identities for the Albanian state. However, they are both articulated within the horizon of the 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation' and sustained by a set of national identity narratives. A key finding of the analysis is that these myths or national identity narratives are reproduced by the national political actors fittingly to their own political identities and ideological repertoires as well as to their political interests.

The 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' neutralizes the differences between the different interpretations of the West by constructing both integration processes, the one leading to the EU and the other to NATO, as overlapping. However, there were differences from one administration to the other regarding the construction of the 'West' or the 'Euro-Atlantic Community', both in terms of how the West works and who the West is, or which is the most authoritative representation of the West. The different constructions of the West have thus depended on the political actors' struggle to achieve a dominant position in the discursive/political field.

Furthermore, the present official discourse rests on a basic misconception of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' as one unitary and homogenous process of integration to NATO and the EU. Diplomatic relations between Albania and the European Community were opened in 1991 and Albania's application for NATO membership was filed in 1992. However, this

chronology of Albania's opening towards both the EU and NATO does not capture the formation of the discourse of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation'. As I demonstrate in Chapter 4, when I discuss the legitimacy crisis of 1996-1997, the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' as one unitary state identity was 'born' out of a moment of de-stabilization of the identity of both, the Albanian state and the state elite. This means that the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' is more than just the sum of the two processes, of EU and NATO integration. In Chapter 5, I demonstrate how the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' discourse is further stabilized through the Socialists' embracing of the 'regional approach' in 1997 and gains a hegemonic status in the post-Kosovo war era.

I test this hypothesis by investigating two main areas: firstly, the differences between official and political/party rhetoric of the main political parties, the Albanian Democratic Party and the Albanian Socialist Party (henceforth SP and DP) regarding the construction of the 'national interest' and 'national question' on the one hand and the West on the other. By looking comparatively at both domains, I aim to identify the key ideological elements in the security discourse employed by the main political parties in power. The question I ask is how these ideological/interpretative repertoires affected the official construction of the state and the relationship between state and nation when these parties were in power. Secondly, I look at the differences in discourse between moments of 'dislocation' and moments when the political discourse is more stable, that is, during periods of 'normal politics'.

In this connection, I found that in the case of the Democrats, the notion of the 'nation' was central to their security discourse and to their project of rapid liberalization and privatization from 1992 to 1997. In contrast to them, the Socialists' locus of policy-making and of their discourse of security remained the 'region' from 1997 to 2005. The analysis showed that both the official foreign and security discourse during both, Democrat and Socialist-led administrations built not only upon some basic conceptions of statehood of the

governing parties, but also upon these parties' ideological conceptions of 'democracy' and of 'democratic governance'.

The analysis of various texts, both official and non-official, shows that the notion of 'national sovereignty' was deployed much more strongly in moments of disjuncture or of legitimacy crisis for the centre-rightist coalition, such as 1996-1997. However, despite the centrality of the notion of the 'nation' and of 'national sovereignty' their discourse of the nation did not mark a departure from the previous communist discourse. In fact, in the Democrats' official and political discourse ethnic nationalism was constructed as detrimental to the interests of the Albanian state and nation. Consequently, a fundamental incoherence was built into the Democrats-led government's policy of Kosovo. The overall analysis attests to the dominance throughout the post-communist period of 'the political-territorial conception of nationhood' (Brubaker 1996:41). This was the case despite the centrality of the 'nation' and of the discourse of 'national sovereignty' on the part of the centre-right in general and of the Democrats in particular during 1992-1997.

The empirical analysis centres on a number of policies. The Albanian state's policy towards Kosovo and the integration processes in the EU and NATO are a running theme throughout the thesis. Albania's Kosovo policy is especially important as it demonstrates the official discourse and the broader political debate on Albania's 'national question' as well as on the boundaries of the post-communist 'political community'. Other points of focus include Albania's membership in the Islamic Conference Organization (ICO) in 1992; Albania's bilateral relations with Greece, particularly during 1994-1997 and 1997-2005; Albania's relations with the USA in 1997; and Albania's involvement in the anti-terror coalition in 2001. Albania's relations with Greece played a crucial role in shaping Albania's regional identity in the context of its enhanced relationship with the EU. Alongside Kosovo policy, Albania's relations with Greece capture the political elites' attempts to reconcile the 'national question' and the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation'. Albania's membership in ICO is important

because it articulated an alternative identity for Albania. Although this particular identity discourse did not gain a dominant status either at the time of membership or later, it did trigger an important debate, both academic and political, on Albania's cultural belonging and its historical past. Furthermore, the debate on membership in ICO demonstrates how categories or elements of dominant Western discourses of security are re-articulated and re-interpreted in the domestic context, and with what implications. Albania's relationship with the USA particularly during 1996 attests to the non-homogenous path of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation'. Albania's involvement in the anti-terror coalition in 2001 demonstrates how the cultural understanding of security in the post September 11 period is reconciled with the Albanian state elites' dominant economic conception of security.

1.4 Structural Dislocation and Change in Security Discourses

The empirical analysis covers three periods which correspond to the first centre-right administration (1992-1997), the centre-leftist administrations (1997-2005) and the first two years of the current administration (2005-2007). The temporal starting point of the 'post-communist era' of foreign policy is 22 March 1992, when the Democrats won the general elections against the newly named Socialist Party (formerly the Party of Labour). [9]

In this section I will draw a brief outline of two 'dislocatory experiences', 1991-1992 and 1996-1997. 'Dislocation' in this context refers to 'the emergence of an event, or a set of events, that cannot be represented, symbolized or in other ways domesticated by the discursive structure-which therefore is disrupted' (Torfing, 1999: 148). At moments of dislocation, the incoherency between different elements in the dominant discourse of security

---

[9]In fact the first post-communist elections took place in 1991; they were won by the Communist Party. However, I take the elections of 1992 which were won by the Democratic Party as the moment of departure from communism. This is because of the radical departure that the newly elected Democrats sought to mark from their communist predecessors regarding both 'foreign policy orientation' and domestic politics, and more specifically the liberalization and privatization reforms.

is exposed (also Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000:13). Consequently, the legitimacy of the subject, whether it is the state or the state elites, is weakened. In this context, both the state and the state elites will go through a process of 'subjectivization' (Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000:13) which has to do with re-constructing a coherent identity. In the conditions of 'dislocation' the actors will be forced to take decisions, that is, 'to identify with those social constructions that seem capable of suturing the rift in the symbolic order' (Howarth and Stavrakakis 2000:13).

Such moments can be of grand and at times supranational scales, such as the end of the Cold War which de-legitimated the Communist ideological discourse, or September 11, which led to a strengthening of the culturalist understanding of security. The main implication is that certain 'subject positions' within a debate on security or democratic governance which have hitherto been marginalized then became dominant; consequently, the meanings that the actors from these 'subject positions' attach to the 'national interest' and 'security' become the hegemonic interpretations. In the Albanian case I suggest that both the fall of communism in 1991-1992 and the collapse of the pyramid schemes in 1996-1997 constitute such experiences. In the following sections I explain the context within which we can call these two experiences 'dislocatory', unlike others (such as the Kosovo conflict in 1998-1999, or the general elections of 2005) which do not constitute any such shift in the official security discourse. [10]

1.4.1. The end of Communism: 1991-1992

In May 1990, the Albanian Parliament approved political economic reforms and human rights measures, including the right to travel abroad and the freedom of religious

---

[10] The need for a temporal contextualization of analysis and of investigation of sequential action, instead of 'snapshots' is also acknowledged by Pierson (2004) Although Pierson locates his study in rational choice theories and on different ontological premises from this study, his study shares with this thesis the assumption that certain critical junctures—or dislocations—reshape the political context or de-stabilize the dominant discourse and consequently create new possibilities for political action (Pierson, 2004: 54-78).

belief. In the same month, Prime Minister Adil Carcani announced the government's intention to join the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (Pearson 2006: 651-652). These two developments can be seen as the first indicators of the communist regime's willingness to reform. This trend continued into the following year: in May 1991 diplomatic relations were re-established with Great Britain and in June of the same year, US Secretary of State James Baker paid a visit to Tirana (Pearson, 2006:654). In the elections of March 1992, the first opposition party, the Albanian Democratic Party won 62% of the popular vote, and 92 out of 140 seats in the new People's Assembly (Pearson, 2006:655)[11].

The social cleavages that had been inherited from communism were deepened as the Democratic Party (henceforth DP) drew in the initial phase of its rule on those segments of the population who had either been persecuted during communism or were unsympathetic to the regime (Kajsiu et. al, 2002:15). Furthermore, while the Communist regime enjoyed strong support in the South of the country, the DP leadership was predominantly Northerner. The legacy of communism whereby the Party was identified with the State (Kajsiu et. al, 2002:15) persisted[12]. In these conditions, political antagonism between the two main parties, the DP and the Socialist Party (henceforth SP) would translate into supporters' distrust for and alienation from state institutions.

In the early nineties the country was heavily dependent on foreign aid (Kajsiu et. al, 2002:15). The new government immediately passed laws which led to rapid privatization and liberalization. The 'shock therapy' method was deployed with the aim of achieving rapid liberalization of the economy. The fast liberalization and opening to the West earned the new Democrat-led government the reputation of high achievers and forerunners in the region (Bogdani and Loughlin, 2007: 40).

---

[11] The Democratic Party was founded on 12 December 1990.
[12] This identification of the party in power with the state still persists. This is the case, despite the mixed (proportional+majority seats) electoral system. See Elbasani (2008).

However, apart from northern Albania, where resistance to communism had traditionally been stronger, and a few pockets such as Kavaja, the legitimacy and authority of the new government became increasingly weak in the mid-nineties. Despite the rapid liberalization reforms and the integration in financial and political international organizations, by 1996 the centre-right government in general and the President of the Republic, Sali Berisha in particular came increasingly under the international spotlight for showing signs of authoritarianism in relation to the media, the opposition and eventually in relation to the EU neighbour, Greece. The State Security Service started to be seen as a personal weapon in the hands of the party in power and of Berisha in particular (Vickers and Pettifer, 1997: 240-241). The arrest of the Socialist leader Fatos Nano on the accusation of abuse of public funds during his time as Prime Minister of the 1991-1992 government gave rise to greater concerns in the international community regarding the state of democracy and the orientation of post-communist Albania (see Gumbel 1997). The crisis of 1996-1997 destroyed both the external legitimacy of the first non-communist government and the image of post-communist Albania as a fast learner.

1.4.2. The Collapse of the Pyramid Schemes: 1996-1997

The Democrats' campaign for the general elections of 1996 relied heavily on the figure of President Berisha and on the anti-communist identification. The elections of 1996 gave a final blow to the domestic and international legitimacy of the ADP in general and President Berisha in particular. Opposition party members reported having been harassed, physically attacked or detained by members of the secret police (Council of Europe, 1996). On 27 May 1996, the leading opposition parties called for a demonstration in Tirana's central Skenderberg Square to protest the manipulation of the vote' (Council of Europe, 1996). The Ministry of the Interior declared the gathering illegal, and excessive force was used for two consecutive days to break up demonstrations (Council of Europe Report, 25 June 1996). The

Socialists refused to take up the 5 seats which the Central Electoral Commission declared they had won (Vickers and Petiffer 1997:283). The results of the elections were not recognized by the US, whereas the countries of the European Community[13] continued their support in favour of 'stability over change'. As will be argued in Chapter 6, this development led to a shift in Berisha's discourse of the West in 1996.

This crisis of legitimacy was followed by the collapse of the pyramid schemes during January-March 1997. The banking system that Albania had inherited from communism had not been privatized and was inadequate to digest the flow of hard currency from the emigrants' remittances (Pettifer and Vickers 2007: 4). The response to this was the rapid rise of pyramid firms. By 1996 the high interest rates offered by these Ponzi schemes had created a feeling of both euphoria and uncertainty domestically. The schemes kept paying out enormous sums in interest. The political elites were not prepared to interfere in this process, as both the party in power and the Socialists had benefited greatly from donations from these 'foundations' to fund their party activities (Judah, 2002:128). Furthermore, as I suggest in Chapter 5, the rapid economic growth was crucial to the ideological identity and legitimacy of the centre-right, as their ideological/political identity was built in juxtaposition to communism. Being faced with the general elections of 1996, the President was not willing to take action to curb the pyramid schemes (Judah, 2002: 128). [14]

Southern Albania was the most heavily affected by the losses; in addition, the collapse hit thousands of emigrants to Greece who had put their remittances in the pyramid schemes. The loss of savings added to the growing unpopularity of President Berisha and gave rise to violent rallies and protests, at first sporadic and eventually en masse, in cities like Lushnja, Vlora and Berat. The Socialists were quick to seize the initiative and take measures aimed at

---

[13] European Community (EC) was the first of the three pillars of the European Union (EU), created under the Maastrich Treaty in 1992.
[14] This pressure was also greater after the constitutional amendments which had been pushed forward by the President were defeated in the referendum of November 1994 (Lubonja, 2004:44; also Fuga, 2003a:75).

channelling the mass frustration (Vickers and Pettifer 1997; Judah 2002). [15] The government lost control over the situation, the army dissolved and arms stores were thrown open. In April 1997 an interim government of 'National Reconciliation' was formed under the premiership of the Socialist Bashkim Fino and in May 1997 the Italian-led EU Multi-Task Force 'Alba' was launched in order to help stabilize the country.

The crisis of 1997 presented the Socialists with many opportunities with regard to the broadening of their electorate in the South as well as to the internal organization of the Party. Furthermore, it provided the Left in general and the Socialists in particular with some uniting ideological elements. It also provided a front against which the Socialists could unite and a chance to revamp their former-communist identity. As will be discussed in Chapter 6, this front consisted of elements such as the 'people's oppression', 'international isolation', 'Balkan-type nationalism' etc. From their early lack of orientation following the change of the name in 1992 to the elections of 1997, the Socialists grew rapidly into a major opposition to the Democratic-led government. This is also proved by the great difference between the number of votes won by the Socialist Party in the elections of May 1996 (only 31.1%) and June 1997 (52.7%), only a year later (Lubonja, 2004: 54-55).

Given the context of their electoral victory, the Socialists faced major challenges regarding economic stabilization and domestic security. While in the critical juncture of 1991-1992, the Socialists had shifted away from the Stalinist ideology of their predecessors (the Albanian Party of Labour) to a Social-Democratic programme, in the aftermath of the 1997 crisis the Socialists moved towards rapid social and economic liberalization (Fuga 2003:108). As Artan Fuga notes, the Socialists now continued the liberalization and privatization reforms which the Democrats had started; furthermore, the Socialists enjoyed more freedom to do so, as the people largely blamed the Democrats for the economic crisis of 1997 (Fuga,

---

[15] According to Tim Judah, the Socialists activated networks of former secret police forces in the South, where they had continuously enjoyed support (Judah, 2002:28).

2003a:114). In this respect, the Socialists legitimized their privatization reforms by the prospect of 'foreign investment'. [16] At the same time, as will be discussed in Chapter 6, the Socialists were keen to build their new political identity in terms of opening up and partnership with international institutions, and by so doing shed their totalitarian and communist past (see also Fuga, 2003a: 112).

The year 1998 was dominated by domestic crisis and political clashes between the Democratic and the Socialist parties[17].On 13 September 1998 the prominent DP MP Azem Hajdari was assassinated, and on the next day, around two thousand DP supporters set fire to government cars outside the Ministry, accusing the government of being behind the assassination (Bideleux and Jeffries 2007:60). On 14 September, Hajdari's funeral turned into a semi *coup d'état*, during which DP protesters took control of the parliament buildings, the offices of the prime minister and the state television and radio station (Bideleux and Jeffries, 2007:60). Prime Minister Fatos Nano fled the country, leaving President Meidani and the SP leader Pandeli Majko to manage the situation. On 28 September 1998 a new coalition government was formed under the premiership of Majko. [18]

In the same year, the Kosovo crisis escalated, leading to 400 thousand Kosovo Albanians seeking refuge in Albania. In addition, during the 1999 air campaign on

---

[16] Telecommunications was the priority sector in the SP's privatization program of 1998. Telekomi Shqiptar and the Albanian Mobile Phone Company were the first ones to be privatized. See *Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States* (1999) p. 116. One particular sector which flourished under the new privatisation reform was the audiovisual media. In October 1997 TV Klan, the first private TV station with an almost national aerial coverage was launched. This brought a qualitative change in terms of multiplicity and diversity of sources of information in comparison with the Berisha years (1992-1997) when Albanian State Television was primarily an extension of the Information Department of the Council of Ministers and of the Presidency (Lubonja, 2004: 46-7).

[17] The DP boycotted the Parliament in September 1998 following the shooting of a DP MP by an SP MP inside the building of the Parliament. The DP MPs only joined the parliamentary sessions in March 1998 in order to attend a debate on Kosovo. The DP boycotted the Parliament again in July 1998 following the publication of an official report which blamed exclusively the former President Berisha and the Meksi government for the pyramid crisis (Bideleux and Jeffries, 2007:59). Parliamentary boycott remains a common political practice in Albania to this day.

[18] In 1998, the new Constitution was approved in a referendum; it reduced the powers of the President and increased the element of proportional representation in the electoral system (Bideleux and Jeffries, 2007: 61).

Yugoslavia, Albania put its naval and aerial space at NATO's disposal[19]. As will be shown in Chapter 5, this moment led to a change in the discourse of the 'national question'. However, this change was rhetorical rather than at the basic conception of statehood and of democratic governance of the Albanian state.

In 2001, the Socialists were re-elected. The main electoral issues were domestic; the so-called 'national issue', concerning Albanians outside Albania, played little or no role in the campaign (Szajkowski, 2003). The re-election of the Socialists in office represented a continuation of the enhanced relationship with Greece and a setback for the regional influence of Italy (author's interview with Islami 2006). While the DP has traditionally maintained close links with Silvio Berlusconi's centre-right *Forza Italia* (Szajkowski 2003), the Socialist Party saw Greece as the 'gate to the EU', as will be discussed in Chapter 5.[20]. This shows two things; firstly, that despite the enhanced regional approach with the EU, Albania's relationship with its two EU neighbours, Italy and Greece remained preferential; and secondly, that the close relationship with these countries helped to sustain the political identity of the main political parties.

---

[19] The reward for this unreserved help and support was increased EU economic aid and the prospect of opening the negotiations for the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA). A direct 'reward' for Albania's support to NATO during the Kosovo crisis was materialized through the NATO membership invitation during the Riga Summit in 2007 and eventually NATO membership during the Baden-Baden Summit in April 2009.

[20] In December 2001 the Socialist Party underwent a radical crisis, which was caused by aggravation of the rift between the Premier Ilir Meta and the Socialist Leader Fatos Nano. At the Party Leadership Convention, Nano accused Meta of having monopolized the key sectors of the Albanian economy and betrayed the Socialist ideals. Meta, on the other hand, accused Nano of embodying the 'old Soviet-type politics', whereas his fraction had captured the aspirations of the entire 'nation' and not only of the Socialist electorate (Fuga 2003: 182-183). The result of this rift led to the reshuffling of the Meta government, the resignation of the Prime Minister and the re-election of Fatos Nano as Prime Minister in July 2002. As Artan Fuga rightly argues, the 'battle' which Fatos Nano named as the 'catharsis movement' was fought over power and legitimacy within the party rather than ideological and ideational content (Fuga, 2003a:180-183). In this respect, the ideological or interpretative repertoire of the Albanian Left in general and of the Socialists in particular did not undergo any radical change. According to many analysts, these internal political battles severely damaged Albania's standing vis-à-vis the EU as well as delaying the progress of its negotiations towards signing a SAA with the EU. The negotiations were inaugurated in February 2003, but in March 2004 the EU Commission criticized again the leaders of the two main political parties for blocking the process of reform (Bogdani and Loughlin, 2007:123-133).

1.4.3 The Elections of 2005: the return of the Centre-Right

As will be discussed in Chapter 6, the electoral rhetoric of both the Democrats and the Movement for European Integration (led by Ilir Meta) during the electoral campaign of 2005 relied on the metaphor of 'new politics' over the old. In contrast, the Socialists, led by Fatos Nano, continued to rely on the '1997 crisis', building their ideological identity solely in juxtaposition to the Democrats in general and Berisha in particular. By 2005, the Socialist-led government was so mired in high-level corruption, financial scandals and complacency that Albanians were keen to see change, even if this were to come in the form of Sali Berisha and the Democratic Party. The 2005 elections were the only ones in the entire post-communist period which were not followed by fierce contestations of the electoral result.

The post-2005 Democrat-led government bore many successes: most prominently, the signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the EU in June 2006; the membership invitation by NATO in 2007; and the first visit of US President George W. Bush in June 2007. Most of these achievements were in fact in reward for the Albanian foreign policy from 1997 onwards (also author's interview with Mustafaj, 16 March 2006); however, the anti-corruption and anti-crime rhetoric of Prime Minister Berisha also won the EU's sympathy, at least in the first two years after the elections.

This contextual analysis brings to the fore three interrelated points: firstly, experiences of 1991-1992 and 1996-1997 differ from other crucial moments of juncture, such as 1998-1999 Kosovo conflict and refugee crisis or of political change, such as the general elections of 2005. Unlike these moments, 1992-1992 and 1996-1997 demonstrated the inter-dependency of the Albanian state's legitimacy and recognition by the West and the political elites' state-making capabilities and democratic identity. Secondly, it shows how the meanings of the 'West' and particularly of 'Atlanticim' and 'Europeanism' depend upon the state elites' legitimacy and identification needs. Lastly, it shows that other material factors such as the systematic change following the demise of communism, the intervention of the multi-task

Alba force or the collapse of the pyramid schemes influence discourse. Yet, for these events to become meaningful, they must be accommodated and appropriated by the political actors.

1.5. Methodology

1.5.1 A Discursive Approach

Although I situate the analysis of post-communist Albania against the backdrop of the domestic politics and foreign policy of the countries of South Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans, this is a single case-study. Albania shows many characteristics which distinguish it from the other countries of South Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans. The two distinct characteristics which are relevant to our analysis are its specific route of nation-state formation in the twentieth century, on the one hand, and the specificities of its communist regime, on the other. This thesis is interested in how these 'facts' are reproduced by the national political elites.

The thesis adopts a discursive methodology. This methodology is appropriate to the study of the meanings attached to the 'national identity' and 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' for a number of reasons. Firstly, it accounts for changes and continuities of articulations of the state identity and of 'national interest', on both the spatial and the temporal planes. Secondly, this methodology accounts for the actors' interpretation of their policy environment—whether domestic or international—and of their resources. The actors' interpretative processes are in turn crucial to the investigation of the relationship between the elites' articulation of 'national interest' and 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' on the one hand, and their own political identities and interests, on the other. Thirdly, in order to grasp the meanings that the national elites attach to 'national interest' or the 'West', we must have a high degree of familiarity with the context of meaning-production. As Friedrich Kratochwil notes, practices of the national elites become meaningful to us only when we can place them 'within an intersubjectively understood context (…)' (Kratochwil 1989: 24). Fourthly, a discursive approach aims at revealing the

structures of the dominant discourse, which act both as constraining or enabling for the political actors/discursive agents (Hansen, 2006). This is particularly useful for my case, as I am interested in identifying the 'basic discourses' upon which the political elites build their foreign policy discourse. Fifth, a discursive approach enables us to draw an inter-textual analysis, by drawing on various genres as well as institutional and discursive sites. This means that it enables us to explore how a particular policy draws upon older discourses and how these discourses are re-articulated in a new context. This is particularly beneficial to this study as it helps to understand how the national political elites re-formulate some elements of their old ideological and political repertoires in a new context, while sustaining the 'basic discourses'. Finally, this approach fits countries which are either under-theorized in Western academia or grouped together with the other countries of South Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans. By taking the role of language and of the linguistic context seriously, this approach elucidates the subtleties and the specificities of the case study which are often neglected by positivist approaches.

This methodology bears strong similarities with the narrative theories of foreign policy (for example, Ringmar 1996; Browning 2002). The narrative theory of identity and action contends that 'action only becomes meaningful, in the process of narrating a constitutive story of the self' (Browning, 2002: 49). In line with the narrative theory of action, my thesis is also informed by a narrative concept of self (Ringmar, 1996: 75-6), as well as by an emphasis on the temporal nature of subjectivity (Browning, 2002: 49). Yet, the approach I adopt here emphasizes the politicized nature of the process of interpretation and re-articulation of identity narratives on the part of the political actors, rather than drawing a cultural analysis of the content and structure of the narratives *per se*. In addition, it does not adopt a unitary and state-centred approach to subjectivity; instead, it explores the relationship between the identity and interests of the 'story-tellers'—the national political elites—and the

identity and interests of the Albanian state, against the backdrop of an 'imagined' Western audience.

At the same time, its emphasis on discursive practices sets this study apart from the cognitive approaches to foreign policy or to security. As this thesis focuses on practices and strategies employed by political actors in order to dominate the discursive/political field, an approach which emphasizes the productive power of discourse fits this project best. In contrast to the emphasis placed by cognitive approaches upon individuals' perceptions and meaning-making practices, a discursive approach contends that in order to have anything to perceive, subjects must be situated within the social order and within a structure (Doty, 1993: 300). Hence the emphasis of a discursive approach lies in the interface of the actors' subjectivization and identification practices and the construction of the environment wherein the actors are constituted.

1.6. Structure of Thesis

Chapter 1 elaborates the theoretical and methodological premises of the thesis, with concentration on discursive approaches to the study of foreign policy. Chapter 2 sets forward the framework of analysis and the conceptual vocabulary of the thesis. Chapter 3 analyzes the basic identity narratives of the Albanian National Renaissance, focusing primarily on their reproduction in the post-communist era by the political actors. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 draw an empirical analysis of the official and political discourse of the 'national interest' and of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' of the Democrat and Socialist administrations from 1992 to 2007.[21] The analysis ends with US President George W. Bush's visit to Tirana on 12 June 2007. The reason for this demarcation is the immense significance of the visit for the

---

[21] I also draw on some contextual materials pre-dating March 1992 and on the official and political discourse of the Albanian Labour Party when I discuss the ideological tenets of the Socialists in Chapter 5.

legitimization of the centre-rightist administration and its renowned strong Atlanticism. The analysis of the first two years of the current administration provides a setting enabling a comparative analysis of the two previous periods in Chapter 7.

The structure of the thesis is intrinsic to the research design. The structure of the three empirical chapters helps detect the differences between the official and electoral/political discourses of 'national interest' and of 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' of the centre-leftist and the centre-rightist administrations. Furthermore, it helps to elucidate the differences between the electoral/political discourse of the parties and of their key actors before and during their stay in power and while in opposition. The last chapter outlines the conclusions from the comparative analysis across different administrations.

CHAPTER TWO: POLITICAL SUBJECTIVITY, HEGEMONY AND THE MYTH OF EURO-ATLANTIC ORIENTATION

2.1. Introduction

Literature on post-communist Albania is broadly divided into two main approaches with regard to the relationship between the national interest and the Euro-Atlantic integration. On the one side, the neo-liberal approach equates the 'national interest' with the Euro-Atlantic integration of the country. Along these lines, it blames the Albanian 'political class' and its political and material interests for the delays in the process of integration (O'Brennan and Gassie, 2009; Vickers 2008; Pettifer and Vickers, 2007; Bogdani and Loughlin 2007; Elbasani 2004). This body of literature shows how the post-communist Albanian elites have manipulated EU norms and failed to fulfill the criteria of membership. [22] Another strand of literature on Albanian foreign policy suggests that the weak legitimacy and the economic and institutional weakness of post-communist Albania have made it impossible for the Tirana elites to push for more assertive policies with regard to the Albanian 'national question' in the Balkans (Pettifer and Vickers 2007; Kola 2003; Austin, 2004). [23]

This study builds on the premises of liberal IR theory by focusing on the domestic factors. However, contrary to these studies, I suggest that the 'national interest' is an empty notion which the state elites fill with different meanings, depending on their subject position in a debate on security. Furthermore, the Euro-Atlantic Orientation is not only compatible with but subsumes the 'national interest', as it encompasses a great number and variety of different and at times conflicting identities, representations and political demands.

---

[22] For an insight into the 'simulation' of EU norms by the state elites in the countries of the Western Balkans, see Noutcheva (2007).

[23] There is also a third, nationalist body of literature. This literature views 'national interest' as invariably the interest of all Albanian communities in the Balkans and it suggests that the domestic problems regarding Albania's governance can only be solved through national unification. However, this discourse is completely marginalized in the Albanian foreign policy debates as well as in the academic debate. See, for example, (Baleta, 1995; Feraj, 1998).

This chapter aims at incorporating a stronger sense of agency in the 'discursive tree' framework as developed by Hansen and Waever (2002). Building on the concept of myth and of nodal points as developed by Discourse Theory and particularly by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (1985), the chapter demonstrates that the basic identity narratives of the nation and the state only translate into Albanian state identity and foreign policy orientation through the interpretative repertoires of domestic political elites.

The main contribution of this chapter lies in its move from discursive layers of identity (context) into actors' practices of articulating and fixing the identity of the Albanian state. To this end, the abstract conceptual vocabulary of Discourse Theory is combined with a set of analytical tools borrowed from Critical Discourse Analysis; most importantly among them the notion of 'interpretative repertoires' and 'identification strategies'. This eclectic approach aims at contextualizing social action or practices which take place 'here and now' (also Wetherell 1998: 388). [24]

In the first part of the chapter I emphasize the role of domestic actors in fixing the meaning and identity of the Albanian state and the understanding of foreign policy as co-constitutive of politics. In the second part of the chapter, I critically investigate the relationship between national identity and foreign and security policy. Here I argue that an emphasis on actors' practices of articulating and translating national identity narratives should replace the structural understanding of 'national identity'. The third part of the chapter introduces the notion of 'interpretative repertoires' of political actors as a tool for understanding how the actors translate national identity into foreign policy through their

---

[24] The approach developed by Laclau and Mouffe (1985) is thus not taken as a whole system and applied to the case study of Albanian discourses of foreign and security policy. Instead, I only utilize a set of their concepts which are commensurate, both ontologically and methodologically, with the post-structuralist literature on foreign policy analysis with which I engage. The nature of the approach of Laclau and Mouffe (1985) allows for this. As Jacob Torfing suggests, 'the writings of Laclau and Mouffe are not "architectonic" in the sense of providing a coherent set of well-defined concepts, categories and arguments with the character of a unified theoretical system to be used as a manual in the concrete studies' (Torfing, 1999:13).

ideological and political lenses.[25] The fourth part of the chapter explains the concept of 'myth' as an analytical tool for understanding the constitution of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' as *the* Albanian identity in the post-communist era. Finally, I outline the methodological tools and the empirical material upon which this study builds.

2.2. Domestic Factors and Foreign Policy

In the empirical analysis I suggest that foreign policy discourse shifted from a focus on the nation and national sovereignty from 1992 to 1997 to a focus on the region and on economic security from 2005 onwards. It is, then, pertinent to ask whether we can speak of a shift in the Albanian state orientation, from nationalist to integrationist or Europeanist. My answer is no: Despite the centrality of the 'nation' and of the 'national sovereignty' during 1992-1997, the nationalist discourse did not gain a hegemonic status in the foreign and security policy discourse in Albania. Furthermore, the priority of the centre-right administration remained Albania's integration in the West in general, and particularly in NATO. Therefore, it is not the case of a shift from a non-integrationist position to a more pro-EU integration position.

What, then, brought this change about? One could argue that the European Union's regional approach to the countries of the Western Balkans[26] led to an identity transformation, at the level of foreign policy as well as at the level of domestic political identities.[27] In addition, one could suggest that the fall of the pyramid schemes and the institutional and

---

[25] Ozlem Demirtas-Bagdonas makes a similar use of the notion of 'domestic repertoires' in the case of Turkey's Cyprus policy. See Demirtas-Bagdonas (2007).
[26] The regional identification 'Western Balkans' was introduced by the Austrian Presidency of the European Union in 1999.
[27] According to the Europeanization scholars, the reasons for change lie in the impact of the EU on the policies, state identities and public discourses of security and governance in the candidate or aspirant countries. For example, T. Diez, A. Caliber and A. Agnantopoulos argue that the effects of the EU on the EU member or candidate states can be mainly identified on three levels: firstly, at the level of effects on the political domestic actors (political Europeanization); secondly, effects on inter-subjective understandings (societal Europeanization); and finally, effects on public discourses (discursive Europeanization). See Diez et. al. (2005).

economic crisis which followed, left the new Albanian government no choice but to comply with the regional discourse of the EU. Both arguments are valid; however, they ignore a crucial dimension of post-communist politics in Albania, which is the political elites' ideological interpretation of EU norms and discursive categories. 'Having no choice' but to comply with the EU, because of the economic benefits of such a choice, does not quite explain the absence of any resistance towards the Euro-Atlantic integration in Albania. In other terms, the rationalist neo-liberal explanation does not suffice to account for the hegemonic status of the Euro-Atlantic orientation discourse in the post-1997 era. In order to account for these domestic processes and practices of interpretation and meaning-making, the political and electoral discourse of the main governing parties, as well as the official discourse, should be brought under analysis.

Nevertheless, despite the emphasis on domestic actors' interests and identification strategies and the legacy of Albanian nationalism, the domestic approach in this thesis differs from both neo-liberal approaches and historical constructivism. Unlike the neo-liberal approaches, I do not emphasize domestic actors' preferences (for instance, Moravscik 1998; del Sarto, 2007) or material interests as factors which shape foreign policy.[28] In contrast to neo-liberal accounts, my understanding of 'interests' is not exclusively material/economic but rather views interests as constituted by the identities of the subjects. In this respect, whereas the neo-liberal understanding of politics signifies solely the representation of material interests, in this thesis politics encompasses processes of identity construction, stabilization and resistance.

Unlike historical constructivist accounts (Onuf, 1989; 1998), [29] this thesis emphasizes the fluidity of identity discourses rather than their structured and rule-based character.[30] I

---

[28] For a discussion of the neo-liberals' limitations with regard to the theorization of identity construction and reconstruction in the face of the evolving European integration see Waever (2001:21).

[29] However, all different strands of constructivism, from the rule-based to post-structuralism emphasize the necessity of historical contextualization of each specific case study.

emphasize two domestic factors which count for post-communist Albanian foreign policy: the actors' ideological/political identities, and the legacy of Albanian Nationalism. In this respect, I suggest that identity narratives of the nation are translated into the myth of 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' through the interpretative repertoires of political elites.

In the following part, I aim to do three things: firstly, to demonstrate that domestic actors' should be taken seriously in their own right and not exclusively through the lenses of the top-down approaches; secondly, that political actors' interests do not preclude their identities and are not exclusively material; and, finally, that the Albanian National Renaissance is constantly instantiated through the practices of domestic actors.

2.2.1. Foreign Policy as Identity Politics

In this section, I suggest a broader understanding of politics than the conception of 'politics' in the neo-libeal literature on Albania, as well as a co-constitutive relationship between foreign policy and politics. I will do this by incorporating a relational, social and discursively constructed understanding of identity.

Literature on the EU and NATO integration of the countries of the Western Balkans in general and Albania in particular rarely theorizes identity politics in the post-communist period.[31] Furthermore, the emphasis on the 'political class' as one category bypasses the strategies of the main political parties and state elites to fix their political identities and obtain legitimacy and recognition both, domestically and externally. The juxtaposition of the

---

[30] Despite the shared understanding of language as constitutive rather than mediating of reality, there are different traditions of conducting discourse analysis in International Relations. Their differences largely stem from the philosophical sources of inspiration. Jennifer Milliken differentiates between the Foucauldian, Derridarian and Wittgensteinian strands (Milliken, 1999). Lene Hansen differentiates the approaches which draw on the work of Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida and Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe into one category—which includes work conducted by herself and Ole Waever (2002), Ole Waever (2002), David Campbell (1992; 1993; 1998), Iver C. Neumann (1996; 1999) —from the work which draws on a Wittgensteinian framework of language games—such as Karin Fierke (1996; 1998; 1999) —as well as from the narrative approaches adopted by Jennifer Milliken (2001) and Janice Bially Mattern (2001) (Hansen, 2006: 221).
[31] Exceptions are Lampe & Mazower, M (2004) and Savic (2005). The former edited volume emphasized exclusively the legacy of Albanian nationalism rather than the strategies of its translation and utilization in the post-communist period. The latter volume leaves Albania out altogether and concentrates primarily in the former states of ex-Yugoslavia. In the case of Albania, an exception is Batt (2008).

'political class' to the 'nation' and to Albania's integration in NATO and the EU overshadows the political actors' practices of domestic exclusion and inclusion in the name of 'Euro-Atlantic orientation'.[32] Therefore, the literature misses a crucial dimension of post-communist political conflict in the countries on the 'periphery' of the EU. As such, this literature does not provide an explanatory model for the interplay between identities and foreign policy[33]. As Judy Batt argues, the studies of the sub-state level have focused on the top-down dynamic; the process of reforms is assessed as a single, one-dimensional process which starts with communism and ends with democracy or 'Europeanization' (Batt, 2002:3). This simplistic and unidirectional understanding of change and the dominant representation of Europe and Europeanization as the ultimate security guarantee overshadows the overlapping practices of security (Barnett and Greve, 2009) as well as the multiplicity of interpretations of security within the discourse of Europeanization and of integration. Like post-communist elites in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans, the Albanian state elites promulgated the transition from communist isolation to the opening towards the West through a 'return to Europe' identity discourse. However, 'return to Europe' refers to a process of identity construction and not recovery of a lost identity.[34] In this process of reconstruction, certain identity projects dominate the public discourse over others and thus

---

[32] As Norman Fairclough contends, 'where contrasting discursive practices are in use in a particular domain or institution, the likelihood is that part of that contrast is ideological' and political. This is to say that in this particular context, the academic literature becomes another site of the production of the dominant discourse of the Euro-Atlantic Orientation as the primary national interest and as apolitical and un-ideological (Fairclough, 1992:88).

[33] For example, in their account of the 'Albanian question' in the Balkans in the post-communist period, James Pettiffer and Miranda Vickers rightly point to the importance of the overlapping religious, local and political identities of the main political actors of post-communist Albania in producing certain foreign policies and in shaping the 'Albanian question' in the region. However, these identities are sprinkled throughout the analysis and presented as self-explanatory causal variables, and not properly theorized. This may at times lead to the reproduction of the practices of identification of the actors themselves. See Pettifer &Vickers (2007).

[34] Along similar lines, Christopher Browning has argued in the case of post-Cold War Finland that the elites' discourse of 'coming home' which stresses return to a common Western cultural and geopolitical sphere, in effect means 'moving houses'. By this Browning implies that the security challenge of the country lies in reconstructing a new identity, which negates Finland's 'Eastern' identity and which only privileges the history of its integration in Western security institutions during the Cold War. See Browning (2002).

become state identities. [35] In this respect, 'return to Europe' was both a quest for normality as well as for recognition of a common shared past. However, as Richard Sakwa rightly notes, the 'normality' to which the post-communist countries aspire, is far from homogenous and the post-Cold War West is different from the one they were hoping to join (Sakwa, 1999:121).

Furthermore, these different interpretations constitute different legitimacy criteria for policy. In this regard, although foreign policy is formulated for external relations, its legitimization takes place domestically (Kuus 2002). As Milada Bukovansky notes:

> Insofar as one of the requirements of domestic legitimacy is maintenance of the security and identity of the state in a world of other states, domestic and international legitimacy are intertwined. While international legitimacy is one condition for sustaining domestic legitimacy, the reverse is also true; without domestic legitimacy a government will have difficulty mustering the resources to act as a state in the international stage (Bukovansky, 2002:212).

This process of legitimization simultaneously reifies certain identity narratives of the nation and the state.

The second problem of the top-down approaches is that they tend to regard the EU as an external influence over domestic politics and as such as 'apolitical' and 'non-ideological'. This means that although the difficulties of implementation of the EU norms and rules seem to lie with domestic political actors, change is expected to come from the EU and from the international institutions. The political dimension of Albania's post-communist foreign policy in general and Euro-Atlantic integration in particular is largely ignored. The dichotomy of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' of the Albanian state on one hand, and political elites' implementation of the requirements which derive from integration in the EU and NATO on the other, largely bypasses the differences in political actors' construction of security and

---

[35] Building on the work of Peter Hall (1993), Apostolos Agnantopoulos specifies three progressive stages of identity change. In the first stage, one finds adjustment of the dominant discourse, which involves a limited change in the strategies used by the domestic actors. In the second stage, the dominant discourse is transformed to a large extent. This involves the introduction of new strategies on the part of domestic actors to achieve the specified national interests. In the third stage, the dominant discourse is replaced with a new one. This entails a different understanding of national interests and therefore involves a change in national identity (Agnantopoulos, 2005:4).

integration. Actors' identities and interests thus become another 'black box', replacing the 'state' in neo-realist approaches to foreign policy; their presence is acknowledged but not fully theorized.

The nominal understanding of political actors is a direct consequence of the referential understanding of 'political subjects' and of 'politics' in the Albanian literature on integration. By referential I mean the understanding of subjectivities as preceding interests and political practices. This understanding of 'actors' largely elides struggles for the legitimacy and the authority to speak in the name of the entire 'nation' and of its Euro-Atlantic orientation. In this respect, I suggest that the EU and the Euro-Atlantic integration are the real 'issue' over which politics takes place. [36] By this I mean that the different interpretations of Europe, of European integration and of European values are enmeshed in the political actors' struggle for recognition and legitimacy. Furthermore, in the same way that the notions of 'democracy', 'interests' and 'security' are open to interpretation and tied to different political/ideological identities, so too are the EU norms and rules. EU rules and norms are both intersubjective (Kratochwil and Ruggie, 1986: 764) and discursive (Doty, 1997:371). This means that they are constituted through domestic actors' processes of interpretation and meaning-production.[37]

The implications of this assumption are three-fold: firstly, that international organizations in general and the EU in particular do not cause change but are a constitutive part of it; secondly, that the notion of politics should be broadened to encompass processes of identity construction; and finally, that neither the norms and the dominant EU discourse of security nor the domestic actors alone can constitute foreign policy actions. Therefore, I focus on political elites' practices of interpreting and domesticating the categories of the dominant

---

[36] In a different context, Thomas Diez argues that the EU cannot be an 'external' actor which can mediate between the conflicting parties, because it is already part of the conflicting narratives of the 'conflict'. See Diez (2000).
[37] For an insight into the weaknesses of the democracy promotion efforts of international organizations in Albania see Kajsiu (2006).

EU discourse of security and of fixing what 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' means for the Albanian people. In this thesis, politics implies not only decision-making, but also fixing the meaning of key signifiers such as 'democracy', 'national interest' and 'security'.[38] In other words, politics is understood as articulatory practice, which is the practice of inscribing identities on subjects. In this respect, the two stages, the decision-making and the interpretation of the key terms around which politics takes place, such as the nation, democracy, national interest, Euro-Atlantic integration, are intimately linked.

In the context of this thesis, the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' is a hegemonic discursive formation. My use of 'discursive formation' here follows the Foucauldian conception of the term:

> Whenever one can describe, between a number of statements such a system of dispersion, whenever, between objects, types of statement, concepts or thematic choices, one can define a regularity (an order, correlations, position and functionings, transformations), we will say, for the sake of convenience, that we are dealing with a discursive formation—thus avoiding words that are already over laden with conditions and consequences, and in any case inadequate to the task of designating such a dispersion, such as 'science', 'ideology', 'theory' or a 'domain of objectivity' (Foucault, 1989:41).

The language of foreign policy is inherently political as it serves as 'a site for the production and reproduction of particular subjectivities and identities while others are simultaneously excluded' (Hansen 2006: 18-19). As such, its formation and stabilization is political and it involves the construction of antagonism and the drawing of political frontiers between 'insiders' and 'outsiders' (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000: 4). This exclusion between 'insiders' and 'outsiders' takes place not only on the basis of spatial construction of identity, but also on the basis of temporal basis (Hansen, 2006:48-49). The identities that foreign policy simultaneously constitutes and builds upon are social; this means that they are constructed through social and political practices (Pace 2006; Hansen 2006). In Iver Neumann's words, 'the very terms through which identity is articulated, reproduce political

---

[38] For an analysis of the notion of 'security' as a 'thick signifier' see Huysmans (1998).

institutions such as the state and the EU, and that is always internally contested practice',
(Neumann 1999:30). In the same spirit, the Albanian official discourse of foreign policy and
democratization renders any representation of self and others which cannot be translated into
the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' discourse as anti-national and anti-Albanian. This is to say,
that the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' of the Albanian state is a matter of national security: any
perceived threat to that orientation is translated into a threat to national security. I will
therefore argue that 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' is not only a discourse of both levels, of
domestic politics and foreign policy but first and foremost a discourse of the relationship
between the two; it mediates Albania's position and role on the international stage and in the
global/regional economy and at the same time it reconstitutes national identity and national
subjectivity.

2.2.2. Foreign Policy and National Identity

Building on a conceptualization of the relationship between identity and policy as co-
constitutive, Ole Waever (2002) suggests that there are some basic discourses of the nation
and of the state which determine the discourse of Europe. According to Waever, discourse has
a layered nature and it serves as a system for the formation of statements, which is, it
structures what can and cannot be said (Waever, 2002:29-30). At the deepest layers of
discourse lies the constellation of concepts of the nation and of the state and the relation
between the two. In this respect, the relation between state and nation can build on different
conceptions of nation-state and statehood (Waever 2002:33-34) For example, the dominant
discourse in a particular country can be based on the conceptual division between cultural
community/*ethnie* and the institutions of state—which would correspond to the model of
Kulturnation—or on the conceptual unity of the two—*Staatsnation* or the modern state-nation
(Waever, 2002:35-36; see also Brubaker 1996).

The second layer consists of the representations of Europe in relation to the basic concepts of state and nation (first Layer) (Waever, 2002:37). The third level consists of concrete European policies and draws on how Europe is represented domestically and what it means in terms of national identity. However, these core concepts of the nation and the state are inextricable from one's relation to the West in general and Europe in particular (Waever 2002:38). This is particularly the case of the countries of the Western Balkans, where the core identity narratives are written with the West in mind (Triadafilopoulos 2000). Furthermore, arguments about the 'nation' and statehood are formulated within a broader context of dominant Western security discourses.

The basic conceptions of 'state' and 'nation' serve thus as the context which structures representations of Europe and serves as the ideational and legitimization basis for foreign policy. Along similar lines, relevant literature explains the hegemonic status of the Euro-Atlantic discourse and the lack of a strong irredentist/nationalist position in post-communist Albania with the strong attraction of Europe —and by proxy of the Western European civil conception of statehood— in the Albanian nationalist imaginary of the nineteenth century (Bechev 2006:12) as well as with the late formation of a cultural unified identity in the nineteenth century (for example, Austin 2004) Other authors have argued that the Albanian Renaissance articulated the national interest as one and inseparable from the objective of joining European modernity (Ypi, 2008; Austin 2004); hence, this legacy structures the discourses on the Euro-Atlantic integration in the post-communist period. [39] In other words, the civil conception of statehood and the late formation of a cultural unified national identity in the nineteenth century have not created much space for 'nationalizing' practices (Brubaker, 1996:9) in post-communist Albania. As such, European integration has not met with

---

[39] For example, in his article on the Albanian state's Kosovo question from independence in 1912 to our days, Robert C. Austin suggests that the contested and uncertain nature of the Albanian identity in the twentieth century has foreclosed any possibility for Tirana to push for a unification policy with regards to Kosovo. See Austin (2004).

resistance either at the elites' level or at the level of society. There has been no tendency to *securitize* integration in Albania from 1992 to the present day. [40]

This leads me to consider the basic representations of Europe in particular and the West in general in the Albanian narratives of nation and state. In contrast with the EU countries, where 'Europe' might be perceived as a 'choice' in certain sensitive policy areas, in the Albanian case, the 'West' in general and 'Europe' in particular is a 'necessity' for the construction of the national self. As Adrian Brisku argues (2009), Europe signifies contemporary modernity, geopolitical interests as well as an inherent part of the identity of the national identity. To put it simply, in contrast with other member EU states, the peripheral position of Albania vis-à-vis the EU necessitates the appropriation of the national identity narratives and myths. Although it is constructed through discursive practices of both the EU and Albanian political elites, the asymmetrical relation of Albania with the EU has practical implication in day-to-day political practices of re-adjusting and re-articulating elements from the myths of the Albanian National Renaissance. Furthermore, the identity myths of the Albanian Nationalist discourse were part of a broader discursive formation of European security of late nineteenth century Europe (Triadafilopoulos, 2000). [41] Every discourse of the nation includes elements of discourses of both ethnic nationalism and civil nationalism and the difference between the two is often ideologically constructed (also Brubaker, 1996). In this respect, the pertinent question to ask is how the relationship between nation and state demonstrates itself through a set of practices, idioms or images which are part of a broader discursive formation of 'Euro-Atlantic orientation'.

---

[40] By *securitization*, I refer here to the process of taking extraordinary measures to defend the survival of a community, which is able to identity itself as 'us'. In this context, 'identity' constitutes the 'survival' of a community (Waever, 1998:26).

[41] As will be discussed in Chapter 3, the political elites' emphasis on the Albanian Nationalist Discourse excludes the influence of post-independence and inter-war intellectuals and the political discourse of the West. As will be discussed in the next chapter, after the creation of the nation state, the discourse of the West was primarily engaged with the relationship between state and society, or state and economy.

In this respect the root discourses of the nation (Hansen 2002; Waever, 2002; Holm, 1997; Larsen, 1995) cannot be regarded as causes of foreign policy: they become legitimizing criteria of foreign policy only when translated through the political elites' political repertoires. Different political actors are constantly competing with each other to be perceived (domestically and externally) as the ones/the party whose discourse of foreign policy articulates the most real and *authentic* national identity (see also Bloom 1990: 81) and speaks in the name of the people. [42] In addition, speaking about the people has a performative function: it enacts the subject it aims to represent (Hansen, 2006:21). Therefore, speaking about Albania's democratic orientation constitutes the democratic identity of the Albanian state in different ways.

In this respect, Albania's foreign policies, whether regarding the EU and NATO or the region and Kosovo are part, rather than effect, of the discursive formation of 'Euro-Atlantic orientation'. This 'orientation' of the Albanian state is linked to a set of meta-narratives on some key questions of what 'Albanianness'[43] is and what the world is about. [44] As such, 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' is a discourse about the relation not only between statehood and the nation but also between state and society or state and economy.

For example, a liberal discourse of integration which constructs the EU integration exclusively in terms of 'free movement of goods and people' centres on the key concept of economy. However, in order for it to become uncontested, it must include a wide variety of positions in a debate about the EU (Diez 2001:16). For this purpose, it needs to refer to the 'nation' and to the 'people'. To this end, political elites might re-articulate a particular myth/narrative of national identity. The re-articulated national identity narrative provides not

---

[42] The question of *authentic* reproduction of the elements from national identity narratives will be discussed in Chapter 3, where I investigate the reconstitution of the National Renaissance

[43] 'Albanianness' and 'Albanianism' are often used interchangeably in the literature. In the context of this thesis, 'Albanianness' refers to national identity, 'Albanianism' refers to the Albanian national ideology.

[44] This builds on Thomas Diez's argument that European policy is best understood as part of the discursive formation of European governance that is linked to a set of meta-narratives on questions of 'what the world is about'(Diez 2001:7).

only the history, but also the rationality and the argumentative structure of policy. During this re-articulation, the new discourse obtains authority by reference to the older one; at the same time, this re-articulation reifies or stabilizes the identity of the older discourse (also Hansen, 2006:57).

These meta-narratives are not only discourses of the nation and statehood; they are also linked to older and at times transnational or regional ideological programmes. As Pavlos Hatzopoulos suggests in the case of the Balkans, the discourse of the 'Balkans' is part of a broader ideological formation of the Leftist political forces in the countries of the Western Balkans in the inter-war years (Hatzopoulos 2008). As such, identification with the Balkans was part of a broader discursive formation on the relation between economy and the state in the countries of the Balkans and not exclusively on the relationship between state and nation. The dualism between Europeanist or integrationist discourse on the one hand and nationalist discourse on the other does not capture the interdependency between elements from each discourse and why certain interpretations of the 'national interest' and 'integration' gain a hegemonic position in the entire discursive field.

This analysis has a number of important implications: firstly, the national identity narratives cannot serve as the structure of the post-communist discourses of Europe, EU and Euro-Atlantic integration. For these narratives or these myths of national identity to become entrenched in the post-communist discourse of foreign and security policy, they will have to be 'translated' in the new political context of Albania as well as in the context of the Western dominant discourses of security. This process of 'translation' is possible through the political actors' practices of attaching meaning to key signifiers of every policy and political discourse, such as 'national interest', 'national security', the 'West', 'democracy', 'sovereignty' etc. Secondly, the meta-narratives upon which a foreign policy discourse draws are not exclusively about the relationship between the nation and the state, but also between the state and broader discursive formations, such as the economy. This triadic relationship is mediated

through the actors' interpretative repertoires. Thirdly, my choice of practices over structures of discourse privileges agency of the actors, yet it is not limited to the actors' intentions, choices and preferences exclusively. Therefore, there is always some level of 'indeterminacy' involved and which makes meaning difficult to pin down. 'Practice' contains a signifying element, which means that in order to have any meaning at all a practice must signify something. However, although practices are generally embedded in discourse(s) which enable particular meaning(s) to be signified' (Doty, 1999:376), practices do not mechanically or instrumentally reproduce a particular discourse; what they signify is never straightforward (Doty, 1999:376). These practices are 'possible because systems of meaning are contingent and can never completely exhaust a field of meaning' (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000:3). Discourse therefore is not a complete totality and not governed by a fixed centre (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 11). In this sense, imbuing identity discourses with the status of explanatory variables is untenable, as discourse is by definition a terrain of instability and of continuous struggle to fix meaning (also Zehfuss, 2001:338). In the next section I discuss political actors' practices of construing the identity of post-communist Albania in ways which are consistent with and favourable to their subject positions and interpretative lenses.

2.2.3. Foreign Policy and Political Identities

Every foreign and security policy discourse articulates at once the identity of the nation, the boundaries of its national community, its history and responsibility to act (Hansen, 2006:46-47). Furthermore, I add that every security discourse articulates the relation between state and society or state and the people. As such, every security discourse interpellates (Laclau, 1987:109; Hatzopoulos, 2008:37) [45] not only the subject of the state (Albania) but

---

[45]The concept of 'interpellation' is primarily used in Louis Althusser's theory of ideology to explain the connection of individuals to certain ideologies. In simple words, 'interpellation' refers to an act of 'hailing' of individuals into a particular kind of subject (Hatzopoulos, 2008:36-39 Ernesto Laclau has reconstructed the concept of 'interpellation' to include processes of constitution of other subjects than class members. According

also the *Albanians*. To put it more simply, security discourses construct state identity as well as the social identities upon which the state identity draws. They are about the relationship of the nation with the state as well as about the social form of governance. In this context, foreign and security policy has both an internal and external dimension.

In this context, foreign and security policy debates are malleable discourses 'in which different images and associations—such as New Europe, historical legacies, cultural affinities etc.—are deployed flexibly and strategically' (Kuus, 2004:9). These signs acquire their meanings in relation to each other and only in the context of broader discursive formations, such as 'European security' or 'Balkan statehood'.

For example, when articulated in a chain of signs such as 'nationalism', 'radicalism', 'obscurantism', the 'Balkans' signifies a radical *other* to the identity of Albania. In turn, the identity of the latter—in other words, of what Albania is—is thus constructed in juxtaposition to the Balkans. On the other hand, the security discourse of the 'Balkan Schengen' articulates the Balkans as plagued by the past and ethnic hatreds, but yet which can be changed in the model of united Europe. In this respect, the Balkans is still an *other*, but not a radical other; instead, it is an other which can be changed. [46] Within this discourse, Albania is identified with the Balkans; yet, it is constructed as possessing the resources and having the responsibility to change or 'emancipate' the Balkans. [47] This representation has implications for the way the role of the EU is constructed. Although the metaphor of 'Schengen' refers to the example of the EU as a liberal security community which the Balkans can emulate,

---

to Ernesto Laclau, 'what constitutes the unifying principle of an ideological discourse is the subject "interpellated' and thus constituted by this discourse' (Laclau, 1979:101).

[46] For an insight into the construction of multiple *others* and *selves*, see (Hansen, 2006: 39-4. Hansen draws a similar argument with regard to the construction of the Balkans in the dominant US and UK security discourse. Hansen notes that a shift took place from the beginning of the war in Bosnia, when the Balkans was constructed as a radical Other, which was plagued by ancient hatreds and which could not change to a later construction of the region as an Other which could be changed, assimilated and emancipated. In this regard, it is interesting to note how Albanian post-1997 state elites adopted the Western discourse of the Balkans, while accommodating Albania's place in it.

[47] This was particularly true of the post-1997 official discourse of the Balkans.

change within this discourse is initiated from within the Balkans and not from outside or from the 'West'.

At the same time, this discourse constitutes or 'interpellates' (Laclau, 1987:101; Torfing, 1999:30; Hatzopoulos, 2008:38) a subject which is not the nation but the citizens. In other words, the subject of security is not the state, and the referent object of security is not state or ethnic borders; instead, the subject of this discourse is the Balkan 'people' and the referent object is their welfare and human rights. This subject has a different historical narrative from that of the subject of the national sovereignty discourse. Whereas in the latter, the (Albanian) nation is under constant threat from the neighbouring Balkan countries, the discourse of the 'Balkan Schengen' constructs the history of the Balkan people in terms of resistance to Western intervention and neo-colonialism. [48]At the same time, apart from its temporal and spatial construction, the economic-liberal discourse of 'Balkan Schengen' also articulates Albania's ethical duty and responsibility to help by uprooting irredentist nationalism. In this respect, the elites' discourses of foreign and security policy articulate the identity of the Albanian state along temporal, spatial and ethical dimensions (Hansen, 2006:46).

In order to become dominant, the identity of a discourse needs alternative articulations of identity (also Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000:9). These alternative or counter-articulations might not be prominent in the political and security discourse and there might be no viable political project tied to them. In these cases, the dominant discourse will, if necessary, simulate its alternatives, in order to gain a hegemonic position in the debate. For example, the

---

[48] This point is made by Pavlos Hatzopoulos with regard to the construction of the 'Balkans' in the communist ideological discourse. According to Hatzopoulos, 'nationalism was situated by the communist ideology within the specific conditions of Balkan societies: it reflected the prominent role of the peasant masses, it was affected by the semi-colonial character of the region as a whole, and ultimately it could be related to the specific cause of the social revolution in the Balkans' (Hatzopoulos, 2008:87). This reference does not suggest that I am equating the ideological communist discourse of the 'Balkans' in the inter-war period with the post-1997 Albanian Socialists' discourse of the 'Balkan Schengen'. However, as I will demonstrate in the following empirical analysis, the political actors' practices of security constantly negotiate and translate various ideological constructions into the state's security discourse. They do so in the context of a broader dominant Western discourse of security and governance.

identity of the discourse of the 'Balkan Schengen' fosters the articulation of 'Greater Albania', while pushing the counter-discourse of 'Greater Albania' into the field of 'politics' and conflict. In the vocabulary of Discourse Theory, this field of negativity and conflict is called the 'constitutive outside' (Torfing, 1999:124). As such, the (positive) identity of a hegemonic discourse is constructed in relation to what it is or is not 'outside'. In this respect, the actors' hegemonic practices to construct and sediment an identity discourse are inherently political practices of excluding opponents domestically. Therefore, it makes sense that although the alternative of 'Greater Albania' might not be tied to any viable policy project in the Albanian political debate in the entire post-communist era, the political actors have continuously articulated it as an alternative to the Western and democratic identity of Albania and which the domestic opponents embody. Other identities, such as Islamic radicalism, play the same role in the domestic political debate on foreign and security policy (AIIS, 2004:77). In Jacob Torfing's words, 'all identities and all values are constituted by reference to something outside them, which has the character of a subversive margin, preventing the possibility of an ultimate fix' (Torfing, 1999:6-7).

Therefore, these state identities have implications for both Albania's recognition and perception by the EU or the USA and for domestic politics. This means that identification with the nation or with the region, with the West as a whole or with markers such as 'Europeanism' or 'Atlanticism' is part of political actors' struggle for domination domestically. As Rastko Mocnik notes, for example, Balkanism articulates two types of relations of domination: the relations of geo-political and economic hegemony; and the relations of internal domination within the societies which are geopolitically stigmatized as 'Balkan' (Mocnic, 2002:79). Furthermore, these two levels of relations of domination cannot be extricated from each-other. Domestic actors constantly negotiate, translate and

operationalize Western practices of security. [49] In the following part I introduce the ideological and political lenses through which the political actors construct the subjectivity of post-communist Albania through foreign policy discourse.

2.3 Main Parties' Interpretative Repertoires and Hegemonic Practices

The fall of communism during 1991-1992 and the crisis following the collapse of the pyramid schemes in 1997[50] have heavily influenced the process of the construction of identities in post-communist Albania. In 1991, while the old communist party was faced with the need to restructure its political identity[51] to accommodate the systematic and ideational changes, the new parties sought to construct new identities. As Richard Sakwa notes, the fall of communism led not only to 'transition' or 'progress' from one system to a more democratic one, but first and foremost to the creation of a new subjectivity of 'post-communism' (Sakwa, 1999:122-125). This is also the case for Albania, which had just started to open up to the world after decades of isolation, as well as for the Albanian political elites. Similarly, 1997 led to a de-stabilization of the dominant discourse of security and of the identity of the party in power. Following such moments of disjuncture and dislocation, the political actors undergo a process of 'subjectivization' or acquiring new political identities. In the next section I elaborate my understanding in the context of this thesis of political identities, subject positions and processes of subjectivization.

---

[49] As Merje Kuus notes in another country case, 'the concept of "civilizational conflict" does not reveal itself to the Estonian population; instead it has been translated and operationalized by Estonian intellectuals of statecraft' (Kuus, 2004:9).

[50] A few authors regard the civil unrest which followed the fall of pyramid schemes in 1997 as 'civil war'. See, for example, Fatos Lubonja (2004:51). I hesitate to call it a 'civil war', given that the warring parties or sides of conflict were not easy to discern. Classifications of the 1997 social unrest as a conflict between the North and South of the country arise mainly from the fact that the hotbeds of social protest against the government were in Southern cities such as Vlora, Berat and Lushnja and that the government was predominantly northern. However, such a societal conflict between North and South never materialized.

[51] At the national Congress of the Labour Party of Albania in December 1990, the party split into two groups. One group was led by Enver Hoxha's widow, Nexhmije Hoxha, and the other was led by the First Secretary of the Party, Ramiz Alia, who was more open to the pluralist political system and the market economy (Lubonja, 2004:37).

2.3.1. Main Parties' Subject Positions and Interpretative Repertoires

I will start by distinguishing between 'subjectivity' and 'subject position': the term 'subject position' refers to the positioning of political subjects in various discourses (Howarth 1995:123). Given that 'every subject position is a discursive position, it cannot be totally fixed in a closed system of differences' (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985:115). In other words, subject positions are a particular constellation of identities which are materialized in one stance, or position, in a debate about security and foreign policy[52]. One example is a debate in 1991 in the Albanian Parliament over the inclusion of a clause on 'good neighbourhood policy' as a constitutional principle of the Albanian state's foreign policy. Whereas the Socialists were in favour of inclusion of the clause, the MPs of the Democratic Party insisted that the 'national interest' should not be dependent upon relations with others, whether they are regional neighbours or states of Western Europe (*Parliamentary Debates*, 21 October 1991:128-9). This clearly indicates two 'positions' in a debate on the nation and national interest: The inclusion of the 'good neighbourhood policy' clause in the constitution demonstrates an understanding of Albania's role in the region as complementary to its national interest. In contrast to this position, the Democrats' position articulates the Albanian national interest primarily in traditional territorial terms.

Neither can the ideological programmes of a political party nor institutional positions be equivalent with the subject position of the actors. On the contrary, different subject positions appear dispersed within a discursive formation. As the example above illustrates, the two different subject positions can be identified as such only as part of the discursive formation of 'statehood'. In this context, although I speak of the Democrats and the Socialists

---

[52] A similar concept to 'subject positions' is 'ideological dilemmas'. Ideological dilemmas refer to sets of beliefs and metaphors and interpretations, which subsume their counterparts —.hence their dilemmatic character. See Billig, M., Candor, S., Edwards, D., Gane, M., Middleton, D., Radley, A. (1988) *Ideological Dilemmas. A Social Psychology of Everyday Thinking*. London, Newbury Park, Beverly Hills & New Delhi: Sage Publications.

as the centre-rightists or the centre-leftists respectively, I do not subscribe to the view that these political identities are fixed, conclusive or essentialist.[53] As Pavlos Hatzopoulos suggests, 'political ideologies might involve heterogeneous elements (…), they might allow for a wide margin of logical inconsistencies, but what largely accounts for their unity is that they aim at constituting a particular kind of subject' (2008: 37).

Identity construction follows two logics, the logic of equivalence and the logic of difference (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985). The logic of equivalence functions by creating equivalential identities. In this case, the actors articulate the identities as interchangeable with each other and aim to neutralize all difference (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985:130; Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000:11). For example, a social force might articulate its identity as Europeanist, pragmatist, liberal, nationalist, etc. These identities are articulated as equivalent to each other and as counter-identities to another chain of signs, such as isolationist, emotional (or ideological), nationalist (or communist). This logic is particularly dominant in cases when an issue or a subject is constructed as national threat or as a threat to public security or to the common identity. The logic of difference does the contrary: 'it expands the field of differences by dissolving existing chains of equivalence and incorporating these elements into an expanding order' (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985:130; Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000:11). In this case, elements which are left unarticulated from a dissolved chain of equivalent identities (floating signifiers) are incorporated into an expanding order (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000:11). These two logics follow a dual process of juxtaposition and of linkage (Hansen, 2006:19) of various elements into one chain of identities.

In this respect, whereas the logic of equivalence simplifies the political space, the logic of difference increases the complexity and diversity of positions within a debate (Laclau

---

[53] Both terms, 'centre-right' and 'centre-left', are intertextually constructed across texts of the political parties themselves, as well through media and academic discourses. However, these texts belong to broader political discourses on the Left and the Right in Europe and are intimately related to the construction of security and governance in Europe and beyond. The 'centre' prefix is fundamental to the process of constructing their identities as moderate, democratic and in alignment with (as opposed as deviant from) the EU norms and the EU requirements.

and Mouffe, 1985:130). Both logics can co-exist during dislocatory experiences such as 1991-1992 and 1996-1997. In such moments of dislocation, the political actors will attempt to 'colonize' as many identities as possible and link them in one political programme which can provide order. Simultaneously, the actors will attempt to distance themselves from those identities, which in the new context might de-stabilize the emerging political project. As such, the moments of 1992-1997 and 19996-1997 can be understood as moments of both high creativity and (discursive) productivity, and of closure. As I will elaborate in the empirical Chapters 4 and 5, the political projects which followed these two experiences articulated identities which became highly sedimented in the foreign policy discourse.

Subjectivity, in turn, concerns the way in which social actors act or take decisions in novel forms, after moments of critical juncture, when the contingency of their identity has been revealed and thus their legitimacy has weakened (Howarth, 1995: 123). In these moments the 'ultimate contingency of all forms of identification' becomes visible and the actors seek new political discourses which will restore coherence and order (Norval, 1996:13). In the context of this thesis, processes of subjectivization refer to the political actors' practices of re-stabilizing their political identities and state identity following moments of crisis such as 1991-1992 and 1996-1997.

For example, following the dislocatory experience of December 1990[54] and the pluralization of the political system, the Party of Labour reconstructed its identity on the basis of the 'chaos' that the opponents would bring upon the country (Vickers and Pettifer, 1997:52; also Lubonja, 2004: 38-39). In turn, the first opposition party, the DP, sought to construct its own identity in opposition to 'communism', 'isolation' and 'statism'. In this respect, the metaphor of 'opening up' to the 'West' became central to the political identity of the new party. As one can see, these key metaphors of 'isolation' and 'chaos' provided the

---

[54] In December 1990, students from the Students Town in Tirana started protesting initially on the basis of economic demands, which later accelerated into demands for political pluralism. The Democratic Party, the first opposition party was founded on 12 December 1991.

central unifying principle of these reconstructed or new political agents. As Claude Lefort suggests, the 'function of an ideological discourse is an attempt to organize social life around the metaphor of a centre' (quoted in Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000:8). In this respect, both sides are seeking to fix the meaning of 'national interest' and of the post-communist identity of Albania.

A 'we' group can become a politically effective and active unity only through concepts which are more than just names or typifications. A political or social agency is first constituted through concepts by means of which it circumscribes itself and hence excludes others' (Andersen, 2003:38). As Niels Akerstrom Andersen suggests:

> A group may empirically develop on the basis of command or consent, or contract or propaganda, of necessity or kinship and so forth. But however constituted, concepts are needed within which the group can recognize itself as a functioning agency' (Andersen, 2003:38).

Furthermore, such a conceptual constitution is also a necessity for the group's external recognition and authority. In this respect, the Albanian parties or state elites need a set of concepts around which their identity and unity can be constituted. These concepts can be elements which are re-constituted from the older ideological discourse of the party or from other parties, with which the new Albanian parties aimed to identify.[55] These concepts form an 'interpretative repertoire' through which political actors reify their political identity and construct a sense of continuity and unity. An interpretative repertoire is 'a culturally familiar and habitual line of argument comprised of recognizable themes, common places and tropes' (Wetherell, 1998: 394). As such, the themes, metaphors and tropes of an interpretative repertoire can be only recognized as such by the agents who constitute the group. Furthermore, these metaphors help to sustain and stabilize the ideological/political identity of

---

[55] For example, Fatos Lubonja notes that the the Democratic Party (DP) was similar in its beginnings to the Western conservative and Christian Democratic Parties, while the Republican Party identified itself with the left-liberal Italian Republicans (Lubonja, 2004: 37).

those who articulate them and give a sense of unity to the members of the group. Social practices form the identities of subjects by 'articulating together a series of contingent elements in a discursive field' (Howarth in Stavrakakis in Howarth et.al, 2000:7). This need for the recovery of conceptual or ideological unity becomes a necessity during and following moments of crisis of 'dislocation'.

To conclude this part, the reconstruction of political identities of old communist parties and the construction of new democratic identities for the first opposition movements is intimately linked to the process of constructing a democratic post-communist state identity.

2.3.2. From ideological identities to hegemonic identity of the state

The more capable an ideological discourse is to translate elements of the national political tradition into images, figures, tropes and identities of its own interpretative repertoire, the more successful it will be in achieving a stable and coherent political identity. Some attempts to draw on ideological forms of the past include, for example, the Albanian Republican Party (RP)'s identification with the tradition of the forces of the social-democratic revolution led by Bishop Fan S. Noli (Schmidt-Neke and Blanken quoted in Lubonja, 2004:37). Similarly, the DP in its early days sought to appropriate many intellectual figures that had been excluded from the communist historiography as intellectuals of the Albanian tradition of the Right. [56] As these examples demonstrate, the post-communist parties' attempts

---

[56] These examples support Hatzopoulos' argument about the heterogeneity of elements which make an ideology, or an ideological interpretative repertoire. Fan S. Noli is one of the most revered national intellectuals by the communist historiography. The social-democratic revolution led by Fain S. Noli of June 1924 was crushed by the monarchist forces led by King Zog I. (Fischer, 2004:75-93) *Mbreti Zog dhe Perpjekja per Stabilitet ne Shqiperi* (King Zog and the Struggle for Stability in Albania). Cabej: Tirana. The Albanian Communist ideology constructed the makers of the June Revolution as the predecessors of the Albanian left. In this respect, it is ironic that the Republicans, who promised the restitution of property and land to those who had been expropriated by the Communist regime, identified with Fan S. Noli. The same inconsistencies underlie the attempts by the Democratic Party in particular and the Albanian Right more broadly to appropriate the figure of Faik Konitza. Faik Konitza (1876-1942) was ambassador of Albania to the United States during King Zog's monarchic rule. Paradoxically, during 1992-1997, the Democratic Party denounced the Zogist/Monarchist past and called pro-Monarchy post-communist forces 'anti-nationalist' and 'obscurantist'. See Chapter 4 for a lengthier discussion of the post-communist actors' attempts to identify with the national intellectuals.

to construct-or reconstruct, as was the case with the Socialists-their political identity involve attaching to the 'nation' and to 'national identity' meanings which are favourable to their subject positions. In this case, the cultural field is vital for the political actors' attempts to create hegemonic political projects and hegemonic identities (see also Laclau, 1990: 189).

It is part of the process of subjectivization of the political actors following dislocatory experiences that they will try to distance themselves from old identifications or to impose a sense of continuity upon their narrative of self. These choices depend upon the actors' legitimacy needs and the discursive conditions of possibility (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 115) at a certain moment in time. This means that the political actors cannot pick and choose radically new representations from other discourses which cannot be coherently re-articulated in the new political discourse. Therefore, the elements which are re-articulated must 'fit together' with elements which are already in place. For example, the formulation of a super-liberal policy by a Leftist force, as in the case of the Albanian Socialists after their electoral victory in 1997 (Fuga 2003a:108-109) can be legitimized by linking a crucial concept of the leftist ideological repertoire—'people's liberation'— in a relation of equivalence with elements from the centre-right liberal discourse, such as 'privatization', 'open market', 'individual initiative'. As this example illustrates, the ideological and interpretative repertoires are not bounded texts; instead, they are a set of articulatory practices through which the actors seek to fix the meaning of the key concepts in a political and foreign policy discourse, in terms which are favourable to their interests and identities. The employment of ideologies is then 'intimately associated with decision-making, understood as bestowing a de-contested meaning on a political term' (Norval, 2000:322). [57]

---

[57] Ideology is understood here as forms of power/knowledge in the Foucauldian sense. As such, 'ideologies cannot be counter-posed to the truth, for they are then structures of signification which constitute social relations in and through power' (Baker and Galasinki, 2001:66) Here ideology is approached in a neutral, yet political way. This means not only that the concept is itself politically impregnated, but that the very dichotomy between ideology and non-ideology is political.

The most important political struggle regards the bestowing of meaning to those political terms which are the most uncontested ones and which capture the basic conception of 'us'. These terms serve 'to temporally and partially fix meaning' and are defined as nodal points (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 113). The nodal point is the central sign around which other signs gain their meanings (Jorgensen and Phillips, 2004: 26). A nodal point in political discourses is 'democracy' and in national discourses a nodal point is 'the people' (Jorgensen and Phillips: 26). Every foreign and security policy is an identity discourse. This means that in the case of Albania, it fixes the identity of Albania and what the interests of Albania are. The nodal point of a foreign and security policy discourse has traditionally been the state. However, a discourse of foreign policy is both a discourse of democracy and a discourse of the people. In this respect, the actors responsible for formulating and legitimizing foreign policy will aim to speak on behalf of the people and to appeal to democratic ideals, whether they are couched in the nationalist discourse of exemplarity and the heroic past, or in terms of the objective of integration.

The actors' practices of articulation consist in the construction of nodal points of a discourse (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 113). Hegemonic practices involve the articulation of different identities and subjectivities in a common project (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000: 14) by imbuing the nodal point with meanings which are favourable to the subject position of the actors. Hegemonic discourses interpellate one 'hegemonic' subject and privilege one subjectivity over another (also Hatzopoulos, 2008:38). In this context, hegemonic practices do not follow the construction of the actors' identities and their interests. On the contrary, these practices 'suppose the construction of the very identity of social agents, and not just a rationalist coincidence of 'interests' among pre-constituted agents' (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985:58).

According to Anna Marie-Smith, a hegemonic discourse strives to represent itself not just as a list of political positions or a bloc of concrete social agents and not just as one

alternative among many, but as the only possible alternative to total chaos (Smith, 1998:171). The outcomes of hegemonic practices which endeavour to create new forms of social order from a variety of dispersed or dislocated elements are called hegemonic formations (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000: 14).

A discourse of statehood and integration becomes dominant or gains a hegemonic status, when it is translated into new discourse from many subject positions (Diez, 2001:12-26). This would mean that one discourse's meta-narratives are similar in its nodal points (Diez, 2001:16). The pertinent question is why the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' became hegemonic only after the dislocation moment of 1997? With a view to answering this question, I now look at the meta-narratives of the Albanian state and of its relationship with the 'West'.

2.4. Meaning and functions of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation'

Having discussed how the actors translate national identity myths into foreign policy discourse, I now turn to the specific conditions and functions of the discourse of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' of the Albanian state. Here I discuss how the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' can be understood as a myth of post-communist Albania. This myth has the function of constructing both the new post-communist national identity and the 'democratic' identity of the state.

2.4.1. The concept of 'myth'

According to George Schopflin 'myth' is a 'particular set of ideas with a moral content told as a narrative by a community about itself' (Schopflin, 2002:26). Along the same lines with Schopflin, in the context of this thesis, 'myth' does not denote an irrational distortion of 'reality'. On the contrary, 'myth' is understood here as horizons or imaginaries

which include many social and political demands and articulations of identity. As such, myths are necessary for politics and do not lie outside the sphere of the political. The discourse of Europe and of the Euro-Atlantic integration builds on certain myths of the nation and of the state and it is not un-mythical (see also Hansen and Williams, 1999). It reconciles both the national question and the liberal discourse of integration, of joining contemporary modernity (Brisku, 2009) as well as the global market economy. It thus translates particularistic claims for preservation of 'tradition', 'character', 'national character' or 'national culture'[58] into universalistic claims for recognition and admission in a global system of governance.

Myths differ from discursive elements and moments; this difference is a matter of sedimentation and stabilization. Elements are signs which because of a structural dislocation have remained unarticulated within a discourse and therefore have not attained a full identity (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000:8). When elements are stabilized and have obtained some degree of fixity, they become 'moments' or what we might simply call identities. In the vocabulary of Discourse Theory, these are the differential positions within a discourse (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000: 8). Those 'moments' which are sediment to the degree of becoming political imaginaries and incorporating a large number of social and political demands become myths (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000:16). Myths are institutionalized and constitute a large variety of subjectivities.

As such, myths help reconstruct the social as objective and as external to the field of political contestation (also Norval, 2000:329). I use the term myth in the context of Discourse Theory as 'signifying attempts to constitute a new space of representation' after a moment of dislocation/juncture (Norval, 2000:329). In this respect, the myth attempts to reconstruct the 'social' or the entirety of the social relations as objective (Norval, 2000:329). The party which

---

[58] Drawing upon Clifford Geertz, Judy Batt suggests that post-communist politics of identity follows two complementary and yet competing motives: of pursuing the 'indigenous way of life' on the one hand, and aligning with the 'Spirit of the Age' on the other .While the former is materialized through themes of 'national culture', 'national tradition' and 'national character', the latter is captured by the aspiration to 'return to Europe'. (Batt, 2002: 3-4).

constitutes the government or leads the governing coalition is thus particularly interested in institutionalizing a specific myth, which captures best their political identity and makes their specific demands or political project seem universal and compatible with the 'national identity'. Insofar as a 'myth' becomes institutionalized, it becomes hegemonic (Norval, 2000:329) and it resembles a 'horizon' outside which any articulation of the 'national interest' or of 'democracy' sounds irrelevant. Therefore, the different understandings of security and of integration of the Albanian political actors can only be analyzed in the context of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' of the Albanian state.

In this respect, we can argue that the identification with the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' after the crisis of 1997 was a response to the weakening of Albania's international standing and to the wavering prospect of integration in the EU and NATO. Before the crisis of 1997, integration into NATO and integration into the EU were not tied to one foreign policy objective. Therefore, the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' of the Albanian state was not articulated as one state identity until the legitimacy crisis of 1997. The concept of 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' imbued the Albanian 'society' with a high level of unity of purpose and identity and aimed at strengthening the domestic legitimacy of the Albanian state following the crisis of 1997. This sense of unity of purpose and identity was even more necessary in the light of the deep political antagonisms which reiterated the division between South and North of the country during the crisis of 1997. In this respect, the hegemonic discourse of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' of the Albanian state is not the unfolding of an identity already in place, but the response to a crisis of identity.

To recapitulate, in the Albanian case the functions of the myth of the 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation' are three: firstly, it accommodates a wide variety of political and social demands and interpretations of national security and governance and reconciles the tension between them. As Jacob Torfing notes, 'the political as well as moral-intellectual leadership of a hegemonic force (state, class, movement, or other) hinges on the construction of a discursive

formation that provides a surface of inscription for a wide range of demands, view and attitudes' (Torfing 1999:101). 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' inscribes a multiplicity of security demands such as 'sovereignty', 'democracy', 'national unification', 'national unity', 'economic prosperity' and 'identity preservation'. As such, 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' is not exclusively a nationalist or cosmopolitan discourse. Secondly, it fixes the political identity and subjectivity of political elites who speak on behalf of 'nation', particularly after experiences of social and structural dislocation. Finally, it reconciles the historical discourse of an 'unresolved national question' in the Balkans with the discourse of integration in the Euro-Atlantic structures.

2.4.2 The construction of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' as state identity

In the early nineties, the 'West' was mainly constructed in terms of democratic ideals. As a democratic ideal the West was both the home which Albania had lost because of communism and, at the same time, a fulfilment of Albania's true national identity. The communist experience was constructed in the dominant political debate primarily as an 'accident' (Lubonja, 2002: 101). The West completed the communist nationalist imaginary of development, plenitude and cultural emancipation that Albania had experienced before the Ottoman invasion. The slogan of the anti-communist Students' Movement of December 1990, 'We want Albania to be like Europe' captured best this need to reach fullness of identity and agency. In this sense, the myth of the West, like nationalist myths, tells a narrative of the past which plays a functional role of power or of subjectivization in the present. At the same time, it continues the communist discourse of the nation's progress and emancipation. However, the nationalist discourse of the communist regime was not devoid of ideological elements. On the contrary, the myths of the Albanian nation were re-interpreted in an ideological riverbed. As Fatos Lubonja notes, during the communist regime, the myths that had nourished nationalism and communism grew together in a symbiosis as a combination of the glorious past with the

happy future and the great brother (Lubonja, 2002:99). In this context, the subjectivity of the nation and of the Albanian state was constructed in ways favourable to the subject position and ideological repertoire of the state elite. Along similar lines, the myth of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' is reconstituted as Albanianism in the new context of Albania's integration in the EU and NATO.

In their study of the construction of Albanian identities in the post-communist era, Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers and Bernd J. Fischer point to the ideological construction of nationalist identities and of Albanianism in the post-communist period. In an exploration of the 'nationalist politics of ideology' (Schwandner-Sievers, 2002:5), the authors emphasize the power of myths of national identity in the post-communist period and their selective reproduction by the Albanian political elites. My work builds on this body of literature, by showing how the actors reconstitute Albanianism in the post-communist era by translating some basic identity discourses (Hansen 2006) of the nation into the discourse of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation'. Furthermore, I show that myths of the nation are as much about the authenticity of the national community as about the democratic governance of the state and its external legitimacy and recognition as democratic.

Given that the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' captures the process of integration into both NATO and the EU, then it is pertinent to ask how the actors have sought to fix the meaning of Europeanism and Atlanticism at different moments in the post-communist history and consequently to articulate Albania's relationship with the EU and the USA. I analyze these articulations on three levels: the temporal, the spatial and the political levels. In the temporal dimension, I reconstruct these discourses (or meta-narratives) along two three temporal segments, from 1992 to 1997 to 1997 to 2005 and then from 2005 till 2007. At the spatial level, I analyze how the actors fix the meaning of 'Europeanism' and 'Atlanticism' within geo-political discourses. In other words, in the spatial dimension I ask what Europeanism and Atlanticism mean in relation to the borders of the political community and the nation. Finally,

at the political level, I ask what do Atlanticism and Europeanism signify when articulated in relation to other ideological identities, such as 'nationalist', 'pragmatist', 'liberal' or 'regionalist'.

At the temporal level, certain events have influenced the political elites' constructions of the EU and the USA. These events can be grouped in three categories: firstly, events related to the 'national question' and primarily Kosovo; secondly, events related to the economic and political situation in Albania (such as, for example, the crisis of 1997); and thirdly, events related to institutional changes inside the EU or of a broader global dimension (such as September 11, or the launching of the EU regional approach and the inclusion of Albania in the 'Western Balkans' policy package). These events will serve as focal moments when the actors are faced with the need to re-articulate elements of older discourse or meta-narratives of the West with regards to the national question or democratization, or reify myths of the West which seem already uncontested and entrenched in the national debate.

At the spatial level, both Europeanism and Atlanticism articulate geo-political identities. [59] These spatial constructions are invariably combined with temporal factors. For example, during 1992-1997 the Albanian state elites mainly perceived the relationship with the European Community (EC) in terms of bilateral relations with individual EU countries, particularly with Italy and Greece (also Johnson, 2001:172), whereas the regional approach within the framework of enlargement substituted the 'nested partnership' after 1997 (also O'Brennan &Gassie, 2009:63).

At the third level, Europeanism and Atlanticism are imbued with political meaning. This is to say, that they are articulated as elements within an interpretative repertoire of a political party or the state elite to signify a particular configuration of the relation between the state and its citizens or the state and the economy. In this respect, the political party or the

---

[59] Richard Sakwa notes that in the post-communist countries, with the fall of communism 'the temporal utopias of the West turned into spatial utopias' (Sakwa, 1999:117). The slogan 'return to Europe' captures best these attempts for approaching and becoming part of an economic, cultural and geopolitical space.

state elite might identify with a particular party or movement in the EU or USA, or with a specific ideological/political programme. As such Atlanticism and Europeanism are not foreign policy orientations, but elements of meta-narratives on the nation, state and democracy. They become identities (moments) when the political actors re-articulate them as legitimizing criteria of foreign policy acts and as part of their political/ideological identity.

2.5 Methodology

The methodology combines Discourse Theory with a number of tools from Critical Discourse Analysis[60]. In alignment with the theoretical framework, the empirical data are viewed as sets of signifying practices that constitute a discourse and its reality (Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000:4).

The methodological contribution of the thesis is three-fold. Firstly, the thesis introduces new texts which have not been used so far in studies on post-communist Albania. It draws on a wide range of such sources including transcripts of parliamentary debates, the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, official statements, political memoirs and interviews conducted by the author. Secondly, the thesis offers a new reading and interpretation of the existing primary and secondary literature (including previously examined primary texts such as policy statements, as well as the existing academic commentary). The research question which is asked and consequently the methodological tools which are used depart from the previous interpretations of these texts. Finally, the thesis draws upon a close reading of most texts in their original language, which is Albanian. Given that identity

---

[60] Critical Discourse Analysis has various branches; the research group at the Vienna University exemplified by the work of Ruth Wodak coins its research agenda as the discourse-historical approach; the Dutch school of Discourse Analysis as exemplified by the work of Teun van Dijk develops a cognitive-oriented approach which emphasizes the mediating role of personal and social cognition between social structures and discourse structures. The British school of Critical Discourse Analysis, as exemplified by the work of Norman Fairclough, builds primarily on Michel Foucault's concept of discourse and its linguistic dimension. See Wodak et. al. (1999: 7).

construction involves both linguistic and non-linguistic elements (Laclau and Mouffe, 1990: 100), being a native Albanian speaker has helped the author to detect the subtleties of the language that the actors use. The linguistic and contextual sensitivity has at times led to subtle but significant findings in the course of textual analysis. For example, Albanian political actors use various terms such as 'national unification' or 'national unity' interchangeably. Only through an in-depth knowledge of the language can one differentiate between the two; furthermore, a grounded linguistic analysis helps to avoid the mistake of equating one specific term with a discursive position. In this respect, 'national unification' might not indicate a nationalist position when national unification is articulated in the context of cultural exchange between Albanian communities in the Balkans.

In the next part of the chapter I discuss my definition of the relevant political actors and of elites, actors' strategies of identification, and lastly the empirical corpus of texts.

2.5.1. Political actors, political elites and state elites

Given this thesis' emphasis on the relationship between domestic politics and foreign policy discourse, the 'relevant actors' whose texts I have systematically analyzed are those who have held both high government positions and high positions within their political parties. Therefore, I have paid particular attention to texts produced by the two most prominent political actors of the post-communist period, Sali Berisha and Fatos Nano. Sali Berisha was Chairman of the first opposition party, the Democratic Party, from 1997 to 2005 and served as President of the Republic from 1992 to 1997; since September 2005 he has been the Prime Minister of Albania. Many identify the first administration of the centre-right coalition, (1992-1997) with the figure of Berisha[61]. I regard his speeches as a site of

---

[61] Part of the reason for this was the dominant position of Berisha within the Democratic Party. The administration of 1992-1997 resembled a Presidential-Republican model more than a parliamentarian one. Furthermore, the Democratic Party identified itself with the figure of Berisha. This was particularly the case during the electoral campaign of May 1996 as discussed in Chapter 4.

exploration of both the official discourse and of the Democratic Party's discourse of foreign policy.

Similarly, the figure of Fatos Nano has been crucial in Albanian politics, at least until the Socialists' electoral loss of July 2005. Nano saw his imprisonment during the centre-right administration and his contribution more generally as indispensable to the transformation of the Socialist Party from the Party of Labour. Furthermore, Nano's position as Prime Minister was reinforced after the constitutional changes of 1998 which shifted much of the power from the President to the Prime Minister. In addition to Nano's role within the Socialist Party, this institutional change makes Nano's political and official texts an important source for exploring the meanings of 'national interest' and 'Western vocation' from 1997 to 2005.

2.5.2. Linguistic Strategies of Identification

Ruth Wodak, Rudolf de Cillia, Martin Reisigl and Karin Liebhart distinguish three main linguistic means of identity construction: firstly, the personal reference (personal pronouns such as 'we'/ 'I'/'we as political force/our party); secondly, spatial references (adverbs of place, toponyms etc); and finally, temporal references (for example, adverbs of time, temporal conjuctions etc) (Wodak et.al. 1999:35). As the empirical analysis will show, through these linguistic means, the political actors seek to mark continuity or difference. For example, political actors construct their policies and political positions as continuous and unaltered through linguistic means such as 'I have always said' or 'The Democrats have always supported a policy on Kosovo'. By so doing, not only do the political actors refer to a body of other previous texts—which might or might not articulate different policy options from the one that the actors are presently articulating —but also imbue the present text with the legitimacy of the past ones.

Another level in which identity is constructed is the level of the genre of texts. While the official discourse of foreign policy might not construct the neighbouring states as the

nation's *other*, in memoirs or during personal interviews, the official constructs his own identity and the political identity of the political party s/he belongs to as genuinely 'nationalist'. [62] In other words, in different genres and discursive sites, the actors relapse into a traditional territorial conception of security. Depending on the genres and discursive sites in which the author is speaking, the text incorporates more elements from the liberal discourse than from the nationalist ones. In this respect, in a memoir on the Kosovo war, the actors' foreign policy discourse might reproduce myths of injustice to the nation, myths of survival. However, these elements might be removed from a text produced for official delivery.

2.5.3. Empirical resources

The texts which my analysis draws upon are relatively closer to the official level, although I also draw upon party programmes, electoral speeches, parliamentary debates, as well as editorials and analyses of foreign policy written by 'responsible actors' (Pace 2006:12) in the political sphere or who are actively engaged in Albanian public life. This diversity responds to my research agenda: in order to detect change and continuity in foreign policy discourse under different administrations one has to take into consideration the process of identity formation and of ideological changes in the political discourse of the main parties. The analysis of electoral speeches and of party programmes proved helpful for the identification of inconsistencies between the political/domestic and the official discourses of foreign policy.

2.5.3.1. Primary Texts

Many of the texts used in this thesis were obtained in their original and unmediated form, such as transcripts of parliamentary debates, speeches made by the Albanian Ministers

---

[62] The fact that officials use these strategies of 'duplicity' during personal interviews with the author is linked to the nationality of the author, and therefore to the interviewees' strategies to 'control the impressions of the audience'. For this see Goffman (1959).

of Foreign Affairs from 2001 to 2003, interviews conducted by the author, books written by state officials on foreign policy, statements made by the Socialist leader and the Albanian Prime Minister from 2002 to 2004, as well as policy texts. The rest of the texts which make up the empirical corpus are mediated through other actors (such as media people, spokesmen etc.).[63] There is also an in-the-middle category, between the mediated and the non-mediated texts, comprising texts such as speeches of the key political actors (such as Nano, Berisha etc) which are published in their full and unmediated form in the party newspapers or on the official websites.

The use of traditionally secondary materials, such as the media in general and newspapers in particular as primary empirical material can be problematic (also Hansen 2006: 84). I have tried to address this problem, firstly, by creating an 'archive' of basic or seminal texts (Pace, 2006:14), and secondly, by combining these basic texts with a corpus of primary resources. Basic texts can vary from political parties' electoral programmes and founding statutes to policy texts to foreign policy statements. The more formal the text, the lower the degree of sharpness with which identity is constructed (Hansen 2006:85). However, these texts are widely read and quoted as well as have the 'formal authority to define a political position' (Hansen 2006:85). At the same time, I have looked at key historical texts, which are continuously reproduced by historians, as well as politicians and media in contemporary debates on statehood and national identity. [64]

Primary data which are accessed as unmediated include parliamentary debates; personal interviews; political and official statements made by the Socialist leader and Prime

---

[63] This is the reason why I differentiate in the bibliography between direct speeches/statements of the political actors which are published unabridged or unedited in the media (primarily official newspaper of the party or official website of the party or the institution) and those statements which are edited or incorporated into a text of 'hard news', 'interview' or other journalistic genres. Although I consider both types as 'primary texts', the second type might incorporate words and comments from a journalist/editor etc; in that case I refer to the media (newspaper, TV Channel) as the author of the text. In those cases when the newspaper article is fully attributed, the name of the author/journalist or editorialist is quoted.

[64] For example, one of the key texts of the nationalist discourse which is Sami Frasheri's *Albania as it was, is now and will become* (1899/1999) is reproduced in many school history books as well as in academic works on the Albanian nationalist discourse. This literature is discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

Minister Fatos Nano during the 2002-2005 period; statements by foreign ministers, as accessed both from institutional websites, published unabridged in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs publication *Negotium* or obtained personally by the author via the Information Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. [65]

In the case of official statements by foreign policy officials and diplomats, they rarely say anything new; indeed as Iver Neumann has noted, change in diplomacy is initiated by politicians, not by diplomats themselves (Neumann, 2007). However, precisely for this reason, these statements provide a snapshot of the 'stabilized' state identity and foreign policy discourse at a certain moment.

Parliamentary debates also play a part in the corpus of primary sources. The debates covered relate to the years 1991, 1992, 1997 and 1998. This choice was due to the limited availability of the parliamentary debates in compiled form and their accessibility to the general public and the researchers [66]. However, this limitation should not have implications for the analysis, given that the years which are covered by the transcripts correspond to the key political moments of post-communist foreign policy. This is, to my knowledge, the first time that the parliamentary debates of these moments are used as data for the Albanian foreign policy analysis. The parliamentary debates have helped to identify the different positions on various political and foreign policy issues. Furthermore, given that most of these debates are not televised or attended by the media, the tone of the speakers is often more honest and at times controversial than in other genres.

Against the background of the changes which happened during these moments, I will analyze the shifts and continuities in the articulations of the 'national interest' and the 'Euro-

---

[65] Speeches of Fatos Nano of the period from 2003-2005 were provided to the author by information officers at the Council of Ministers. The author would like to thank particularly Blendi Kajsiu for helping with the availability of the materials. As for the official statements of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, which were not published at *Negotium*, they were passed on to the author by specialists at the Information Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

[66] The texts have subsequently been made accessible (as of 2007, when I last checked) for researchers at the Parliament's Library by official request to the General Secretary. They are accessible in un-compiled format.

Atlantic orientation'. As such, the parliamentary debates provide an invaluable source of contra-punctual or dissenting voices even within the official discourse or alternatively from the opposition parties. Given that they are unprocessed and unmediated by the media, and that most of the debates were in fact unattended by the media or by representatives of the international community in the country, these debates provide an approximately 'authentic' snapshot of the framing of the responsibility and authority of the West, of the construction of Europe and of the 'national question' during these crucial moments. The 'authenticity' of these debates is a relevant point here, given the attention I give throughout the empirical analysis to the 'implied audience' and the moments at which the text was produced. One need not juxtapose discursive practices with non-discursive facts or practices to discern contradictions and thus predict inconsistency in policy. Lastly, this thesis comprises the first study in which debates in the Albanian Parliament of the post-communist period are explored as a domain of research for the study of Albanian foreign policy.

The last primary texts are those extracted from interviews. Interviews are a complementary method in this thesis. Although they are not a typical method of post-structural discourse analysis, personal interviews are a valid method (Hansen, 2006: 85). However, their incorporation in the analysis does not follow the methodology of rationalist or positivist accounts; given the textual form of interviews (dialogue rather than monologue), the analyst (interviewer) should be conscious of his/her own role and position in the production of text from the interview (Hansen, 2006: 86). [67]

In the context of poststructuralist discourse analysis, the interviews are not analyzed as a source of facts, but as another site of text production. The interviewees fall into three groups: The first and largest group includes high officials or former officials who are

---

[67] Furthermore, no text is a pure form of monologue. Even statements and political speeches, which are neither mediated through the media-and thus processed through media workers-nor direct responses to questions, nor polemics in the media or in policy making circles are still targeted for certain audiences. In other words, every text implies its audience. The notion of 'implied audience' is borrowed from Goffman (1959).

positioned very close to power and are thus significant individuals in the making of foreign policy. The second group consists of practitioners in the field of foreign policy, that is, experts and specialists in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These interviews have been instrumental in providing not only 'facts' but also another angle whence the dominant discourse could be criticized or indeed 'deconstructed'.

Another set of conversation have informed the analysis. These are less structured and informal conversations with journalists and analysts of foreign affairs (2) and domestic politics. While rarely cited in the text, these conversations helped to provide some basic information for the analysis as well as for the preparation for elite interviewing. Most of the interviews were conducted during January-February 2006, with the exception of a few interviews which were conducted during the second stage of my field work in January-February 2007. 17 people were interviewed in total.

2.5.3.2. Elite Interviews

My selection of the elite interviewees was based on two main criteria: firstly, the positions they had within the field of foreign policy production, and secondly, the position of authority and whether or not they were currently active on the political scene in general and within their respective parties in particular. The largest group of interviewees include former ministers of foreign affairs and the current minister at the time of interview, former Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, former Deputy Prime Minister and the Albanian Ambassador to Greece from 1997 to 2005. A second smaller and less instrumental group of interviewees consisted of foreign policy experts, that is, present or former practitioners of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. [68]

---

[68] The experts tended to repeat the official line and the dominant discourse. Although I had already interviewed the Minister of Foreign Affairs and been granted permission to work at the Library of the Archives of the Ministry, the lower positioned experts expressed concerns about being interviewed at all, and about being recorded.

There are several difficulties involved in elite interviewing, such as time limitations and the efforts to reach at the highest official level are not always successful (also, Lilleker 2003: 207-214). Nevertheless, these interviews were valuable because they provided a unique perspective on the ways in which elite figures re-fashion and re-edit themselves as well as about their self-serving readings of the past. I found that what David Weltman and Michael Billig demonstrated with their analysis of political actors' discourse of 'end of ideology' also held true to some extent for my interviewees: when interviewed, political actors tend to account for an evolution from ideological, divisive politics to a more consensual, moderate and pragmatist one: 'they also stress their own stability; as if they existed outside the previous political climate' (Weltman and Billig, 2001: 367). There was a tendency among those respondents who had previously been in positions of power and were now part of the opposition to represent their personal role as instrumental to a certain degree of resistance to the established discourse, either at home or in the context of the EU. When used in conjunction with official texts, the texts substracted from the interviews enable a comparison of positions articulated in different contexts and for different audiences.

In addition, elite interviews proved also helpful for detecting implicit and explicit strategies of identification of the actors or of state elites with historical figures or their attempts to construct 'acceptable knowledge' (Hansen, 2006:8). For example, during the personal interview with the Albanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Besnik Mustafaj (16 March 2006), I observed that the large portrait of Faik Konitza[69] was the only one besides that of the President of the Republic which is hung on the walls of the office of the Albanian Minister of Foreign Affairs. In this context, pictures, visual representations and symbols are part of broader political discourses or meta-narratives of the nation and of the state. The political

---

[69] Faik Konitza (1876-1942) was a publicist, writer, essayist and ambassador of Albania to the United States during King Zog's monarchic rule. He was also the publisher of 'Albania' (1896-1909), one of the most importand and influential media organs of the Albanian *publicistique* in the early twentieth century. Konitza was renounced by the Communist nationalist ideology and historiography as a supporter of the Zogist regime. For the communist anti-Konitza arguments see Koka (1985:32).

appropriation of cultural discourse is therefore part of the hegemonic practices of the state elite or of political elites in general in order to obtain legitimacy and authority.

2.5.3.3. Archive Work

From January to mid-February 2007 I worked in the State Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Despite the fact that my study is not strictly historical, I was interested in identifying changes and continuities in the criteria of legitimization of various policy moments and the construction of the Albanian state identity through these legitimization strategies. In this respect, I was mainly interested in reading official statements regarding the ICO membership in 1992, the framing of the Kosovo policy in the early nineties, and the deterioration of relations with Greece in 1994.

Primary resources on this period are rare and extremely difficult to find and access. The related materials are classified as 'state secrets', and are only declassified twenty years after their date of publication/classification. I was, however, granted full access to archival material. To my knowledge, I was the first researcher to have been granted permission to read through the 'classified' documents of the post-communist period.[70] Since these materials are still classified, however, they cannot be cited directly and full reference details cannot be provided. On the instruction of the Director of the Archives, all state archival materials used in this thesis are identified only as 'State Archive No. 251'.

My reading of these first-hand materials of the early nineties was further supplemented in the course of personal interviews conducted with the authors of these materials, such as specialists from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

---

[70]I am grateful to Dr Pranvera Dibra (Director of the Archives Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and Mrs Desada Metaj (former spokeswoman of the Minister for Foreign Affairs) for their kind assistance.

2.5.3.4. Other Sources

I have used a wide range of print media as a major source of texts for empirical analysis. The dailies I have analyzed are predominantly, although not exclusively, the official press of the main parties, such as *Rilindja Demokratike* (Democratic Party), *Zeri I Popullit* (Socialist Party), as well as several other media where the main political actors may have published analyses or interviews. One such example is the newspaper *Koha Jone*, which held a strong-anti-governmental tone during 1996-1997 before later becoming the mouthpiece of the Socialist Party following the collapse of the pyramid schemes in March 1997. It published the letters of the imprisoned SP leader Fatos Nano during 1996 as the official newspaper of the Socialist Party, *Zeri I Popullit,* would not publish them (author's interview with Godole).[71]

Other media which I include in my empirical sources are interviews and statements given on talk shows on Albanian Public Television, TV Klan and Top Channel. These were chosen because of their national reach and their status as professional and mainstream channels. I have also extensively read analyses of foreign policy and domestic politics, particularly those published in the political magazine *Klan* during 1997.[72]

2.6. Conclusions

In this chapter I developed a framework of analysis which aims at demonstrating how and when domestic factors matter in the construction of security. This framework privileges practices over discursive structures and actors' strategies over the discursive context. Building on the concepts of 'myth', 'identification strategies' and 'interpretative repertoires' of

---

[71] These letters were highly critical of the actual leadership of the Party and called for internal reform of the party. Interview with Jonila Godole, Tirana, 23 March 2006.

[72] In this connection, the newspaper *Shekulli* became highly critical to Nano government during 2003-2004; the media group Klan (*Klan TV*, *Klan* magazine and newspaper *Korrieri*) openly supported Berisha and the Democratic Party from the electoral campaign in 2005 onwards; media company *Top Channel* has aligned itself with the Socialist Party in general and with its leader Edi Rama in particular. I have grounded my selection of texts in the context of these political alignments of the media.

political actors, the chapter explicated how the state elites attach to the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' meanings which are favourable to their subject positions and domestic political projects of governance.

I suggested that the political elites define and aim at fixing the meaning of the 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation' through their political and ideological interpretations of the national identity myths. Identity is neither exclusively nationalist nor exclusively Europeanist in the countries of the Western Balkans (also Hatzopoulos, 2008); ideological and political ideas of governance and governability interact and overlap with ideas of the (national) self and the West or the Euro-Atlantic community. It is through the political actors' hegemonic practices that the relationship between these elements is fixed.

The main implication of the analysis is that the Euro-Atlantic Orientation transcends the dualism between nationalism and integration, which has largely dominated the literature on the EU and NATO integration of the Balkan states. Furthermore, I suggested that the 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation' discourse is no less mythical than the discourse of nationalism and of nation-state. On the contrary, its hegemonic status relies not only on the inscription of a wide variety of demands, and interpretations which might at times be contradictory and incompatible, but also on the re-articulation of identities of the nationalist discourse.

The following chapter outlines a set of prominent narratives of national identity and their re-articulation within a dominant discourse of security from the political elites' different subject positions.

CHAPTER 3: MYTHS OF ALBANIAN NATIONAL RENAISSANCE AND

THEIR POST-COMMUNIST RECONSTITUTION

3.1. Introduction

'Albania is entering in this new historical era with its identity and physiognomy, with the advanced culture, language and literature of the National Renaissance, with the self-awareness of an intelligent and brave nation'- Sali Berisha[73]

'Our national policy will be guided by the philosophy of the National Renaissance, which promulgated unity and love among all Albanians, regardless of religion, region and ideas. The philosophy of our honourable national ideologues [rilindasve] is today more pertinent than ever, for it encapsulates both, our national and democratic ideals' –Paskal Milo[74]

The Albanian post-communist elites refer implicitly or explicitly to the National Renaissance in order to legitimize their foreign policy and political decisions. The National Renaissance in its common use refers to a stage of from mid-nineteenth century to the Proclamation of Independence in 1912[75]. In the post-communist era, National Renaissance has come to signify two things: firstly, the *ideology* which underlies foreign policy orientation of the Albanian state in the post-communist era; and secondly, the *history* of state-formation and of joining the European modernity.[76] It is in the context of this dual function that the National Renaissance plays for the post-communist elites that I will argue in this chapter that the National Renaissance provides both the *rationality* of the Albanian state's foreign policy as well the discursive *resources,* which enable certain strategies of identification for the political actors. As discussed in Chapter 2, these resources come in the form of 'moments' or simply identities, which when sedimented in the hegemonic discourse become myths of the political and foreign political discourse. This chapter asks how the National Renaissance is

---

[73] Berisha, 1992b:1.

[74] Presentation of the programme of the new government in the Albanian Parliament, *Parliamentary Debates*, 10 November 1997: 251.

[75] For a genealogical history of the concept of 'Renaissance' see Ypi (2007).

[76] It is in this sense, that one could argue that the National Renaissance signifies both Albanianness *and* Albanianism, that is, both identity and ideology.

reconstituted through foreign policy discourse from 1992 to 2007. The key argument is that the post-communist political actors have re-articulated some basic identity narratives of the Albanian Renaissance in the new context through their ideological and interpretative lenses. These identity narratives help to restore coherence and order in the political actors' stories of both self and the Albanian state in moments of structural dislocation and destabilization of the dominant discourses, such as during 1991-1992 and 1996-1997. When they are highly stabilized, they resemble myths—or basic identity narratives—which provide the argumentative and legitimation basis of policy discourse. As discussed in Chapter 2, in the conceptual framework of this thesis, myths resemble 'solutions' to which political actors turn in moments of crisis and social dislocation. Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers rightly argues that 'myth' is the political *modus operandi*, the tool of choice, for those who want to simplify complex realities for the sake of making a group's action predictable in its conformist perceptions of the world' (Schwandner-Sievers, 2002:17). Although the concept of 'myth' in the nationalism studies (e.g. Schopflin 2002: 26-33) differs from the use of 'myth' in Discourse theory, both uses denote an urgent and necessary choice by political actors to stabilize their own political identities and the state identity in moments of crisis and uncertainty.

I contend that paradoxically enough, the national identity narratives have been translated into the political myths of post-communism through the ideological lenses of the communist historiography. Furthermore, the myths of the Albanian National Renaissance are re-articulated in the post-communist discourse of security through the ideological categories and meta-narratives of the actors. These meta-narratives are constituted during communism and therefore any reading of the National Renaissance goes through the ideological lenses of the communist historiography. This is the case despite the post-communist actors' attempts to distance themselves from the communist legacy and the communist discourse of the nation. This intertextual reconstruction of the National Renaissance through the communist ideology

helps to explain why there are continuities in the framing of the 'national question' from the communist regime to the post-communist era. This is the case despite differences in the ideological programmes between the main post-communist political parties and their attempts to distance themselves from communism. In this context, it is pertinent to investigate the identity narratives of the nation (self) and of Europe/West during the communist period .

The chapter seeks to delineate the key meta-narratives of Albanianness, upon which the post-communist actors' interpretations of statehood, nation and of democratic governance build. In the context of this thesis, these meta-narratives or myths of national identity are conceptualized as analytically and empirically inseparable from their political reality and from their constant re-articulation in new political contexts. In this respect, it is not the 'content' of myths which matters, but the strategies of their re-constitution. In this sense, for example, the Albanian identity narrative of indifference to religion (Malcolm 2002: 84) does not have any political content outside its reproduction by the post-communist state elites. Its reproduction is part of the subjectivisation of the Albanian state but also of the post-communist elites who speak on its behalf.

When speaking of the National Renaissance, one should note that the relevant body of texts is heterogeneous and dispersed across different genres. In my choice of 'basic texts', I will follow in the footsteps of the methodology of the compilation of *Discourses of Collective Identity in Central and Southeast Europe (1770-1945)* (Trencsenyi and Kopecek, 2006, 2006) and refer primarily to those texts which were continually inserted in textbooks or which served as manifestos of the national movement in the pre-First World War period. These texts build upon two traditions, or two basic identity discourses: the discourse of National Romanticism, on the one hand, and of Enlightenment, on the other. The two are ideologically, rather than temporally marked. The temporal overlap between the two is a significant proof of the co-existence of elements of both, Romanticism and Enlightenment, within what is called the National Renaissance (Ypi 2007).

The first part of the chapter draws an outline of the key features of the social and political context as well as of the key identity narratives of the National Renaissance project. The notion of "context" here does not simply include events but also the dominant Western discourses of statehood and democratic governance at the time. In this respect, I will discuss how the National Renaissance project has re-articulated elements of the European Enlightenment in the new context of the dominant discourse of the nation-state. In the second part I discuss how these national identity narratives of the National Renaissance have been re-interpreted in the communist historiography and official discourse. The last part provides an account of the re-articulation of the national identity on the part of post-communist political actors in post-communist Albania from 1992 to 2007. The reason this part is put in the end is to provide a diachronic reading of some basic identity discourses from their 'original' texts of the National Renaissance, through the communist historiography to the post-communist political and foreign policy texts.

3.2 Contextualizing the Nationalist Discourse (1870-1939)

The nationalist discourse of the Albanian Renaissance ideologues (*Rilindas*), similarly or like the nationalist discourse elsewhere in the Balkans, arose in a political context in which the Ottoman system of millet was being replaced with the system of the nation-states (Misha, 2002:34) Thus the end of the nineteenth century marks a shift from the discourse of religion as the primary identity marker to language and culture as the primary identification.

The two key features which characterized the Albanian nation on the eve of the twentieth century were weak national consciousness, on the one hand, and deep decentralization and societal division across regions, religions and class, on the other (Misha, 2002:37-39) Fragmented along family/clan and religious and regional lines, Albania was the last of the Balkan states to sever ties with the Turks. Even after independence, the Albanian state remained dependent upon the Great Powers with regards to territorial survival and

domestic stability. Therefore, claims for self-determination could not then be extricated from the attempts to obtain recognition from the West.

3.2.1 The challenges of national unification

In their aspirations to build an independent and modern Albanian state, the Albanian nationalist intellectuals of the late nineteenth-early twentieth century (*rilindas*-it) were faced with a society which was highly divided across regional or family/*klan* lines (Misha, 2002: 36). In addition, religion was one of the major dividing forces of the Albanian stateless society. In the Ottoman Empire, religion and not nationality was the criterion which used to determine the conqueror from the conquered. Being Muslims, the majority of Albanians enjoyed a privileged position with the Empire, which their Catholic and Orthodox brothers did not (Skendo in Kulla 2003:732). However, this religious affinity gave Turks less inclination to understand and accept the nationalist awakening of their Albanian brethren than to understand Serbs' or Greeks' resistance towards them. Tajar Zavalani, one of the main proponents of the inter-war intellectual tradition, notes that while in other countries of the Balkans the religious clergy became the bearers and leaders of the nationalist projects, under the vow for 'the nation and for God', religion could not fulfill this role in the case of Albania; it was only the common language and the common rites and habits which made Albanians feel as though they belonged to one nation, albeit divided into different religions (Zavalani, 1998: 193).

3.2.2. National Independence as Political Pragmatism

In this section I suggest that the founding of the modern Albanian nation-state was the product of a discursive shift in the conceptualization of the relationship between the nation and the state. Whereas the initial conception of the future nation-state was based on the

Ottoman principle of religion, the prevailing principle of the Nationalist Movement in the League of Prizren became the territorial principle.

In the League of Prizren (1878)[77] the Albanian Movement called for the constitutionalization of the "territorial concept" of the Albanian state. This meant the dominance of the *ethnic* rather than *historical* criterion (Puto, 2003a: 22; Qosja, 1998:231) of the unification of the Albanian *vilayets*. Despite the gradual assertion of the autonomy and inviolability of territorial borders, the Albanian movement at this stage could hardly envisage, let alone demand, the drastic separation from the High Porte. Indeed, the religious unity with Turkey had provided Albanians with so many privileges within the vast Ottoman Empire, that the separation of Albanians from the empire was not regarded as compatible with vital national interests (Frasheri in Kulla, 2003: 408). Even in what came to resemble a treatise of the Albanian National Movement, Sami Frasheri's *Albania as it was, is now and will become* (1999/1899), the project of independence is so framed that it could only come into being as a consequence of the actual bad governance of the Ottoman Empire and of its mismanagement of the 'Albanian situation' (Frasheri, 1999: 44-46).

It was not until the start of the Balkan wars of 1912 that Albanians realized the real danger of their being swept off by the neighbouring countries with the final collapse of the Empire, as well as the vanity of their previous efforts to seek for autonomy (Puto, 2003a:81). The trajectory followed by the League of Prizren captures best this shift from a loyalist position to a pragmatist one. There were many among the patriots who suggested that the League should be based on religious tolerance (Austin, 2004:238). Indeed, in its beginnings, the League was summoned under the name of 'The Committee of the Real Muslims'[78] (Halili

---

[77] The League of Prizren marked the first moment of the institutionalization of the nationalist claims to the High Porte. Despite its eventual failure, Albanian historiography identifies the League as the beginning of the autonomous Albanian state (Pollo, 1993:89).

[78] There were other projects too. According to Adrian Brisku, there were mainly three positions with regards to the future of the Albanian territories: One position, coming from a politically conservative fraction of the Albanian Highlanders, North Albania and Kosova, believed in the survival of the Ottoman Empire. They opposed the Europeanising reforms of Tanzimat. Hence, in Brisku' words, a further orientation towards political

in Trencseneyi and Kopecek, 2006:348). It was only due to the arrival of the Shkodra Delegates to the League that the pragmatist trend prevailed over religious unity (ibid.). This shift in power signified a shift in the articulation of the 'nation' in the nationalist project. The struggle was formulated as a struggle for the defence of Albanian lands (*vilayets*) as opposed to the struggle for the "defence of Muslim" lands of the Balkans; in the political aspect this was accompanied with demands for the foundation of a unified *Albanian Vilayet* (Halili in Trencseneyi and Kopecek, 2006:349).

On 28 November 1912 the Albanian independent state was formed by the Vlora Government, led by Ismail Qemali. The proclamation of independence was the product not only of the discourse of the National Renaissance on the distinctness of the Albanian nation but first and foremost of the dominance of the secularist patriotic alternative over the alternative discourse of equating nation with religion. In the context of the nationalist project of independence, pragmatism implied the adaptation on the part of the Albanian leaders of the dominant discourse of the time in Europe, which was the discourse of nation-state. As Iver Neumann argues, the Europeans perceived the Ottoman Empire as 'profoundly unsuited to the new Westphalian system' (Neumann, 1999:51). In this context, the creation of the Albanian state was simultaneously an act of territorial and identity survival as well as of foundation of a new modern system of governance, based not on religion but on the linguistic and territorial concept of nationality.

Europe was seen as a regression with respect to what they already had achieved. The second position came from mainly Catholic Albanians, who opposed Ottoman rule, but had a restricted view what was to become of the Albanian territories. They sought to create an autonomous, or fully independent, Catholic Albanian principality in the area of Mirdita, north of Albania. The third position came mainly from the Albanian intellectual émigré communities, who realised that the Empire was coming out of the European political equation, and believed that a unified Albanian political state could be achieved with the support and protection of key actors from within political Europe (Brisku, 2009:41-42).

3.3. The key identity narratives of the National Renaissance

Having briefly drawn an account of the main events which mark the formation and early organization of the Albanian state till the outbreak of the Second World War, I now turn to the formation of a coherent Albanian nationalist discourse during what has come to be known as the Albanian Renaissance. The early period of Renaissance, stretching from the 1870s to the proclamation of independence in 1912, reflects the efforts of the intellectual elite, who were broadly educated and cultivated abroad, to mould an authentic national culture, through which the nationalist project of independence would be saved and furthered to its fulfilment.

One striking feature of this nationalist discourse is the re-articulation of key moments/identities of the discourse of European Enlightenment such as education, reason and progress (see Ypi 2007, Brisku, 2009:38, also Qosja, 1991: 3). In this context, European Enlightenment and Romanticism stood in a dialectical relationship as played within the ideology of Albanian National Renaissace (Ypi 2007), we should note that the basic identity narratives of the National Renaissance do not simply provide an outline of the ethno-cultural features of the Albanian nation—which is, what Albanianness is—but also the basic features of political organization of the future Albanian modern state.

3.3.1. Europe: From an Other to another Self

Given the post-1989 discourse of 'return to Europe' and the reconstitution of the Albanianness in terms of Westernism, it is easy to forget the dilemmas faced by the ideologues of the National Renaissance regarding the construction of a modern state identity. A close reading of the texts produced by the National Renaissance intellectuals renders visible the dilemmas of differentiation and identification with Europe.

From the mid nineteenth century to the time of independence, Europe was both seen as untrustworthy and as necessary for the formation and independence of the Albanian state

(Brisku, 2009: 38-39). Its untrustworthiness was most prominently proven at the Congress of Berlin of 1878 (13 June-13 July). Despite the noise which the European powers made around the 'nationality principle' as the alleged basis of solving all the problems deriving from the fall of Ottoman Empire, what really counted as the primary criterion was the 'allocation of war goods'. This allocation was carried forth without regard for ethnic or national criteria, particularly in the Balkans (Puto, 2003a:17; Salleo 2000:128-9, Zavalani, 1998: 247). The Congress of Berlin decided to partition many Albanian territories among Albania's immediate neighbors and did not even recognize the existence of an 'Albanian question' (Misha, 2002:39-40.) Furthermore, the Great European Powers, such as Italy, Austro-Hungary and Great Britain were often seen as spurring on regional and religious differences among Albanians in order to serve their own individual interests.[79] Europe was often identified with the policy and interests of one particular European country (Misha, 2002:4). This lack of trust in Europeans' help pertained also in the nationalist discourse of post-independence (see for instance Fishta in Kulla: 191).

At the same time, arguments about Europe were not only arguments about the nation and its territorial integrity, but also about form of governance. In a passage dedicated to the 'Leadership of the Government of Albania', Sami Frasheri captures the dilemmas of governance of the time:

> (..)If a foreigner comes from Europe, he will bring the ball and theatre and other customs which neither the Muslims nor the Christians want. If a foreigner Muslim Prince or King comes, he will bring with him a caravan of *hadems*, women, Arabs, etc. which Albania has no time to feed and maintain (Frasheri, 1999:82).[80]

Furthermore, five centuries of Ottoman governance and high level of decentralization had left behind a strong legacy of distrust of the city and of central government (Fischer, 2004:55). Therefore, any modernization and centralization reform had to be coated in national

---

[79] For an insight into the role of British diplomacy with regard to the territorial integrity, independence and organization of the new Albanian state before and during the WWII see Puto (2001).
[80] All translations are of the author, unless otherwise stated.

and local colours in order to be legitimate and trusted by the people. Frasheri finds the solution in the resuscitation of the idea of *pleqesia* or council of the elders (Frasheri, 1999:85-87). This demonstrates that the national ideology still regarded Europe as culturally different, which is as an *other*.

However, this European other was not a radical other, but one which represented the aspirations of the new Albanian state. In this respect, the idea of resuscitating the council of elders was on the one hand an attempt to preserve and resuscitate what was inherently Albanian from the ancient times and yet democratic and in compliance with the European governance model. The dominant nation-building project hinged upon the narrative of the inherent Europeanness of the Albanian nation. The texts of the national ideologues construed Europe as the only guarantee against territorial partition between the Balkan neighbours and subsequent loss of any national identity or distinctness. As the first Albanian Prime Minister Ismail Qemali put it in 1912: 'If Albania proves unable to exist like a Western state, it will not be able to survive on the Balkan Peninsula' (quoted in Zhelyazkova, 2000:246). Westernization, then, was a matter of survival.[81] The positive identity of Europe was, then, constructed along temporal lines—as a space of security—as well as along territorial lines, which is, in terms of leaving behind the Ottoman past and joining European modernity. As Adrian Brisku puts it, 'Europe became the desirable—albeit the uncertain and wavering—future (2009: 39). In this respect, territorial and identity survival was articulated as equivalent-and not incompatible-with democratic and Western statehood.

---

[81] Pirro Misha argues that, because of its important borderline position, the Sublime Porte had considered Albania 'not only as a borderline defensive belt, but also as an important source of cheap cannon-fodder. To this end, the Ottomans did their best to keep the country isolated and uncontaminated by contacts with Europe' (Misha, 2002:37).

3.3.2. Nation above all: the ideological construction of 'religious tolerance'

National Renaissance ideologues (*Rilindasit*) strove to construct Albanianism as an overarching homogenous identity which transcended religious and regional lines. This attempt is encapsulated by the monumental line of the National Renaissance intellectual (Rilindas) Pashko Vaso (1825-1892) '*Churches and mosques you shall not heed / The religion of Albanians is Albanianism*'. Indifference to religion is one of the key myths of the Albanian communist historiography (Malcolm, 2002:84-87) as will be argued below. This myth was instrumental to the unification of the Albanian nation and to the strengthening of nationalist awareness. As Piro Misha argues, the nationalists considered religious divisions 'not only as a factor for discord but also as a vehicle for foreign influence' (Misha, 2002:45).

A thorough reading of the canonical texts of the National Renaissance demonstrates that the narrative of religious tolerance was from the very beginning tied to the project of building a secular European state which would be thus recognized by the Great European Powers. The only way to achieve this was through the creation of a unified homogenous and overarching state identity which would mobilize the loyalties of the highly divided Albanian populations (also Misha, 2002:45-46). Unity and homogeneity of the ideas of the nation were regarded as the prerequisite for unified political action (also Fishta in Kulla 2003: 198). Consider, for example, this excerpt from Frasheri's text on the post-independence Albanian leadership:

> If he is Albanian(..) and if he is Gegh, Tosks would not want him; if he is Tosk, Gegs would not want him; if he is Muslim, the Christians would not view him under a good light; if he was Muslim the Christians would not be happy (Frasheri 1899/1999:82).

This passage does not attest to Albanians perennial indifference to religion as the post-communist myth of indifference seems to imply. On the contrary, it confirms the deep societal antagonisms within the Albanian population of the time–antagonisms which are clearly

attributed to confessional differences. In addition to regionalism and *klan*-based divisions, religion was one of the major dividing forces of the Albanian stateless society.

In the Ottoman Empire, 'religion' was the main criterion which used to distinguish the conqueror from the conquered. Being Muslims, the majority of Albanians enjoyed a privileged position with the Empire, which their Catholic and Orthodox brothers did not. (Skendo quoted in Kulla 2003:701) However, this had negative repercussions for the Albanian nationalist movement of the nineteenth century. As Tajar Zvalani notes, whereas in other countries of the Balkans the religious clergy became the bearers and leaders of the nationalist projects, under the vow for 'the nation and for God', religion could not fulfill this role in the case of Albania. It was only the common language and the common rites and habits which made Albanians feel as belonging to one nation, albeit divided in different religions (Zavalani, 1998: 193).

Therefore, continuous downplaying of the political and cultural legacies of religious differences has been the prerequisite for the process of forging a sense of Albanianness (Ger Duijzings 2002:60). Since none of the dominant religions of Albanians could possibly appeal to the whole nation through one religious platform of unification (Duijzings, 2002:60), the essence of Albanianism had to be defined in secular and cultural terms. It is our assumption that, considering that the majority of Albanians belonged to Islam and Greek Orthodoxy for both of which the separation of church from the state was unthinkable (Dimistras, 2000:7), a definition of the Albanian identity in secular and cultural terms was deemed to be the best bridging strategy of the state-to-be with Western Europe or the Great continental Powers, where State and Church had long been separated. In this respect, religious tolerance is not an ethnic-national feature, but an ideological and highly instrumental identity construction of the nationalist movement.

Furthermore, the function of the identity narrative of 'religious tolerance' was not only to forge national unity, but also to construct the identity of the Albanian nation as Western

and particularly as European. Religious tolerance was an element of the European Enlightenment ideal of an illuminated, rational and secular public sphere (Ypi 2007). This public sphere was primarily envisaged as national and as defined by the borders of the nation-state. It was in this context that the narrative of religious tolerance became pertinent for the nationalists. With this aim, the first task of the Renaissance intellectuals was the recollection and reconstruction of 'primordial' autochthonous Albanian habits, customs and history.

It is not surprising, then, that mystification of the medieval pre-Ottoman era of Prince Scanderbeg's rule when Albanians were described as having had a strong sense of unity and undivided loyalties towards their national Prince became one of the landmarks of the intellectual thought of the Renaissance. One of the founding fathers of the Albanian national movement, Naim Frasheri wrote his prominent epic poem *Istori e Skenderbeut* (*History of Scanderbeg*) (1898)in which the hero of the poem fights for the survival not only of the Albanian nation, but also of the entire European Christian civilization (Sulstarova 2006: 22-3). At the same time, Scanderbeg's identity as an Albanian Prince was elevated over his other religious or regional identities, and for this reason Scanderbeg best exemplified national unity over specific Albanian divisions, thereby promoting religious tolerance (Feraj, 1998: 82-4).

The relation that religion was to have with the state according to the National Movement platform was that 'everyone has his faith for his own and nobody can bring one by force to believe one thing or to do something for the sake of religion' (Frasheri, 1899/1999:98). It was this secular conception of statehood that led the Renaissance elites to repudiate the Greek policy of registering the Orthodox Albanians of Southern Albania as Greeks (see Zavalani, 1998:251-253). However, this secular conception of statehood met in resistance and ambivalence on the part of both, Orthodox and (Sunni) Muslims.

Members of Albania's Orthodox community could be ethnic Albanians, but also Arumunians, Vlachs, Greeks and in small numbers Slavs (Clayer, 2005: 29). The often chameleonic attitudes and reported manipulations of the Albanian Orthodox of Southern

Albania by Greece led the intellectuals of the Renaissance to regard Orthodoxy as playing a dubious role when it came to constituting a strong moral ground for the national movement (for instance, Zavalani, 1999: 239-241)

Albanian (Sunni) Muslims could not easily consent to either the idea of an independent secular Albanian state or the idea of being under the protectorate of any Christian European or Balkan state. The Orthodox Community comprised the most heterogeneous group in Albania in terms of the ethnic origin of its members. It was largely for this reason that the Roman Catholics and the Muslim Shiites would comprise the two main pillars of the national movement (see Frasheri in Kulla: 450).[82]

While Albanian Sunnis found themselves confused about their national or ethnic identity and ambivalence about their relations with Turkey, the segment of Islam which was most active for the national cause were the Bektashi (Shiite) Albanians, among whom the Frasheri Brothers founded the platform of the national movement and were the main pillars of the intellectual and literary traditions of the Renaissance. Being less strict than Sunni Islam and having borrowed many elements from the pre-Christian Albanian rites and beliefs, this sect was prescribed by the national poet of the Renaissance, Naim Frasheri, as the best potential unifying religion of all Albanians (Duijzings, 2002:65).

Historians have seen this hybridization between Shiite Islam and the nationalist project a unique feature of the Albanian nationalism. Prominent contemporary academics such as Moikom Zeqo have gone so far as to interpret the Shiite sect as a bridge between Islam and Christianity and as a strong ground for the formation of an Albanian identity oscillating between and borrowing elements from both East and West' (as quoted in Clayer

---

[82] As Roberto della Rocca argues, the Catholic clergy were a stronghold of Albanian nationalism despite the aid from Italy and Austro-Hungary. In della Rocca's words: 'Ironically, Italians would notice in 1939 that a strong centre of moral resistance to the Italian invasion of Albania consisted mainly of precisely those Shkodra Franciscans whom Italians had supported through aid for several years. The Albanian Church remained jealous of its national traditions and prerogatives, in other words its Albanianness'(della Rocca, 1994:89).

2005: 29). This historical discussion gains relevance in the context of the construction of the Bektashi identity as a pillar of the myth of religious tolerance in the post-communist period.

3.4. The reconstitution of Albanianism in Communist Historiography

The nationalist discourse of communism marks paradoxically a radical break with as well as a continuation of the past nationalist discourses. First, as briefly suggested above, the communist doctrine avoided narrow conceptualizations of the nation in ethnic terms, giving prominence to the conceptualization of the nation as an organic body whose members' loyalties were called on not by 'blood ties' but by 'belonging' to the same polity. This polity was organized around the symbiotic concepts of the 'people' and 'party'. The state and the nation were thus congruent and the physical borders of the nation overlapped with the territorial borders of the Republic of Albania (Sulstarova, 2003:69). Therefore, this discourse was dismissive of any claim for an 'Ethnic Albania' or 'Greater Albania'. In this context, the Albanian national question was interpreted through ideological terms. During a visit to China, Hoxha would state that 'the territorial pretensions between the socialist countries would only be sorted out with the total overthrow of revisionism and when the genuine Marxist-Leninist parties would restore power in these countries' (as quoted in Sulstarova, 2003:81-82).

In its construction of the nation's *Others*, Enverism differed radically from the nationalism of the Renaissance tradition; Albania's enemies were first and foremost ideological enemies who most of the time were not Albania's neighbours (Sulstarova, 2003:77). On the contrary, the neighbouring Balkan peoples were for the communist ideology the historical friends of the Albanian nation; it was their chauvinistic elites combined with the rivalry between the two World Powers (the US and the Soviet Union) which would not let relations between neighbouring countries of the Balkans be as harmonious and sincere as they had historically been (Sulstarova, 2003:77). Hence, a strong Balkan identity was forged building on historical narratives of common struggles of the Balkan peoples against common

enemies, such as the Turks, the Fascists and the Nazis and finally against revisionism and pseudo-Marxism embodied in the political elite of Belgrade. One can assume that this regional, overarching identity narrative building on the historical legacies and ideological doctrines subsumed the Albanian national question, while strengthening the identity demarcations between Albanians of the Republic of Albania and Albanians of Kosovo or of other Albanian territories outside the Republic's borders.

3.4.1. The communist discourse of the 'nation' and the 'West'

While striving to create a new identity of the Albanian nation and to create a 'new Albanian Man', the nationalist discourse of the communist period did not spring out of an ideational vacuum. On the contrary, in many respects it continued the nationalist project shaped by the Renaissance intellectuals. Firstly, the nationalist discourse of the communist period sustained the organic conceptualization of the 'nation', while equating 'nation' with 'people'. Like the human body, the national body was constantly threatened by external and internal forces; however, in contrast to the nationalist discourse of the Renaissance, communist discourse defined these forces not in national and ethnic terms but solely in cultural and ideological terms.

Secondly, the nationalist discourse of the communist period repudiated everything Oriental and Eastern as backward and inherently non-Albanian with just as much vigor as the Renaissance discourse had (Sulstarova, 2006:61-62). In this context, the Albanian communist discourse was strongly attracted to values of European Illumination and to its basic notion of 'progress'. The only difference was that Western Europe's claim to embody this Illumination was located in the past; it had now abandoned these values in exchange for the market and for capitalist oppression. By repudiating both the East's backwardness and the West's moral decadence, Albania was presented as the perfect cultural and economic place in the world, a social-economic system which represented the embodiment of an ideal future, a beacon, for

all the world's peoples (Fuga, 2001: 88). Despite its messianic tones, the communist official discourse bears evident signs of continuation of the modernization project of the national Renaissance while simultaneously decoupling this project from the political and social realities of contemporary Western Europe.

Thirdly, the present economic and political representations of this unique state had to be grounded in primordial cultural premises. To this end, the nationalist communist discourse re-articulated from the national Renaissance the 'myth of origins', which refers to Albanians as one of the oldest people of Europe who had been present in the Balkan penninsula long before the Slavs and even the Greeks (see Malcolm, 2002:75-77). The Communist state elites re-articulated this myth in the new ideological discourse of the Albanian 'New man', particularly after completely severring diplomatic relations with the Eastern bloc in the late seventies.In the face of isolation from both East and West, the Albanian communist government funded extensive research aimed at confirming the Pelazg origin of Albanians (Sulstarova, 2006:6)

Fourthly, the communist doctrine as institutionalized through the official propaganda and historiography neutralized to the point of denial all the previous existing divisions of Albanian society along anything other than class lines for the sake of national unity. In this context, the National Liberation War was pruned of any contributions of any other forces but the communists/partisans and the story of the Albanian state-formation was read through the Marxist lenses of class war and class oppression. Official communist discourse presented the National Renaissance project as still unfulfilled; the vision of the Renaissance intellectuals could be fulfilled only through Enverism and only in the conditions of socialism (Sulstarova, 2003:89). The Golden Ages that had anticipated socialism according to the official nationalist discourse, and which were the landmarks of the national official history were the Illyrian period, the Scanderbeg wars against the Turks, the National Renaissance and the National Liberation War (Sulstarova, 2003:91). Just as Scanderbeg was interpreted as having fought

the Ottomans and the Venetians simultaneously, in the same fashion, the Renaissance activists and then the communists were interpreted as having fought on parallel fronts the Turks/ Italians/Nazis as external enemies and the feudalists and conservators as internal enemies (Sulstarova, 2003: 95). Thus the communists gave a legitimate place to their role in history, alongside the National Renaissance elites.

The communist historiography interpreted the invasion of Albania by the Turks as an event marking the drastic break of Albanians with their former national development and their European civilization. The Albanian historians lamented the fact that the Balkan states were abandoned to the Ottoman invasion by a divided Europe, which was not interested in the fate of weaker and smaller nations (Puto, 2003b:93). This representation of the Ottoman invasion fulfilled at least three goals of the communist historiography at once: First, it helped to construct the myth of 'Albanian people as having recovered full control of their own national fate' only in the post-1945 era. By choosing not to illuminate the inherent and internal factors of the delay of the birth and development of an Albanian national movement by the end of the nineteenth century, communist historiography tended to shift the responsibility for a weak Albanian consciousness to external factors and mainly to the Ottoman inheritance. Second, it presumed that a strong Albanian national consciousness and a homogenous Albanian nation in the Balkans were already in existence before the Ottoman invasion. The only factors of social divisions among Albanians were the local feudalists. Third, by stressing Europeans' disregard for Albanian sufferings under the Ottoman rule, it represented the European Powers as led by egoism (Puto, 2003b: 95).

The identity narrative of Europe as 'untrustworthy' goes hand in hand with the 'myth of injustice' or 'myth of victimization' (Misha, 2002: 44). As George Schopflin notes, this myth implies that, similarly with the resurrection myth, the world—in our case Europe—must reward those who have paid a special debt, have made a special sacrifice, and the entire world should acknowledge this; it is through this myth that the suffering community is represented

as unique (quoted in Puto, 2003b:101). When re-articulated by the Communist elite, the nationalist narrative of historical injustice became an anti-hegemonic and anti-imperialist identity discourse. This ideological discourse constructed Albania's relationship with the West in general and with Europe in particular as a relation of domination—on the part of the West—and of perpetual struggle of small nations in general and of Albania in particular to liberate itself and fulfil its own destiny.

3.4.2. Pragmatism and Religious Tolerance

In the context of the Communists' strategies of identification with the entire nation and with the tradition of the National Renaissance, it is revealing to examine how the communist state elite re-articulated the identity narrative of 'religious tolerance' through its ideological lenses. The conversion of Albanians to Islam is also a crucial element of the Albanian historiography of the communist period. This conversion is interpreted as a forceful process which took place abruptly and only as a result of the draconic pressures of the Ottomans (Puto, 2003b: 101). The reaction of the Albanian people towards the conversion policies of the High Porte is interpreted as a pragmatist choice aimed at the protection of its national dignity. In other words, religion was sacrificed for nationality. Hence, the communist historiography elevated the National Renaissance's motto of 'The religion of the Albanians is Albanianism' to an ethno-cultural feature of the Albanian nation.[83] In a statement addressed to the Northern Catholics, Enver Hoxha denounced the Vatican as or for 'trying unceasingly to destroy the Albanian nation by keeping the Albanian Catholic Church under its grip' (as quoted in Zavalani, 1998:353).

---

[83] As Arben Puto rightly argues, this interpretation of the conversion to Islam of Albanians strategically leaves out the internal dynamic of Albanian medieval society, for which religious conversion was often a strategy to maintain its local or *klan*-based autonomy from any central power, as well as the long duration of the process of conversion (Puto, 2003b: 91-104)

This myth of Albanian indifference to religion fulfilled the ideological function of replacing the irrationality of religion with the modernist aspirations of constructing the new rational Socialist Man, who is a maker of his own destiny (Lubonja, 2002: 95). The same narrative of the individual was transferred to the level of the state: the Albanian state was thus constructed as the project of the Albanians themselves, unaided either by God or by the West. After struggling for a long time to put the Albanian clergy under control and impose its ideology upon it, the communist regime of Enver Hoxha abolished religious practice altogether in 1967 (Misha, 2002:46).

At the same time the interpretation of conversion as a strategy of necessity (i.e. as a false consciousness) stabilized the identity narrative of the pragmatism of the Albanian nation. These discursive linkages are significant for the post-communist period. As is discussed below and in the empirical chapters, the myth of pragmatism became the key identification strategy of the Albanian Left and the basic discourse of foreign policy of the Socialist-led administrations (1997-2005).

The formation of the new modern nation-states has inevitably led to a modification and accommodation of history to the identity needs of the regime of the time. The official histories in each nation-state had thus to be 'censored' if not outright distorted versions of often unpleasant reality (Dimitras, 2000:2). As Ernest Renan put it in 1882 (quoted in Anderson, 1991:199), there were even events people learnt that they should 'forget' as undignified to their nation's history. The duration and legitimacy of the Albanian communist regime can be analogously attributed, among others, to a long process of distortion of history by selectively choosing some events and by strategically "forgetting" others. Since nationalist particularity and communist universalism walked hand-in-hand in the Balkan states of the post-Second World War period, it was to be expected that the new socialist-nationalist doctrine of the Albanian Communist Party would tailor the historical and intellectual inheritance of the pre-War period according to its needs of power. However, as is shown in

the analysis below and in the empirical chapters, the unceasing efforts of post-communist political actors to de-legitimize communist historiography notwithstanding, the reconstruction of the key identity narratives of Self and of the West in the post-1991 period bears many similarities with and to a great extent continues the process of building Albanianness as laid down by the communist discourse.

3.5. The reconstitution of the National Renaissance in the post-communist era

This part of the Chapter asks what the post-communist elites mean when they state their politics builds on the foundations of the National Renaissance. The most obvious answer would be that they refer to both the solution of the national question in the Balkans and the process of modernization and Westernization of the Albanian state. However, I suggest that the post-communist elites have re-articulated the identity narratives of the National Renaissance through their ideological/interpretative repertoires. In this respect, the National Renaissance myths serve as legitimizing narratives as well as solutions for moments of disorder and dislocation, when the identity of the political actors or of the Albanian state is de-stabilized.

Albanian state elites were faced with two key challenges of foreign policy in 1991-1992: Firstly, how to determine 'foes' and 'friends' without reiterating the ideological discourse of foreign policy of the communist state; and secondly how to achieve recognition by the West. Regarding recognition from the West, what von Hain (cited in Kuus, 2004: 5) argues about the countries of Central and Eastern Europe that 'one of the most challenging tasks of the foreign policy agenda has been to carve out a place in the mental map of European and American policy-makers' also applies to post-communist Albania. However, it was not only the Albanian state which needed recognition, but also the Albanian political actors and state elites. While the new opposition parties (mainly the first opposition party, which is the Democratic Party), needed a constitutional story, the Socialists needed to

reconstruct their political identity in a way which would not alienate the supporters of the Left in the country and yet, would obtain recognition from the West.

The years 1991-1992 were such a moment when both the narrative of the Albanian state and the ideological stories of the main political parties were destabilized or in need of reconstitution. This is when the political actors feel most strongly the need to reconstitute identify with the entire nation and with the ideology of National Renaissance. As is argued in Chapters 6 and 7, the dislocatory experiences of 1991-1992 and 1996-1997 required the reconstruction of Albanianism both in terms of national exemplarity and of Western belonging. The state elites translated some basic narratives of national identity in terms which stabilized and legitimated their hegemonic position in the discursive field. The following section draws an outline of the reconstruction of the myths of Albanianism from 1992 to 2007.

3.5.1. The Political reconstruction of Albanianism

The official communist regime had left behind an unusable discourse of patriotism. As Elez Biberaj notes, 'the regime had manipulated the issue of national unity to such an extent that in the post-communist period any interpretation of patriotism was considered by many, particularly by the youth, as objectionable, anachronistic or primitive' (Biberaj, 1998:153). Yet, as discussed in Chapter 2 the legitimacy of foreign policy and of the state elite which formulates it depends on the articulation of some coherent story of the national self (also Bloom 1991). Given that the patriotism during the communist era was constructed from above, the post-communist elites needed to extract legitimacy from other discourse orders (such as the literary or media fields).

In this respect, the Democrats, as the first oppositional political force sought to identify with the national intellectuals. There are two main reasons why the centre-right in general and the Democrats in particular sought to identify with (national) intellectuals: firstly,

the Albanian National Renaissance texts were written by men who were first and foremost authors of texts across different genres, primarily non-fiction genres such as literature. They were also firstly and foremost intellectuals in the sense that they were seeking to build and promote a national culture; in this respect recognition of the Albanian language and its development were paramount to the nationalist project (Ypi 2008, Halili in Trencsenyi and Kopecek 2006). Secondly, the state elite of the time of the nationalist project was foreign, i.e. Turkish. The elite of the declining Ottoman Empire was held responsible by the Albanian nationalists for bad management not only of the Empire but also of the national minority issues in general and of the Albanian one in particular (Frasheri in Kulla 2003). Therefore being identified with the (national) intellectuals, the (post-communist) politicians constructed a sense of continuity with the National Renaissance project. By identifying with the intellectuals, the post-communist politicians distanced themselves from the 'political class'; their interests were construed as not strictly political, but national and as such above-politics.

The identification with intellectuals was most prominent in the early nineties, during the first Democrat-led coalition and even more so at individual moments of crisis. In 1996, on the eve of the parliamentary elections President Berisha resorted to the strength of the intelligentsia which he introduced as the driving force behind the political and economic reforms from 1992 to 1996. Berisha stated that following the fall of communism, the Albanian *intelligentsia* was, '[…] the primary designer and the implementer of the reforms program, which led to the formation in Albania of a Western-type democracy, which builds on the rule of law, market economy and integration of the country in Europe' (Berisha, 1996a:1).

This discursive chain serves to stabilize the emergent political identity of the Democrats themselves, lending it a sense of continuity. As Jacob Torfing suggests: 'To exercise hegemonic power, one needs to hegemonize the empty signifiers of the 'nation' and the 'people' by giving them a particular content' (Torfing, 1999: 193). In this sense, the

content that the Democrats gave to the nation and the people was extracted from their

programmatic platform of privatization, open market, liberal democracy and opening towards

and emulating the West—all of which came under the umbrella slogan of 'Making Albania

like Europe'. Thus, by identifying with the intelligentsia, the Democrats identified themselves

with the only Westernizing forces in the country, i.e. with those forces which support

Albania's integration and which counter the isolating tendencies of the opposition. Thus a

dichotomy formed in the official and political discourse: that of integration and the

Westernization of the Albanian state as opposed to its isolation. While the former was

identified as the tenet of the Albanian National Renaissance, the latter was identified with

regress and with 'threat to the Western identity':

> The entire history of Albania as well as the history of the
> development of Albanian thought is a unceasing duel between
> the intellectual thought which was born and evolved as a
> synthesis of our Western thought and the pseudo-intellectual
> thought, which was historically the thought of the foreign or
> internal invaders and the product of obscurantism and Albanian
> and human darkness […](Berisha, 1996a:5).

As the quotation suggests, in the post-communist official and political discourse the

references to Albanianness as the only belief of Albanians has been evoked to de-legitimize

the politicization of difference, either in terms of religion, or in regional or

ideological/political terms. At different times and by different actors Albanianness has been

filled with various meanings, from anti-communism to democracy, and it has more

predominantly been equated with the Western vocation of the Albanian state. Consider the

following quotation from the Democrat leader Berisha when he was in opposition in 1998:

> Today, the Albanian crisis lies in the confrontation between value and anti-value,
> totalitarianism and its ideology and practices which are trying to consolidate every
> day and the principles of a *free society* which does not accept them. But above all,
> it is a confrontation between what is Albanian and which is represented by
> Albanian intellectual thought and what is anti-Albanian, which is represented by
> the pseudo-intellectual thought or the official thought of the Albanian regime and
> of the Balkan regimes, of the fiercest enemies of the Albanian nation; a
> confrontation between Albanianism as the doctrine of our Western civilization

and its development on one side and the various new and old atrocities and barbarities of the region on the other (Berisha, 1998:2, italics added).

This articulation of Albanianism attempts to accomplish two things: Firstly, the reconstitution of Albanianism as both a Western ideology and an ideology of Westernization and secondly, the construction of the Democrats' own political identity as bearers of Albanianism and of the Albanian National Renaissance. During the Democrats' first administration of 1992-1997, Albanianism meant anti-communism and compliance to the liberal project of privatization and open market. During the Socialists' administration of 1997-2005, Albanianism was evoked in the name of political stability and national unity in the face of the necessity to meet the EU requirements. The contradiction consists in the fact that whilst Albanianism is clearly evoked to legitimize one ideological identity over another and one political project over another, it calls for the eradication of all political and ideological differences in the name of national interest, however defined.

3.5.2. Basic Identity narratives of the post-communist national discourse

In this part the chapter I discuss two key identity narratives— 'indifference to religion' and 'pragmatism'—which the political elites have re-articulated as pillars of the state identity in the post-communist era. I will pay particular attention to the dual function of these narratives, that is, to make sense of history and of Albania's role/contribution in the world on the one hand, as well as to fix the meaning of the Albanian state and nation in the political/ideological terms of the political elites on the other.

3.5.2.1 Religious tolerance

As will be discussed in Chapter 5, during the first Democrats' administration (1992-1997), references to God were frequent in the political and foreign policy discourse of the state elites and particularly of the President, Sali Berisha. As we shall see in the following

chapter, the official discourse of the Albanian state from 1992 through to the crisis of 1996 built on three pillars: God, 'our own forces' and the 'Western partners'.

A perusal of the political and electoral texts of the Democrat leader Berisha shows that references to God often served to qualify the Democrats' political project and their conception of democratic order as the one which fulfilled best the Albanian national character and was compatible with the Albanians' belief in God. However, in a nation with 3 major confessions, references to God could never be entirely neutral. Despite Berisha's persistence upon not instrumentalizing any of the three religions in Albania, Nathalie Clayer suggests that in his strategy of opening towards Europe, Berisha did instrumentalize Catholicism and its historical anti-communism (Clayer 2005:34). Indeed, the clergy was constantly showed close to the official figures on the Public TV, particularly on occasions of high national significance or during electoral rallies. The instrumentalization of Islam was even more explicit; the affiliation of some of the highest state figures with the Muslim community (Clayer, 2005: 23)[84] helped to reify ethe image of the Democrats' administration of 1992-1996 as a concoction of nationalist-religious ideals. Yet, the official discourse with regard to both the crisis with Greece throughout the Democrat administration and the Islamic Conference Organization in 1992 promulgated the state identity in terms of secularism. In so doing it sought to reproduce Albanianism as an ideological overarching identity which subsumed all other societal differences.

With the change of government administration in 1997, the use of the religious narrative shifted to the interpretation of Islam as an exogenous layer over the national identity (also Clayer 2005:25). As Nathalie Clayer suggests, following their coming to power in 1997, the Socialists dismantled the 'Islamic' network which had been intimately connected

---

[84] The Head of the National Intelligence Service (SHIK), Bashkim Gazidede held at the time the position of the Head of the Association of Albanian Muslim Intellectuals (Clayer, 2005: 23).

with Democratic Party and the Presidency of Berisha (Clayer, 2005:25)[85]. Furthermore, the word 'Islam' took a negative connotation in the media and in the intellectual discourse.[86] Most notably, President Alfred Moisiu in a presentation delivered at Oxford University during the Inter-Religious Relations Symposium on 9 November 2005 stated that:

> If one scratches slightly on the surface of every Albanian, one would discover his Christian essence.(...) The Albanian Muslim believer might indeed swear on the Quran, but so does he at the same time celebrate the St. Maria of August, St. George of May and St. Nicola of autumn as well as Christmas. This means that inside the Albanian man, no matter how he identified himself today, there is a homogenizing factor and this homogenizing factor lies precisely in the period of fifteen centuries of Christianity that each of them has inherited from the tradition of ancestors (Moisiu, 2005:3).

As Enis Sulstarova has rightly noted, according to the President's presentation, one might conclude that just as the essence of Albanianism in its vertical plane (as opposed to the diachronic plane) is Christianity, so tolerance as its defining feature which is materialized in everyday practice derives from the Albanian Christian essence (Sulstarova, 2006b:61).

Orthodoxy has always been and still is strongly related to the political issue of ethnic minorities and has been a strong identity element in the intra-political battles between the Socialists and the Democrats[87] as well as in the inter-state relations between Albania and Greece. Given that Greece is the second host country for Albanian immigrants in the post-communist period—after Italy—and that Albanian immigrants were faced with the need to adapt in a not very tolerant Orthodox society (Clayer, 2005: 30), Orthodoxy has been intimately linked in the Albanian foreign policy debate with questions of national identity,

---

[85] The US embassy in Tirana was temporarily closed in August 1998 in response to 'Islamic threats'; it was the first US Embassy to close on these grounds. See Kiefner (1998).

[86] For the negative portrayal of the Albanian Muslims in the Albanian public discourse and the instrumentalization of 'Islam' on the part of post-communist politicians, see Hatibi, (2005).

[87] Nathalie Clayer notes that following the Socialists' electoral victory in 1997, the Democratic Party and academics/media editorialists who were closely affiliated with the DP launched a campaign against the 'orthodox fundamentalism'. In 1998, academics such as Sherif Delvina and Kasem Bicoku published texts with titles such *Pa Pavaresi Fetare nuk ka pavaresi kombetare*, (*Without religious independence there is no national independence*) or *Falangat qe rrezikojne Kombin Shqiptar* (*The phalanges which threaten the Albanian nation*). (Clayer 2005: 33).

Albania's economic dependency—upon Greece—and of domestic political legitimacy. As we shall see in the next chapter, Orthodoxy became a strong element of the securitization processes of national identity and national sovereignty between Greece and Albania during 1992-1997 (also Clayer, 2005:31-32). However, 'religion' was not securitized as such, but rather subsumed under 'national identity' and 'national sovereignty'.

3.5.2.2. Pragmatism

In the canonical texts of the National Renaissance pragmatism does not feature either as an ethno-cultural feature or as an ideological element of the nationalist platform. The ideologues of the National Renaissance speak mostly about the Albanians' individualism and 'private interest' which had led to intra-societal division and fragmentation, and thus to a weak nationalist conscience consciousness (e.g. Fishta in Kulla, 2003: 184-191; Frasheri 1899/1999:63-66). Antonina Zhelyazkova (2001) argues that Albanians' pragmatist nature has not nourished nationalist ideals in the post-communist era. According to Zhelyazkova:

> Albanian Nationalism outweighs all form of nationalism. It was surprising to hear from a great number of respondents answering the question about their geopolitical attitudes, that they did not show keen interest in Albania's sovereignty. All Albanians strive to be under the protection of some strong and rich country or union or else—to leave Albania and emigrate to the West (Zhelyazkova, 2001: 95).

As the quotation suggests, pragmatism signifies here the supremacy of 'interests over ideals'. However, another meaning of 'pragmatism' is realistic as opposed to idealistic. As discussed above, the decision of the League of Prizren to put its claim forward within a national/ethnic framework rather than a religious one is viewed as pragmatist (Halili in Trancsenyi 2006:348). These two interpretations of pragmatism as both patriotic and realistic are both present in the Socialists' discourse of Albanian foreign policy.

Pragmatism is a basic narrative of the Socialists' foreign policy and political discourse, particularly after the crisis of 1997. The identity narrative of pragmatism emerges

only in the dislocatory moment of 1997 when the Albanian state became heavily dependent on European economic aid and security.[88] As will be argued in Chapter 6 the framing of 'European integration' primarily in terms of free movement and economic prosperity builds on the myth of the pragmatism of the Albanian nation.

3.6. Conclusions

This chapter argued that the nationalist discourse of Albanianism is a political discourse. There are two key propositions which follow from this: firstly, that the nationalist discourse of National Renaissance was from its very beginning a discourse which articulated the question of statehood as inextricably linked to the question of democracy. Therefore, the construction of the 'nation' was co-constitutive to the construction of the West. The construction of 'national interest' is inextricably linked to questions of legitimacy and recognition of both the Albanian state and of its new (national) leadership. As such, the key concepts of the nationalist ideology of the National Renaissance, such as the 'national interest'[89], 'Albanianness'/'Albanianism and 'Western orientation' are points of contention, which the political elites constantly try to fix and interpret in favourable ways to their political projects, identities and interests. Likewise, some basic identity narratives, such as 'indifference to religion', 'pragmatism' 'Western belonging' etc are translated into foreign and security discourse of the Albanian state through the ideological repertoires of the state elites. In this respect, the reconstitution of the Nationalist discourse in the post-communist era is a deeply political process.

---

[88] As is elaborated in Chapter 4, despite the economic rationale behind some of the foreign policy decisions of the Democrats' first administration—such as the membership in the Islamic Conference Organization—the Democrats would not articulate the national interest and the Albanian state identity in terms of pragmatism. As is argued in the following empirical chapter, this can be explained with the pillars of the political discourse of the Democrats, which are exemplarity, assertiveness, independence and self-sufficiency of the Albanian state. Therefore, the evocation of the pragmatism theme would de-stabilize this dominant identity discourse of the Democrats.

[89] For an insight into the 'national interest' as a point of contention, which is not 'given prior to discursive and political processes' see Hansen (2001:5).

This chapter argued that the National Renaissance captures both the claims of the nationalist intellectuals of the mid-nineteenth century till 1912 for an independent state as well as for recognition by the West or by the 'family of the civilized nations' (Frasheri, 1899/1999). In this respect the nation was co-constitutive of the West in general and Europe in particular. The discourse of nationalism was never quite distinct or separate from the discourse of the 'Western orientation' and of joining the 'family of civilized nations'.

As will be discussed in the following empirical chapters, the centrality of the "nation" and of 'national sovereignty' in the early years of the post-communist era does not exclude the aspirations to integrate in Europe and co-operate with the West. The national interest and the Western Orientation are both reconcilable. The construction of the (national) self was inextricably linked in this project to the construction of the identity of Europe and of the West. Furthermore one cannot argue that the National Renaissance identity repertoires and the construction of self is entirely independent from the dominant Western discourses of the nation-state of the time. The need for recognition by the West thus lies at the foundations of the identity repertoires of the National Renaissance texts.

From this follows my key argument that it is this need for recognition which underlies the post-communist reconstitution of the National Renaissance, particularly in moments of change, of juncture and of de-stabilization of the key story of the Albanian state but also of their political narratives. This explains the selective re-articulation of certain elements of the basic identity narratives of the National Renaissance on the part of the post-communist elites. In this respect, references to the National Renaissance serve to imbue with legitimacy the political actors' articulations of foreign policy; they also endow authority upon the political actors themselves who refer to the principles of the National Renaissance. The following empirical analysis draws on the discursive strategies of the domestic actors not only to stabilize the discourse of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' of the Albanian state, but also to "own" the process of the integration. This is to say that the actors seek to interpret the process

of integration in the EU and NATO as their own merit and as fulfillment of their own political identity and interests. In this respect, every political force re-interprets the National Renaissance in ways which are favourable to their retaining their hold on power and to their own projects of foreign policy.

CHAPTER FOUR

ALBANIAN FOREIGN POLICY 1992-1997: RECONCILING NATIONAL

SOVEREIGNTY WITH LIBERALISM

4.1. Introduction

This chapter is an empirical analysis of Albanian foreign policy of the Democrat-led administration from the elections of 22 March 1992 to the general elections of 29 June 1997. The main question of the chapter is: how did the Democrat-led administration define the Western orientation of Albania and the national interest? This question is answered in the context of the ideological repertoire and identification strategies of the Albanian centre-right in general and the Democrats[90] in particular. The main argument of this chapter is that the Democrats sought to identify with the entire nation and with the ideology of the National Renaissance to the end of stabilizing their own political identity and favouring their political project of rapid privatization and liberalization. In this respect, their project sought to reconcile the discourse of economic liberalization with romantic elements of the nationalist discourse such as the exemplarity of the nation, national tradition and 'God's help'. However, despite what one might expect, the Democrats' attempted identification with the entire nation did not build upon an ethnic conception of statehood. For this reason, the nationalist discourse, for example with regards to the Kosovo question, did not gain a hegemonic status during the administration of 1992-1997

The period of study corresponds with simultaneous change domestically and in Albania's foreign policy course. Domestically, the mono-party system was dismantled and the

---

[90]For the sake of convenience, I refer in this chapter to the 'Democrat-led administration' and the 'Democrats'. This is not to say, however, that we could speak of a homogenous 'Democrat' discourse. As will become clear through the analysis, even within the dominant or official discourse of foreign policy there are various voices which seek to de-stabilize the dominant story. Yet, these different voices are either brought into the dominant discourse within the sphere of the 'objective' or, alternatively, 'radically excluded and banished to the sphere of the 'political', and thus of the contestable' (Jørgensen and Louise, 2004: 36-7). We can therefore speak of a 'subject position' of the Democrats in the debate on foreign and security policy.

centralized economy gave way to rapid privatization. On the foreign policy front, Albania put an end to its isolationist policy and accelerated integration in international organizations as well as restoring recovered diplomatic relations with countries of both the former Soviet and Western blocs. The economic and political transformation of Albania in the early nineties also took place in the context of rising nationalism in the other Balkan countries and of accelerating conflict in the republics of former Yugoslavia and particularly in Kosovo. As a consequence, the new post-communist elite faced the necessity of addressing the 'national question' in general and the Kosovo question in particular.

The analysis discusses four policy developments: entry in the Islamic Conference Organization, the deterioration of bilateral relations with the USA (May 1996-June 1997) and with Greece (1994-1997) as well as the Kosovo policy throughout the first Democrats' first administration. These policy developments are chosen because they articulate the governing party's conceptions of the 'nation' and 'statehood' as well as of democratic governance.   The chapter does not set out to explore the rationale behind the decisions taken at particular moments[91] in relation to the USA, Greece, Kosovo or Albania's membership in the Islamic Conference Organization (ICO). Instead it asks how these policies were legitimized and to what end one form of legitimization was offered and not another. To the end of answering this question, I will reconstruct the *subject position* of the Democrats in particular and of the Albanian centre-right in general within the debate on Albanian foreign policy and the meanings attached to the West and to self (Albania) in this time period.

The analysis is divided into two temporal segments: the first part (t1) starts with the electoral victory of the Democrats in March 1992, and ends with the general elections of May 1996. The second part (t2) covers the period from the general elections of May 1996 through to the preliminary general elections of June 1997 (t2). The contested elections of May 1996

---

[91] The term 'moment' has simply a temporal connotation; therefore it does not refer to a stabilized discursive element, as I elaborate in Chapter 2.

and the institutional collapse of 1997 form what can be called a 'dislocatory experience'. As elaborated in Chapter 2, 'dislocatory experiences' lead to the de-stabilization of the basic discourse of the subject (Torfing 1999; Laclau and Mouffe 1985) and to a new process of 'subjectivization' of political actors through their identification strategies.

In the first part I discuss the Democratic Party's ideological repertoire throughout the period of 1992-1997. As we saw in Chapter 2, interpretative repertoires refer here to a line of argument, comprised of themes and metaphors and which are recognizable for a group (Wetherell, 1998: 394). In addition, I discuss how the Democrats translated national identity narratives through their ideological repertoire into meta-narratives of the discourse of statehood and democracy. The second part of the chapter discusses the Democrats' Kosovo policy in the context of the Democrats' discourse of the nation and the West. In the third part of the chapter I investigate how the Democrats' security discourse regarding to Greece and membership in the Islamic Conference Organization articulates the identity of the Albanian nation, and of the West. The last part looks at the strategies of the party in power aimed at overcoming the dislocatory experience caused by the contested general elections of 1996 and the fall of the pyramid schemes in 1997. To this end, it explores the Democrats' various constructions of the West and of the 'nation' during the period between May 1996 and June 1997.

4.2 The Political Repertoire of the Democrats

Like the other countries of Eastern and Central Europe, Albania underwent a 'dual transformation' of political democratization and economic transformation in the early nineties (Pridham, 2000: 181). Elez Biberaj notes that the three pillars of the Democrats' foreign policy (1992-1997) increased interaction with the West, increased international economic aid and defending the rights of the Albanian ethnic communities in the region (Biberaj,

1998:230). In other words, the priorities of the first Democrat-led administration were the national economy, the nation and the West. The relationship between these three priorities was articulated by the Democrats' political lenses and their ideological identity.

Within a very short time liberalization had achieved its goals: shortages were eliminated and private markets were thriving in many cities (Biberaj, 1998: 196). This performance ranked Albania high in comparison with other former communist countries (Loughlin and Bogdani, 2007:40). In July 1991 Albania established relations with the European Community. Within a few years, Albania was accepted as a member of international political and financial institutions, such as the Council of Europe, the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the International Monetary Fund, etc. Albania was the first country from the former communist bloc to submit an application for NATO membership.[92] The aspiration to 'open up to the West' and to depart from the isolationist policy of the communist regime prevailed in the foreign policy and political discourse of all political forces at the time, but especially so of the Albanian centre-right and the Democrats. The slogan of 'We want Albania to be like Europe' had, in fact, been the slogan of anti-communist protests in December 1990 (Brisku, 2009:198) and the electoral slogan of the Democratic Party in the general elections of 1991 and 1992. Therefore this change of foreign policy orientation was crucial to the new democratic identity of the anti-communist opposition and eventually of the first post-communist government.

In this section I discuss the Democrats' main ideological tenets and their strategies of identification throughout 1991-1997. In this connection, I explore the meanings attached by the Democrats and their first administration (1992-1997) to signifiers such 'democracy', 'national interest' and 'national security'.

---

[92]This can be partially linked to the fact that in 1961 Albania withdrew its support for the Warsaw Pact and formally left the alliance in 1968. Its decision to apply for NATO membership was not therefore as hard as for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. However, this fact is never mentioned in the Democrats' official discourse, as to do so would be to de-stabilize the Democrats' identity as the most pro-Western force in the country and in the region, as well the identity discourse of the 'exemplarity' of the Albanian state in the region.

4.2.1 The Democrats' Interpretation of the new democratic order

In the early nineties, the Democratic Party and the other parties of the right and centre-right spectrum shared one strong programmatic tenet: anti-communism. At that time, the national interest and national security signified a range of things, from open market and individualism, to privatization and property restitution, to restoration of belief in God and human rights, as well as a departure from the isolationist foreign policy of the communist predecessors. However, all these elements became identities/moments only through their articulation in relation to anti-communism. Therefore, anti-communism served as ideological lens through which 'statehood' and 'democracy' were articulated.

In their attempts to construct a democratic identity and differentiate themselves from their predecessors, the Democrats identified with various programmatic elements from the European Conservative parties. Thus, for example, while still in opposition in 1991, one of the key figures of the anti-communist December Movement[93] and the Vice-Head of the Democratic Party, Gramoz Pashko stated upon his return from a visit to the Helsinki Federation in Vienna that:

> (…) our party, despite its originality, shares many European features regarding both organizational and programmatic aspects. Its three cardinal points which are: human rights, freedom of private property and the formation of a judicial state in alignment with the requirements of the Acts of the Security Council of the EC, bring its programme close to the spectrum of the democratic parties of the centre (*Rilindja Demokratike*, 1991e: 6)

The Democrats, identified with the conservative pole of the European political spectrum (see for example, Meksi, 1997:5). The Democratic Party shared with these parties an emphasis on liberal democratic values as well as on national tradition, national values and

---

[93] The December Movement refers primarily to the Students' protests and hunger strike in December 1991. The protesting started in the campus of the University of Tirana on December 8 and lasted for two days. After the police failed to put an end to the strike, the scope of the protest expanded to include political demands, among which the legalization of political parties was the first in the list. In December 11, the Presidium of the People's Assembly had issued a directive authorizing the registration of opposition parties. See Pano (1997: 287).

national culture (see also, Berisha, 1992b). While still in opposition in 1991, the DP leader Sali Berisha suggested in Parliament: 'I think that our laws should synthesize the best aspects of the Albanian tradition as well as the most notable achievements of contemporary civilization' (*Parliamentary Debates*, 25 April 1991: 113). In the same spirit, the Democrats sought to construct the political past of the nation in terms of democratic tradition and democratic aspirations (see for instance, *Parliamentary Debates*, 25 April 1991: 84).[94] By so doing, the Democrats aimed both to legitimize their conceptions of statehood and of democracy as well as their actual policies.

In this connection, the Democrats in general and the President, Sali Berisha in particular sought to identify with the followers of the Albanian National Renaissance. To this end, national identity narratives of the National Renaissance were translated into moments/identities of the Democrats' discourse of democracy and democratic governance. By restoring continuity of the democratic tradition of the Albanian nation, the Democrats sought to stabilize their own identity narrative in terms of the only political force, which could fulfill the Albanian 'national spirit'.

In line with this nationalist rhetoric, Berisha interpreted belief in God, individuality and free initiative as authentic Albanian cultural identities. Berisha referred continuously to God and to God's wish to save Albania (Berisha, 1992b: 3; also, Berisha 1997a: 3) and to Democrats as the chosen political force which could respect God's will to save the country.[95] It is important to recognize that, in the context of the DP's repertoire, references to God became meaningful only in relation to anti-communism. In this respect, references to God and religion served to distance the DP in particular and the centre-right in general from the

---

[94] DP leaders such as Pjeter Arbnori and Sali Berisha would occasionally refer to the pluralist parliament of 1920-1924 as well as to the 'national tradition of councils of wise men and of the Medieval *Kanun*'. See Pjeter Arbnori's note in *Parliamentary Debate*, 25 April 1991, p. 84; also Berisha, 1991a. On the re-interpretation of *besa* (the oath)—one of the pillars of the *Kanun*—as a source of political legitimacy see Schwandner-Sievers, S. (2002:6).

[95] In addition, the clerics of the three main religions in Albania (Islam, Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism), were often shown at the side of the President of the Republic, particularly during electoral campaigns.

communist past and the leftist opposition. At the same time, it served to identify the Democrats with the West, where belief in God had not been prohibited, and particularly so with the Western European Conservative Parties.

Furthermore, as the quotation above shows, the Democrats' ideological identity articulated various elements from the liberal discourse, most prominent among which was 'private property'. In fact, all the emergent parties of the post-1991 political spectrum (with the exception of the Communist Party, but including the newly re-named Socialist Party) shared the same objectives regarding the liberalization of the economy, respect for human rights and the re-establishment of bilateral and multi-lateral relations with the West. Yet, while the Socialists were more cautious in their discourse of liberalization, as will be discussed in Chapter 6, the Democrats' electoral programme revolved around the restitution of private property and the implementation of fast track privatization (*Rilindja Democratike,* 1991e: 1). In the same spirit with the programme of fast privatization, the Democratic Party claimed a minimalistic role of the state on a broad range of social issues, from agricultural reform to the rights of minorities. In their electoral platform of 1991, the DP stated that the intervention of the state in agriculture should be by no means imposing for the individual peasant, cooperative or farm; instead its role would only be limited to guidance. (*Rilindja Demokratike*, 1991e: 2). [96] In this respect, the Democrats articulated privatization as the key element of their political project, specifically because it differentiated their concept of governance from the communist legacy and the centre-Left opposition (see Berisha, 1996b:1-3). In the electoral campaign of 1996, President Berisha juxtaposed the current government's project of privatization with the Socialists' project of nationalization. As such, the Democratic Party couched its achievements on the front of making all Albanians proprietors in terms of

---

[96] See also the discussion by the prominent DP figure, Genc Ruli in Parliament regarding the need for the state to grant more space to individuals (*Parliamentary Debates*, 25 April 1991: 70). This policy differed from the approach of the Socialists in the early nineties, which favoured the state's active role in reform. See also, Lubonja (2004:38).

historical victory of the entire nation (Berisha, 1996b: 1; see also Berisha 1992c:4). As we have seen, the various elements of the ideological programme of the Democrats obtained their meaning and legitimacy in relation to the communist past.

As part of this political programme, the Democratic Party re-articulated the national identity narrative of the 'chosen people' in the new context of the nationalist threat from the neighbours, on the one hand, and the internal threat coming from communism, on the other (for example, Berisha, 1991a: 1).[97] In this new re-articulation of the narrative of the 'chosen people', the Albanian nation could only recover its past and fulfil its true identity through the ideological platform of the centre-right. Communism was thus presented as a counter-pole of Albanianism and of national unity. In June 1995 the newspaper of the Democratic Party's Tirana branch *Tribuna Democratike* published 'death lists' allegedly compiled by the communist authorities, identifying those opponents of the communist regime who were to be 'liquidated' without trial (Kajsiu, 2007: 21). A law condemning the genocide under the communist regime was passed in autumn 1995 that excluded anyone who had held a position of power before March 1991 from standing as parliamentary candidate or working in parliament, the government, the judiciary, or the State-run media until 2002 (Pearson, 2006:660). As Blendi Kajsiu has rightly suggested, the communist threat thus acted in the early nineties as a security referent which pulled the nation together (Kajsiu, 2007: 19).

How was, then, the 'nation' constructed in the Democrats' political discourse? Furthermore, how was the relation of the nation to statehood articulated? The following section aims to answer these questions.

---

[97] In this re-articulation in the post-communist period, political elites' comparisons of the Albanian nation with the Jewish people are ample, particularly in the early nineties and in the context of the Kosovo war.

4.2.2. The ideological construction of Albanianism

One of the key identification strategies of the Democrats were calls for the de-ideologization of the nation and of the 'national question'. During the parliamentary debates on constitutional amendments in 1991, one of the prominent figures of the DP, Blerim Cela, stated that:

> The ideology of the Constitution should be national reconciliation (unity) and the protection of the rights of the individual according to the principles of the Final Act of Helsinki, of the Charter of Paris and of the Security Council of the EU. The national Emblem and the flag should be cleansed of ideology: they should remain symbols of our ancestors and not represent any particular ideology, which ever that may be. The Nation is above any ideology, following the motto of our great renaissance figure: The religion of Albanians is Albanianism (…)The important thing for our people today is the guarantee for economic wellbeing and the rights of the individual, in relation with the countries it (the people) sees and contacts on a daily basis, such as Italy, Greece and Yugoslavia (*Parliamentary debates*, 25 April 1991:75).

Alongside their attempts to build their political identity as the only legitimate followers of the Albanian National Renaissance, the Democrats and the right-centre press implicitly equated the Albanian Democratic Awakening (*Rilindja Demokratike*), that is, the overthrow of the communist regime, with the Albanian National Awakening/Renaissance *(Rilindja)*. This reference was particularly prominent in moments of uncertainty or of crisis such as 1991-1992 and 1996-1997.[98] Identification by the Democrats in general and Berisha in particular with the founders of the nation aimed to make the politics of liberalization, privatization and opening up to the West domestically uncontestable. As discussed in Chapter 3, the National Renaissance ideologues (*Rilindasit*) of the nineteenth century as well as the post-independence nationalist intellectuals sought to put forward an ideology of Albanianism which subsumed all differences, whether religious or regionalist (also, Berisha, 1992a, p.1). Likewise, framing the liberalization and privatization reforms in terms of continuity with the

---

[98]Therefore it is not coincidental that upon their return to power in 2005, the Democrats changed the name of a main square at the entrance to the capital city Tirana from 'Zogu i Zi' to 'Rilindja' (Awakening/Renaissance).Author's observation, winter 2006-07.

ideology of the National Renaissance made political contestation illegitimate. The Democrats' political and official discourse lumped together into an undifferentiated mass the ethnic nationalists, the pseudo-intellectuals and the communists and juxtaposed them to democracy and Albanianness (Berisha, 1996a, pp. 1-5).

As we see from these examples, the political identity of the Democrats was constructed through the logic of equivalence, which is of sewing different subjectivities/identities as one and lining up against an *other*. Making contestation illegitimate is thus combined with strategies of othering the opponents. In practice, the logic of equivalence is achieved by linking communism to everything which is 'foreign', anti-nationalist *and* anti-democratic. Not incidentally, the Democrats sought to re-construct the history of the Second World War and merge the date of liberation with the National Flag Day (28 November), thus dissociating it from the liberation day of former Yugoslavia (29 November). The Democrats justified the change on the basis of allegations that the Albanian Communist leader Enver Hoxha had intended the Albanian National Day to converge with the Liberation Day of former Yugoslavia (Berisha, 1993a: 1; also *Rilindja*, 1993: 1)[99]. This intertextual reference to Hoxha's anti-nationalist policy evoked themes of 'national betrayal' and particularly of the communists' betrayal of the 'Kosovo policy'.[100] The change of this symbol had two functions: the *othering* of domestic opponents and the identification of the party in power with the nation and the national unity.

The Democrats in general and Berisha in particular articulated 'national unity' as the main objective of their democratic-social project. However, 'national unity' became meaningful only when juxtaposed to 'communism', 'isolation' and 'national disintegration'.

---

[99] The state elites also supported research by a Commission of the Institute of History at the Albanian Academy of Sciences, aimed at defining 'scientifically' the date of National Liberation. The Commission concluded that the date of National Liberation had been 28 November and not 29 November 1944. See *Rilindja*, 11 November 1993, p.1.

[100] According to Berisha, the symbol of 29 November was part of 'the oppressive unification of Albania with the Yugoslav Federation, which was a promise that Enver Hoxha has seemingly made to Miladin and Dusan on 8 November 1941'. The date 8 November 1941 is the day when Albanian Communist Party was founded. See Berisha (1993a:1).

An editorial which was published simultaneously in the Democratic Party's official newspaper (Rilindja Demokratike) and in two other pro-governmental newspapers (*Republika*, *Alternative SD*) in October 1992 exemplifies best this logic of equivalence between democracy and national unity around the new government and President Berisha:

> Mr. President, you have no reason to give in to the pressure you are facing.(…) The control over the transitional changes from dictatorship to democracy should not be negligible. This must be done for the sake of democracy. Kemal Ataturk, for the sake of the interests of modern Turkey and of the Turkish people itself, managed to even undertake some infringements upon democratic liberties. You are neither Washington, nor Roosevelt, nor Truman, but the Albanian Ataturk (quoted in Fuga 2001:148).

Here again the interests of the Albanian people are equated with democracy and thus with the reforms which the new Democratic government aspired to bring about. The DP and its supporting media thus claimed to be working to restore the unity of society and of the 'people' through and they underline this by employing metaphors of national disintegration and of isolation. As Berisha's slogan suggests, 'If we lose unity, we lose freedom' (Berisha, 1992b*:* 3). Therefore, the Democrats constructed the nodal point of the 'nation' by drawing on their political project and their ideological repertoire, which hinges upon moments/identities such as 'privatization', 'open market', 'individual freedom', 'belief in God' etc. In turn, the *national interest* became something of a shell concept, or an empty signifier for a variety of things, from privatization to the infringement of democratic liberties which the authors of this text seem to condone.

4.3. The National Question

In this part I analyze the formation and reproduction of the discourse of the 'national question' throughout the years of the right-centrist administration. My primary focus is the meanings which were attached to the national interest and to the Western orientation with

regard to the Kosovo policy during 1992-1997. Furthermore, I discuss the Democrats'
conception of the relation between nation and state and the repercussions this conception had
for Albania's Kosovo policy during 1992-1997. Here I analyze a set of texts produced by key
state officials with regard to Kosovo and attempt to reveal the inconsistencies of the Kosovo
policy articulations. In the second section I examine the Democrats' strategies of
identification in relation to the national question.

4.3.1. Kosovo Policy: The relationship between 'nation' and 'state'

This section explores the framing of the Kosovo question by the Democrats in the
early nineties. It provides an outline of the Democrat-led Kosovo policy with a focus on its
underlying conceptions of statehood and nation. This analysis aims at showing the interplay
between the Democrats' ideological repertoire and conceptions/meta-narratives of democratic
governance and their articulation of the relation between state and nation.

The centre-right in general and the Democrats in particular put forward two main
scenarios regarding the solution of the Kosovo question during the early nineties. These
options were at times contradictory and built on conflicting conceptions of the relation
between state and nation. Given their discursive instability they did not succeed in becoming
viable policy options. Instead, they remained elements in the Democrats' discourse of the
national question.

The first option was full independence. In 1991 the Democrats stated that Kosovo
Albanians had the right to have their own republic within the Yugoslav Confederation
(*Rilindja Demokratike*, 1991f: 6). On 21 August 1991, the Albanian Parliament passed a
Resolution recognizing the affirmative results of the referendum on independence held in
Kosovo earlier the same month and thereby recognizing the self-proclaimed Republic of

Kosovo and its temporary government (*Parliamentary debates*, 29 April 1991, p.272).[101] In general, in fact, this option was perceived as practically inevitable in Albania in the early nineties in the context of the accelerating disintegration of the former Yugoslavia.

The first legitimization basis for this policy option was ideological. The DP leader drew upon the abovementioned discourse/meta-narrative of a civic and un-ideological statehood, when he noted that the Kosovo question was part of a clash between 'the totalitarian ideology of Milosevic and his red army on one side and the democratic ideology defended by the Northern republics[102] on the other' (*Rilindja Demokratike*, 1991f: 6). This quotation exemplifies the ways in which the civic conception of statehood was translated into policy option through the ideological repertoire of the DP. Through this ideological repertoire, the regime of Milosevic was constructed not only as nationalist but also as 'red', that is, communist. In other words, solutions for the national question were again legitimized through the key signifier of 'anti-communism'.

Another legitimacy basis of the independence option was the 'right to self-determination'. Here, however, it is important to note that references to the discourse of 'self-determination' were always qualified by the phrase 'in accordance with the international documents and the will of the international community'[103] (for instance, Berisha, 1993c: 1; Meksi, 1992:1). As such, self-determination and the will of the Kosovo people were extricated from the broader legal discourse and re-articulated as part of the DP's political discourse of the nation. References to the international community and to international legal acts de-stabilized this policy discourse and prevented it from becoming an assertive policy option of the Albanian state.

---

[101] The resolution is void of any reference to an all-Albanian nation-state; instead it refers to the contribution that the people of Kosovo would make to the process of reaching a peaceful and democratic solution to the Yugoslav crisis.

[102] It is clear from the context that 'Northern republics' refers here to Croatia and Slovenia.

[103] However, during the first days in office, the Albanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alfred Serreqi stated that Albania would only accept those legal documents which are suitable for the Kosovo case and which are accepted by the Kosovo Albanian political elites. In this respect, Serreqi implicitly criticized the European Community's approach to the Kosovo question as a matter of human rights. See Serreqi (1992).

The second policy option was unification with Albania. In its electoral platform of 1991, the Democratic Party expressed its commitment to 'draft a new policy of the Albanian state with regard to the Albanian question, for the fulfilment of the aspirations of the Albanian people for *unification* and prosperity in alignment with the international acts of the UN and of CSCE' (*Rilindja Demokratike*, 2 February 1991, p: 1, italics added). In the same year, while still in opposition, Berisha stated that:

> (…) And in case of a Greater Serbia, they (Kosovo Albanians) can be united with the motherland (*Rilindja Demokratike*, 1991f: 6).

The option of unification also occupied a central place in the DP's 1992 electoral campaign (also Kola, 2003: 106; Sulstarova, 2003:106). It should be noted that the possibility of unification was also broadly articulated by intellectuals in the early nineties (for instance Kadare, 1991:1-5). Considering the attempts of Berisha in particular and the DP in general to identify with the 'national intellectuals', the nationalist discourse of injustice and of the unfaithfulness of Europe served as a strong link in the DP's political and ideological repertoire.

The unification option, then, was a key motif of the electoral speeches of the Democrats while they were in opposition. Once they came to power, however, this option was dismissed from their official foreign policy discourse. When this option does appear in the Democrats' political discourse after their electoral victory of March 1992, it is always either in the context of intellectual forums or in interviews given for the nationalist media (e.g. *Zeri i Kombit*, 2 July 1993:3-4), or it is articulated within the liberal discourse of cross-border exchange among the Albanian communities in the region (for instance, *Rilindja Demokratike*, 4 December 1992, p. 1). Furthermore, following the Democrats' 1992 victory, every statement about 'national unification' was henceforth accompanied by references to the

Helsinki Act and other international acts, which Albania committed to respect (for instance, *Rilindja Demokratike*, 1992e).

In this context, 'national unification' never succeeded in becoming a consistent policy option: it served to stabilize the political identity of the Democrats as the defenders of Albanianism and differentiate them from the Albanian Left; at the same time, when articulated within the liberal discourse of cross-border cultural and economic exchange, 'national unification' simply implied departure from the isolationist policy of communism and increased exchange between the Albanian populations in the Balkans. The idea of unification of all Albanians in one state was never a coherent or consistent policy option. Instead, vague references to the 'Kosovo Albanians' will' and their 'right to self-determination' remained the official Kosovo policy throughout 1992-1997.

As we saw above, the Democrat-led government articulated Albanianism as radically different from Balkan nationalism as well as from the communist discourse of the nation. The Democrats articulated Albanian nationalism as strictly civic and different from the ethnic nationalism of the Balkan state elites in the nineties.[104] However, in closer examination it becomes clear that the Democrats' conception of the relationship between state and nation did not depart from the communist regime's nationalist discourse. Within their discourse of the nation, the boundaries of the nation overlapped with those of the Albanian state and the national community spans 'from Vermosh to Konispol' (Sulstarova, 2003: 70), which are the north and the south poles respectively of the territory of the Albanian state.

Furthermore, the equation of the Balkan nationalist ideology with the communist ideology was one of Democrats' identification strategies. Contrary to their claims, the Democrats' conception of the relation between the state and the nation drew from the same

---

[104] In protest against the alleged abandonment of the national question by the DP once in government, the rightist fraction of the DP split off in 1994 to join the new Party of (National) Revival (*Rimekembja*). The Party of Revival postulates the unification of all territories inhabited by ethnic Albanians into one nation-state; it has no seat in the Albanian Parliament.

modernist conception underlying the communist discourse of the nation. As we saw, this conception of statehood and of the political community had ramifications for the formulation of Kosovo policy.

4.3.2. The DP's identification strategies in relation to the 'national question'

The stabilization of the identity of the Democrats as the only defenders of Albanianness and of the legacy of the Albanian National Renaissance could only be achieved through repetition and of retrospective reconstruction of certain policies, especially the Kosovo policy. Inconsistencies within policy articulations in both political and official texts are shoved to one side through constant reconstruction of the history of these articulations. Thus in 1999, when the Democrats were once again in opposition, at a meeting with the leader of the Albanian Democratic Party of Macedonia Arber Xhaferri, Berisha summarized the Democrats' stance on Kosovo:

> I want to remind you that the DP has been for Kosovo's independence *since the moment of its [the DP's] founding* (…). The DP Parliamentary Group was the initiator of the Resolution of the Albanian Parliament, which recognized the Republic of Kosovo. We have never and will never waver in our demand for the independence of Kosovo (*Albania*, 1999a: 3, italics added).

In other words, in 1999 the Democrat leader sought to present the Democrats as having had a constant and consistent Kosovo policy throughout their political life. Such claims appear self-deluding, however, if we examine Berisha's articulation of the Kosovo question two years previously. In 1997, on the verge of the fall of the right-centrist government and amid the institutional and economic crisis following the collapse of the pyramid schemes, President Berisha framed the Kosovo question as one and inseparable from the EU integration of the Balkans:

> We Albanians will have to keep always in mind that we can solve nothing outside Europe and that there is no brighter future for us than being located where we should be, which is inside the European Union. It is precisely for this reason that we stated in the programme of the Democratic Party in 1990 and also repeated in 1996, that: 'The *Albanian Question* will be solved on the basis of European integration processes' (…). Because I consider it unrealistic to think of changing Europe's borders, Albanians must be adapted to Europe and not Europe to them, and this should be, I think, the key *orientation* of our politics (Berisha, 1997b: 4).

Both statements refer back to what the Democratic Party had ostensibly always advocated with regard to the solution of the Kosovo question. As both Berisha's statements were published in the official DP newspaper, they represent the official discourse of the Albanian state. Yet, there are crucial differences in the policy solutions these texts articulate: whereas the 1999 statement clearly purports Kosovo's independence, the 1997 statement articulates a solution only within the European integration framework. In 1999, Berisha elided these important differences, however, and re-articulated former versions of the Democrats' policy as identical with one another. Audiences targeted by the texts are obviously different: In the meeting with the leader of the Democratic Party of the Albanians of Macedonia, the Democrat leader Berisha referred to the nationalist orientation of the Democratic Party, a point which resonated strongly with the platform and political concerns of his interlocutor. Furthermore, whereas the 1997 statement was made at a moment of dislocation when the official discourse had been de-stabilized, the 1999 statement was made when the speaker was in opposition. In both cases, however, the statements were aimed at stabilizing the political identity of the Democrats as the only political force which could defend the 'national question'.

We are thus faced with a situation in which the political actor is projecting his positive identity retrospectively in time and addressing different audiences. Continuity of policy orientation is thus established. Yet, the establishing of continuity in policy is only the first

step, enabling the attainment of a further objective: the establishing of continuity, or rather of stability of the subject in whose name it is being spoken. Both statements seek to convey that the subject had never had any 'hesitations' with regard to the Kosovo policy. As we saw in the theoretical chapter, the relationship between foreign and security policy discourse and the identity of its subject (state or the state elite) is co-constitutive. In this respect, if different moments/identities of the policy discourse, for instance in relation to Kosovo, are de-stabilized and the relationship between them seems logically inconsistent, the identity of the subject is also de-stabilized (also Hansen, 2006:29). The oscillation between the framing of the Kosovo question in terms of 'self-determination' and even at times of unification on one hand, and its framing within the regional dynamic of integration and liberalization, on the other, can be explained with reference to the process of 'subjectivisation' that the Democrats were going through during their first administration.

To sum up this part, the Democrats did not simply seek to build their identity on the broad societal consensus: they aspired to represent the entire Albanian nation. Furthermore, they attempted to depart from the communist and the leftist Kosovo policy. However, as the analysis showed, their foreign policy discourse articulated the same boundaries of the national/political community as the communist official discourse and the same civic/modernist conception of the relationship between state and nation. This civic/modernist conception of the relationship between nation and state did not allow for a more assertive Kosovo policy and led at times at inconsistencies in its formulation.

Furthermore, the Democrat-led government sought to fix the meaning of the 'national question' through the governing party's ideological/political lenses. These lenses constructed the Albanian subject/citizen as a supporter of free market and individualism, as a believer in God and in human rights. These underlying conceptions of democracy and of the West together with the Democrats' legitimacy needs determined their Kosovo policy. In return, rather than being symptomatic of a nationalist agenda, the focus on Kosovo question served to

grant authority and domestic legitimacy to the Democrats, while in power and later in opposition.

4.4. The external and internal securitization of national identity

As we saw above, the Democrats aimed to construct their identity as the only political force which could fulfil the aspirations of the nationalist project of the Albanian Renaissance. This was aimed at through different strategies, among which the key strategies were the juxtaposition of Albanian nationalism to communism as well as the attempted de-ideologisation of the national question. The identity of the Albanian citizen/subject was thus secured against the domestic threat of communism, ethnic nationalism and religious radicalism. In this section I discuss how this process of internal securitization was accompanied by a process of external securitization. To the end of doing so, I examine two policy developments: firstly, the Democrat-led administration's bilateral relationship with Greece and Albania's membership in the Islamic Conference Organization (ICO).

An examination of the debate on Albania's relations with Greece – a debate which has raged continuously through the post-communist period at both the official and the political levels – has the capacity to shed light on the evolution of the security discourse in Albania. Albania's relations with Greece provide insight into the political elites' construction of the 'national interest'. Being both, a Balkan neighbour and EU and NATO member state, Greece remains vital for the construction of the Albanian state identity in the post-communist era.

Albania's entry into the Islamic Conference Organization[105], on the other hand, is a single foreign policy moment. I suggest that this moment did not have a sustained effect on Albania's foreign policy in the post-communist era. Symbolically, however, given the salience that it gained in the post-September 11 context, this policy moment is an instructive

---

[105] The government's decision for Albania to become member of the ICO has not yet been ratified by the Albanian Parliament.

case study of the Democrats' articulation of the identity of the Albanian state and of Albanianism.

Both Albania's entry into the Islamic Conference Organization and the crisis moments in the bilateral relations with Greece during 1992-1997 are instructive for the understanding of the interdependency between processes of domestic/internal securitization of the democratic identity of the Albanian state and of the Albanian citizens, as articulated by the hegemonic political project of the state elite and external securitization of the Western identity of the Albanian nation.

4.4.1. The 'Balkans inside Europe': The Albanian-Greek rift

In this section I explore the tense relationship between Albania and Greece under the first Democrat-led administration (1991-1997) I suggest we read the conflict with Greece in the context of the Democrats' discourse of security and the centrality of the national question for the construction of their political identity. My discussion here is structured along the two basic discourses on which the official and the political discourse with regard to Albania's relations with Greece were built: first, the discourse of national sovereignty, and second, the discourse of the Western vocation of the Albanian state. As I elaborate below, these two discourses feed into each other, since what was interpreted as Greece's aggressive policy towards Albania was not limited to the sphere of territorial and minority disputes but was perceived as interference in Albanian domestic affairs and as a direct attack on to Albanianism.

As we saw above, the Democrats sought to identify with the entire nation and with the ideals of the Albanian National Renaissance. This identity was constructed by re-articulating and linking together a number of identities from the National Renaissance. In this respect, ideological, religious and ethnic differences were construed as anti-Albanian and as imported from 'outside'. Whereas the Democrats construed ideological differences as anti-national in

their attempts to hegemonise the domestic discourse, religion and ethnic nationalism were securitized in relation to bilateral relations with Greece and entry in the ICO. In this process of securitization, the Albanian national identity was articulated as unified, civic, secular, Western and democratic.

In the early nineties, a number of events unfolded which led to this process of securitization and the entrenchment of elements such as 'national sovereignty' and 'non-intervention from outside' into the official foreign and security policy discourse.

Just a few months after the Democrats came to power in 1992, the head of the district of Dervican, of ethnic Greek origin, was imprisoned on the charge of raising the Greek flag in a public place. In August of the same year, Anastas Janullatos was nominated the Hierarch of the Albanian Orthodox Church by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Istanbul (Clayer, 2005:30). The state elite and particularly the Democratic Party considered this act as a direct blow on the independence of the Autocephalous Albanian Orthodox Church.[106] With a view to counter this act, academics from the Institute of History at the Albanian Academy of Sciences which were close to the DP leadership organized a symposium on the 70th anniversary of the Autocephalous Albanian Orthodox Church (Clayer, 2005:31). The speakers of the symposium denounced the decision of the Istanbul Patriarchate to nominate a Greek Hierarch as an 'intervention in the domestic affairs of the Albanian state' (Prifti quoted in Clayer, 2005:31). As we saw in Chapter 3, the identity narrative of religious tolerance was one of the main pillars of the Albanian National Renaissance ideology. Being self-identified as the defenders of Albanianism and of the National Renaissance ideology, the Democrats were particularly sensitive to the equation in the Greek discourse of minorities between Greek Orthodoxy and Greek nationality.

---

[106] The Autocephalous Orthodox Albanian Church was founded in 1922 by Fan Stilian Noli, Visarion Xhuvani et al. Following the fall of communism and the restoration of religious institutions, the Autocephalous Church was led by the Archbishop of Tirana, Durres and all Albania, Anastasios Yannoulatos.

The situation aggravated on 20 April 1994 when a Greek military brigade entered Albanian territory and attacked the border guard post at Peshkepia, leaving two Albanian soldiers dead (Bushati, 2006). Furthermore, the Albanian government responded by arresting five members of the Democratic Union of the Greek Minority (Omonia)[107] and by introducing a ruling whereby Greek citizens, would henceforth be the only EU citizens required to apply for visas before entering Albania. The Greek government, in its turn, responded to the arrests with a proposal for an EU economic embargo on Albania.

The Albanian Government denounced the incident of April 1994 as an open act of violation of the territorial sovereignty of the Albanian state and as a direct blow to its national identity. The Albanian government drew parallels between the nationalist statements of high Greek officials regarding Northern Epirus[108] on the one hand and Greek foreign policy in Cyprus and towards Macedonia on the other (*Rilindja Demokratike,* 1994b: 1; also *Rilindja Demokratike*, 1993a:1). According to the Albanian government, Greece was helping Milosevic's Serbian regime to further de-stabilize the Balkans (Berisha, 1993b: 1; Berisha, 1994:4; *Rilindja Demokratike*, 1992c:1; *Rilindja Demokratike*, 1993a:1). Furthermore, the Albanian government stated that irredentist activity would not be tolerated in Albania (*Rilindja Demokratike*, 1994b: 1). In its assertive stance towards Greece the Albanian government enjoyed broad support from the public and from intellectuals and the right/centre-wing media.

Greece's response was the forceful expulsion of thousands of Albanian immigrants and the vetoing of further EU economic aid to Albania. The Albanian government denounced the attempts by the Greek government to make EU economic aid to Albania conditional upon Albania's respect for minority rights, as strategies to disrupt Albania's reform process and

---

[107] *Omonia* was the third opposition party created in 1991, after the Democratic Party and the Republican Party. In the first pluralist elections of 31 March 1991, it won 5 seats in the Albanian Parliament. (Bideleux and Jeffries, 2007: 40).

[108] The term (Northern Epirus (Greek: Βόρειος Ήπειρος, *Vorios Ipiros*) is used mostly by Greeks and it refers to a part of modern Albania, which stretches from the Llogara mountains north of Himara southward to the Greek border, and from the Ionian coast to lake Prespa.

relations with the EU. Along these lines, Greece was constructed implicitly or explicitly as undeserving of the title 'European' and as still haunted by Balkan-type nationalism (for example, Berisha 1993d:1) The leader of the Republican Party (PR) Sabri Godo called the Greek attempt to achieve a blocking a demonstration of 'Balkan type resentment', and pointed out that 'Greece is not paying, but Europe is' (*Albanian Telegraphic Agency*, 1994). The implication of is this statement is that Greece was using Europe's name and European rhetoric for its egoistic, nationalist purposes. Here the Western and European credentials of Greece's genuine underlying orientation are called into doubt (author's interview with Zeneli, 21 March 2006). The Albanian President nevertheless re-assured the nation that: 'This blockage (…) or any other measures of Greece will not succeed in deterring its [Albania's, OB] strong European orientation and our European integration' (*Rilindja Demokratike*, 1994a:1). On the same note, the President made a clear distinction between the EU and Greece, clearly designating the foreign policy of the latter as running counter to and indeed undermining the EU's objectives of stabilizing the region. Confirming that the Albanian state was meeting the Copenhagen Criteria with regard to minority rights the Albanian President expressed his commitment to transforming Albania into a model state with regard to respecting minority rights in the Balkans (*Rilindja Demokratike*, 1994a:4).

On more than one occasion, the Albanian side used historical arguments. Following a historical narrative or argumentative line, Greece was construed as the *other* of the Albanian nation particularly in its crucial moments, such as in the eve of the formation of the Albanian state and now again, in the first days of its democratic awakening (for instance, *Rilindja Demokratike*, 1993b: 1). Again, through these arguments, the party in power reified its political identity as the defenders of Albanian nationalism and the followers of the Albanian Renaissance ideology. Furthermore, the democratization reforms were construed as continuation of the ideology of the Albanian National Renaissance and as a sequence in the history of Albanian state-formation.

Greece was perceived, then, as a threat to both, ''sovereignty' as well as to the European identity and vocation of the Albanian nation. Immediately after the opening up of Albania in 1991-1992, Greece raised the issue of the *Orthodox* population of Southern Albania. The issue of the Greek minority there was framed by Greece in terms of religious affiliation. This had to do first and foremost with the composition of the Greek national identity narratives and their reconstruction by Greek officials in the mid nineties, particularly in the context of Greece's position within the EU (Pace, 2004). This clashed with a basic identity narrative of the Albanian National Renaissance: the secularism of the Albanian state. The Democrats' administration invoked the thesis that religious identities were no cause for conflict among Albanians, unless conflict was forged from *outside*, i.e. by external enemies of the nation or their partisans *inside* the Albanian polity. In a joint press conference after a meeting with the Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs, Karolias Papulias in 1993, President Berisha stated in relation to the bilateral relations between Albania and Greece that: '[They] would witness that not religion-based alliances, but dialogue, understanding, cooperation, full reciprocal respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country have an extraordinary importance for peace and cooperation' (*Rilindja Demokratike*, 1993b: 3). In this context, as in many of Berisha's texts from this period, 'sovereignty' signified not only territorial sovereignty but also 'non-interference from outside', and 'local/home-bred democracy'.

Lastly, construction of Greece in the Democrats' official and political discourse of security should be contextualized against the Democrats' construction of the Balkans. Despite the fact that President Berisha called for the Balkans to become an 'example of peace and good understanding among nations', where there would only be free movement of people, goods and services with no visas or other constraining obstacles in the Balkan region (*Rilindja Demokratike*, 1991e:1), the regional identification with the Balkans did not gain a hegemonic status in the Democrats' foreign and security policy discourse. In contrast with the Socialists

later (see Chapter 5), the Democrats did not identify with the Balkans. This is to be contextualized against the Democrats' ideological discourse of the nation in terms of exemplarity, common destiny and of rightist concepts of democratic governance. Therefore, it is not coincidental that the EU's grouping of Albania within the 'Western Balkans' gave rise to unease in official Tirana (for example, author's interview with Kondo). In the context of this construction of the Balkans, the representation of Greece as the 'Balkans inside Europe' in 1994 did not call for partnership or co-responsibility on the part of the Democrat-led government, as discussed below.

To conclude this part, the diplomatic crisis with Greece exemplifies the dominance of the twin discourses of foreign policy: of national sovereignty, on the one hand, and of the Western vocation of the Albanian state, on the other. These discourses were by no means mutually exclusive; on the contrary, they were quite compatible. Both of them articulated the Albanian national identity in terms of secularism and Westernism, and the identity of the state elites in terms of nationalism and, simultaneously, commitment to European integration. To the end of stabilizing both these identities, Greece was constructed as the Balkans inside Europe and as such as a threat to the *national interests* of Albania— the national interests being articulated here in relation to both the legitimacy of the Democrats' administration and the aspirations of Albania to join the EU. I will return to this discussion when I discuss the crisis of 1996-1997 in the last part of the chapter.

4.4.2. Membership in the Islamic Conference Organization

This section asks whether the decision to join the Islamic Conference Organization (henceforth ICO) in 1992 marked a departure from the Westernist orientation of the Democrats' first administration (1992-1997).[109] This question is pertinent and topical in two

---

[109] It should be noted that Albania gained the status of an 'observer' at the ICO on 7 December 1991, when the newly-reformed Labour Party was still in power. The Democrat Minister for Foreign Affairs, Alfred Serreqi,

aspects: Firstly, the ICO membership gained considerable prominence in the foreign policy and political debates in Albania, particularly in the aftermath of September 11 and in the context of debates within Albania on the cultural identity of the Albanian nation and thus of its foreign policy orientation.

During his visit to Tirana in March 2006 the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs requested of the Albanian Minister for Foreign Affairs that Albania play an active role within the framework of the Coalition of Civilizations, given its membership in the ICO. The question was met first with surprise and eventually with disappointment at Europe's misperception of Albania as an Islamic country (author's interview with Meta, 21 February, 2006; author's interview with Zeneli, 21 March 2006; author's interview with Rakipi, 14 March 2006). Earlier to this, during his visit to Brussels in 2005, the Prime Minister Berisha was asked by European Parliamentarians about the status of Albania's ICO membership (Gjymshana, 2006a). Berisha sought to dispel any fears on the part of the European Union that the ICO Membership represented either societal religious affiliations—and thus, the prospect of religious radicalism—or a new direction of the Albanian foreign policy. He did so by re-stating the 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation' of the Albanian state and its 'exemplary religious tolerance and co-existence' (Gjymshana, 2006b). Political opposition has coined membership in ICO as 'deviation' from the 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation' of Albanian post-communist foreign policy. The former Socialist Foreign Minister and the Secretary for External Relations of the Socialist Party went so far as to describe it as an anomaly, stating in an interview that the Albanian state had sustained its Western orientation throughout the post-communist era, '*despite* membership of the ICO, which was more an isolated moment than a re-adjustment of foreign policy orientation' (author's interview with Dade, 21 May 2008). By calling it an isolated case, the former Foreign Minister effectively reiterated the leftists' thesis that the ICO

---

made a formal request for membership in October 1992. According to Miranda Vickers and James Pettifer (1997) Minister Serreqi was openly opposed to the ICO membership.

membership was indeed incompatible with the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' of post-communist Albania. In contrast with the pre-2005 Socialist political/electoral discourse which claimed that the ICO membership proved the anti-Western orientation of the first Democrats' administration, the former Socialist Minister's statement downplayed the membership as a policy moment which was inconsequential in terms of Albania's general foreign policy orientation. At the same time, however, the Minister implied that there was a clear boundary between Western and 'Eastern' foreign policy orientations and alleged that Berisha's move towards the ICO in 1992 had transgressed this boundary. Both interpretations converge in the point that the ICO membership is represented as a departure or a deviation from the post-communist orientation of Albanian foreign policy.

These examples show that membership in the ICO has gained salience in the post September 11 context. In this section I examine the meaning/significance that membership in the ICO had in 1992. Instead of looking for the real motives behind the decision to join the ICO, this section discusses the contemporary interpretations of this policy moment and particularly of the 'national interest' in the official discourse in relation to it. In practice, it analyzes how the state elite legitimized the decision and it also outlines the particular understanding of the nation and democracy which underpinned the decision.

The government's legitimization of ICO membership was based on two factors. On the one hand, the ICO membership was presented as a step which would help Albania to advocate the Kosovo question; a perusal of the documents of the time shows that the Albanian representatives were indeed calling upon the members of the ICO for united and concerted action against Serbian aggression in the Balkans. At the same time, membership in ICO was legitimized in terms of the economic benefits it would bring to Albania's fragile economy. In this latter case, the national interest was constituted in purely economic terms. These two discourses, however—which we might call the security discourse and the economic discourse respectively—also incorporate many overlapping elements; indeed, the dominant post-

communist argument has been that only an economically strong Albania can advocate the Kosovo question internationally. As Berisha put it in his speech regarding the ICO membership in 1992: 'If we do not prosper soon, we won't be in the position to be masters of our fate; it is only fast development which will secure our national integrity' (*Rilindja Demokratike*, 6 December 1992:1). In other words, the articulation of the nation in the context of this policy development built on the civic as opposed to ethnic conception. Furthermore, the articulation of the national interest in this context attributes to Albania the role of the 'motherland'.

This statement also ties in with the key discursive features of the Democrats' first administration: the construction of their political identity as representatives of the entire Albanian nation and as the only political force which could fulfil the ideals of the National Renaissance and secure national sovereignty and integrity. To this end, the state elite articulated Albania's state identity in terms of a bridge between Eastern and Western cultures and civilizations. Later, the Democrats simply re-appropriated this to serve the identity needs of the new post-communist state, as well as their own legitimacy needs as the only force which could fulfill the identity of the Albanian nation.

In his 1992 speech on the Parliament's vote on the issue of Albanian ICO membership, President Berisha emphasized the necessity for the religious affiliation of Albanians to be pressed into the service of the 'national interest':

> We are a profoundly European country and Albania will soon become part of the political and military organizations of Europe. However, in Albania, in a European country, the Muslim percentage of the population is very important. It [Albania] must put this reality into the service of its people and of its region. (…)If there are people who find the word 'Islamic' shocking, I would do no more than to remind them that this is incompatible with our country's great tradition of religious tolerance (quoted in Fuga, 2003a: 113).

As the quote suggests, then, was to be put into the service of the 'national interest'. The argument for Albania's entry into the ICO can be paraphrased as follows: the fact of being Muslim should be put into the service of our national interest and identity, which is European-oriented. This articulation of Albanians as Muslim applied not only to Albanian citizens, but to the entire Albanian nation, that is, including also the population of Kosovo and the other ethnic Albanian communities in the Balkans. It is here that we can find, if not the origins, then certainly one of the earliest articulations in the post-communist era of a discourse of the 'European Islam' of Albanians which was to become increasingly salient in the post-September 11 context.

The general tendency has been to interpret these events in one of two ways: in terms of the discourse of the national question in general and the Kosovo question in particular, on the one hand, or the economic discourse, on the other. Thus, for example, Artan Fuga reads. the ICO membership as a marker of the indecisiveness of the first Democrat government when it came to fully trusting the West and more specifically Europe in the event that Albania too would be threatened by Milosevic's increasingly aggressive regime (Fuga, 2003a:114). On the other hand, the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time suggests that the reasons behind the decision to join the ICO were only economic, '…despite the fact that the expected economic benefits never came' (Author's interview with Rakipi, 14 March 2006). Even if it is the case that the rationale for the decision to join the ICO was primarily economic, then the question still remains: why was it that, as we have seen from the official commentary on this issue at the time, the discourse of the 'nation' subsumed the discourse of economic benefit? The answer to this should be sought in the political identity that the first Democrat-led administration strove to construct.

As in the case of the construction of Albania in relation to Greece, the emphasis is on the national question and of the Nationalist Ideology. In most of their speeches at the ICO summits, the Albanian delegates were calling for help in protecting Kosovo Albanians from

Serbian aggression.[110] It is pertinent to note here how the reconstitution of the key national identity narrative of 'nation above religion' is simultaneously one of key identification strategies of the governing party. In an editorial with the title 'Albania is for an open policy', the official Democratic Party newspaper, *Rilindja Demokratike* accused the opposition of pushing the religious character of the ICO to the foreground of the debate, and thus deforming and betraying the 'nation above religion' postulate of the National Renaissance:

> To attack Islam in the name of Christianity: this is a new, grotesque and very anachronistic fundamentalism when comparing it with our National Ideology of the nineteenth century. To bring religions directly or indirectly to the political foreground of the Albanian state is anti-national, is a further division of Albania (…) Be reasonable, at least as much as our predecessors in the nineteenth century regarding the notions of nation and religion (*Rilindja Demokratike,* 1992a:1).

As it becomes clear from this quote, membership of ICO is legitimized by the reference to the National Ideology (Renaissance). In this context, the threat to the national identity and the national interest is represented as domestic, rather than external and related to foreign policy. In the same editorial the opposition is reminded of the communist 'forgetfulness', regarding the fact that the majority of the Albanian nation, including the population of Kosovo, were Muslim. Here again the *nation* becomes the key signifier and the key locus of the debate. As it is put in the editorial: 'The Albanian nation is not only the political Albania but also its other half outside the borders' (*Rilindja Democratike*, 1992a:1). Within this framing, the nationalist and Westernist credentials of the Democrats are restated and thus their subjectivity is stabilized, together with the secularism and Western orientation of the Albanian state. Like the case of the bilateral relation with Greece, this policy articulation shows that both the discourse of national sovereignty and the discourse of Western orientation were completely compatible and constituted the political identities of the

---

[110] It is therefore ironic that despite the efforts of the Albanian government to legitimize membership in the ICO by invoking the Kosovo issue and the 'national question', most of the members of the ICO did not recognize the independence of Kosovo in 2008.

state elites as legitimate in terms of both Westernism and nationalism. The contradiction in the ICO case lies in the fact that, while restating the secularism of the Albanian state, the official discourse also repeatedly mentions the Muslim majority as a reality which should not only be respected, but should serve as a basis for the policy of the Albanian state.

Furthermore, the state elites reassured the nation that membership of the ICO would also comply with the Western orientation of the Albanian state. In fact, the Vice-Minister, who also represented Albania at one of the early ICO summits, claims that 'we were telling the ICO delegates about the OSCE principles we were complying to and urging them to do the same' (Author's interview with Rakipi, 14 March 2006) Here, Albania was presented not only as a bridge between different cultures and civilizations, but also as having a civilizing mission/role to play in the Islamic world by virtue of Albania's Western orientation.[111] As a former specialist of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs notes, Albania was following the example of Turkey in its inclination to sustain its constitutional secularism and represent itself as a bridge between cultures (author's interview with Lleshi, 15 January 2007; see also Bejtja, 1997). This view confirms that the ICO membership was never regarded as jeopardizing either Albania's standing vis-à-vis the West or the Democrats' domestic and external legitimacy.

While the above discussion demonstrates how the identity of the Albanian state was constructed internally, in the last part I will briefly discuss how the identity of the Albanian state was constructed in relation to the rest of the world and particularly vis-à-vis the West. As we have seen, both the internal and the external identities are co-constitutive, and thus the construction of each element of the former influences how the latter is constructed and vice versa.

---

[111] In an interview given to the German daily, *Die Presse* and re-printed in Rilindja Demokratike, President Berisha stated that 'Albania is the most Western country in the region. We are already paying our obligations to our roots'. See *Rilindja Demokratike*, 1996c: 2.

4.5.1 The Construction of the West and the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' (1992-1997)

I have made the case so far that the Democrats' Kosovo policy depended on their attempts to articulate their own political identity as the most Westernizing forces in the country. In this respect, the stability and unity of the 'West' is crucial for the authority and Westernizing credentials of the domestic actors. In this part I will look more closely at this issue of how the identity of the West was articulated by the foreign and security policy of the first Democrat-led administration.

I start this section with one key assumption: The putative unity and stability of the West has been crucial to the unity and stability of both the Albanian state identity and the political identities of the key Albanian political forces or those actors speaking in the name of the state during 1992-1997. However, a perusal of political and official texts demonstrates that the identity of the 'West' in Albanian foreign and security policy discourse has never been stable or fixed. Instead, we find the construction of two prominent West-s: the EU/ Europe[112] and the USA. The identities of both these two West-s are constructed with varying degrees of identification with or differentiation from self. Despite the official discourse of the Albanian nation's Western character and the Western orientation of the Albanian state, what exactly constituted the authentic West was constantly open to the political struggles of the official and political elites. Thomas Diez has noted the ways in which Europe functions as the discursive battleground of different political alternatives (Diez, 2001). In the Albanian case, it is the West that is the discursive battleground. In the following section I examine the meanings that the elites attach to the West and subsequently to the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' of the Albanian state. In the following section, I pay particular attention to the Democrats' strategies of identification with the USA and with a strong Atlanticist orientation.

---

[112] The two are often used interchangeably but they are clearly differentiated in moments of crisis in relations with individual EU countries, such as Greece. This will be elaborated in the following part of this Chapter.

4.5.1. Democrats' Atlanticist identity

Despite the anti-communist protesters' slogan in 1991 of 'We want Albania to be like Europe' the first post-communist administration sought to appear to be following a foreign policy orientation of strong Atlanticism. In the Albanian case, the two important West-s seem to be the EU and the USA. However, can we speak of two clear state orientations, such as Europeanism and Atlanticism? Furthermore, does the 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation' subsume both or is it something entirely different?

According to Elizabetta Brighi (2007), Atlanticism signifies stronger bilateral relations with the US, whereas Europeanism signifies a stronger commitment to supranationalism. As Brighi notes, these two orientations build on certain foreign policy paradigms (Brighi, 2007:106-107). However, it is not clear from Brighi's framework, why certain policy paradigms resonate with particular political programmes/projects and not with others and *when* and *how* the 'domestic context' becomes important for policy orientation. I suggest that instead of approaching 'Europeanism' and 'Atlanticism' as state orientations, they are moments/identities in the ideological programmes of the main political parties. I find that although the elite seeks to continuously stabilize the discourse of the Western orientation of the Albanian state, this official discourse is often de-stabilized in the political discourse, that is, in the political debate about democracy and Albanian/national interests. I will examine the meaning of Europeanism and of Atlanticism in relation to the elites' political repertoires and their conceptions of 'nation' and 'democracy'.

In his address to the forty-sixth session of the UN General Assembly on 25 September 1991, the Albanian Minister for Foreign Affairs rendered Europe responsible for having failed to contain Serbian nationalism:

> (…)Had Europe and the rest of Yugoslavia reacted with proper attention at the right moment and prevented the Serbian national-chauvinists, at least over the past ten years, from

turning Kosovo into a testing ground for establishing their hegemony over Yugoslavia as a whole, things would have been quite different now (as quoted in Kola, 2003: 207).

The same argument was repeated the following year by the first Democrat Minister for Foreign Affairs, Alfred Serreqi, when he called for action to be taken against Serbian nationalism and accused Europe of indifference on this issue (Serreqi, 1992:1). The subsequent acceleration of the Bosnian war further strengthened the accusatory tone taken towards Europe, particularly in the parliamentary debates at the time. These debates invoked the historical narrative of Europe as untrustworthy when it came to the question of nation formation in the Balkans, with particular reference to its injustice to the Albanian nation.

The USA, on the other hand, remained the purest ideological model for the Democrats throughout the early nineties: Atlanticism as articulated by the state elite combined the Democrats' narrative of the exemplarity of the nation as well as various elements from their ideological repertoire, such as freedom of the individual, privatization, open market etc. The USA was invoked as the purest form of capitalism, i.e. the symmetrical counter-pole of the socialism which Albania had just left behind. In this context, the USA was called upon as the only superpower and also as a model of universal values, which had led the countries of Eastern Europe on their path away from the communist dictatorship (Berisha, 1991a:1) As far as the national question was concerned, Albanian Atlanticism was framed as natural given the key role that the Wilsonian doctrine of self-determination had played in the fates of the small Eastern European nations at the turn of the twentieth century (Berisha, 1991a:5). Therefore, both these moments—the Wilsonian Nineteen Points at the Peace Conference of 1919, and the role of the USA in the collapse of communism—were of crucial importance for the political identity and legitimacy of the Albanian right in general and the Democrats in particular.

In the Democrats' discourse of security, the contribution that the USA had given in 1919 to the independence and territorial integrity of the Albanian state was constructed as a binding act of partnership and of preferential partnership. Therefore, Tirana leadership called upon USA to step in and prevent the spill-over of the Bosnian war into the other parts of the Balkans, particularly Kosovo. Atlanticism was materialized in the strong support of the 1992-1997 government for Albania's entry in NATO (*Rilindja Demokratike*, 1996b:1). Albania was the first of the former communist countries of Eastern Europe to apply for NATO membership in 1991. The leader of the Democratic Party would state that support for NATO had been one of the ideational and political pillars of the party's programme *Rilindja Demokratike*, 1996b:1; also Berisha 1992d). Albanian elites' support for NATO grew even stronger in the post-1992-official discourse upon the advent of the conflict in Bosnia and with the prospect of spill-over into Kosovo (for instance, Berisha, 1993c:1). [113]

At the same time, the USA was portrayed as the main force which brought down the communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe and led to the triumph of liberal ideals. In this respect, the USA was credited with having made the greatest contribution to the processes of democratization in Albania (Berisha, 19991a:1). In addition, the USA was portrayed as the stout defender of 'individual initiative, open market, free capital and private investments' (*Rilindja Demokratike*, 1991d: 1).

Pro-Americanism or Atlanticism was therefore articulated as an overarching state identity: regarding democracy and form of governance, it represented the purest and ideal form of capitalism; regarding the 'national interest', it evoked metaphors of the US as the historical ally of the Albanian nation. Therefore, in both cases, the Democrats' identification with Atlanticism can be seen as a strategy aimed at legitimizing the main political force in power. This changed in May 1996, when the USA denounced the electoral process and called

---

[113] President Berisha proposed as early as 1993 that Kosovo be put under the protectorate of the United Nations or under the control of NATO, so that ethnic cleansing is prevented. See Berisha (1993c:1).

for the elections to be repeated. The next section examines how this event led to a re-accommodation of the Atlanticist and Europeanist identities in the new political context.

4.5.2. The crisis of 1997 and the myth of 'Euro-Atlantic orientation'

The period from the elections of May 1996 through to the collapse of the pyramid schemes in March 1997 can be described as a period of increasingly weak legitimacy, domestically and externally, for the right-centrist administration and President Berisha in particular. The electoral victory of the DP in the two-stage parliamentary elections of 26 May and 2 June 1996 had been denounced as fraudulent and in flagrant violation of the law (Bideleux and Jeffries 2007:47). The USA's demand for a repetition of the elections had been vehemently refused by the Albanian President and the newly elected majority. The hardest blow to the government's domestic legitimacy, however, came with the collapse of the pyramid schemes in early 1997 and the state structures' unpreparedness for the subsequent popular protests. As the insurgency escalated, over half a million weapons of various sorts fell into civilian hands through the looting of army depots (Bideleux and Jeffries, 2007: 54). Soldiers and police were either deserting or went over to the insurgents (Bideleux and Jeffries, 2007: p.54). In this context, it was obvious that references to the support of the 'international community' would not be sufficient for gaining domestic legitimacy. The narrative of the strong Atlanticism of the Albanian nation and of the Democrat-led government in Albania had clearly lost its coherence after the diplomatic rift between Tirana and Washington regarding the May 1996 elections.

The USA was now for imposing an incompatible understanding of democracy on Albania, this had no bearing/impact on the stability of all the other elements of the Atlanticist identity, such as the assertiveness and independence of the Albanian state, or the primacy of the national security and sovereignty. We find thus the continuation of the reproduction of an Atlanticist identity, even though the USA is no longer identified as Albania's best *friend*. This

inconsistency will be elaborated in the last part when I discuss the security discourse during 1996-1997. It suffices to say here that the inherent instability and disunity of the Democrats' discourse of the West and of the Western orientation became visible in the Democrats' foreign policy discourse only in 1997. The revelation of this instability of the narrative of the West then made visible, in turn, the contingency of the Subject of the post-communist Albanian state itself, as well as the incoherencies of the political repertoire of the state elite.

Following the rift with the USA, Europe became the only remaining source of external legitimacy for the government. In addition, an EU delegation arrived in Albania on 7 March 1997, and Italy took the lead in European initiatives to mediate between the government and the insurgents: on 10 March, Italian diplomats met with insurgent leaders in Vlore, who agreed to restore order and also encouraged civilians to lay down their weapons (Bideleux and Jeffries, 2007: 54). Following OSCE recommendations for international military intervention issued on 16 March, EU foreign ministers agreed to send a small team of advisers to help restore civilian structures and law and order and to join the OSCE, Greece and Turkey in sending a delegation to act as mediators. On 9 April 1997 the Italian government obtained parliamentary approval to send a 2.500-strong force to Albania (Bideleux and Jeffries 2007: 54). The EU was thus a more present and immediate actor in the political and economic crisis than the USA.

It was only during the dislocatory moment of 1997 that Europe was endowed with a positive identity with regard to the 'national question'. In 1997, Berisha now articulated a different Europe, the Europe of the EU, so to speak; that is, a transnational Europe of diffused state borders and common cultural spaces—a Europe which had surpassed the historical Europe of the *realpolitik* of the early twentieth century. Referring to the historic London Conference of 1912 which determined the present territorial borders of the Albanian state, Berisha reassured his audience that:

> Post-war Europe is a very different Europe. The post-war Europe is the one of the European Union, of the greatest political and economic miracle of the old continent of all times, about which we had very limited concepts in 1990 (Berisha, 1997b:4).

As the quote suggests, the identity narrative of Europe as the unfaithful is inadequate to reflect the present development in Europe and the change of the paradigm of International Relations in the continent. However, ironically, while president Berisha portrayed Europe as the continent of supranational cooperation and economic interdependency, he also heightened the nationalist tones. In the state elites' discourse of security at the time, the enemies of the nation were any state which sought to undermine the 'national sovereignty' of the Albanian people and intervene in domestic affairs (Berisha, 1997c). Just as the element of 'non-intervention from outside' was sutured on to the discourse of the national interest during the minority dispute with Greece in 1994, so again, in 1997, the element of 'non-intervention from outside' was incorporated into the Democrats' discourse of security.

The entrenchment of these two elements-of 'non-intervention from outside' and of 'national sovereignty' in the official security discourse of 1996-1997 is exemplified in a debate between president Berisha and two prominent figures within the Democratic Party, Alfred Serreqi and Dashamir Shehi in April 1997. The text was produced in the form of a dialogue between the Albanian President and Serreqi and Shehu. Yet, although the text was derived from a conversational interaction, it was published in the Democratic Party newspaper (*Rilindja Demokratike*, 15 April 1997: 4) in the form of long statements by all of the protagonists. It becomes clear from the text that the two other actors, that is, Shehi and Serreqi, were critical of the deterioration of the relationship between Albania and the USA. In response, the Albanian President called for a more 'realistic' approach to foreign affairs. This *realistic* approach was eventually explained in terms of a sharper awareness of the European vocation of the Albanian state and Albanian nation.

Furthermore, Berisha stressed two key things: that the USA's conception of democracy was incompatible with the Albanian experience; and that the national question could/would only be solved within the framework of European integration. The EU was articulated as model of conflict mediation, (the political conflict of 1997 is an example) and an adaptable model of democracy for Albania. In this context, Europe came to mean both the framework within which the Albanian national question would be solved and as the form of democracy with the closest affinity to political Albanian culture. This relationship of Albania with Europe was framed as not simply of paramount importance, but also as preferential compared to Albania's relationship with the rest of the world, including the USA. In his statement the Albanian President went so far as to make the grand proclamation that: 'Albania is a country of three religions and one Faith: Europe' (Berisha, 1997b:4).

In the same text, the President stated that: 'a free country must be sovereign' (Berisha, 1997b:4)[114]. All references to national sovereignty imply some kind of threat not only to the territorial borders of the state, but also to the order and identity of the national community. The statement is an exemplary text of the security discourse of 1997. It primarily concerned Albania's relations with the USA and with Europe and it articulated the solution of the Kosovo question against the background of these relations.

Yet, Europeanism and Atlanticism were not presented as mutually exclusive; quite the contrary, in fact. As President Berisha re-assured Albanians in the same statement: 'The DP cannot be a pro-European and anti-American party' (Berisha, 1997b:4). In this connection, the metaphor of President Wilson as the saviour of the Albanian nation-state was brought up again and again by the Albanian President throughout his presidency. In this respect, the first strategy to keep the unity of the identity of the 'West' intact was to differentiate between countries and governments. In this connection, a crucial distinction was drawn between the Wilsonian USA of the past and the USA of the present. The USA was thus not dismissed

---

[114] Berisha was referring here to Albania, rather than Kosovo.

altogether as a model of democracy; instead, the present administration only was accused of failing to understand the difference between the American experience of democracy and the Albanian short-lived democratic tradition (Berisha 1997b:4). It was the state elite—Greek or American— which were made culpable for playing a destructive role for democracy and the Western orientation of Albania. While the individual Western governments and political actors who were singled out for denunciation were presented as somehow contingent to the West/to the West's underlying core.

The second strategy to keep the identity of the West unaffected by the tension with the USA was to differentiate between the aspiration to join NATO and Atlanticism, on one hand, and pro-Americanism, on the other. This was clearly demonstrated in Albanian government officials' attempts to deflect criticism in connection with the decision to let the Island of Sazan[115] to the USA for military purposes. Replying to allegations that the deterioration in relations with the USA had come about as a result of the USA's persistence in turning the island into a US military zone, the former Prime Minister, Alexander Meksi stated that talks between the USA and Albania had only concerned the issue of the NATO (not US) presence on the island 'within the framework of Partnership for Peace and Albania's political orientation (…) but we have never requested any specific country' (implying the USA; OB) (*Rilindja Democratike*, 1997c:1) However, in more assertive statements, it was noted, in a clear reference to the USA, that Albania was too small a country to house military bases of any particular country outside the NATO framework (*Rilindja Democratike*, 1997a:3). In a pre-electoral press conference in May 1997, President Berisha added that 'others may have other ideas, but this is my concept: We are too small a country to have foreign bases' (*Rilindja Democratike*, 1997a:3).

---

[115]*Sazan*-i is a small island, which is located at the entrance to the Bay of Vlora in Southern Albania. It is the largest island in Albania and it is a military facility.

The construction of Albania 'small' state in this context is clearly different from the construction of smallness of state in the Socialists' discourse of 'Euro-Atlantic orientation', as will be argued in the following chapter. While in the latter context, the 'smallness' of the Albanian state was an element in a discourse of partnership with the West and of pragmatist objectives, in the context of Berisha's 1997 statement, the 'smallness' of the Albanian state called for resistance to the hegemonic power which aimed at undermining domestic legitimacy.

In general, the reconciliation between the two West-s—the USA and Europe—and the construction of Europeanism and Atlanticism as equivalent identities was a response to the dislocation or destabilization of the ideological/political identity of the Albanian right in general and of the Democrats in particular as well as of the Albanian state identity, as a result of the 1996-1997 crisis. In this context, we can argue that the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' of the Albanian state as one identity was only 'born' out of this crisis. As the analysis of the next chapter demonstrates, this identity becomes a 'myth', that is, uncontestable and highly institutionalized following the 1997 elections and the coming into power of the Socialists.

These two texts – (*Rilindja Demokratike*, 15 April 1997; *Rilindja Demokratike*, 1997a)—demonstrate how inextricably linked the identity construction of the West was to the identity construction of the Albanian state and the Albanian political and state elites. Both texts were produced in a moment of crisis. Their articulations of the West as possible intruder and as hegemonic power helped to stabilize the political identity of the political party in office as the defenders of the National sovereignty. Yet the national identity narrative of the West and of the Western belonging was not de-stabilized by these articulations. By clearly differentiating between the USA and Europe, and between the USA and its administration of the moment, the state elites aimed to re-stabilize the identity of the West. By so doing, the state elites aimed to reconcile their discourse of 'national sovereignty' and 'non-intervention

from outside' with one of the basic identity narratives of the nation, that is, of Western belonging.

4.6. Conclusions

In this chapter I argued that the articulation of the nation and of the West during the 1992-1997 period was dependent upon the political repertoire of the main political power in office, in this case, the Democratic Party. I suggested that the Democrats sought to depart from the communist official discourse of foreign policy by pushing for the solution of the national question and for the opening up of Albania to the West. However, I argued that despite the centrality of the 'national question' and 'national sovereignty' in the official discourse, the Democrats' understanding of the borders of the national community did not depart radically from the communist discourse of the nation.

I argued that at moments of disjuncture, when the contingency of the political identity of the state elites is revealed and their domestic and external legitimacy is weakened, the themes of 'non-interference from outside' and of 'national sovereignty' became central elements in the security discourse of the Democrat-led government. However, the discourse of national sovereignty was not tied to any ethnic nationalist project of a Greater Albania or an irredentist foreign policy. Rather, I made the case that it was an identification strategy through which the Democrats sought to re-stabilize their own political identities as nationalist and as defenders of Albanianism.

During the crisis of 1996-1997, the notion of 'national sovereignty' was reinstated through the security warnings against interference by the West. But since the Westernism of the Albanian nation is a key political myth of the post-communist period (Lubonja 2002; Misha 2002; Sulstarova 2006a), the official elites would either oscillate from stronger Atlanticism to a stronger Europeanist discourse—as was the case in 1997 when problems arose with the USA—or deploy a historical discourse of security and question the authenticity

of the Western identity of the state with which problems had arisen—as was the case in relation to Greece during 1994-1997.

Furthermore, the identity/subjectivity of the West in the political discourse of the main political party was never as stable or coherent as the official discourse sought to construct it. I argued that like foreign policy 'orientation', 'Atlanticism' and 'Europeanism' are empty signifiers which are filled with different meanings. Thus, in moments when the basic identity narratives of Self were de-stabilized, the official discourse leaned more towards one or the other. This oscillation can be only understood through the 'process of subjectivization' of the key political actors, i.e. their need to stabilize their own political identity and domestic legitimacy.

Albanian foreign policy during the 1992-1997 provides exceptionally rich material for a case study in a number of respects, not least because the national elites had more space for creativity and assertiveness during this period than the post-1997 elites would have, as Chapter 5 demonstrates. The first centre-right administration was faced with the task of putting an end of isolation of Albania in the international stage as well as of its domestic democratization. As we saw, these two levels were inextricably linked; foreign policy articulations were based upon the Democrats' political project of fast-track liberalization and rapid privatization. In the following chapter, I examine how the Socialists' ideological discourse of democracy and of the nation sought to construct a different subjectivity for the Albanian state and the Albanian citizens.

CHAPTER FIVE

BETWEEN PRAGMATISM AND THE EMANCIPATION IDEALS OF THE LEFT: ALBANIAN FORIEGN POLICY 1997-2005

5.1. Introduction

This chapter explores the articulation of the West and of 'national interest' in the official foreign and security policy discourse during 1997-2005. The chapter asks how the Albanian state identity was re-interpreted in the official and political discourse of the leftists during this period of time. I pay particular attention to how the centre-leftist coalition in general and the Socialist Party in particular sought to sustain the 'Western vocation' of Albania as proclaimed by the previous centre-right government, and yet differentiate themselves from the Democrats. I suggest that this differentiation was crucial for the political legitimization of the new government, both domestically and externally.

In this chapter I contend that during the process of constructing a new political identity for themselves, the Left in general and the Socialists in particular formulated the Albanian state identity and interests in economic terms and through a strong regional identification. In this respect, I will argue that the re-interpretation of the identity narrative of 'pragmatism' was crucial to the construction of a new identity for Albania as well as for the Albanian Left in the post-1997 period.

5.1.1. Background of the Socialists' Electoral Victory in 1997

The Albanian Left consists of three main political parties: the Socialist Party, the Social Democratic Party and the Socialist Movement for Integration. The Socialist Party was founded in June 1991, during the 10th and last Congress of the Party of Labour. The change of name from the Party of Labour to the Socialist Party followed the general elections of March 1991, which the Party of Labour had won. In the subsequent elections of March 1992,

the Socialist Party lost to the Democratic Party which won three quarters of the parliamentary seats. The Social Democratic Party was founded in 1991. It joined the Democrat-led coalition till 1994, when it rejected the Draft Constitution introduced by the Democrat President Sali Berisha (Fuga, 2003a: 75). Finally, the Socialist Movement for Integration (SMI) was founded in 2003, following the rift between the former Socialist Prime Minister and prominent member of the Socialist Party, Ilir Meta, on the one hand, and the Socialist Leader Fatos Nano and his supporting fraction within the Socialist Party, on the other.

The general elections of 29 June 1997 which brought the Socialist-led coalition to power followed the collapse of the pyramid schemes in March of the same year. As briefly discussed in Chapter 1, being faced with massive anti-governmental revolts in the Southern cities of Vlorë, Lushnjë and Fier, as well as with growing international pressure to solve the institutional crisis through political dialogue, the Democrat-led government conceded to the formation of an interim government of National Reconciliation from 11 March to 24 July 1997.

Given the sharp division between pro- and anti- governmental forces, the political context in which the new Socialist-led coalition came to power was imbued with high domestic tensions. Furthermore, the international image of Albania had been considerably damaged externally. International TV channels continuously portrayed the country through images of children carrying guns and tanks rolling down city streets. In March, a 6,500-strong Multinational Protection Force (Operation *Alba), c*ame to operate in Albania under UN Resolution 1101, under the lead of Italy (Brighi, 2007:4) with the aim of restoring domestic order.

The Socialist-led coalition that came to power in 1997 was thus faced with a dual challenge: the domestic economic crisis and political and institutional instability, on the one hand, and a tainted international image, on the other. The two challenges were inextricably linked, as a credible image in the eyes of the international community and the recovery of

relations with Albania's immediate EU neighbours, such as Italy and Greece, was a pre-condition for foreign investments as well as foreign (mainly EU) aid to the country. Hence the need for a new narrative of the Albanian state identity which differed from the narrative of exemplarity as forged by the Democrat-led coalition.

As we saw in the previous chapter, the collapse of the pyramid schemes revealed the contradictions of such a discourse of exemplarity. Meanwhile, as far as the issue of international recognition was concerned, Democrat President Berisha's discourse of non-interference by foreigners in the domestic affairs of Albania and particularly the diplomatic rifts with Greece and the USA in 1997, coupled with the democratic record of his Presidency, had earned him identifications with the nationalist leaders of the Balkans (Gumbel, 1997). Therefore, the new Socialist government faced the challenge of departing from their predecessors' foreign and security policy discourse while sustaining the Western vocation and the primacy of the nation above all other political, ideological or societal divisions.

In addition, ethnic conflict in Kosovo escalated parallel to the unfolding of the 1997 crisis in Albania (Vickers and Pettifer, 2007) In this connection, the new Socialist government was in need of a new narrative which would offer a fresh interpretation of the relationship between the 'national interest' and the Western vocation of Albania. My argument is that the new government re-interpreted this relationship through the lenses of the political identity and interests of the Albanian left in general and of the Socialist Party in particular. My analysis suggests that the Socialist-led administrations articulated the Albanian 'national interest' and identity primarily through the narrative of pragmatism. As I will elaborate in the body of the chapter, this narrative served the Socialists' attempts to depart from and yet maintain some of the elements of their communist predecessors' official discourse of the nation and of the region, as well as meeting the need to differentiate themselves from the discredited legacy of the centre-right administration of 1992-1997.

The chapter is divided into two parts: In the first part I discuss the Socialists' attempts in the early nineties to re-interpret the past in favourable terms and create a new identity for themselves through the re-articulation of certain elements of the old communist discourse of the 'nation', the 'region' and the 'West' in a post-Cold War context. The second part of the chapter investigates the continuities and shifts in the Socialists' articulation of the 'national interest' and the West, against the backdrop of their political repertoire and particularly of their basic identity narrative of 'pragmatism'.

5.2. The Socialists' 'opening' of the early nineties

Soon after the change of the name of the Party of Labour into the Socialist Party, its leader Fatos Nano denounced the dominant communist ideology of the Party of Labour and the legacy of the monist state. Nano stated that the Albanian Socialists would be led by the principles of 'full integration in the global economy' as well as of 'preservation of sovereignty through interdependency' (*Zeri i Popullit*, 1991b:1-2). 'Opening' became the preferential sign over 'isolation'.

In this part of the chapter I ask how the national question and the Western vocation of Albania were framed by the Socialists while in opposition from 1992 to 1997. To this end I investigate the discursive strategies deployed by the Socialists with a view to articulating a new democratic identity for them. This investigation is informed by the assumption that the political elites' construction of the national interest and of the West depends upon their need to re-formulate their own political identity, as well as on their political interests. I suggest that contrary to the Socialists' proclaimed abandonment of the principles and ideology of their communist predecessors, the Socialists' political identity was reconstructed during this period through the re-articulation of some old elements of the communist discourse of the national question and of the West. I pay particular attention to the construction of the boundaries and role of the Albanian state in the new international environment.

5.2.1. The National Question in the Leftist Discourse 1992-1997

The Albanian communist regime framed the national question primarily in terms of *people*'s liberation and *people*'s struggle against oppression and hegemonic order, whether economic (capitalist) or imperialist (Fuga, 2003a: 100-1002). As such, the national question was inextricably formulated through the ideological tenets of the communist party. In this respect, it is not coincidental that the solution of the national question was seen through the lenses of the victory of socialism in the Balkans and beyond. Furthermore, communist leader Enver Hoxha's occasionally overheated nationalist discourse notwithstanding, in the communist discourse the 'nation' overlapped with the state borders of the Republic of Albania, namely, 'from Vermosh to Konispol' (Sulstarova, 2003:76).

In the early nineties the communist cadre started reviewing the solution of the national question in the context of the political liberalization in Central and Eastern Europe (Alia 1991:3). In the words of the Secretary of the PLA and eventually the first post-communist President, Ramiz Alia, 'the question of Kosovo, like the other problems of Yugoslavia, stems from the clash between demands for freedom, democracy and progress on one hand and the struggle for domination, arbitrariness, oppression and violence on the other' (Alia, 1993:3). In other words, the Kosovo question was formulated primarily in terms of collective and human rights as well as within a discourse of democratic values. In this context, 'national minorities' were interpreted as 'bridges' between the cultures and peoples of the Balkans (also Vickers and Pettifer, 1997: 145).

I suggest that this formulation of national minorities as bridges between cultures and peoples of the Balkans persisted even after the party's change of name from the Party of Labour to the Socialist Party. This construction of the minorities confirms that national unification was not a real foreign policy option for the Albanian national elites. The framing of national minorities as bridges of culture (and eventually of economic exchange) was

symptomatic of a specific understanding of the Balkans which can in fact be traced back to the communist official discourse of the Balkans.

Following the Meeting of Balkan Foreign Ministers in October 1991, the communist Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Muhamet Kapllani called for the creation of a common Balkan identity, which would function as a passport to Europe (cited in Kola 2003: 203). By accentuating similarities between the Balkan societies—backwardness, Ottoman legacy, the lack of a Social Democratic political alternative)—the communists used the concept of the Balkans as a 'filter through which all the major themes pertinent to the devising of an effective revolutionary strategy were processed' (Hatzopoulos, 2008: 72). I argue that the usage of the Balkans as an ideological/political filter through which the 'national question' and the 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation' of the Albanian state continued to be viewed in the newly reformed Socialists' discourse.

In the new context, when the communist leadership was faced with the necessity of opening up to the West and integrating into Europe, the regional identification with the Balkans became instrumental to the reconstruction of the identity of the former Party of Labour and of the emergent reformed leftist forces. Following their change of name and internal reformation in 1991, the Socialists continued to frame the national question within the regional discourse of democratization and of liberation of the Balkan people. In the parliamentary debates over the formulation of primary foreign policy objectives in the first post-communist constitution in 1991, the Socialist MPs suggested the inclusion of a 'good neighbourhood' clause as the primary objective of the Albanian state (*Parliamentary Debates*, 25 April, 1991:128). Tellingly, the proposal was rejected by the Democrat MP who insisted that the priority should be the 'national interest' as, in the words of Arben Imami:[116]

---

[116]Arben Imami started his political career as one of the founders of the Democratic Party in 1991. In 1992 he left the DP and went on to found together with Neritan Ceka, the Party of the Democratic Alliance (PDA), which entered into a coalition with the Socialist Party in the elections of 1997. In 2005 Imami returned to the DP and following that party's electoral victory in July 2005 he took up a high position in the government. This shows that specific individuals' political histories are not as important as the subject positions they occupy in a

There is no reason that the 'national interests' should be conditioned by something else, which may be a 'good neighbourhood' policy or, let's say, relations with Western Europe or Southern America. The only *intention* of the Albanian policy is the national interest. This does not mean that we are against 'good neighbourhood' but not to the degree of inserting it as the constitutional principle of the foreign policy of the Albanian state (*Parliamentary Debates*, 25 April 1991:128-9, italics added).

This exchange is proof of the contesting positions held with regard to the articulation of the 'good neighbourhood' policy: while for the Democrats, 'good neighbourhood' policy was distinct from—if not opposite to—the national interest the Socialists asserted that 'good neighbourhood' policy was co-extensive of the national interest. Yet, at the same time, in addition to calls for a cautious opening up to the West, the newly renamed Socialists called for a return to genuinely national values, as the only way of recovering agency and finding a voice in the new international context. In a meeting with a prominent intellectual from Kosovo in 1991, the Socialist leader Nano stated that:

We consider it a vital necessity to return to the national tradition and ideology by discarding all the foreign ideologies which for some time weakened the national values in Albania. We are at the moment of building the youth of the nation. But we still cannot find a common language(…) Our only interest is the nation, tradition and the general national progress' (*Zeri I Popullit*, 1991a: 2)[117]

As the above statement shows, the newly reformed Socialists equated the national interest with the national question during 1991-1992. 'National tradition', 'national ideology' and 'democracy' were all re-articulated as equivalent with the 'national interest'; yet, the meanings of each of these individual notions remained unstable and unfixed. They resemble floating signifiers which obtain their meaning only in relation to what they are not. In this

---

discursive/political field. An exception to this is the case of the *leaders* of the two main parties, mainly Sali Berisha and Fatos Nano, who dominated the discursive field till 2005, to the point that they represented the entire 'party'.

[117] 'National tradition; and the 'Ideology of the National Renaissance' are invoked especially often in meetings with representatives from Kosovo or with intellectuals rather than in the official discourse.

respect, they could not serve as a basis for any coherent policy option with regard to Kosovo. As I showed in the previous chapter, this was the case with the Democrats' discourse of the 'national interest' in the early nineties.

That the strong nationalist calls made by the Socialists in the early nineties were primarily tied to the Socialists' political identity and interests, is also confirmed by the shift in the interpretation of the 'national interest' once the Socialist-led coalition came to power in 1997. Much like the Democrat-led government of 1992, once in power the Socialists distanced themselves from 'Balkan-type nationalism' and instead emphasized change and reform over national tradition. Describing his meeting with Slobodan Milosevic during the Crete Summit in November 1997, Fatos Nano declared that: 'I had the impression as if I was in front of a member of the Politburo of our old Communist Party: nationalism to the highest level'(*Zeri I Popullit*, 1998a: 9). Once in power the Socialists distanced themselves not only from their centre-right predecessors but also from their communist past. In their attempts to reconstruct their identity, the Socialists re-interpreted Albanian communism as inauthentic, i.e. un-Albanian, imported from *outside*—an interpretation which they continue to make today (author's with Kastriot Islami, 17 February 2006).Yet, as I showed above, despite their attempts to distance themselves from their communist predecessors, the Socialists re-articulated the 'national interest' within the regional identification with the Balkans in the same way as their communist predecessors had.

The analysis in the second part of the chapter explores how and why regional identification with the Balkans became a constitutive element of the Socialists' identity and eventually of their official foreign and security policy discourse. Given that the Socialists regarded regional identification as a 'passport to Europe', in other words, to 'the West', as the above cited statement suggests, it is pertinent to first explore the construction of the role and identity of the West in the Socialists' political discourse. The following section traces the

continuities of the construction of the 'West' through from the communist to the Socialists' discourse.

5.2.2 The West in the Leftist discourse 1992-1997

Mistrust of the West remained a dominant element of the leftists' discourse before and immediately after their electoral defeat of March 1992. During 1991-1992, the Socialists were hesitant in proclaiming an overt open foreign policy as they were partly inhibited by their strong anxieties inherited from the communists about 'capitalist hegemony' (see Fuga, 2003a: 105). In his speech as the first post-communist President, Ramiz Alia stated that:

> Albania has demanded and will continue to demand a strong collaboration with the world. It will construct an open foreign policy. We are prepared to accept friendship from everyone who sincerely wishes the Albanian people well and has the same interests as us. In Albanian foreign policy there will be no place for prejudices or for positions which are not compatible with the democratic tendencies of international relations (*Parliamentary Debates,* 30 April, 1990: 298).

The leader of the liberal current within the Party of Labour, Fatos Nano held a similar view with regard to the cautious opening up of Albania to the West. In an interview given in 1992 Fatos Nano emphasized that the opening of Albania to the West should reflect caution:

> We condemned the policy of self-isolation, but this does not mean that Albania should become a *bridge or a prey to the dictates of others.* We are for a politics of 'open doors' and not one of 'torn-down doors' (Nano, 1992:1, italics added).

As the quotation suggests, the newly reformed Socialists' process of opening up towards the West was careful and discreet. [118] Likewise, Nano stated that Albania's

---

[118] It is ironic that while here, Nano calls for caution with a view to avoiding becoming 'a bridge or a prey to the dictates of others', the metaphor of the bridge would later become a constitutive element of the security and foreign policy discourse of the Socialist-led governments in 1997-2005.

partnership with Europe and its integration in the global markets should not follow 'colonialist models', but build upon 'real partnership' (*Zeri i Popullit*, 1992a:1).

This 'anti-imperialist' discourse was only abandoned during the political crisis of 1996. Following the electoral process of May 1996, the leftist opposition sought support from the West to de-legitimize the Democrat-led government domestically and externally. However, given Berisha' strong anti-communist rhetoric and Albania's seemingly fast economic development, Europe had shown some reluctance to step in (see Milo, 23 February 1997:10). [119]

Once in power, the Socialists sought to depart completely from the 'anti-hegemonic' discourse of their communist predecessors. When asked by a foreign newspaper in 1998 about his personal transformation from a communist, Nano reminisced about his attempt to persuade the communist President Ramiz Alia to consider his report on Albania's roadmap towards the European Community: 'He [Alia] found it of no interest. Thus we lost the way, which was followed by Poland and Czech Republic. Today the turn has been taken' (*Zeri I Popullit*, 1998a:8). Thus, not only was the identity of the Socialists reconstructed as pro-European and open to liberalization from the early nineties to the present moment, but also the new trend within the party which Nano represented was clearly distinguished from the old cadre, which in Nano's quote was represented by Alia.

This confirms that the shift of emphasis from the discourse of 'national sovereignty' and from the formulation of the 'national interest' as equivalent to the 'national question' to an economic and regional formulation of security does not represent a change from a nationalist to a Euro-Atlantic foreign policy orientation per se. Instead, it illustrates how the elites re-articulated their political identities in favourable ways in new contexts. Furthermore, this shift shows that the Socialists' cautious attitude towards the West was not tied to any anti-

---

[119] It should be noted that while the USA seemed to have determined quickly that Berisha should go immediately after the May 1996 elections, the reaction of the EU was more discreet and cautious. See Myers (1997.

Western foreign policy orientation; instead it depended upon the Socialists' interpretation of national interest and democratic governance.

We can draw two conclusions from this analysis: Firstly, the framing of the 'national interest' was inextricably linked to the national elites' political interests and identity. Secondly, the national interest was framed by the leftist opposition primarily in terms of domestic and regional democratization. These two assumptions also remain valid for the Socialist-led governments of the post-1997 period.

5.3. The 'New Politics' of Socialist-led governments: 1997-2005

Having analyzed the Socialists' political discourse of the 'nation', the 'region' and the 'West' while in opposition, I turn now to the articulation of the 'national interest' and the 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation' from 1997 to 2005. To this end, I investigate the construction of the identity of self and of the West in the official discourse. I explore how the ideological elements of the post-communist Left were re-articulated by the Socialist-led coalition in a new context in order to create a new state identity and obtain both internal and external legitimacy for the national elite in power. Ultimately, this section attempts to answer the question of how different the 'new politics' of the Socialist-led governments was from the foreign policy of their predecessors.

While my main focus is on the official discourse, I also draw upon transcripts of parliamentary debates as well as unofficial texts produced by prominent state figures. This diversification of texts, genres and voices helps to detect the differences in the articulation of the 'national interest' and of the 'West' across different discursive sites, as well as of the potential challenges to the dominant discourse. Furthermore, it elucidates the discursive strategies through which the political actors attempt to recover and 'stabilize' their political identities both spatially and temporally.

The first section analyses the government's re-interpretation of the National Renaissance identity narratives, particularly the narrative of 'pragmatism' in the post-1997 context, with the aim of constructing a stable and legitimate identity not only for the Albanian state but for the government itself. The second section explores the usage of 'pragmatism' as the keystone of the official and political discourse of the Albanian Left following the economic collapse of 1997, with particular regard to the 'regional dimension' of Albanian foreign policy. The third section explores the formulation of the 'national question' in general and of Kosovo in particular in the pre- and post-1998 periods against the backdrop of the Socialist-led coalition and of its economic understanding of security. The last section explores the incorporation of culturalist elements into the dominant discourse of foreign and security policy following the NATO air campaign on former Yugoslavia in March 1999, and the events of September 11.

5.3.1. 1997 as a Moment of (Re) Awakening: Constructing a 'Pragmatist' nation

The electoral victory of the Socialist-led coalition in 29 June 1997 was a direct product of the popular protests against the response to and management of the 1997 pyramid crisis on the part of the Democrat-led government. The crisis had created a highly divided political scene domestically: the Socialists accused the Democrats in general and President Berisha in particular of igniting national divisions between north and south and therefore running against the 'national interests' (for instance, Nano 1997d: 3; Nano 1997g: 3). In the period between the May elections of 1996 and their electoral victory in June 1997, the Socialists sought to differentiate themselves from the Democrats' heightened nationalist rhetoric. Therefore, during the electoral campaign of 1997, the Socialists articulated the 'national interest' primarily in terms of national unity and reconciliation as well as of Albania's 'return' to the Western community. In this respect, the Socialists were keen to

stress that 'Our national philosophy is oriented by the National Renaissance which promoted national unification and reconciliation' (*Punimet e Kuvendit Popullor*, 27 July 1997: 247).

Just as the Democrats framed their electoral victory of March 1992 as the culmination of the National Renaissance, so the Socialists and their leftist allies anticipated the elections of June 1997 as the true National Awakening (for instance, Nano, 1997d: 3) [120] Nevertheless, there were differences in the ways that the two parties re-constituted the National Renaissance: the Democrats identified themselves as the successors of the National Renaissance by emphasizing the solution of the national question and by framing security primarily in traditional/territorial terms. On the contrary, the Socialists' conception of security was primarily economic. Furthermore, whereas the Democrats had read the history of the Albanian people as a struggle against foreign invaders and its national enemies, the Socialists read the history of the Albanian people as a continuous struggle of liberation from oppression and from undemocratic rule. This chimed well with their ideological interpretation of the key moments in the history of the Albanian Left—most prominently, the National Liberation War and the 1997 anti-government protests—in terms of struggle for liberation and popular protest.

The economic crisis of 1997 de-stabilized and showed up the inconsistencies of the Democrat-led government's discourse of the Albanian state's exemplarity. As I showed in Chapter 4, the elements of this discourse of exemplarity were the 'strong support of the Western partners', Albania's role as the homeland of the Albanian nationalism in the Balkans and the 'economic miracle' as a product of rapid privatization and liberalization of the economy. The crisis showed the West's frustration with Berisha; the institutional collapse made Albania too weak to have a voice in the region regarding Kosovo or the other Albanian communities in the region; and finally, the 'economic miracle' proved to be a farce when the

---

[120] The same tone was upheld by the media which supported the Socialist Party at the time, such as the newspaper *Koha Jone*. See for example interview with Edi Rama (*Koha Jone*, 1997b: 4, 5).

collapse of the pyramid schemes led to losses amounting to half of the national GDP (Jarvis, 2000). Therefore, the Socialist-led government was faced with the need to reconstruct the identity of the Albanian state or, in other words, to invent a new story of self. This new narrative had to capture the needs of the Socialists to differentiate themselves from the Democrats in the eyes of the West and yet also to be recognized domestically as promoting the 'national question'.

To this end, the Socialists set about re-interpreting identity narrative of pragmatism. 'Pragmatism' here was used to mean that because of their geographic location in the Balkans, Albanians had 'always' been obliged to bargain their higher ideals for their survival. This interpretation of Albanian 'pragmatism' in terms of adaptability and negotiability was perfectly compatible with the Socialists' emphasis on their ever-changing and reformist political identity, as well as with their attempts to draw economic aid and investment from the West.

In this respect, the articulation of 'pragmatism' as the new identity narrative helped to explain the Socialists' continuation of the liberalization reforms of the right-centre predecessors. Following their electoral victory in 1997, the Socialist-led coalition followed a very liberal agenda, including further privatization and integration of Albania into international economic organizations. This attitude clashed with the Socialists' hesitant approach towards liberalization in the early nineties. When asked by a journalist of the French newspaper *Liberation* whether it was not paradoxical for a 'former communist to turn Albania into a devoted student of the IMF', Prime Minister Nano replied: 'Our politics is neither on the right nor on the left. It is necessary' (*Zeri I Popullit*, 1998a: 8). Thus, the pragmatism of the Albanian administration was framed as apolitical and not underpinned by ideological preferences. This disclaimer aimed at accomplishing two things at once: the recovery of the Socialists' communist past, and their identification with Europeanism. Towards these two ends, the post-1997 Socialist foreign and security policy sought to differentiate between the

'politicized' and the 'ideological' foreign policy of the old communist regime, and the 'apolitical' and 'rationalist' foreign policy of the centre-left coalition. Once the legacy of the communist ideologization of foreign policy had been publicly and repeatedly renounced, the Socialists would be in a better position to construct their own political post-communist identity as the initiators and supporters of an Europeanist and moderate foreign policy, which centred on economic interests rather than ideological differences.

How, then, was pragmatism constructed, and what meaning was attached to it? Most importantly, what possibilities did the Socialists' construction of their own political identity and of Albanian state identity in terms of pragmatism create for the formulation of the 'national question' and of a viable Kosovo policy? 'Pragmatism' was articulated in the government's official discourse through a chain of signifiers, the most important of which were: economic, realistic, necessary, apolitical and national. Being linked to these signifiers in a relationship of equivalence, 'pragmatism' came to mean that firstly, the West's interest and Albania's interests were compatible; secondly, that economic prosperity was the foremost security issue of Albania and of the region; and finally, that the Westernizing New Politics of the Left rose above the ideological conflicts of domestic politics. In other words, politics was an obstacle to the process of Euro-Atlantic integration.

However, these signifiers did not have any fixed or stable meaning. Therefore, the meaning of 'pragmatism' was fixed only through its juxtaposition to other signifiers such as 'ethnic nationalism', 'fundamentalism' or 'anti-Westernism'. The construction of these alternatives was paramount, then, to the re-interpretation and eventual stability of the pragmatist identity narrative, as the analysis demonstrates below. Therefore, in 1997-1998, the 'new pragmatist politics' of the Socialist-led government interpreted 'national interest' primarily in economic terms. In the words of the Albanian President, Rexhep Meidani, 'the measure of success of foreign policy became firstly the 'volume of exchange, investment and mutual benefits of Albania with the international partners. This would be the starting point of

a genuinely *open*, *national* and *pragmatist* policy which has one priority only: partnership' (Meidani in Nazarko, 2000: 77). In the context of this 'new policy', Albania was construed as a 'partner' and not as a recipient of aid or source of instability. The Socialist-led government declared that Albanian foreign policy would reflect and embody the best values of contemporary European civilization. In this respect, the basis of Albanian foreign policy according to the Socialists would be dialogue, co-existence and openness (see for instance Nano, 1997f:3).

At the same time, the official discourse constructed partnership with the West as equivalent with Albania's survival in the Balkans and with the 'national question'. Both the official and the political discourse of the Socialists articulated 'Europe' and 'European integration' in terms of normality and of those democratic and moral values which are compatible with the main characteristics of the Albanian nation, which is Albanianness (Nano, 1998a).[121] . The Albanian Prime Minister, Fatos Nano even went so far as to claim in an interview to an Italian daily that 'becoming a protectorate of Italy would make it easier for Albania to be integrated in the European community' (*Radio Free Europe*, 1997). In the Prime Minister's words 'Albania will show that it is capable of accepting even a 'protectorate' if that leads to it becoming a member state of the European Union as soon as possible'(*Radio Free Europe*, 1997). He noted Italians are already working in Albanian government ministries to make them more efficient' (*Radio Free Europe*, 1997). Nano replied to the criticism received at home (*Radio Free Europe*, 1997; also *Zeri i Popullit*, 1997d: 3) by reiterating the Euro-Atlantic orientation of the new government, against the isolation 'towards which the out-dated nationalists are trying to push the country' (Nano 2005:2).

---

[121] For example, the Albanian PM Fatos Nano drew parallels between the foreign policy and diplomacy of the national ideologues [*rilindasvet*] and the Socialist foreign policy and his own efforts to start dialogue with Slobodan Milosevic at the Crete Summit. According to Nano, dialogue remained one of the basic values of the Albanian state, from its formation up to date (Nano, 1998a:3).

The Prime Minister stated that the Socialists' stance with regards to the 'national interests' align with the European stance, which according to him meant 'opening of borders and the maximization of the contacts between Albanians and the citizens of other countries in the Balkans, with a view that the Balkans is Europeanized as soon as possible' (*Zeri i Popullit*, 1997f: 3). At the same time, Nano denounced the domestic opponents, which is the Democrats in general and their leader Berisha in particular, as sharing the same communist-nationalist ideology as Milosevic (*Zeri i Popullit*, 1997f: 3). In this way, the projection of the 'nationalist', 'communist' and 'fundamentalist' political subject inside the Albanian state was crucial to the task of fixing the meaning of 'pragmatism'.

The new narrative of pragmatism also required the accommodation of relations with the Balkan neighbours. Leaving the nationalist past behind for the sake of the European future became a central theme of the Socialists' political and foreign policy discourse and their key identity metaphor (for example, *Zeri I Popullit*, 1998a: 9). This was ironic, given that Albania had not gone through any internal ethnic conflict and that the antecedent government (1992-1997) had not demonstrated any irredentist orientation, as I established in the previous chapter. Therefore, we can argue that the Socialist-led government 'simulated' these discursive categories such as 'ethnic nationalism' and eventually of 'religious fundamentalism' to the end of filling the notion of 'pragmatism' with meaning and thus differentiating themselves from the Democrats in the eyes of the West. I now turn my attention to the key policy directions through which pragmatism was materialized during the Socialist government and through which the government sought to differentiate itself from the foreign policy of the antecedent Democrat-led governments.

5.3.2. Socialists' Pragmatism in relation to the Balkans

The Socialists' 'new politics' (for instance, *Zeri i Popullit*, 1997a:2; Nano, 1997h: 3) in relation to the Balkans was materialized through their emphasis on 'good neighbourhood

policy'. 'Good neighbourhood policy' was one of the pillars of the Socialists' foreign policy. I argue that this was so not only because of the normative power of the EU (for instance Diez, 2005; Manners 2006) and because this was perceived as a requirement of the West, but also because of the Socialists' political repertoire and of their specific understanding of the relationship between nation and statehood on the one hand, and state and society on the other. The central place that the good neighbourhood policy occupied in the Socialists' foreign policy discourse is demonstrated primarily in two ways: firstly, through the discourse of the 'Balkan Schengen'; and secondly, through the preferential relationship with Greece.

5.3.2.1. The 'Balkan Schengen'

The new government assumed officially its leading role in the Balkans at the Crete Summit in November 1997. In Crete, the Albanian Prime Minister Fatos Nano launched his project for the democratization and Europeanization of the Balkans. The plan consisted primarily in 'making borders less important' (cited in Kola, 2003: 332) and prioritizing economic cooporation over ideological, political or ethnic differences. According to Nano, regional cooporation among the Balkans countries was the only guarantee for these countries' survival in a global market (Nano, 1997e:2).

In this process the 'Western Balkans' became a key notion for the Socialists' construction of a positive identity for themselves as well as a positive notion of agency for the Albanian state. For the former Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Kastriot Islami the ambition of the Socialists (and his personal ambition while at the head of diplomacy and of government) was to turn Albania into a second pole of emancipation of the Balkans (Slovenia being the first) (author's interview with Islami, 17 February 2006). In this respect, Albania's role as a negotiator with regards the national question as well as a partner of the West could only start from and depend upon its regional policies (See Meidani in Nazarko, 2000: 77).

Despite the early and non-official resistance towards the identification with the 'Western Balkans', the Socialist-led government came not only to accept but also to use regional identification for their political interests as well as for the construction of a democratic and Western identity of Albania as a source rather than consumer of stability. As confirmed by Islami, a prominent member of the Socialist party and minister in many Socialist-led coalitions, for the Socialists, the economic approach to regional integration was the only way for Albania (like the other countries of the Western Balkans) to survive the competition within the framework of the Free Trade Agreement with the EU (author's interview with Islami, 17 February 2006). In other words, the individual transition to the EU was regarded as much more difficult than the regional one.

Why, then, was regional identity so central in the security and foreign policy of the Socialist governments? One starting point for answering this is to look at the EU's power to construct regional identities. Despite the fact that there had been talk of the Western Balkans as early as 1996, the term was officially introduced by the Austrian Presidency of the EU in 1998 and it emerged as a distinct policy regional group only after the Kosovo crisis in 1999 and when Romania and Bulgaria were invited to open membership talks with the EU. Given the context of its birth, this regional identification denoted the necessity of containing the conflict and of post-conflict reconstruction. Yet, for a country such as Albania which had not undergone ethnic conflict and which had played the card of moderate politics with regard to the Albanian minorities in the Balkans, this categorization was a large step backwards in the process of EU integration (author's interviews with Islami, 17 February 2006; author's interview with Kondo, 7 February 2007). Why, then, did the Socialist governments push for such a strong identification with the Western Balkans?

One possible explanation has to do with the EU's attraction and its power to construct identities in the Balkan periphery, where the nineteenth-century image of Europe as the beacon of progress and civilization persists (Bechev, 2006: 16) and more generally to inscribe

'normality' in the countries in its periphery (Diez, 2006). As various constructivist authors have convincingly argued, the EU has the power to re-shape political geography by bundling states together (Pace, 2006; Bechev, 2006). As Dimitar Bechev argues in the case of the Balkans region-construction, 'Europeanizing elites in the Balkans have been content to pursue region-building strategies in compliance with the norms projected by the EU because they did not question the legitimacy of Europe as a standard-setter' (Bechev, 2006: 230). However, the Albanian elites did resist the term 'Western Balkans' (author's interview with Islami, 17 February 2006; also State Archive No. 251).[122] Furthermore, although the notion of the Balkans was present in the Democrat-led governments' foreign policy discourse, it never mounted to a strong state identification on a par with its role in the Socialists' political discourse while in opposition and in their official discourse of foreign policy from 1997 to 2005. I argue that the reason for this strong regional identification lies in the political identity and interests of the new post-1997 state elites. As we saw so far, whereas the centre-right coalition government of 1992-1997 had interpreted the 'Western vocation' and the 'national interest' within a traditional/territorial conception of security, the Socialist-led coalitions interpreted the 'national interest' and the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation'[123] through an economic lens. Furthermore, regional integration as a step towards European integration was particularly important for the Albanian left in general and the Socialist party in particular in its attempts to revamp its political identity in terms of progressiveness, openness and tolerance (Nano, 2003:2). Thus, regional identification was crucial for the legitimacy of the Albanian left domestically and externally.

---

[122] Documentation in the State Archive of the Foreign Ministry speaks clearly of the diplomatic attempts made in 1996 by the Albanian Ambassador in Brussels as well as by the then Vice Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Tritan Shehu to persuade the EU Commissioner van den Broek that Albania was being punished for the misdoings of Serbia by being inserted in a group which was distinguished for its unresolved state-building problems.

[123] For the difference between 'Western vocation' and 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' refer to the previous chapter, where I argue that the Euro-Atlantic orientation discourse is recent and can be traced back to the crisis of 1996-1997 rather than to the early days of post-communism as the official discourse suggests.

5.3.2.2. Recovery of bilateral relations with Greece

The attempts to improve relations with the EU neighbour, Greece, were part of this process of identity-construction of the Socialists. As discussed in Chapter 4, the Democrat-led government's relations with Greece came close to breaking point more than once during 1992-1997. The Socialists emphasized the need for an enhanced relationship with Greece as part of the reconciliatory politics in the Balkans, not only at the level of states but also of (Socialist) parties. Thus, the leftist discourse held that the legacy of the early nineties' conflicts over 'minorities' should be overcome by joint attempts to recover the economy and integrate the Balkans as a whole into Europe. In his speech at the Congress of the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) in 2005, the Albanian Prime Minister emphasized the need for the Socialists of both states to assume a greater role in the economic integration of the Balkans as well as in the creation of multi-ethnic democracies in the region (*Zeri i Popullit*, 2005b:2).

The relationship with Greece remained preferential throughout the Socialist-led administrations 1997-2005 and it was qualitatively more enhanced than the bilateral relationship with the other EU neighbour Italy, despite the leading role of the latter in managing the 1997 crisis (author's interview with Mertiri, 23 January 2007; author's interview with Islami, 17 February 2006). This can be explained with reference to three main factors: firstly, the strong Greek business presence in Albania (author's interview with Lleshi 15 January 2007; author's interview with Islami 17 February 2006, Bejtja 1997) [124]; secondly, the presence in Greece of the highest number of Albanian immigrants of the post-communist era (author's interview with Zeneli, 21 March 2006); and thirdly, the Socialist-led governments' need to differentiate themselves from the Democrats' conflict with Greece over

---

[124] Former Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Foreign Affairs as well as prominent member of the Socialist Party, Kastriot Islami explains the strong economic ties between Albania and Greece in terms of the latter's serious commitment to invest in Albania in the aftermath of the 1997 crisis, "*In comparison with the Greeks, Italians were never quite as committed and serious in doing business with Albania (...) Trust has been broken between Italy and Albania, as neither side has always stuck to their words*". Author's personal interview with Kastriot Islami, Tirana, 16 February 2006.

'minorities'. All three factors are related to the identity and interests of the political elite in power and they confirm that the enhanced relationship with Greece was compatible with the Socialists' economic understanding of security and Albania's aspiration to join the EU.[125] In many occasions, the Albanian Prime Minister acknowledged Greece as the main Europeanizing force of the Balkans and as an example for the rest of the Western Balkans to follow in their process of integration (for instance, Nano 1997e:2; also *Zeri i Popullit*, 2002:3).

The Socialist government framed the question of Albanian immigration in Greece and of the Greek minority in Albania as possibilities of enhancing the bilateral relationshio between the two countries and not as 'problems' of nationality and statehood (see *Zeri i Popullit*, 2005b:2). Furthermore, in his meeting with the leader of PASOK, Jorgos Papandreu, the Albanian Prime Minister suggested that the Albanian emigrants in Greece join PASOK and that the Greek minority in Albania join the Albanian Socialist Party (*Zeri i Popullit*, 2005b:2)[126] The Albanian Prime Minister justified this proposal with the benefits it would bring to regional cooperation and to the objective of Europeanization of the Balkans. As the official newspaper of SP, *Zeri i Popullit* summarizes it: 'A political Schengen which precedes the Balkan Schengen' (*Zeri i Popullit*, 2005b:2). The Socialists saw the 'Balkans' as a locus of Albania's relations with the world in general and with Europe in particular (see for instance, *Parliamentary Debates*, 7 October 1998:1748-9). What Iver Neumann argues about the formation of regions, that they are 'invented by political actors as a political programme, they are not simply waiting to be discovered' (Neumann, 2001:58) holds also true for the re-invention, re-articulation and instrumental use of the 'Western Balkans' by the Albanian Left in general and the Socialists in particular. This shows that region-building projects and the

---

[125] The Socialists' preferential relationship with Greece was countered by the Rightists' preference for Italy to be the key EU partner and fuelled the opposition's allegations that the Tirana government was defending the economic interests of Athens. See, *Shekulli,* 2003; Shekulli 2001.
[126] One should note that the SP and its leader Fatos Nano held one of the biggest electoral rallies in Athens with the Albanian emigrants in June 1997. See *Zeri i Popullit*, 1997b: 2.

construction of regional identities are internal as much as inter-state or supra-national projects (also del Sarto, 2006; Pace 2006). Furthermore, they are tied to specific projects of governance and conceptions of democracy.

   To conclude this part, I suggest that the Socialists' articulation of the Balkan identity was qualitatively different from the Democrats' articulation of the Balkans as a radical *other* which represented the negative pole of Europe. In contrast, by constructing the Balkans identity in terms of a significant and yet 'negotiable *other*', the Albanian state assumed responsibility to act in the region. This responsibility to emancipate and democratize the Balkans also determined what articulations of the 'national question' in general and of the Kosovo question in particular were possible. The following section discusses how the 'national question', with particular reference to Kosovo, was articulated within this economic framing of security and the identity narrative of pragmatism.

5.3.3 The 'national question' in the context of the economic discourse of security

   In this part I ask how the 'national question', with particular reference to the Kosovo question, was interpreted in the official foreign and security policy discourse of the Socialist-led government. The analysis is divided into two sub-sections, dealing respectively with the periods before and during the humanitarian crisis of 1998. This temporal division is informed by the assumption that the Kosovo refugee crisis of spring 1998 marked a temporary broadening of the boundaries of what constituted the national community.

5.3.3.1. The 'national question' 1997-1998

   For the Albanian Prime Minister, the Crete Summit of 1997 proved that the entire Balkans was already open for and oriented towards Europe and the European integration (*Zeri i Popullit*, 1997d: 3). In his Summit speech, the Prime Minister framed the Kosovo question solely in terms of the 'human and civil rights of the ethnic and national communities' and

grounded its solution in the context of democratization and Europeanization of the entire Balkans (*Zeri i Popullit*, 1997d: 3). Thus, Nano confirmed that the Albanian government's attitude to the national question was the same as that of the West (*Zeri i Popullit*, 1997d: 3). The economic discourse of security produced a construction of the Albanian state identity as inextricably linked to regional economic integration. Within this economic understanding of security, the official line was that only an economically strong Albanian state could have a voice in international relations regarding the Kosovo question. In the words of the Socialist Minister for Foreign Affairs:

> The main element of our FP is the Euro-Atlantic integration, which would give the Albanian state and society the place it deserves as well as enabling it to play its role in the European and global politics, which is characterized by *multi-dimensional nationalism* and interdependency…Our aim is to turn Albania…from a source of instability of the European Community into its loyal partner (*Punimet e Kuvendit Popullor*, 10 November 1997:247).

As the quotation above suggests, the Socialist-led government was struggling during the early days in power to invent a foreign policy vocabulary, which would resonate with the public frustration over the fact that 'foreigners' had to intervene to restore order and stability in 1997,[127] as well as displaying to the West Albania's commitment to a moderate and constructive policy in the Balkans. The term 'multi-dimensional nationalism' demonstrates clearly such attempts to reconcile the discourse of 'national sovereignty' and of 'national interest' with that of regional integration. Furthermore, it reflects the Socialists' attempts to identify with the ideology of the National Renaissance by emphasizing the primacy of the 'nation' over other societal and political differences (see *Parliamentary Debates*, 10

---

[127] The Parliamentary debates of spring-summer 1997 reveal the controversial attitudes towards the intervention of the *Alba* Mission in Albania. Interestingly, prominent politicians on the Right, such as the Republican leader Sabri Godo, insisted that Greek forces would only come to Albania under an EU umbrella rather than as a unilateral military force, given the legacy of the minority problems between Greece and Albania, particularly in the 1992-1997 period. See Parliamentary Debates,

November, 1997:249) as well as their need to reassure the West that the government's 'new route' would change radically from that of its predecessors.

When asked by the French newspaper *Liberation* whether an 'independent Kosovo' recognized by the Republic of Albania still existed, Prime Minister Nano replied that: 'There is no possible reunification outside the European criteria which creates regional communities, which in turn are linked through open borders' (*Zeri I Popullit*, 1998a: 9). Furthermore, to the question of whether Albania considered the creation of a second Albanian state in the Balkans (Kosovo) as a solution to the present crisis, Nano replied:

> My model is the one of a decentralized Europe, wherein borders are more control points rather than dividing barriers and wherein the democratic institutions allow the citizens to enjoy freely their liberties; [it is] not a project which recreates a community of peoples divided by *history* (*Zeri I Popullit*, 1998a: 9, italics added).

As this statement makes clear, Kosovo independence was not an option for the Albanian government in early 1998. The themes of 'borders as points of contacts' and eventually after 1998, of 'European borders for Kosovo' were framed as vague policy options which did not present any clear platform on the Kosovo question. As the quotation strongly implies, any other articulation of the 'national interest' which was not framed in the language of 'European borders' was equated with Balkan-type populism. This enabled the Prime Minister to emphasize particularly the departure of the Socialist government from the historical discourse of nation-state borders. Thus, Nano differentiated the Socialist administration not only from Balkan ethnic-nationalist politics but also from centre-right predecessors.

To the former end, the Socialist administration continuously reassured the West that the new government did not harbour any aspirations regarding a 'Greater Albania'. Yet, while the official discourse repeatedly denied the existence of such an option within Albania, the

opposition was constructed in the image of 'Balkan nationalists' and 'fundamentalists' (for instance, *Koha Jone*, 1996:5, *Koha Jone*, 1997c:3; *Koha Jone*, 1997a:6; *Parliamentary Debates*, 10 November 1997:215; Nano 2005b). This shows how the language of 'deviations' or departures from the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' of the Albanian state was primarily a political discourse through which the national elites sought to readjust and stabilize their identities and satisfy their interests.

Parallel to this formulation of the 'national question' within the regional dynamic of democratization, the Socialist-led government attempted during its first two years in office to distance the Albanian state identity from Kosovo. The following explanation by the Albanian Minister for Foreign Affairs as to why the platform of 'Greater Albania' failed to gain popularity within Albania captures best this differentiation between Albanians of Albania and those living in other Balkan states.

> The platform of Greater Albania is not popular in Albania. This does not mean that Albanians of Albania are less nationalistic than others or that they do not want close relations with their compatriots. But Albanians of Albania have cultivated a *higher developed* political culture and education than Albanians in Kosovo or Macedonia. Living in the mother country, they have conceptualized their future in the development of Albania and its orientation towards Euro-Atlantic structures (Milo, 1998:4, italics added).

In this statement, Albania's commitment to Euro-Atlantic integration is made equivalent with the identity of the Albanian people within the state borders of Albania. By differentiating the Albanians of Albania from the Albanians of Kosovo the statement aims to reassure the West that unification is neither possible (because of the Euro-Atlantic commitment of Tirana) nor *desirable* (because of the identity differences among Albanians on both sides of the border). Furthermore, this differentiation reiterates the mission of the Socialist-led government's foreign policy: the fulfillment of the Western identity of the Albanian nation. As late as in July 1998, in a meeting with the minister of the Contact

Group[128], the Albanian Prime Minister stated that the position of Albania vis-à-vis Kosovo would be in alignment only with the international community, which was for an extended autonomy within ex-Yugoslavia, and would be congruent with the 'European orientation of this nation' (*Parliamentary Debates,* 6 July 1998: 1323).

The last part of the chapter will demonstrate how this differentiation of the Albanian identity from the identity of Kosovo remained a strong element of the Socialists' discourse of the 'national question' even after the Kosovo refugee crisis of 1998 and the NATO air bombardments of the former Yugoslavia in March 1999.

5.3.3.2. 'One nation, one stance': the national question during 1998-1999

In this section I suggest that the Kosovo refugee crisis of 1998 marked a moment of broadening of the national imagination and of the collective national 'we', albeit temporarily. The pertinent question is whether the government's equation of the 'national interest' with the 'national question' and its response to the 1998 refugee crisis marked a departure from its pragmatist security and foreign policy. I will argue that this is not the case. Rather than representing a nationalist or hard-line approach to the Kosovo question, the response to the 1998 crisis was entirely compatible with the pragmatist line of the Socialist government and with the Socialists' attempts to create a legitimate political identity while at the same time assure the West of Albania's Euro-Atlantic orientation.

The acceleration of the conflict in Kosovo in 1998 and the humanitarian crisis which followed led to a toughening of the government's nationalist rhetoric. The dynamic of the debate and the official discourse on Kosovo shifted, in turn, with the USA taking a more advanced position than the Contact Group, which effectively meant threatening the Belgrade regime with NATO intervention unless the ethnic cleansing of Albanians would stop.

---

[128] The Contact Group was first created in response to the war and the crisis in Bosnia in the early 1990s. It is composed of United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Russia and Italy.

Following the change of US policy with regard to the Kosovo Liberation army, (KLA) resistance in Kosovo, the Tirana officials dropped the term 'terrorist' from their references to the KLA fighters in Kosovo (Vickers and Pettifer, 2007: 148). In July 1998 the Albanian Minister for Defense hardened the security rhetoric in relation to Kosovo by declaring that Albania was considering the possibility of military confrontation with Serbia, if the Serbs continued with their ethnic cleansing in Kosovo (Vickers and Pettifer, 2007: 148).

In addition, popular manifestations with the participation of the leadership of the entire political class were organized during March 1998 under the slogan 'One nation, one stance'. The official newspaper of the Socialist Party in power, *Zeri i Popullit* reported these protests under headlines such as 'Party Flags Down, National Flag Up' (see *Zeri i Popullit*, 1998b: 3) These protests were organized by the President of the Republic, Rexhep Meidani and they were the first occasion after the 1997 conflict on which prominent politicians from both the government and the opposition stood together on the same tribune. Speeches made by the political leaders during these protests emphasized the urgency of political reconciliation in the face of the violence in Kosovo. Thus the protests targeted both the 'West' and the domestic audience. Regarding the former, the protests aimed to reiterate that the position of Tirana was in step with that of the international community as well as to show that the national elite was capable of consensus and reconciliation. Regarding the domestic audience, it aimed to show that such consensus was possible when the 'national question' was at stake. Thus 'political conflict' was juxtaposed to the 'national question' in much the same way as 'communism' had been juxtaposed to the 'national question' in the early nineties by the Democrat-led government, as discussed in Chapter 4. Yet, apart from an appeal to the West to stop the violence in Kosovo, these temporary heightened nationalist tones did not rise to any consistent policy option on the part of Tirana.

The refugees from the war in Kosovo who were sheltered in Albania were not conventionally named as 'refugees' in the official discourse. Instead, they were referred to as

'the escapees from the Serbian aggression or conflict'. Likewise, the government referred now to Albania as the 'motherland' (*vendi ame*) (see for instance, Nano 1998b:2; *Parliamentary Debates*, 7 October 1998:1731-1760) and the government undertook to play the role of the 'preferential party' in the international negotiations for the solution of the Kosovo question (Nano, 1998c:3).

The framing of the Kosovo refugees in terms of the 'escapees' emphasized two main things: it unequivocally identified the aggressor's side (the Serbs) while at the same time demonstrating something more than human solidarity with the Kosovo Albanians who had fled Kosovo. The hospitality of the Albanian state towards the Albanian refugees was framed as both, an act of patriotism and of re-stabilization of the Balkans. Domestically, the Socialist government framed the sheltering of the Kosovo refugees as a patriotic act. At the same time the official discourse construed the sheltering of the Kosovo refugees in terms of 'crisis management'. In this respect, the Albanian state's hospitality was framed as complementary to the Western involvement in the Kosovo crisis. The Albanian government was in desperate need for such recognition on the part of the West given that the crisis of 1997 had been solved with the military intervention of the European Union Mission in Kosovo (EUMIK). Thus, the refugee crisis was framed in the official discourse as in full accordance with the Albanian state's aspiration to transform itself from a source of instability in the region to a contributor to peace and stability.[129]

Tirana's nationalist tones did not outlast the NATO air campaign of 1999. In 2001, the Albanian PM Fatos Nano reverted to the economic conception of security and to the formulation of the national question around the notion of the 'region'. According to Nano,

---

[129] The Albanian government was hoping to be 'rewarded' for 'crisis management' with the opening of the negotiations for a Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) with the EU; however, the EU backtracked on its promise on a SAA soon after the 1999 crisis ended, (Bideleux and Jeffries 2007:61).

Tirana and 6 million Albanians do not simply share their nationality, but above all, 'they share the same dream to have peaceful region, democratic development, integrated markets and open borders for free movement within the region and in Europe' (Nano, 2000:2). As the quote suggests, the identification with the 'region' subsumes nationality.

In December 2001 Prime Minister Nano held a confidential meeting in Athens with Serbian president Vojislav Kostunica. In an interview given to the Albanian weekly *Klan* following the meeting, Nano noted that:

> It is impressive how the Serbs seem to have forgotten Kosovo; they do not seem to have it as their political-regional priority anymore. Throughout the talk, Kostunica did not even mention Kosovo…Consequently all those folkloristic patriots who expect that every time one holds talks with Yugoslavia, one should have representatives from Kosovo in the delegation or should take the opinion of the Kosovo leaders prior to talks, should not forget that the Prishtina-Belgrade segment is independent from the Tirana-Belgrade segment (Bushati, 2001: 31).

The statement reflects the withdrawal of Tirana from the role of the mediator between Belgrade and Pristina which it had hitherto attempted to play. As such it restates the Socialists' discourse of 'shedding the historical/nationalist past'. However, this position proved to be premature, at least with regard to the Serbs' short memory with regard to Kosovo, as the unsuccessful negotiations over the final status of Kosovo in 2007 were to show.

The following part explores how the hospitality of the Albanian state during 1998 was used by the national elite in power following the NATO air campaign of 1999. In turn, it investigates how the NATO air campaign of 1999 paved the way for the civilizational discourse of security which followed September 11 and Albania's engagement in the anti-terror coalition. The analysis of these two moments together is informed by the assumption that they both contributed to the incorporation and entrenchment of cultural elements into the Socialists' framing of national security.

5.4. Albania's Atlanticist identity in the wake of the Kosovo crisis and September 11

In this section I analyze how the national elite in power re-articulated pro-Americanism within their dominant economic discourse during 1997-2005. Although both the NATO and EU integration processes were framed in the official discourse as two sides of the same coin (Nano, 2004: 24), the Socialists' economic understanding of security framed European integration as the first priority of the post-1997 government. This changed in 1998 following the escalation of the Kosovo conflict and the differences between the US and the EU position regarding the Kosovo question. In this section I analyze, firstly how NATO integration was interpreted as a 'security community' (Adler and Barnett 1998) in the post-1999 air campaign period; and secondly, *how* and *why* the elite in power incorporated this culturalist interpretation of NATO into its dominant narrative of the pragmatism of the Albanian state.

5.4.1 Atlanticism and the National Question

As argued above, the Kosovo refugee crisis of 1998 marked a moment of broadening of the 'national community' in the official discourse. In this respect, the official discourse departed temporarily from its articulation of the Kosovo question in terms of national and human rights. This shift in the articulation of the Kosovo question was accompanied by an upsurge in support for the USA's policy with regard to Kosovo.

Miranda Vickers and James Pettifer suggest that there were two distinct policy orientations and affiliations within the Socialist government of the time: the American orientation, represented by President Rexhep Meidani and the new Prime Minister Pandeli Majko and the European orientation, represented by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Paskal Milo (Vickers and Pettifer, 2007:177). According to Vickers and Pettifer, these two orientations led to conflicting responses to the Kosovo conflict: the European current defended a moderate pro-EU position, while the American current pushed for a more assertive

policy. The slowness of the Contact Group in coming up with a clear and coherent position on the issue of Kosovo and the escalation of the conflict led to the dominance of the pro-American orientation within the Socialist party during 1998. This was despite the proclaimed strong Europeanist identity of the party in power. As the former Minister for Foreign Affairs put it, 'the USA became the Great Ally which in a way found us' (author's interview with Islami, 17 February, 2006). Following the September 11 attacks, on 3 March 2003 the Albanian parliament voted unanimously in favour of putting the Albanian aerial and naval space as well as territorial military bases at the disposal of the *Coalition of the willing*.[130]

This shift did not however mean a radical negation of Europe as an inspiring model of domestic democratization as well as of democratization of relations among neighbours in the Balkans. Rather, it demanded a new articulation of Albanian pro-Americanism as complementary to the Socialists' proclaimed Europeanist identity and their economic understanding of security (*Punimet e Kuvendit Popullor*, 7 October 1998). To the end of investigating the articulation of the Atlanticist identity one should first look at how integration in NATO was constructed in the official discourse before and after the NATO air campaign against former Yugoslavia in March 1999.

NATO membership was interpreted as the primary 'national interest' in two respects: Firstly, in moments of crisis or juncture, such as in 1992, when the political party in power was keen to confirm its pro-Western commitment and distance itself from the communist past; in 1997, when the national elite in power invoked threats to the territorial sovereignty of Albania; or in 1998, when territorial attacks on the part of former Yugoslavia and the spill-over of the Kosovo conflict into other former republics of Yugoslavia with Albanian

---

[130] 'Coalition of the willing' is a phrase used to describe military/humanitarian interventions for which the United Nations Security Council cannot agree to mount a full UN peacekeeping operation. It was applied during the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003.

minorities seemed possible. However, with the exception of spring 1998,[131] physical threats were neither present nor credible in the post-1997 crisis period. Secondly, NATO membership was attached to the 'national interest', when it was regarded as complementary to the EU integration process. In this latter interpretation, NATO was viewed not only as a military organization but also as one which embodied the same democratic values as the EU (author's interview with Milo, 21 January 2007). Therefore, membership in NATO would confirm the Western identity of Albania and of the Albanian nation as well as the Socialists' commitment to the 'national interests'. In other words, NATO membership was regarded as confirmation of Albania's capability to become part of the Euro-Atlantic institutions in general and the EU in particular (author's interview with Rakipi, 15 March 2006; author's interview with Milo, 15 May 2008).

One possible reason for this culturalist rather than military interpretation of NATO integration is the change in self-identification of NATO in the post-Cold War period. As Michael Williams and Iver Neuman argue, 'from being ostensibly a military alliance NATO has steadily re-conceptualized itself in cultural terms, the essential identity and history of which is now understood as one of cultural, or even civilisational commonality centered around the shared democratic foundations of its members' (Williams and Neumann, 2000: 367). In this sense, NATO is understood as a 'security community' (Adler and Barnett, 1998) whose members share the same values, ideas and meaning of security. I suggest that the Albanian government's interpretation of NATO in these culturalist terms aimed at stabilizing the Western identity of the Albania.

Thus, the Socialist-led governments interpreted NATO's role in the Kosovo conflict as a sign of recognition on the part of the West of the Western democratic identity of the Albanian state. Therefore, the NATO air bombardments of former Yugoslavia provided the

---

[131] The prevalence of concerns among the Albanian national elite about potential territorial violation of Albania on the part of former Yugoslavia in spring 1998 is also confirmed by the former Minister for Foreign Affairs, Besnik Mustafaj. Author's interview with Besnik Mustafaj, Tirana, 16 March 2006.

chance for the Socialist-led government to re-draw the ethical boundaries of the Albanian state.[132] This means that the war in Kosovo and above all the NATO intervention led by the USA gave the government the opportunity to reproduce a positive identity which was defined firstly by national unity rather than ideological, regional (implying within Albania) or religious fragmentation, and secondly, by the Western values of dialogue and civic nationalism.

This culturalist construction of Albania's Atlanticist identity was strengthened with Albania's engagement in the war on terror alongside the USA in 2002. In the words of a former adviser of the Albanian Prime Minister, Albania's engagement in the Coalition of the Willing was tied to Albania's commitment to democracy and Western values: 'Albania's choice of the USA over the oppressive and terrorist regime of Iraq is in full adherence with its principles and civilized western values, which contributed to the fall of the totalitarian communist regime in Albania 11 years ago' (Murati, 2003). Thus pro-Americanism was constructed as the expression of the democratic and Western values of the Albanian state as well as of the *interests* of the Albanian nation. At the same time, it resonated with the Left's ideological identity as a promoter of 'people's liberation', whether the 'people' were Kosovars or Iraqis. In this respect pro-Americanism sought to fix the political identity of the Socialists as cosmopolitans and as the antithesis of Balkan-type populism. At the same time, domestically, it constructed the Socialists as supporters of the 'national question'. The NATO air campaign against former Yugoslavia in March 1999 was interpreted as recognition of both the Western identity of the Albanian nation and the constructivist and peaceful policy of both Pristina and Kosovo. As the Albanian Prime Minister stated, 'The importance of America to us goes beyond geopolitics, into the Albanian heart and soul. If America went to Albania and asked: 'Who among you is a friend of the United States? 3.5 million people would rise, as

---

[132] This resonates with David Campbell's argument that the Cold War helped in the reproduction of American identity animated by a concern for the ethical boundaries of identity rather than the territorial borders of the state. See Campbell (1996:168).

one' (Nano, 2004:11). Thus not only were the West's interests equated with those of the nation, but the elite in power constructed itself as the only political force which could fulfill the Western identity of the nation.

5.4.2. 'Religious Tolerance' as Policy Basis

As discussed above, given the political context in which the Socialists came to power, it was crucial for them to emphasize that the ideological basis of their 'new politics' would be the National Renaissance. In this respect, they re-interpreted the basic tenet of the National Renaissance, which was that the nation should be placed above all societal/religious/political divisions, through the lens of 'pragmatism'. Within this interpretation, political contentions and differences became illegitimate in the face of Albania's 'historical mission', namely, 'Euro-Atlantic integration'. Thus, the only ideational and legitimacy basis for the Socialists' foreign policy became the 'economy', since all other cultural elements such as ethnicity, religion, and differences between Right and Left, were now constructed as 'deviations' from the Euro-Atlantic Orientation and from the National Renaissance. Yet, as the previous paragraph shows, the discourse of security during the Kosovo crisis of 1998 and following the September 11 attacks was also imbued with cultural elements.

One of these culturalist elements of the post-1998 security discourse was the secularism of the Albanian state and the 'religious tolerance" of the Albanian nation. The revival of the identity narrative of 'religious tolerance' during the Socialists' governments has two explanations: Firstly, the Socialists' attempt to distance themselves from their predecessors' administration and particularly the Democrat government's decision of 1992 to become a member of the Islamic Conference Organization (ICO) (see *Parliamentary Debates*, 10 November 1997: 249); and secondly, the Socialists' attempts to stabilize the Albanian state identity as secular and Western.

Regarding membership in the ICO, although *sotto voce*, the Socialists acknowledge that it was motivated by economics rather than culture or values, they still refer to it as a demonstration of the anti-Western orientation of the Albanian right (e.g. author's interview with Dade, 21 May 2008). References to the ICO serve then to indicate that the possibility of 'deviation' from the Euro-Atlantic orientation was present, but that this path had not been taken by the Socialist-led government. The need to reassure the West of Albania's commitment not to tolerate Islamic terrorism became urgent particularly after the US evacuated its diplomats from the embassy in Tirana in August 1998 in the face of possible terrorist attacks, following the arrest of five Islamic militants (*New York Times*, 17 August, 1998). Thus, the revival of the narrative of 'religious tolerance' served the domestic legitimization needs of the elite in power.

Secondly, the narrative of 'religious tolerance' was re-articulated within the discourse of the 'national question' during 1998. In this context, the Kosovo conflict raised for Tirana the concern of the Western public opinion perceiving Albanians as 'Islamic'. This concern was raised particularly due to the Serbian propaganda which portrayed the Kosovo Liberation Army as supporters of 'an Islamic State in the Balkans' (Islami, 1999: 191-192). In this context, the alignment with the US against an enemy which was largely defined in terms of religious fundamentalism and more specifically in terms of radical Islam would confirm the fallibility of the thesis of Islam as being a pillar of Albanians' national identification.

Through the narrative of 'religious tolerance', the identity and interest of the Albanian state were constructed as one. As the former Minister for Foreign Affairs, Katriot Islami stated, 'We cannot afford any sign of radicalization; we are constantly being monitored by the West' (author's interview with Islami, 17 February 2006). This explanation also fits very well with the Socialists' basic narrative of pragmatism: it articulated 'religious tolerance' as 'national interest' as long as it enhanced the positive Western identity of Albania and facilitated the processes of Euro-Atlantic integration.

5.5. Conclusions

This chapter discussed the foreign policy and security discourse of the Socialist-led governments from 1997 to 2005, with emphasis on the articulation of the 'national interest' and of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' of the Albanian state. I suggested that the official discourse articulated both, the 'national interest' and the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' as equivalent and interchangeable. In this respect, the official discourse did not demonstrate any departure from the official discourse of the Democrat-led government (1992-1997): despite the cautious approach taken to the opening towards the West in the early nineties and while in opposition (1992-1997), once in power the Socialists attempted to reinforce their Europeanist identity.

However, differences did pertain in the Socialist-led governments' articulation of security: while their predecessors had sustained a traditional (territorial) understanding of national security, the leftist governments formulated national security in terms of economic integration in the region and with the EU. Thus the 'national interest' in the post-1997 foreign policy discourse was located in the context of integration and Europeanization of the entire region. By comparing the articulation of the 'national interest' while the Socialists were both in opposition and in power, the chapter showed that strong continuities persisted from the Democrat-led to the Socialist-led coalitions regarding the Albanian national question: despite the articulation of 'national question', 'national sovereignty' and 'national interest' as interchangeable during 1991-1992, the national question was only articulated within the discourse of the 'Euro-Atlantic integration' when the Socialists came to power and not as opposed or distinct from it.

The identification with the EU and particularly with the regional category 'Western Balkans' best suited the political identity and interests of the Albanian Left in general and the Socialists in particular. As the first part of the chapter demonstrates, the Socialists were keen

to reconstruct their political identity in the aftermath of communism. Once in power this was accomplished through the re-interpretation of the identity narrative of pragmatism. 'Pragmatism' became the basic discourse of both the Albanian state and the Socialists' story of themselves in the post-communist period.

I argued that the notion of the 'Balkans' was an ideological term which was central to the Socialists' process of identity construction. The centrality of the Balkans in the Socialist-led governments cannot thus be explained only through the power of the EU's discourse to construct the identities of others on its periphery (Diez, 2007). Instead, identification with the 'Western Balkans' was a strategy employed by Albanian national elites with a view to managing this 'peripheral position' of Albania in the post-1997 period and reconstructing their political identity.

The Kosovo crisis of 1998 and the NATO air campaign against the former-Yugoslavia in 1999, as well as Albania's engagement in the anti-terror coalition following September 11, gave rise to a combined cultural and economic understanding of security. NATO intervention in former Yugoslavia in defence of the Kosovo population was interpreted by Tirana as a strong sign of recognition on the part of the West of the Western identity of the Albanian nation as well as of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' of the Albanian foreign policy. In this respect, there was a consensual interpretation on the part of all political parties, in power and in opposition, that engagement in the anti-terror coalition alongside the USA was both an act of patriotism and one of commitment to the Euro-Atlantic orientation.

This reconciliation between the interests of the 'entire Albanian nation' and its Euro-Atlantic vocation helped the national elite in power to hegemonize the discursive field, such that every articulation which fell outside the horizon of 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' was delegitimized as anti-Western and against the national interests of Albania. The re-interpretation and incorporation of the narrative of 'religious tolerance' in the foreign and security policy discourse served precisely this end. Thus, the Socialist-governments projected

'deviations' or 'alternatives' to the Euro-Atlantic Orientation onto their domestic opponents in terms of 'ethnic nationalism' or 'religious fundamentalism'. However, a comparison between the 1992-1997 government and the Socialist-led coalitions of 1997-2005 demonstrates that such 'deviations' are simply strategies which aim at delegitimizing the opponent, rather than plausible policy options. This is a key finding as it proves that not only can the EU norms be simulated by domestic actors (Noutcheva, 2007). but so too can the 'alternatives' or the 'deviations' from the 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation' Thus, the 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation' acquires meaning through the projection of what it is not, i.e. through the construction of a non-Western identity.

The emphasis on the agency of national elites in constructing a state identity which is compatible with and instrumental to their own political interests and identities differentiates this study from the bulk of the literature on Albanian foreign policy. The following chapter investigates how the Democrats attempted to recover their legacy of the first administration (1992-1997) after their electoral victory of July 2005. In this respect, it explores the continuities in the official discourse from that of the Socialist-led government as well as the specific elements of the security discourse of the Democrat-led coalition in the post-2005 period.

CHAPTER SIX

THE RETURN OF THE DEMOCRATS: LEAVING BRIDGES BEHIND

6.1. Introduction

The Democrat-led coalition's return to office in July 2005 marks an important moment in our analysis as it provides rich material for the study of continuities and discontinuities in the meanings attached to the 'national interest' and 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' in the light of the ideological repertoire of the centre-right in general and of the Democrats in particular. I shall examine the policy articulations of this period in light of the legacy of the first Democrat-led administration (1992-1997). I will concentrate primarily on the Kosovo question and in particular Kosovo's final status in the post-2005 period, since this is a pivotal policy area for the construction of Albanian state identity and of Albanian 'national interest'. This choice is even more pertinent given that the solution of the Kosovo question was entering a final phase at the time of the analysis. The final empirical chapter of the thesis, this chapter also provides a vantage point for a comparative overview of the first Democrat administration of 1992-1997 and the Socialist governments of 1997-2005.

The two questions which lead this chapter are: Firstly, how did the Democrats reconstruct their party's political identity during 2005? Secondly, has the Democrats' second term in office marked any departure from the foreign policy course of their Socialist predecessors, on the one hand, and of the first Democrat administration, on the other. The first part focuses on the anti-corruption discourse of the Democrats and continues with an analysis of how this discourse continues the project of subjectivisation of the Democrats during the 1991-1997 period but through different identification strategies. The second part of the

chapter discusses more specifically the evolution of the Democrats' policy options with regard to Kosovo's final status.[133]

In the first part of the chapter I will give an outline of the political context of the July 2005 elections and of the political repertoires of the main political forces, namely the Democrats and the Socialists. The second part discusses how the new administration articulated the 'national question' and 'Euro-Atlantic integration' against this political background. The last part is a critical discussion of recent political and academic debates on populist politics and how this relates to the construction of Albanian state identity in the post-communist era.

6.2. Change and Continuity in Albania's Domestic Political Landscape

In this part of the chapter I introduce the political context in which the 2005 elections took place as well as the meanings that the main political forces attached to national security and to the national question in their electoral discourse. This section prepares the ground for my subsequent analysis of the Kosovo policy of the newly elected Democrat-led government.

6.2.1. The political context of the 2005 elections

The elections of 3 July 2005 were a litmus test of the consolidation of a democratic Albanian state. This becomes especially clear when we examine these elections in the context of the previous general elections. The elections of 1992 had been conducted in the political and social atmosphere of radical change in Eastern Europe; furthermore, the legacy of communism had left the newly-converted Socialists with only a shaky ground of legitimacy

---

[133] The Democrats' return to power in Albania coincided with the start of my field work for the thesis. Reflecting on the main themes and the interpretation of key moments in Albania's foreign policy of the last fifteen years of post-communism against current debates has been crucial to the identification of continuities and discontinuities in the foreign policy discourse of post-communist Albania. Although only a brief period of time has elapsed since the Democrats returned to office, it is already possible to discern the broad contours of the official discourse which has emerged since 2005.

under their feet. As discussed in Chapter 4, the victory of the Democratic Party in 1992 was secured through its ability to widen its base and stretch its ideological boundaries to include often contradictory alternatives but which were all woven into a narrative about what the Democrats and the new post-communist Albanian state stood for.

The preliminary general elections of 1997, on the other hand, had been an emergency measure taken during the crisis following the collapse of the pyramid schemes. The electoral victory of the Socialists in 1997 was the result of various factors. These included the popular revolt against the Democrats and the weakening of Berisha's internal and external political prestige (also Crampton 1997:421); the lack of other political alternatives; and the direct and indirect support given to the opposition by the EU and the USA (also Pettifer and Vickers, 2007: 19-36). In the context of these earlier electoral processes, the 2005 electoral process was expected to and largely succeeded in meeting the benchmark of *normalcy* in the eyes of both the international community and the Albanian public (Kola, 5 July 2005).

The elections of July 2005 followed two tumultuous years of political bickering within the Socialist party in power and a series of economic scandals involving the highest ranks of the Socialist officials. By 2004 the opposition movement 'NANO IK' [Out with Nano!] had mobilized considerable popular support and was synchronized with anti-corruption protests by youth NGOs such as MJAFT [Enough!]. In its reports the European Commission made it clear that the elections of July 2005 were vital not only for the future of democracy in Albania but more decidedly for its prospects of signing the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the EU (*European Commission Country Report*, 2004).

There were three main differences between the July 2005 general elections and the previous general elections: First, the 2005 elections were marked by the emergence of a third significant political force, namely, the Socialist Movement for Integration (henceforth SMI). The SMI was founded by the former Socialist Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and Minister

for Integration, Vice-Chairman of the Socialist Party Ilir Meta.[134] The emergence in 2005 of the SMI as a third pole, albeit with a somewhat non-distinctive programme, tempered the stark rivalry between the Democratic Party and the Socialist Party. The second difference was heightened levels of criticism in public debates during the last years of Socialist governance (2002-2005), particularly in the daily media, with regard to the levels of corruption and abuse of public office on the part of those in power (Barbullushi, 2004:47-57) In addition, the EU had continuously evaluated government attempts at fighting monopolies and corruption in many crucial sectors, such as the judicial system, customs, the police and public administration as insufficient (Bogdani and Loughlin 2007:155; European Commission 2005: 35; see also *TV Alsat*, 2006b).[135] Furthermore, the regional identity that the Socialists had sought to project from 1997 onwards did not seem to have earned Albania any merit; compared to countries such as Macedonia and Croatia, Albania had still been left behind in the process of EU accession, despite the Socialists' commitment to regional cooperation (author's interview with Rakipi, 14 March 2006).

The third key difference was salience of the Kosovo question and its usage in the electoral campaigns of each of the main political parties. While the opposition—that is, the centre-right—stressed the need for the Albanian government to take a more assertive stance on the national question, the Socialists emphasized the role of Albania as a moderator in the Balkans and of the Socialist Party as instrumental in building this role for the Albanian state. Both camps used Kosovo in their electoral discourse and accused each other of weakening the advocacy credentials of the Albanian state with regard to the Albanian question on the international stage. Yet, as we saw in Chapters 4 and 5, neither political camp had advanced

---

[134] In early 2002, the Socialist Party chairman Fatos Nano launched a fierce campaign against what he described as the party's 'moral crisis' of corruption, nepotism, and criminal connections. Nano's attacks focused on then-Prime Minister Ilir Meta and his top ministers, who reciprocated by making similar allegations against Nano and his faction. The cross-accusations led to Meta's resignation in January 2002. See Human Rights Watch 14 January 2003; also Fuga (2003:171-182).

[135] In its Country Progress Report in Albania, the European Commission notes that: 'Despite Albania's efforts, and the active support of the international community in supporting Albania's anti-corruption strategy, tangible results in the fight against corruption remain limited' (European Commission, 2005: 15).

any clear policy option with regard to Kosovo's final status while in power. In this chapter, I will examine the Democrat-led government's policy options with regard to Kosovo, as well as the meaning attached to empty signifiers such as 'national sovereignty' and 'national interest' in the new post-2005 context.

The following section examines how social issues such as *crime* and *corruption* were framed as questions of the external legitimacy of the Albanian state in the Democrats' electoral rhetoric for the general elections of July 2005 and eventually in the post-July 2005 official discourse.

6.2.2. The Anti-Corruption Platform and the new nationalist discourse

The state collapse of 1997 played a crucial role in the electoral campaigns of the July 2005 general elections. For the Democrats, it was a matter of overcoming the legacy of 1997. For the Socialists, it was a matter of reaffirming their credentials as the political force which had led the country's revival after the crisis of 1997. At the 2005 Party Congress, Nano asserted that it came down to a basic choice between 'Progress and Regress, Westernism and radical nationalism and regionalism (within Albania, OB), Europe and the Balkans' (Nano, 2005). Likewise, while in opposition, the Democrats had accussed the Socialist-led government for isolating Albania as well as for betraying the national question (for instance, 2000a; 2000b). Whereas the events of 1997, served as a key electoral strategy for the Socialists in particular and the Left in general, corruption, crime and the national question were the pillar of the electoral campaign of the Democrats. As we will see below, in the Democrats' discourse of anti-corruption and 'clean hands', the national question had a differnt meaning from its use in the early nineties.

The Democrats built their campaign upon the promise of a relentless fight against corruption and against economic monopolies as their strategies for integration in NATO and the EU .The Democrats' campaign slogan 'Time for Change' was not simply a call to change

the political party in power; it also promised the reformation of the Democratic Party itself and of its leadership in particular. In an interview for the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) Berisha made the extraordinary statement that his target for the 2005 elections was to 'overcome myself' (cited in Kola, 2005) This statement refers explicitly to the accusations of 'authoritarianism' and isolationist tendencies leveled against the Democrat-led government in general and Berisha in particular by the opposition and the international media during 1992-1997 (see *Koha Jone*, 1994: 5; *Koha Jone* 1996: 5; *Koha Jone* 1997a: 6; Gumbel 1997). In the following analysis, I will suggest that the ideological and political repertoire of the Democrats during the 2005-2007 period built on the Democrats' simultaneous attempts to distance themselves from their legacy of governance of 1992-1997 and to recover and stabilize their political identity after the de-legitimization of 1996-1997.

In the electoral campaign of 2005, the Democrats attempted to construct continuity of their political identity as both the most Westernizing force in the country and the inheritors of the ideology of the National Renaissance. They attempted to do so through three main strategies: Firstly, as in their electoral campaign in 1992, here again, in 2005, the Democrats identified with the national intellectuals. However, whereas in 1992 the cause of the intellectuals had been the overthrow of communism, in 2005 the common cause became the 'purification' of Albanian politics from corruption and immorality, or as the Democrats coined it, 'the politics of clean hands' (Meta, 2005). Communism was now being replaced with crime and corruption. In this respect, the Democrats' logic of constructing the identity of the Albanian state and of their own political force followed the linking together of different identities/moments, such as 'corrupted', 'immoral', 'criminal' etc. (Berisha, 2006: 2, Meta 2006). As we saw in Chapter 4, the identity of the Democrats was constructed through the linking of various elements such as exemplarity of the Albanian post-communist experience, the national question, the free market, self-reliance, belief in God and partnership with the West; all of these elements were juxtaposed to the empty signifier of 'communism'. In the

electoral texts for the general elections of 2005, the 'national interest' was articulated primarily in terms of 'anti-corruption' and 'anti-crime'. The purification of politics from corruption thus replaced the Democrats' earlier objective of uprooting communism. Furthermore, the Democrats now warned that widespread popular anti-government protests would follow in the footsteps of Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan in the event that the government manipulated the elections (*Korrieri*, 2005a; *Korrieri* 2005b). In this sense, the fight against corruption and institutional reform were framed as questions of 'national integrity' and 'dignity'. In the Democrats' electoral and post-electoral discourse of the 'national interest', crime and corruption were articulated as the counter-pole of democracy on the one hand, and as the counter-pole of the best features of the Albanian *nation*, on the other. In this connection, crime and corruption struck at the heart of the main aspirations of the Albanian National Renaissance, that is, the building and consolidation of a viable Western state and the fulfillment of the Albanian national identity. In the parliamentary plenary session on the ousting of the General Prosecutor soon after the Democrats' electoral campaign, Prime Minister Berisha stated that:

> Every civilized citizen, every man who calls himself Albanian and feels part of this *nation* is legitimately proud of Ismail Kadare and of the publication and translation of his books everywhere […]. One cannot be a civilized human being when only one side of the medal shines; the medal has two sides. Thus *we, as a country and as a nation*, if we aspire to have a future, must stand united against this phenomenon, which is the most sinister symbol of Albania and Albanians after communism […] Crime is the anti-state; the money of crime is the destruction of State. Without state there is no freedom, no dignity, no future, no security, nothing: there is no Nation (Berisha, 2006: 2, italics added)[136]

As the quote suggests, the eradication of corruption and crime is thus not only paramount to the consolidation of a democratic state and the eradication of communism: it

---

[136] The Albanian pot-communist politicians often refer to the sayings and the work of the writer Ismail Kadare to legitimate their policy options or support their policy options. As we saw in Chapter 3, the identification of the Democratic Party in general and Sali Berisha in particular with the 'national intellectuals' is a key identification strategy, which aims at fixing the identity of the Democrats and Berisha as inheritors of the tradition and ideology of the National Renaissance.

becomes central to the fulfilment of the Albanian identity and its Euro-Atlantic vocation. By linking 'national sovereignty' and 'national interest' to 'corruption' and 'crime', the Democrats made the 'nation' the locus of political and foreign policy debate.

The second strategy employed by the Democrats with a view to stabilizing their political identity and obtaining domestic legitimacy and authority was their framing of the electoral campaign of 2005 as a *popular* movement. Protagonists from the student anti-communist movement of December 1990 (such as Gramoz Pashko, Arben Imami, Prec Zogaj, Genc Pollo and Genc Ruli)[137]—who had eventually left the Democratic Party and gone on either to found new parties or to shift their political loyalties to the leftist camp—were now invited back to contribute to the Democratic party (*Korrieri*, 2005a; *Korrieri*, 2005c). An attempt was thus made to establish continuity of the Democratic legacy from the early '90s to the current electoral moment through these political re-conciliations, as well as through the discourse of resistance to a corrupt state. At a time when the party basis allegedly consisted of only around 5 out of an initial 339 founders in December 1999 (*Korrieri*, 2005a), the call of the Democrat leader Berisha to the founders of the Democratic Party to join forces in 'the continuation of the democratic revolution started in the nineties'was an 'was an attempted 'recovery of self', and one which was to be carried out in full view of the public. The reformation of the party basis with elements from the student movement of 1990 was thus part of the process undertaken by the Democratic Party with a view to overcoming the legacy of fragmentation, dissolution and internal centralization which it had acquired during the

---

[137]Gramoz Pashko, former Deputy Prime Minister, left the Party in 1992; Arben Imami, Neritan Ceka and Prec Zogaj left in 1994; Genc Ruli, former Finance Minister, left in 1997; and Genc Pollo, former Deputy Chairman, resigned in 1999. Ruli and Pollo took up the posts of Ministers of Finance and Education respectively in the newly formed government after the electoral victory of July 2005. (Bogdani and Loughlin, 2007: 124-5). In addition to inviting the old founders back to the Party, the party leader Sali Berisha also incorporated a new structure within the party, namely, *Komiteti per Koordinimin e Politikave*, commonly referred to as KOP, or the Committee for the Orientation of Policies (COP). This unit was introduced by Berisha as a strategy aimed at materializing the strong linkages of the Democratic Party with the intellectuals and with the expert community from a variety of disciplines and fields.

1990s. In the following section I analyze the Democrats' Kosovo policy after their return to power, in the context of these identification strategies.

6.3. Change and Continuity in Foreign Policy (2005-2007)

Upon its return to office in 2005, the centre-right coalition promised a departure from the passive diplomacy of their Socialist predecessors and thus the conduct of a more pro-active foreign policy. The following part of this chapter explores whether the Democrats' emphasis on the form of conduct and of formulation of foreign policy constituted a substantial difference from their Socialist predecessors, or whether it was simply an identification strategy for the construction of their political identity and for their domestic and external legitimization. This part of the chapter discusses the strategies through which the Democrats, upon returning to office in 2005, sought to re-invent their image and re-construct their political identity repertoire of 1992-1997. The first section draws the contours of the Democrats' foreign policy discourse upon their return to office. The second section examines the Democrats' Kosovo policy in the context of these two elements of their foreign policy discourse.

6.3.1. 'Clarity' and 'Pro-activeness': A Question of Policy or Identification?

Upon taking office in autumn 2005, the Democrat-led coalition promised to depart from the Socialists' passive diplomacy during 1997-2005 and shift towards a more assertive and pro-active foreign policy (for instance, Mustafaj, 10 October 2005). The shift from a passive to a more pro-active foreign policy would be materialized on three main tiers. The first tier would be the engagement of the Albanian state in global debates as an actor in world affairs. The second tier was the establishment of 'diplomacy of image' which aimed to improve the EU citizens' perceptions of Albania and Albanians. This tier lies beyond the

scope of this thesis and will not be examined in detail here. The third tier concerned the strengthening of 'economic diplomacy' (author's interview with Mustafaj, 16 March 2006, also *Voice of America*, 2005). According to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mustafaj, enhanced economic cooperation could only neutralize tensions between countries. Mustafaj stated that, 'Now that Albania has no more [national] enemies, its energies can be all concentrated on the welfare and improvement of the economic standards of its citizens' (author's interview with Mustafaj, 16 March 2006). This statement exemplifies how hegemonic the discourse of economic security became in the post-1997 period. Continuity of the same basic conception of security—in terms of economic prosperity and welfare—can thus be traced through from the Socialists to the post-2005 Democrat-led government.

It is important to note that both 'diplomacy of image' and 'economic diplomacy' built on the same economic rationale of foreign policy. The post-2005 discourse of the 'image' and the commercialist understanding of the state both drew from the post-1997 understanding of security primarily in economic terms. This is clearly linked to social and extra-discursive factors such as the 1997 collapse of the pyramid schemes and the West's 'anxieties' caused by the prospects of new immigration from Albania (for instance, Pandolfi 2002). In this respect, the Democrats' emphasis on image did not depart from the Socialists' discourse of foreign policy.[138]

Finally, the Democrats undertook to depart from what they called the Socialists' 'passive diplomacy'. In the Foreign Minister's words, this passivity of the Socialists was expressed through their subservient attitude to the international community coupled with a failure to engage in dialogue (author's interview with Mustafaj, 16 March 2006):

---

[138] As mentioned in Chapter 3, this continuity in the articulation of the element of 'state image' in the official discourse can be explained by Iver B. Neumann's argument that diplomats never say anything new and that change in diplomatic discourse comes only from the margins of the diplomatic field and through the political actors (Neumann, 2007: 183-200).

The Socialists' slogan of 'acting in accordance with the will of Kosovo's people' is an ambiguous expression, which lacks substance, as in the actual context the will of its people does not suffice for the recognition of a new state if not accompanied by the will of the international environment (author's interview with Mustafaj, 16 March 2006).

Along the same lines, the Democrats stated that only a clear and assertive foreign policy, particularly with regard to the Kosovo question, would enable a departure from the passivity of the Albanian state during the socialist years (*TV Alsat,* 2006a). In the context of Albania's position with regard to Kosovo's final status, the Foreign Minister stated that the most plausible option would be 'supervised conditionality':

> The difference between us and our predecessors lies in the fact that we think that diplomacy should be conducted with no ambiguities; diplomacy should leave its defensive position and express its opinion, by emphasizing that Albania will not interfere and will not play a leading role in finding a solution for the Kosovo question. We think therefore that the future of Kosovo, the formula for its solution, lies only in independence; a conditional independence, an independence which is supervised[139] by the international community as a process, and wherein the presence of the international community would guarantee the protection of the rights of the Serb minority' (Mustafaj, 2007).

As the quote suggest, the first recommended option was independence, but the Minister then went on eventually to qualify this, instead proposing an independence that would be 'supervised by the international community'. In this respect, the Minister's position did not depart from the Socialists' position with regard to Kosovo, particularly in the aftermath of the NATO bombardments, as we saw in the previous chapter. In this context, when located in the context of the predecessor Socialist government's Kosovo policy, this articulation of Albania's official position with regard to the Kosovo question does not reflect any more assertive position.

In this respect, the departure from the predecessors' 'way of conducting foreign policy' did not correspond to a departure from the predecessors' foreign policy course.

---

[139] The term used in the text is *shoqerohet,* which would literally translate as 'is accompanied by'. However a contextualized reading suggests 'supervised by' or 'in close collaboration with'.

Here and elsewhere, the Minister called for clarity and action in foreign policy. Indeed, both terms seem to have been used interchangeably: if one's stance was 'clear' when engaged in debates with other states and actors of international politics, then one could be seen as being 'active; (author's interview with Mustafaj, 16 March 2006).

In the Minister's words, this was a question of finding a voice for the Albanian state on the international stage:

> It seems important to me first, to let everyone know that we have a voice and second, that we reach a common ground which is closest to the reality and closest to peace and stability...We have been distinguished for silence, but silence is not always golden (author's interview with Mustafaj, 16 March 2006).

As the quote suggests, the Democrat Foreign Minister was committed to departing from the Socialists' foreign policy and to attempting to influence rather than simply follow or react to international developments. However, it remains unclear precisely in what sense the Democrats' policy orientation would be any clearer or more assertive than the Socialists' foreign policy. Meanwhile, the notions of clarity, orientation and assertiveness remained intrinsically empty signifiers, whose meanings were fixed only in relation to the Democrats' ideological repertoire of the nation, statehood and democratic governance.

6.3.2. The Democrat-led coalition's Kosovo policy: Reconciling Albania's European orientation with the National Question

As discussed in Chapter 5, the national question was pivotal for the construction of the Albanian state's subjectivity, as well as for the construction of the identity and legitimacy of the main political party in power. However, I argued that the centrality of the nation and of the national question in the Democrats' discourse of foreign policy was not, contrary to the received wisdom, symptomatic of irredentism. I suggest we also read along the same lines the

usage of the 'national question' in general and of Kosovo in particular on the part of the centre-right coalition in the wake of the 2005 general elections. In this section I outline the main policy options which were aired at the time of the Democrats' return to office in 2005. These options were not exclusively articulated by the Albanian government; yet, they were reproduced in the Albanian foreign policy discourse. These different options for the solution of the Kosovo crisis articulated Albania's state identity, role and responsibility in the region. Therefore, even when the international solutions were reproduced literally, this was done in way which was compatible with the political elites' vision of the Albanian state.

By 2005 the two main policy discourses were: 'standards before status' and 'supervised independence'. The former discourse concurred that the Kosovo question could eventually be solved within the European framework for the Western Balkans. In this context, independence would only be granted as a reward for the domestic elites' compliance with the international standards.

The 'supervised independence' policy option, envisaging the creation of an independent and multi-ethnic Kosovo state, underpinned the Ahtisaari Plan[140] and eventually prevailed over the former 'standards before status' option. By the time the Democrats returned to office, talks over the final status were only weeks away from starting and thus an emphasis on 'standards before status' would clearly be outdated. In October 2005 the report of the Special UN Envoy to Kosovo Kai Eide had concluded that 'although the implementation of the standards in Kosovo (particularly with regard to the respect of minorities and commitment to multi-ethnicity) has been uneven, the time has come to move on to the next step of the political process' (Eide, 2005:5; *BBC* 2005).

---

[140] The Plan aimed to create multi-ethnic instititutions in Kosovo and to set a roadmap for the creation of a multi-ethnic Kosovo state. It was named after its designer, the former Finnish Prime Minister and UN Special Envoy for Kosovo, Martti Ahtisaari. The Ahtisaari Plan is available from the website of the United Nations Office of the Special Envoy in Kosovo at: http://www.unosek.org/unosek/en/statusproposal.html (As accessed on 17 April 2009).

Upon taking office, the Albanian Minister for Foreign Affairs specified that the Albanian government understood Kosovo's independence as a 'process rather than as a determinate moment' and that the best option would be 'conditional independence' (Mustafaj 2005d; also *Televizioni Shqiptar* 2005). The Minister claimed that this policy option represented a moment of departure from the Socialists' Kosovo policy. In order to assess the validity of this claim, it is essential to examine it in its spatial and temporal context.

The option of 'conditional independence' was first articulated publicly by the International Crisis Group which itself followed the conclusion drawn by the Independent Commission on Kosovo as early as 2001 (Independent International Commission on Kosovo, 2001). The Commission suggested that the region be kept under the supervision of the UN until it became clear that the time had come for the delegation of state functions from the international to the local authorities (*Independent International Commission on Kosovo*, 2001: 25). The report further recommended that state competencies not be immediately delegated from the UN administration to the local authorities. In addition, the acquisition of state sovereignty would not be immediate but would follow a certain transitional period. Thus, it was recommended that by mid-2006 only the executive functions would be handed over to the Kosovo government, while the UN monitoring functions would be handed over to a new international body (the 'Kosovo Monitoring Mission'). It was recommended that a continuing long-term role for KFOR, or a successor mission, be confirmed by an accord agreed between NATO and Kosovo's government (*International Crisis Group*, 24 January 2005).

The Minister for Foreign Affairs made his first call for 'conditional independence' for Kosovo' at the UN General Assembly in September 2005. His position was promptly supported by Prime Minister Berisha, who claimed in his part that 'in the times of globalization, there exists no un-conditioned independence' (*Balkanweb*, 2005). Facing criticism upon his return from the UN General Assembly Session, the Foreign Minister emphasized that the Albanian state's position was in clear alignment with the Kosovo

citizens' will for independence; at the same time, according to Mustafaj, it reflected realism and an awareness of the international context (*Vizion Plus* 2006). In the same spirit, Mustafaj claimed that 'independence would be a process, not a specific moment or decision' (*TVSH* 2005; also *TV Klan* 2005).

There are three main contextual elements of this policy articulation: firstly, the reiteration of the thesis that the Kosovo question would not impinge upon the bilateral relations between Tirana and Belgrade; secondly, the adoption of an option which had been proposed by a non-intergovernmental organization; and thirdly, the enunciation of this official stance outside Albania. As should be clear by now, we have here thus an early pronouncement by Tirana with regard to Kosovo's final status which shows the commitment of the Democrats to 'pro-active' diplomacy.

However, this statement was followed by more ambiguous and oscillations positions on Kosovo's future. In response to Serbian Foreign Minister Vuk Draskovic's statement that in the event of a unilateral proclamation of independence on the part of Prishtina, partition would be inevitable, the Albanian Foreign Minister Mustafaj stated that 'in the event of partition, Albania would no longer guarantee the territorial borders with the states where large Albanian communities live' namely, with Serbia and Macedonia (*Vizion Plus* 2006). In response to the broad criticism that this statement received from the opposition, national media and EU representatives in Tirana (see *Koha Jone* 2006) Mustafaj defended his position by stating that the Albanian state should have more than one policy alternative from which it might choose in the case of unexpected events (Ndrenika 2006).

Mustafaj's statement on 'possible unification' suggested that despite its commitment to the Western vocation, the Albanian state had a choice of its own.[141]As such it confirmed the Democrats' commitment to play a pro-active rather than a passive foreign policy,

---

[141] This statement ran counter to the statements of the Prime Minister Sali Berisha few months ago and to the general official line of Albanian foreign policy that Kosovo's future lies with Brusssels and not with Tirana. See *Voice of America*, 28 September 2007.

constrained only by the freely chosen Euro-Atlantic Orientation of the Albanian state. In the same spirit, the international community was reminded that the national unification of Albania and Kosovo would have benefits for the entire Albanian nation. However, this option had not been chosen as it would be detrimental to Albania's prospects for joining both the EU and NATO:

> Any project of partition means the opening of a process of re-construction of the Balkan borders, which would be very long and very painful and from which Albanians *would not emerge as losers* in the end. But in fact, given its actual status, Kosovo has decided for independence. Albania's main aspiration is [membership of the], European Union and of NATO (*Rilindja Demokratike*, 2007:2).

As this statement by the Prime Minister suggests, the idea of unification for Albanians was not strictly pragmatically unfeasible. Rather, it was incompatible with the Euro-Atlantic orientation of the Albanian state. It is pertinent to note that this was a statement made for the international media; therefore, the implied audience, was the international audience. As such this subtle reminder that unification would be pragmatically quite productive in some respects, attempted to perform two tasks at once: Firstly, it reified the political identity of the Democrats as building on the primacy of the nation. Furthermore, it re-articulates the notion of 'national sovereignty'—which had been a pillar of the Democrat-led administration during 1992-1997—into 'choice' or pro-activeness of the Albanian state in the foreign policy sector. Secondly, at the same time it sent a message to the international community signalling Albania's determination to sustain its Euro-Atlantic Orientation and continue to be a security provider in the Balkans. However, the Minister's statement suggests that the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' is a choice of the state elites, not the most pragmatist orientation with regards the national question.

Foreign Minister Mustafaj's statement on the need for choice and Prime Minister Berisha's reminder that unification would be beneficial for the Albanian nation conveyed the idea of 'choice' on the part of the Albanian state. At the same time, neither statement did

manage to de-stabilize the hegemonic discourse of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' of the Albanian state. Persistent rejections by Tirana of any potential unilateral proclamation of independence on the part of Prishtina, as well as the drawing of differentiations between the historical political experiences of Kosovo and Albania, have been stable features of the official discourse of the Democrats since their return to office in July 2005. In this way, both the constructive role of Albania in the region and the Western vocation of the Albanian state and nation remained constant variables of the official foreign policy discourse even after the elections of July 2005.

Democrats' attempts to depart from the 'Socialists' passive diplomacy' were also accompanied with the Democrats' strategies of identification with the entire nation and with the 'national question. Reflecting on his pre-1997 position on Kosovo, Prime Minister Berisha rejected any suggestion that Albania's approach to Kosovo had been paternalist: 'Before 1997 I believed that one can never be free when half of the nation is oppressed' (*TV Klan*, 6 January 2006). Liberation of the Kosovo people would thus come only through independence as a state and through integration in the EU, or at least the opening up of the prospect of EU membership. At the same time, by reproducing the Democrats' pre-1997 Kosovo policy in the current context, continuity of the political identity of the Democrats was secured.

Support for the *people*'s self determination and liberation from any kind of oppression or colonization, when articulated on the part of Tirana officials for a domestic audience, suggested also the notion of the people's freedom from Western tutelage. While stressing the importance of Albania's unconditional relationship with Serbia, the Prime Minister argued for a non-imposed agreement among the Balkan countries. With an historical reference to invasions and foreign dominion of the region in the past, Berisha called for an agreement which emanated from these countries themselves, as 'this peninsula has had agreements among its states imposed on them for 120 years' (*TV Klan* 2006). Referring implicitly to the traditional concept of *besa* (oath) of the Balkan societies, although not explicitly naming it,

the Prime Minister thus called upon the Balkan countries to take an oath of honour to uphold peace with one another without resorting to mediation by the *others*. These *others*, who were in a position to mediate and even decide the fate of the Balkan states, comprised the EU states and the USA, or the 'international community'. As this statement suggests, the discourse of regional cooperation and the 'European vocation' of the Balkan countries is coated in the Democrats' nationalist discourse. Hereby, peace and cooperation are articulated as 'choices' not as 'conditions' to fulfil on the way towards EU membership. 'Pragmatism' of the Socialist predecessors is thus left behind in favour of 'national choice'.

The main difference between the Democrats and their Socialist predecessors was the Democrats' departure from the option of 'European Borders for Kosovo. As we saw in Chapter 5, 'European Borders for Kosovo' became the Socialists' dominant policy option in the aftermath of the 1999 NATO bombardments. In this respect, the discourse of 'European Borders for Kosovo' had served as a transitional rhetorical strategy for Tirana from the moment that the interim UN administration in Kosovo was established until the opening of negotiations on Kosovo's final status. As such, it was not a clear policy option.

When the Democrats came to office in summer 2005, however, the process of negotiations for Kosovo's final status was on the verge of beginning. The interregnum period during which the 'European Borders for Kosovo' discourse had served the legitimacy needs of the Socialists was over; the new international context converged with the change of government in Albania. Although they showed commitment to the continuation of Albania's Euro-Atlantic Orientation, the Democrats also needed to accommodate their political identity to the new domestic and international context. Thus, speaking first and loudly about Tirana's stance with regard to Kosovo's final status was a demonstration of pro-activeness. However, the content of these statements were not far removed from what was widely anticipated as the inevitable outcome. Therefore the distinctiveness of the Democrats' foreign policy remained at the level of conduct and identification strategies rather than that of policy options. In this

respect, the Democrats' framing of the new foreign policy as more pro-active and assertive met their needs to reify their political identity both internally and externally.

Yet, as suggested above, these calls did not impinge on the Albanian state's Kosovo policy. Despite the centrality of the nation and of the 'national question' in the Democrats' discourse, official Tirana sustained its position that 'there will only be one Albanian state in the region, which is the Republic of Albania' (*Gazeta Shqiptare* 2005; also Voice of America, 2007a).What this policy articulation suggested was that there would only be one homogeneous Albanian nation-state in the Balkans. As such, it furthered the thesis of a multi-ethnic Kosovo, while simultaneously seeking to strengthen the state identity of Albania as provider of security in the Balkans. Although this policy articulation was not enthusiastically embraced by all political actors in Tirana (author's interview with Godo, 22 December 2005)[142] the thesis of Kosovo as a future multi-ethnic state was a common denominator in the stances of both mainstream politicians and officials in Tirana and Prishtina vis-à-vis the final status. This policy articulation carried the suggestion that was that the time of 'ethnically pure' states in the Balkans was over. Thus both the unification of Kosovo with Albania and the partition of Kosovo along ethnic criteria were deemed as pragmatically unfeasible as far as regional stability and peace were concerned, as well as ethically unacceptable. Indeed, Tirana officials framed the multi-ethnicity of Kosovo as the most distinct demonstration of the Euro-Atlantic orientation of the future Kosovo state.

The last attempt of the Democrats to recover their 'mistakes' of the first administration concerned the abandonment of the old metaphor of the Albanian state as a bridge between East and West or between Europe and the Balkans, bus stay firmly grounded on the Western side (European Policy Centre, 2000). In this context, the Albanian Foreign Minister Mustafaj

---

[142] Sabri Godo maintained that it was due to 'our commitment to the international community that we have to align with this policy articulation. For in reality it makes no sense for a country in which less than 10% of population is non-Albanian to be called multi-ethnic. It would be as though Albania was called a multi-ethnic state because of its Greek minority'. Author's interview with Godo, Tirana, 22 December 2005.

reacted with surprise to the proposal of the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs that Albania be engaged in the *Alliance of Civilizations*[143] in the role of mediator, given its membership in ICO (see *Metropol*, 2006:2).[144] Mustafaj later claimed that 'Albania is different from Spain with regards to its relations with the countries of the Middle East, for it has no history of colonialism' (author's interview with Mustafaj, 16 March 2006). However, Mustafaj went on to confirm that Albania would transmit to the Arab world 'those messages which are compatible with the character of our society, our Constitution and the philosophy of the modernity which we aspire to join' (*Shekulli* 2006:2). As the quote suggests, the Minister sought to dispel any doubts about the 'European Orientation' of the new government.

To conclude this part: by putting emphasis on the clarity of foreign policy orientation as a 'choice' rather than an imperative imposed by the international community, as well as on the pro-activeness of the Albanian foreign policy, the Democrats sought to mark a departure from their Socialist predecessors. Yet, upon closer examination, it becomes evident that their attempts were targeted more at the reconstruction of their party political identity than at any clear shift in foreign policy. In fact, the Democrats' return to office did not mark any departure from the foreign policy discourse of their predecessors. At the same time, the Democrats sought to revamp their image as European-oriented and correct their past mistakes, most notably their 'isolating' tendencies of the early nineties and membership in ICO. In this

---

[143]*Alliance of Civilizations* is an initiative proposed by the President of Spain, Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero at the 59th General Assembly of the United Nations in 2005. The initiative was co-sponsored by the Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and it seeks to forge international, intercultural and interreligious dialogue and cooperation between the Western and Islamic world, with a view to mobilize international action against extremism.

[144] The declaration of the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs met in the surprise and even frustration of the public opinion and the opposition (for example, *Korrieri*, 8 February:8; Nazarko 2006:15). The opposition took the chance to remind the government of the decision of the first Democrat-led administration (1992-1997) to become members of the Islamic Conference Organization. In a parliamentary debate in October 2006, the Socialist MP Ben Blushi asked rhetorically the Democrat Minister for Foreign Affairs, Besnik Mustafaj as to why Albania is asked to play the role of the negotiator of the West with the Muslim countries. In addition, Blushi added that 'we are a European country and the majority of Albanians cannot accept to be [citizens of] an Islamic country. In turn, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Besnik Mustafaj criticized Blushi for inciting hatred for Islam and thus threatening the nation. See *SOT*, 2006:3.

respect their motto of 'leaving bridges behind'[145] is an act of reaffirmation of the Western identity as well as an act of closure of a long process of national and political identity construction.

6.4. Ideological Differences and State Agency

In this section I examine the Democrats' strategies of sustaining the a-mythical and apolitical character of the 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation' of the Albanian state. The second part of the section discusses critically some possible solutions that contemporary academic texts provide with regards the problem of agency and identity of the Albanian state. The last part examines what the Democrats' attempts to 'leave bridges behind' means for the Albanian state identity as well as for the construction of post-communist political identities.

6.4.1. The People, the Nation and the Political Class: Sustaining the a-political character of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation'

As discussed in the empirical chapters, in both main parties' rhetoric the *people* and the *West* were jointly constructed as a pole of resistance, whether to the corruption and nepotism of Socialists or to the potential authoritarianism of the Democrats. In this context, the official and political discourse constructed the political class as a unified actor which stood in stark opposition to the will of the people and of the West. This juxtaposition conveyed a unified, homogeneous category of individuals who were corrupt, illegitimate and pursuing their personal economic interests as opposed to the common national interest of the

---

[145] The motto of 'leaving bridges behind' was particularly pertinent in the context of the first Democrat-led administration (1992-1997)'s use of the narrative of 'bridge' to justify ICO membership (see Chapter 4). In this respect, the reversal of this legitimization metaphor demonstrates the Democrats' attempts to revamp their European orientation and recover the legacy of their first administration.

country's reforms and integration into the Euro-Atlantic community (Kajsiu, 2004; 2007). Here and there, the 'political class' was substituted simply with 'politics'[146] which, when articulated by the opposition, implied the 'government' or those in power.[147]

This usage of *politics* (politika) is here juxtaposed to foreign policy: whereas the latter is constructed by the political actors and state officials as the field where the common, public or national interests are protected, the former figures as the field where national interests are betrayed. The hegemonic position of the 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation' discourse builds precisely upon this dichotomy between domestic politics and foreign policy. Furthermore, the construction of the political class as the key obstacle to the process of the Euro-Atlantic integration also has the function of *apoliticizing* this process, which is framed as primarily technical and national but above politics. The category of the 'political class' is closely related to the framing of the process of the 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation' in the official discourse as a national and technical but *apolitical* process.

The usage of the 'political class' or its equivalent, which is simply *politics* [politika] as both activity and as the subject who performs the activity which is conveyed by *politics*, had marked a departure from the Socialist official discourse of the West and of Euro-Atlantic integration from that of their Democrat predecessors. The drawing of a thick line between the 'people' and the 'political class' conveyed that the process of integration as a national priority rose above all political interests and social, ideological or cultural divisions. 'Politics' and the 'political class' were thus constructed as a sphere outside democratic institutions. In this spatial sense, politics was thus the sphere of street populism, of arbitrary practices and of the

---

[146] In Albanian political and media discourse, the term *politika* does not refer exclusively to political practices and activities but also to a unitary *class* whose activity is domestic politics.
[147] This usage was particularly prevalent in the rhetoric of the Socialist Movement for Integration, which from its founding moment in 2003 was self-positioned against the two major political parties, the Democrats and the Socialists, or indeed against the 'old politics' of conflict and lack of cooperation for the common good, that is, integration.

materialization of tradition and inter-*fis* feuds.[148] In a temporal sense, *politics* was constructed as located outside the actual objectives and priorities of the nation and of the Albanian state, as it was symptomatic of Balkanization rather than of Europeanization. Thus, politics was conceptualized as conflict; in turn, conflict was framed as the key obstacle for the modernization project which was materialized through the 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation' discourse.

This relation of equivalence between 'politics' and 'conflict' contributed to the construction of the political identity of the Democrats and the Western identity of the Albanian state in another significant way. The Democrats identified with the nation and distanced themselves from the 'political class' whose individual interests overrode the 'national interest'; they also constructed 'political conflict as the opposite of Albanianism. 'Euro-Atlantic orientation'; thus came to mean the reconstitution of the Albanian National Renaissance; it was equivalent with the 'national interest', and as such it stood above any political interest and contestation.

As discussed in the previous chapter, references to the 'political class' appeared most prominently in the Socialist official discourse following the start of the negotiations for the signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreement in January 2003. Following their return to power, the Democrats sustained the apolitical and a-mythical character of the 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation' by juxtaposing the 'nation' to the immorality and corruption of the political class in general and of the of centre-left in particular. As the previous section showed, the Democrats' attempts to recover the agency and 'sovereignty' of the Albanian state with regards to foreign policy did not manage to introduce any significant discursive change in the existing discourse of security. This was the case, despite the Democrats' deployment of different identification strategies from those of their predecessors. The

---

[148] *Fis* means *tribe* and refers to a large family network, in most cases sharing the same family name and traditionally located in village.

following section discusses some alternatives that the academic literature offers to the actual state of the hegemony of the 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation' and the seemingly lack of agency and choice of the Albanian state in the international stage.

6.4.2. Re-ideologization of domestic politics as the basis of state identity?

As the section above discussed, the boundaries between the main political parties' articulations of the people, the nation, and the 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation' of Albania had blurred significantly by the summer of 2005. Leftist intellectuals/academics such as Fatos Lubonja and Artan Fuga or the self-proclaimed neo-liberals[149] expressed concern over what they see as the demise of ideological divisions between the Right and the Left—a phenomenon which they identify as the main problem of politics and of foreign policy in Albania. The ideational vacuum of both political camps is seen as one of the most important the shortcomings of Albanian democracy, and the lack of a distinct, clear and assertive Albanian foreign policy. The blurring of the distinction between Right and Left is heralded by such commentators as the end of politics, and with it of any possibility of *national choice* of foreign policy. These critics see the area where the distinction between left and the right blurs as fertile ground for populism, although the term is not specifically used. For example, for Fuga, who is mostly concerned with the ideological degeneration of the Albanian Left

> […]the liberalization reforms and discourse of the Socialists, and particularly their strong linkages with business, have 'paralyzed the political action and electoral propaganda of the Democratic Party, its main rival. There is little left to the Democratic Party except for noting that the socialists are following the economic reform that the Democrats themselves started when they were in power. Therefore, a political democratic alternative to the policies of the socialists in power is missing' (Fuga, 2003a: 114).

However, so far, neither Fuga nor other critics of the status quo has sketched out the contours that such an alternative might take. Furthermore, such a theoretical emphasis on the

---

[149] For the main theses and viewpoints see Albanian Liberal Institute (Instituti Liberal Shqipetar) http://www.alblib.org.

clarity of the distinction between Left and Right implies the empirical existence of such a clear categorization. However, I contend that neither the category of 'class' nor of 'Leftist'/ 'Rightist' exists in its purity. This is even more so in post-communist countries, where the Left and the Right had either to invent themselves from scratch or to re-invent themselves radically, having little or no pre-1945 democratic traditions to draw upon. The Left and the Right are discursive formations rather than fixed political categories or identities.

Yet, what is most pertinent to this project of 're-ideologisation' is the link established by these critics between the demise of ideological differences and the agency of the Albanian state. I suggest that the emphasis on the division between Left and Right in fact betrays concern over the the national content of foreign policy and the relationship between the state and society. We might summarize the legitimacy concerns of these authors into three main categories: first, what they see as the lack of ideational and ideological basis of politics; second, the ambiguity of the ideological programmes and political vocabulary of the political actors; and third, the impossibility of genuine national ideas and concepts which could serve as the basis of both domestic politics and foreign policy. While the first two concerns are tightly related to the fear of populist politics, the latter points to the impossibility of an independent foreign policy. As Artan Fuga puts it:

> [The economic model] has thus been chosen with the approval of political and economic European and international institutions and hence cannot be changed by the domestic social and political actors. Albanian Foreign Policy, located in the context of a region which is impregnated with deep inter-ethnic conflicts, follows necessarily the political positions taken by the latter [the European and international institutions, *my insertion*]. Consequently, the political action takes place within a framework which considerably limits the space of participation on the part of citizens in the democratic institutions of the country (Fuga, 2003a:165).

What this passage underlines is the impossibility of domestic actors exerting influence over Albanian foreign policy, since the latter is established by European and international institutions. This view is particularly relevant to our discussion of change and continuity in the Democrats' discourse of Albania's Euro-Atlantic Orientation and national sovereignty, as the latter was articulated by the Democrats precisely as independence in foreign policy formulation and non-intervention of external actors in domestic politics.[150]

I will summarize the main problems with these critical accounts according to their concerns. First, the critique of the blurring of the division between Right and Left programmes tends to degenerate into nostalgia for essentialist ideological terms which empirically do not correspond to the identifications of the Right and of the Left in the Albanian political context. Therefore, the critique of the deviation from the 'Left'—as supportive of the 'people'—as opposed to liberalism and privatization reforms fails to allow for the ambiguity of the political vocabulary not only of political theorists, but first and foremost of political elites and policy-makers. I argue that a clash of pure ideological alternatives is not only unviable but undesirable, so long as the programmess of the main parliamentary parties have to align to the requirements set by the EU and other international organizations that Albania aspires to join. The emergence of 'new politicians' cannot solve this problem of legitimacy as long as the political repertoires of the national question and the Euro-Atlantic Orientation remain the same.

But what is most problematic in the context of the research question of this thesis is the assumption that the re-ideologization of domestic politics may offer national

---

[150] Arguments linking the demise of ideological divisions to the economic dependency of the Albanian state and political elites on the international community resemble attempts to restore 'national sovereignty' and 'non-interference from outsiders'. In this context, resentment over the absence of an ideological division between Left and Right is in fact resentment over the blurring of a Westphalian conceptualization of nation-state and foreign policy on the one hand, and the Kantian discourse of European governance and regional cooperation on the other, or between a politics of faith and a politics of skepticism See Michael Oakeshott as quoted in Arditi 2004:137) However, to seek to designate the boundaries of these two types of political practice by the criterion of political parties' ideological make-up in Albania is a rather facile position which can only reap barren results. In fact, political practices articulate elements from both poles. As Michael Oakeshott has acceded, it is the tension between these two poles that explains the deep ambiguity of the political vocabulary of political modernity (ibid.)

interpretations, if not alternatives, to the discourse of 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation'. It is in the domain of integration in the 'Euro-Atlantic Community' that calls for the re-ideologization of national politics intersect with calls for Albania to have its own distinct voice on the international stage and particularly in relation to the EU. While the former take society as their starting point, the later prioritize national interests.

We can thus map these two approaches according to their critique of the technical a-political language of Euro-Atlantic integration. The first approach points to the need for re-ideologization of the national political landscape. The second envisages questions of legitimacy as inextricably linked with national sovereignty and a Westphalian understanding of the state. Yet, both are similarly concerned with the resuscitation of *national* politics. The contradiction of the former approach is that its adherents have to rely either on the rightists' discourse of national sovereignty or on the outright political aspiration for the emergence of 'new faces' in politics in order to give their critique of populism any resonance for the Albanian readership. Although this contradiction emerges in the intellectual field and in political debates about the Euro-Atlantic Orientation, it is best exemplified in the foreign policy discourse.

In this first part of the chapter I discussed how the anti-corruption discourse of the Democrats consisted of elements of the anti-communist opposition discourse of the early nineties. At the same time, corruption served as an all-national unifying cause which could not be seen as de-linked from state recognition and legitimacy. As such, corruption was used with a view to reconstructing the political identity of the Democratic Party as a party of moral resistance and of liberation of the people, while demonstrating the commitment of the new administration to continue domestic reforms as set out by EU requirements. I argued that despite the prominence of the *people* in the Democrats' electoral rhetoric, one cannot speak of any new rise of populism for two reasons: firstly, the division between the people and the political class also dominated the political discourse of the Socialists; and secondly, this

dichotomy underlies and guarantees the hegemonic position of the discourse of the Euro-Atlantic Orientation and its populist temptations. In other words, juxtaposition of the people and the West to the political class is a strategy which aims at the framing of the Euro-Atlantic integration as an apolitical process. As such, the Democrats' electoral and post-electoral rhetoric is symptomatic of the dominance of the liberal discourse of economic governance over a state-centric security discourse.

6.5. Conclusions

In this chapter I investigated the meanings that the Democrat-led administration attached to the 'national interest' and to the 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation' during 2005-2007. I argued that in contrast with the 1992 and 1996 general elections, the elections of 2005 did not lead to any major shift in security and foreign policy discourse. I suggested that there are three reasons for this: Firstly, the Democratic Party needed to reconstruct a positive political identity for itself, particularly in the context of its legitimacy crisis of 1996-1997. Secondly, the dominant discourse of security had changed in comparison with 1992. In this respect, one could speak of a higher degree of 'disciplining' of the Albanian political discourse; this means that it was almost impossible any longer to speak the discourse of 'enemies and friends', which Berisha had spoken in the early nineties. Indeed, this was made explicit by the Democrats themselves: in order to distinguish their new administration from their first one of 1992-1997 as well as from the Socialists' administration 1997-2005, one leading Democrats stated that 'now we have no more enemies' (author's interview with Mustafaj). Finally, 2005 was not a moment of structural dislocation as 1992 had been; this means that the Democratic Party were not faced with the need to 'become' subjects and to build their political identity from scratch.

In the first part I discussed the structural and ideational changes in the main political parties as demonstrated in the electoral platforms and electoral rhetoric for the general elections of July 2005. I paid particular attention to how the Democrats framed corruption as a matter of the new primary national interest. By building on a discourse of national resistance to a corrupt state, the Democrats sought first of all to reconstruct a distinct political identity for themselves, and second, to demonstrate their unwavering determination to continue domestic reforms within the framework of Euro-Atlantic Integration.

In the last part I analyzed how the discourse of national sovereignty and non-intervention in domestic affairs which had been constitutive of the foreign policy discourse of the first Democrat administration is reconstructed here again through the emphasis on a pro-active diplomacy, a clear foreign policy orientation of the Albanian state, and people's self-determination. The last section examines the application of three of these tenets of Tirana's foreign policy discourse in the context of Kosovo's final status. I followed the evolution of the Democrats' stance with regard to Kosovo's final status from the time of the general elections of the summer 2005 and in their immediate wake to 2007.

I found out that although the Kosovo issue was no longer framed as a matter of high national interest and did not emerge in the electoral campaigns of the main political parties, it remained an important issue through which the Democrat administration sought to ostentatiously depart from the Socialists' foreign policy. This departure was conveyed through the emphasis on a clear choice of foreign policy orientation and on a pro-active diplomacy. However, the changes ultimately amounted to rhetorical strategies which aimed at the stabilization of the political identity of the Democrats rather than any substantive change in the orientation and course of Albanian foreign policy.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSIONS

This thesis asked *how* and *why* the Albanian foreign policy discourse of the post-communist era changed from the early years of transition (1992-1997) to the period following the collapse of pyramid schemes in 1997 till 2007. I argued that a shift can be noted from the first administration of 1992-1997 to the administration of 1997-2005 from an emphasis on the nation and on national sovereignty to a discourse of regional cooperation and "open borders".

Furthermore, I argued that this shift relies on the political actors' reconstruction of basic identity narratives of the nation and of the West. This process of reconstruction is inherently political in two ways: firstly, the basic myths of Albanianism are reconstructed through the ideological strategies of identification of the political actors who speak in the name of the Albanian state and nation; and secondly, this process of incorporating elements from the identity myths of the National Renaissance into the identity repertoire of the political actors is a process of contestation of old discursive elements and of sedimentation of new ones. As such the process of construction and reconstruction of the identity of the state and of the orientation of the state in terms of Albanianism and of its "Euro-Atlantic vocation" strives to create both the Subject of the Albanian state as well as the subjectivities of those who speak on its behalf.

7.1. Thesis Contribution

The contribution of this thesis lies in the investigation of the relationship between state identity construction (foreign policy orientation) and the identities and interests (subjectivities) of the state elites. In this respect, thesis conducts a two-level analysis, which is at the level of official foreign policy discourse and at the level of the political actors' ideological and political repertoires. I argued that these repertoires are not fixed and pre-set but they are made of identification strategies through which the political actors not only

identify with the nation and the State but also distance themselves from others in the same discursive/political field.

By conducting this two-level analysis, this thesis contributes in three overlapping areas: **Firstly**, in the domain of foreign policy analysis; by offering a *political* reading of Albania's foreign policy discourse in the post-communist period, this thesis proffers the understanding of foreign policy as exceptional public policy and as one which is inherently co-extensive to politics. I submitted that the process of determining the meaning of "national interest", Western orientation, and national security is inherently a political process. In this regard, this study offered an alternative to neo-realist and neo-liberal approaches to the study of foreign policy. In accordance with its research question and key presuppositions, thesis combined a poststructuralist conceptual vocabulary with an intertextual methodology. In this respect, it offered a critical 'reading' of foreign policy which does not only deconstructs existent readings, but also establishes linkages and relations where they are missing.

Secondly, this thesis contributes in the area of Albanian politics. The thesis showed how the construction of a post-communist state identity is co-extensive to the process of the construction of political identities of the main political forces. In this respect, I argued that the political elites' visions of the nation and of the West serve as lenses through which the basic discourses of the Albanian state and of Euro-Atlantic Orientation are constructed. However, in contrast to an emergent literature on Albania's democratization (e.g. Kajsiu 2007, Fuga 2003), this study did not sustain a narrow and fixed understanding of 'ideology' along the lines of the 'Right' and the 'Left'. My study contributed in showing how the 'Left' and the 'Right' in Albania, like in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe needed to re-invent themselves and build political repertoires. These ideological repertoires provide different interpretations of what Albanianness means, both in terms of statehood and national identity but also in terms of democratic governance and 'way of living'.

In this context, thesis explored how certain identity myths of the National Renaissance are used as templates for the construction of the nation and of the West in the post-communist period. However, it is argued that this reproduction of the National Renaissance myths is not neutral and apolitical; but it goes through the ideological and lenses of the key political actors. By exploring the strategies of the political actors' reconstitution of the Albanian National Renaissance and Albanianism as Euro-Atlantic Orientation of the Albanian state, this study seeks to disclose the legitimacy criteria of both the political discourse and of foreign policy discourse on the post-communist period. In the end, in the area of Albanian studies this study is the first attempt to present a complete study on continuities and discontinuities in Albanian foreign policy in the time span of fifteen years.

Finally, this study contributes to the broader domain of European Studies and more specifically to the studies of EU integration of the countries of the Western Balkans. By showing how and why certain constructions of the West in general and of Europe in particular dominate over other at specific moments in time, across textual genres and from different subject positions of the political agents, this thesis offers a multi-faceted reading of "domestication" of Europe in the countries in its "periphery" or its backyard. I argued throughout the thesis that the construction of Albania's relationship and position towards the EU and the US in various terms, such as 'survival', 'economic aid' or 'national identity' reflects the political identities and interests of the political domestic actors. Furthermore, I argued that despite the strong symbolic power of Europe in those countries which experienced Enlightenment at the same time with National Revival such as Albania, EU is not the only 'game in town'. I argued that in the case of Albania, domestic political actors and state elites constructed the EU or the USA as the "genuine" West whose interests and identity is more compatible with those of the Albanian state. As the empirical analysis shows, the oscillation between the EU and the USA reflected not only the political identities of the main political parties, but also their political interests and legitimacy needs of the moment. By contributing

in the three aforementioned domains, this thesis provides a new, holistic and yet structural way to conduct analysis of continuities and discontinuities in foreign policy. In the following part I reiterate some of the key findings in each of the aforementioned domain. By so doing I prepare the ground for the last part of the chapter where I discuss the potential paths that this study opens for future investigation.

7.2. Research Findings

A broad recent scholarship has elaborated on processes of construction of the West in its 'periphery' or in its margins, whether northern, southern or eastern. That the construction of the identity of the West is co-constitutive to the identity of *self* has been acknowledged by different strands of constructivist literature. However little or no attention has been given to the relationship between political actors' ideological repertoires and their political identities and interests on one hand and discourses of the *West* and of the *nation* on the other. As argued in the theoretical part, literature on this domain is limited by the state-centric approach to foreign policy analysis. State-centrism persists even in sociological constructivist studies on the relationship between national identity and foreign policy, such as the work of Hansen and Waever (2001) or the narrative theories of foreign policy analysis (Ringmar 1996; Browning 2002) as well as on their understanding of discourse as productive of social relations and social subjectivity. However, I argued in this thesis that despite the fact that State remains the key provider of necessities such as security, welfare, democracy, national sovereignty and fulfillment of national identity, the meaning of terms in themselves are not determined by the State itself. They are determined by the political elites who speak on behalf of the State and of the entire nation. Furthermore, the struggle to fill these notions with meanings lies at the centre of politics.

7.2.1. Political Elites' Ideological Repertoires and Basic Discourses of Foreign Policy

The Constitution of the state subjectivity is inextricably linked to the constitution of the Albanian (political) Subject. I argued that the construction of the Albanian subject relies upon the political projects of the two key political forces, the Democrats and the Socialists. I argued that the Democrats' ideological project constructed the Albanian Subject in terms of anti-communism, free market, national sovereignty and tradition. In contrast with the Democrats, the Socialists' project constructed Albanianism in terms of pragmatism, economic interest and regional cooperation. Depending upon these constructions of political subjectivities I argued that the identity, responsibility, history and interests of the Albanian nation and state were constructed differently from one administration (1992-1997) to the other (1997-2005).

I structured the analysis along three key moments, the general elections of 1992, 1996 and 2005 and the respective administrations which came out of these elections. I argued that 1992 and 1996 were critical junctures for the political elites in general and for the two main political parties, the Socialists and the Democrats in particular. The elections of 1992 fall of the communist regime and the end of one ideological rule and the beginning of a new one. In this respect the Democrats were faced with the need of constructing a distinct political identity, which would capture both the people's interests and the democratization aspirations. At the same time, the Socialists were also faced with the challenge of reconstructing their ideological program and their identity as a European party of the centre-left. In these conditions, the 'national question' and the 'Western vocation' became the two poles between which the foreign policy of the early nineties oscillated.

As discussed in Chapter 5 the Democrat-led government's foreign and security policy discourse centered on the notion of the 'nation' and articulated together elements such as 'national sovereignty', 'national question' and 'national security'. However, this difference

does not prove to have led to radically different policy with regard to the Kosovo question and more generally to the "national question". Despite the discourse of "national sovereignty" and of "non-intervention from outside" of the Democrat-led administration during 1992-1997, the Kosovo policy during these years complied with the Western policies. Furthermore, while references to the nation and to "national unification" are more frequent in party electoral texts, the discourse of 'Greater Albania' and of national unification did not gain a hegemonic position in the discursive field during neither of the post-communist administrations. The question is why while in opposition and in their electoral rhetoric the Democrats hinged upon the 'nation' and the 'national question' once they took office they followed a moderate policy with regard to the Kosovo question. My argument is that the Democrats maintained the concept of the 'nation' and of the 'national community' which dominated the Communist official ideology; in this respect, the boundaries of the national community overlapped with those of the territorial nation state. At the same time, the Democrats' traditional conception of the nation and of European security as centered on the 'nation-state' led to a nationalist discourse with regard to the Greek minority issue. The 'minority' and the EU requirements regarding minority rights were framed as a threat to 'national sovereignty' and thus as a security matter. However, Europe was not the only 'Western threat'. As I showed in Chapter 5, despite the strong discourse of Atlanticism of President Berisha, the US Department of State's critical stance regarding the violations during the electoral system led to the framing of the US policy as threat to 'national sovereignty' and as 'intervention in domestic affairs'. The analysis of these instances shows that despite the fact that 'Western vocation' was a strong pillar of the repertoire Democrat-led government, the 'West' was framed as a matter of security when its policies clashed either with the basic narratives of the Albanian nation (as in the case of Greece) or with other elements of the ideological and political repertoire of the political party in power, such as 'self-sufficiency', 'national sovereignty' and 'non-interference in domestic affairs' (as in the case of the US). The elements of 'national

sovereignty', 'national question' and 'national security' were then sewed together into a discourse of the political identity of the Democrats. Furthermore, these elements got their meanings in relation to the negative sign of 'communism', which is of the past.

The 1997 elections followed another structural dislocatory experience, which is the collapse of the pyramid schemes and the subsequent institutional collapse of the state. As discussed in Chapter 6, it provided the Socialist party with ample opportunities for the reconstruction of their own political identity in terms of moderation, European socialism, pragmatism and social emancipation. Given that the state identity had been de-stabilized and Albania's Westernizing image had been shattered during the 1997 crisis, the Socialists faced the challenge of building a new 'story' of Self. Despite their Leftist party programme, once they came to power they needed to continue with the privatisation reforms that the Democratic Party had started. This need was related to various reasons, including the material interests of the Socialists, the prospect of foreign investment in the country as well as the pressure for reform on the part of the WTO and the European Union. In this context, the dominant discourse of 'pragmatism' of the Socialist-led government reconciled the Socialists' need for departure from the previous foreign policy discourse on one hand and for ideological identification on the other. While conservative conception of national security had dominated the foreign policy discourse of the Democrat-led administration, the Socialists' foreign policy built upon primarily on an economic understanding of security. In this respect, 'regional cooperation' became the key pillar of foreign policy. In this respect I argued that the 'Balkans' became a key ideological element through which the Socialists reconstructed their Western political identity.

In contrast with the two former moments—1992 and 1996—the elections of 2005 did not bring any radical departure in the security and foreign policy. I argued that despite the Democrats' attempts to build a distinct foreign policy identity, most of the achievements in the area of foreign and security policy-most importantly, the invitation for NATO

membership and the signing of the SAA-had been the outcome of a long process which had started after 1997. The question then is why, despite the return of the same political force which had been in power during 1992-1997, the elections of 2005 did not bring change in foreign and security policy discourse. My argument is that firstly, the Democratic Party needed to reconstruct a positive political identity for itself; this is especially the case given its dramatic loss of external legitimacy in 1997. Secondly, the discourse of the 'Euro-Atlantic Orientation' of the Albanian state had been entrenched and institutionalized during the Socialist-led governments, turning thus into the most prominent *myth* of post-communist Albania. As discussed in Chapter 5, the myth of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' builds upon de-securitization logic. As we saw in Chapter 5, this de-securitization took place through the shift from the 'nation' to the 'economy' as the key locus of politics. The primacy of economics over the politics of national identity or of national sovereignty builds on the notions of consensus and dialogue. In this respect, the discourse of 'politics of no adversaries'—to use Chantal Mouffe's term (2005)— has made it impossible for the Democrats and the centre-right to relapse to confrontational politics and to the discourse of 'nationals sovereignty' and 'non-interference from outside'. This discourse of 'politics of no adversaries' and its economic rationale were not hegemonic in the early nineties when the Democrats were for the first time in office. In this respect, one could speak of a higher degree of 'disciplining' of the Albanian political discourse; this means that it is almost impossible any longer to speak the discourse of 'enemies and friends'.

Finally, 2005 was not a moment of structural dislocation as 1992 had been; this means that the political elites in general and the Democratic Party in particular did not need to build its political and ideological repertoire from scratch. As shown in the Theory Chapter, the political repertoires, or otherwise the political elites' 'visions' are not fixed or with clear and coherent discursive boundaries. On the contrary, they are made of (discursive) *moments*, which might appear in the form of traces of old political discourses. For example the fact that

the 'national question' was a pillar of the Democratic Party in the early nineties does not mean that the Democrats had irredentist aspirations. A discursive analysis of the intertextual construction of the 'nation' in the Democrats' discourse led us to the conclusion that the conception of the nation did not depart from the modernist conception of the 'nation' in the communist official discourse. In turn, the political repertoire of the Socialists while in opposition resisted rapid privatisation and built on the element of 'people's resistance' to oppression, which had been one of the pillars of the Party of Labour's ideological discourse. However, once the Socialists came to power, they pushed even more fiercely for the privatization reforms which their Democrat predecessors had launched. In this context, the discourse of 'pragmatism' served to legitimize this ideological shift but also the enhanced economic and political ties with Greece, which in the National Renaissance canon is framed as the nation's *other* (Sulstarova 2003; Feraj 1998). Furthermore, I argued that the political repertoires of the political elites are constantly 'contaminated' by elements of the dominant Western discourses. As it was argued in Chapter 3 in the context of the Albanian National Renaissance, the national self is constructed both in the 'image of the West' and yet as different from it, when the 'West' impinges the domestic legitimacy of the political elites.

7.2.2. Reconstituting National Renaissance

As I showed in Chapter 3, claiming authority to speak the discourse of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' is possible through the reconstitution of the National Renaissance identity narratives and the incorporation of its elements in the ideological vocabularies of the key political parties and actors. In this respect, reference to the National Renaissance is a practice of legitimization of policy as well as of identity stabilization for the political actors. Despite the heterogeneous nature of the corpus of the National Renaissance texts as argued in Chapter 3, the post-communist actors have enacted their own political identities in terms of fulfillment of both the nationalist and the Westernization aspirations of the nation, in other

words as fulfillment of the National Renaissance ideologues' aspirations. In other words, the two positions within the foreign policy debates-which is, the one of the 'national sovereignty' and 'national security' and the other of 'pragmatism' and 'regional cooperation' are both legitimized by the texts of the National Renaissance.

In Chapter 3, I argued that the texts of the National Renaissance combined elements from a romantic discourse of the 19th century Europe as well as from the Enlightenment discourse of the 18th discourse (also, Ypi, 2007). As such, they may indeed serve as the discursive imaginary within which both the 'West' and the "nation" are constituted. Yet, the texts belong to different genres, in which different authority and legitimacy of the author is constructed. Both the romantic elements of the discourse of the nation as well as the Enlightenment elements co-existed in the literature. However, in more clearly defined genres, such as in political treatises for the solution of the national question, such as in Frasheri's *Albania: what is is, what it was and what it will become*, the Western belonging and the Western orientation of the Albanian nation is far from being articulated in terms of regional peace, cooperation and brotherhood. The region did only appear as a social and economic unit in the inter-war sociological writings. These writings are implicitly excluded from the post-communist reconstruction of the Albanian National Renaissance. To claim that 'pragmatism' can then be traced back to an ethno-feature of the Albanian nation as enacted in the National Renaissance is a discursive strategy of subjectivisation of the political actors.

7.2.3. The Politics of Euro-Atlantic Integration

The empirical analysis showed that the dominant discourse of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' of the Albanian state encompassed both the process of EU integration and of NATO accession. Furthermore, as we saw in Chapters 4 and 5 showed, each of the two key political forces (the Democrats and the Socialists) sought to construct the identity of the Albanian state in terms of Atlanticism or Europeanism. However, as the analysis showed, the

difference as well as the equivalence between these two identities was itself politically constructed on the part of the political parties. Furthermore, the oscillation from one to the other was intimately tied to the immediate interests and political identity of the political elites.

Thesis built on the presumption that identities and interests stand in co-constitutive relationship to each-other. However neither interests nor identities are fixed and in a pre-given closed form, which can serve as ideational basis of foreign policy. Instead, a central claim of this thesis is that the process of identity and interest formation is a continuous struggle for the hegemonic position of one (political) project/position/story over another or various others. Further to this, it contends that both interests and identity are articulated through and within discourse. As such there are no political or state identities or interests outside their articulation.

In this study I sought to demonstrate that foreign policy analysis is not *rational* despite the fact that it builds on a specific *rationale*. Its rationale is underpinned by conflict and constant contestation between different visions of *self* and of *others* in world politics. These different visions are engendered by the political and ideological repertoires of the political actors who speak on behalf of the state and of the nation. Foreign policy cannot therefore be regarded as apolitical or as anti-political, as the political and official discourse of the 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' construes it.

Speaking both the discourse of the nation and of the West is a political practice which is bound up with power and legitimacy within certain discursive limitations. Discourses of 'national interest',' national question' as well as of 'foreign policy orientation' are discourses of the identity, agency and legitimacy of the *subject*. As discussed in the empirical chapters in both main parties' rhetoric the nodal points of the *nation* and the *West* were constructed as the key organizing concepts which fix the meanings of other elements of the anti-corruption or anti-crime or anti-authoritarianism or anti-communism discourses. Thesis argued that the political elites have sought to fix the meaning of the Albanian subject and of the West in

through their own strategies of identification and depending on their interests and legitimacy needs.

Thus, the hegemonic discourse of 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' is a discourse of subjectivity. As such it cannot be regarded as a-political or anti-political as the political elites have construed it, particularly in the post 1997 period. It is political in two respects: firsly, through the construction of the *subjectivity* of the West and of the Albanian state, the political elites have sought to stabilize their own position in the discursive/political field. In this respect, I showed that despite political elites' attempts to construe the 'West' as one and homogenous category and model of democratization, there are various West-s which the post-communist Albanian foreign policy has articulated. Equivalence between them as well as their articulation in terms of difference is a political act.

Secondly, the discursive formation of 'Euro-Atlantic orientation' is political in as far the *process* of integration is carried on by political decisions. The political actors have framed the process of Euro-Atlantic integration as national interest which rises above all political interests as well social, ideological or cultural differences. This construction has necessitated the construction of *politics* and the *political class* as a sphere outside democratic institutions. In this spatial sense, politics is thus constructed as the sphere of street populism, of arbitrary practices and of materialization of tradition and inter-*fis* feuds. In a temporal sense, the political elites have construed *politics* as lying outside the actual objectives and priorities of the nation and of the Albanian state and as symptomatic of Balkanization rather than of Europeanization. The category of the *nation* is thus opposed to the *political class* while the latter is construed as a privileged and remote group able to manipulate the machinery of state for their own advantage (Siedentrop 2000: 129) The political elites reproduce both categories are reproduced as exclusionary: the *political class* represents the lack of will to reform and align to EU requirements and the *people* represents the victim of undemocratic politics.

However, by so doing the political elites deflate questions of legitimacy and responsibility. At the same time this juxtaposition of the nation to the political class conceals the ways and strategies through which the political elite construct the 'nation' through foreign policy discourse. As Jean Baudrillard argues "(…) those who make accusations against the political class are the same ones that replenish it. The class is fed by the accusations made against it" (Baudrillard, 2005:67).

7.3. Directions for Future Research

This research project opens a number of possible options for further research. Future research could be developed along three main directions: the first storyline is the interplay between democratization and foreign policy in Albania. Thesis focused on the two main political parties, which have dominated the political scene in Albania from 1992 to 2007, the Democrats and the Socialists. The question remains whether attempts to re-ideologize domestic politics and these two parties in particular will enhance the Albanian state agency and help achieve coherence of 'foreign policy'. In this study I showed that foreign policy is already 'ideologized' insofar as the political actors will seek to construct the subjectivity of the Albanian state according to their political/ideological repertoires. The question is what alternative discourses are possible to the one of Euro-Atlantic orientation? Can these alternatives remain unassimilated by the hegemonic discourse of the Euro-Atlantic Orientation and yet be compatible with democratic identity of the Albanian state?

The second interrelated domain regards the hegemonic liberal conception of security and foreign policy in the post-1997 period. As discussed in the empirical chapters, the shift from the traditional conception of security and the emphasis on "national sovereignty" during 1992-1997 to the economic conception of security in the post-1997 period left little space for creativity to the national political elites regarding the construction of a distinct state identity. The liberal/economic discourse of foreign and security policy builds upon the preposition of

'politics of no adversaries' (Mouffe, 2005). As such, it does not allow for the explicit articulation of antagonism between *self* and *other/others*. Yet, given that every identity is constructed upon difference, conflict may be expected to be 'simulated' outside democratic institutions by political elites or sub-state actors.

The third direction would investigate the implications of the dominance of the liberal/economic discourse of foreign and security policy with regard to the Atlanticist/Europeanism of Albanian foreign policy, particularly in the post-NATO membership period. Will NATO membership render EU accession as not an imminent national interest any longer? How will Albania face the new security challenges in the region, particularly the challenge of energy? What role will be given to the EU in the context of these challenges? All three possible areas of future research share the same concern with the interplay between processes of construction of political, civic and national identities on one hand and foreign policy orientation on the other. This thesis provided both the conceptual vocabulary to theorize this interplay as well as the model which captures it empirically.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Acar, D. (2007)" Small State Playing the Asymmetric Game: Evolution of Albania's Foreign Policy and its Relations with the United States in the Post-Communist era" Paper Presented at the 7th SGIR Pan-European Conference, 12-15 September 2007. Available at:

http://archive.sgir.eu/uploads/Acar-DilaverArikanAcarSGIR2007PAPER.pdf   (As accessed on 17 September 2007)

Agnantopoulos, A. "The Europeanization of Greek Foreign Policy towards the Arab-Israeli Conflict", *Paper Presented at the BISA Annual Conference*, Cork, 18-20 December 2006: 1-33.

Adler, E. and Barnet, E. (1998) 'A framework for the study of security communities', in E. Adler and M. Barnett eds. *Security Communities.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

_____ and Greve P. (2009) "When Security Community meets balance of power: Overlapping regional mechanisms of security governance", in *Review of International Studies.* 35(1): 59-85.

Albanian Institute of International Studies (2004) *Ceshtje te Sigurise Kombetare. Rasti i Shqiperise* [*Issues of National Security. The Case of Albania*], Tirana: AIIS.

_____, (2001) *Shqiptaret ne Ballkan* [*Albanians in the Balkans*], Tirane: AIIS.

Alpion, G. (2004) "Review Article. Paulin Kola: The Search for Greater Albania". *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations Journal*, Vol. 15 (3): 413-414.

Andersen, N.A. (2003) *Discursive Analytical Strategies: Understanding Foucault, Koselleck, Laclau and Luhmann*. Briston: Policy Press.

Anderson, B. (1991) *Imagined Communities,* London: Verso.

Arditi, B.(2004) 'Populism as a Spectre of Democracy: A Response to Canovan', *Political Studies*, 52(1): 135-143.

Austin, R. C. (2004) "Chapter 9: Greater Albania.The Albanian State and the Question of Kosovo, 1912-2001" in J. R. Lampe and M. Mazower eds. *Ideologies and National Identities. The case of Twentieth Century Southeast Europe*. CEU Press: Budapest, New York.

Baleta, A. (1995) *Shqiptaret perballe shovinizmit serbo-grek.* [*Albanians faced with the Serbian and Greek Chauvinism*], Koha: Tirana.

Baker, C. and D. Galasinki (2001). *Cultural Studies and Discourse Analysis. A Dialogue on Language and Identity.* London: Sage.

Barbullushi, O. (2004) *The role of press in the process of Europeanization of public debate in post-communist Albania*, MA Thesis, Sussex University.

Batt, J. (2008) ed. 'Introduction', *Is there an Albanian Question?* Chaillot Paper Nr. 77, EU Security Studies Institute, Paris.

_____, (2002) 'Introduction: Regions, State and Identity in Central and Eastern Europe', *Regional and Federal Studies*, 12(2): 1-14.

Baudrillard, J. (2005) *The Conspiracy of Art*, Los Angeles, CA: Semiotext(e).

Bechev, D. (March 2006) "Constructing South East Europe: The Politics of Regional identity in the Balkans", *RAMSES Working Paper*, 1/06, European Studies Centre, University of Oxford.

Biberaj, E. (1998) *Albania in Transition: The Rocky Road to Democracy*. Boulder, Colo; Oxford: Westview Press.

Bideleux, R., I. Jeffries (2007) eds. *The Balkans: A post-communist History*. London and New York: Routledge.

Billig, M., Candor, S., Edwards, D., Gane, M., Middleton, D., Radley, A. (1988) *Ideological Dilemmas. A Social Psychology of Everyday Thinking*. London, Newbury Park, Beverly Hills & New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Bjelic, D.I and Savic, O. (2005) *Balkan as a Metaphor. Between Globalization and Fragmentation*. MIT Press.

Bogdani, M and Loughlin, J. (2007), *Albania and the European Union: The Tumultuous Journey towards Integration and Accession*. London, New York: I.B. Taurus.

Bloom, W (1990) *Personal Identity, National Identity and International Relations.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bowman, P. (1999) 'Politics, Polemics and Academic. Interview with Ernesto Laclau', *Parallax*, Issue 11 (April). Available at:

www.scm-ime.tees.ac.uk/VLE/DATA/CSEARCH/MODULES/CS/2006/03/0136/_.doc

(As accessed on 10 July 2009).

Borzel, T., and Risse, T. (2000), When Europe Hits Home: Europeanization and Domestic Change", in *European Integration online Papers* (EIoP) 4(15).   Available at: http://eiop.or.at/eiop/texte/2000-015a.htm. (As accessed on 12 November 2005)

Bourdieu, P. and Wacquant, L. (2001) 'New-Liberal Speak: notes on the new planetary vulgate', *Radical Philosophy* 105:2-5.   Available from: http://sociology.berkeley.edu/faculty/wacquant/wacquant_pdf/neoliberal.pdf   (As accessed on 15.05.2009)

Brighi, E. (2007), 'Europe, the US and the Policy of Pendulum. The importance of foreign policy paradigms in Italian Foreign Policy 1989-2005', *Journal of Southeast Europe and the Balkan,* Vol. 9 (2):99-115.

Brisku, A. (2006) 'Oksidentalizmi i se Shkuares dhe Orientalizmi i te Tashmes: Identiteti "Evropian" i Shqiptareve sipas shkrimtarit Ismail Kadare e Presidentit Aleksander Moisiu' [Occidentalisation of the Past and the Orintalisation of the Present: The

'European' Identity according to the writer Ismail Kadare and the President Aleksander Moisiu], *Perpjekja,* 12(23): 52-70.

_____(2009) *Albanian and Georgian Discourses on Europe: From Berlin 1878 to Tbilisi 2008.* PhD Thesis. European University Institute. Department of History and Civilization.

Browning (2002) 'Coming Home or Moving Home: 'Westernizing Narratives in Finnish Foreign Policy and Reinterpretation of Past Narratives'*, Cooperation and Conflict*, 37(1): 42-72.

_____ (2005) *Remaking Europe in the margins: Northern Europe after the enlargements.* London: Ashgate Publishing.

Brubaker, R. (1996) *Nationalism Reframed*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

_____and Cooper, F. (2000) 'Beyond 'Identity', *Theory and Society*, 29 (1):1-47.

Bumci, A. (2001) 'Albania's Search for Security: 1992 to Date' in Gustenau, G. E. ed. *Ten Years After: Democratization and Security Challenges in Southeast Europe.* Institute for Peace Support and Conflict Management and PfP Consortium of Defense Academies: Vienna.

Bukovansky, M. (2002) *Legitimacy and Power Politics: The American and French Revolutions in International Political Order*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Buzan, B., Waever, O., de Wilde, J. (1998) *Security: A New Framework of Analysis*. London: Lynne Rienner Puublishers.

Campbell, D. 1992. *Writing Security. United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*. Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press.

Clayer, N. (2005) 'Zoti ne Vendin e Mercedeseve' (God in the 'Country of Mercedeses), *Perpjekja*, No. 20 (Spring), pp. 9-42.

Clegg, S. R. (2002) *Frameworks of Power*. London, Thousand Oaks, California &New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Connolly, W. E. (1983) *The Terms of Political Discourse*. Second Edition. Oxford: Martin Robertson.

Crampton, R. J (2002) *The Balkans since the Second World War*. Edinburgh Gate. Essex: Pierson Education Limited.

Davies, P.H.J. (2001) 'Spies as Informants: Triangulation and the Interpretation of Elite Interview Data in the Study of the Intelligence and Security Services', *Politics* 21(1): 73-80.

dela Roka, R. M. (1994) *Feja dhe Kombesia ne Shqiperi, 1920-1944*. [*Nationality and Religion in Albania, 1920-194]*. Elena Gjika: Tirana.

Demirtas-Bagdonas, O. (2008) *A Postructuralist Approach to the Study of Ideology and Foreign Policy: Kemalism in Turkish Political Discourse*. PhD Thesis. Central European University, Department of International Relations and European Studies.

_____, (2007) 'Reconciling the Irreconcilable? Turkey's European-orientation and the Cyprus policy as a 'National Cause', Paper Presented at the 6th Pan-European Conference on International relations 'Making Sense of a Pluralist World', 12-15 September. Turin, Italy.

Diez, T. (1999), 'Speaking "Europe": The Politics of Integration Discourse', *Journal of European Public Policy* 6(4): 598-613.

_____(2001) "Europe as Discursive Battleground. Discourse Analysis and European Integration Studies", *Cooperation and Conflict*, 36(1): 5-38.

_____;.,Agnantopoulos, A. & Kaliber, A. (2005). 'Introduction: Turkey, Europeanisation and Civil Society', *South European Society and Politics*, 10 (1):1-15.

_____(2000) *Last Exit to Paradise? The EU, the Cyprus Conflict, and the Problematic 'Catalytic Effect'*. Copenhagen Peace Research Institute. Working Paper, Available at: http://www.ciaonet.org/wps/dit02/dit02.html (As accessed on 4 March 2006).

_____(2005) 'Constructing Self and Changing Others: Reconsidering 'Normative Power Europe' , *Millennium*, Vol. 33(3): 613-637.

Dimitras, P. E. (2000) "Writing and Re-writing History in the Context of Balkan Nationalism" in *Southeast European Politics*, 1(1):41-59.

Doja, A. (2001) *The Politics of Religion in the Reconstruction of Identities: The Albanian Situation.* Albanian Institute for International Studies. Working Paper, Nr. 1.

Doty, R. L. (1993) 'Foreign Policy as Social Construction: A Post-Positivist Analysis of US Counterinsurgency Policy in the Philippines', *International Studies Quarterly*, 37(3): pp. 297-320.

_____(1997) 'Aporia: A Critical Exploration of the Structure-Agent Problematique in International Relations Theory', *European Journal of International Relations*, **3**(3): 365-392.

Duizing, G. (2002) 'Religion and the Politics of "Albanianism". Naim Frasheri's Bektashi Writings' in S. Schwandner-Sievers and B. J. Fischer eds. *Albanian Identities. Myth and History*. London: Hurst & Company, pp. 60-69.

Duka, V. (2003) *Ceshtje te Historise Bashkekohore Shqiptare* [*Issues of Contemporary Albanian History*] Shblu:Tirana.

Elbasani, A. (2004) "Albania in Transition. Manipulation or Appropriation of International Norms", South East European Politics, 5(1): 24-44.

_____, (2008) 'Mixed Member electoral systems in transition contexts: How has the system worked in Albania?' *CEU Political Science Journal* Issue No. 1:72-92. Available on: www.ceeol.com (As accessed on 12 March 2009).

Ekiert, G. and S. Hanson (2003) 'Time, Space and Institutional Change in Central and Eastern Europe' in Ekiert, G., Hanson, S. (eds.): *Capitalism and Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe: Assessing the Legacy of Communist Rule*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (1999) Europa Publications Limited, 4th Edition.

Fairclough, N. (2003) *Analysing Discourse. Textual Analysis for Social Change*. Routledge: London and New York.

_____, (1995) *Media Discourse*. London: Edward Arnold.

_____,(1992) *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity.

Fawn, R. (2009) "Regions and their study: wherefrom, what for and whereto?", *Review of International Studies*, 35: 5-35.

Feraj, H. (1998) *Skice e Mendimit Politik Shqiptar* [*Sketch of Albanian Political Thought*] Koha: Tirana.

_____, (2003) *Kriza e Perkryer e Shqiperise*: Ese Kritike e Shoqerise [*Albania's Perfect Crisis: A Critical Essay of Society*]. Eurorilindja: Tirana.

Finnermore, M. And Sikkink, K. (2001) 'Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics', *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 4: 391–416.

Fischer, B. J. (2004) *Mbreti Zog dhe Perpjekja per Stabilitet ne Shqiperi* [King Zog and the Struggle for Stability in Albania]. Cabej: Tirana.

_____,(1999) 'Albanian Highland Tribal Society and Family Structure in the Process of Twentieth Century Transformation', in *East European Quarterly*, 33(3):281-302.

Foucault, M. 1989. *Archeology of Knowledge*. Translated by A. M. Sheridan Smith. London and New York: Routledge.

Frasheri, S. (1899/1999) *Shqiperia c'ka qene, c'eshte e c'do te behet* [*Albania: What it was, what it is and what it will become?*] Shtepia Botuese Mesonjetorja: Tirana.

Fuga, A. (2001) *Shtigje drejt Guves se Gjarperit* [original: L'Albanie entre la penseé totalitaire et la raison fragmentaire, 1998] Tirana : Ora.

_____(2003a) *Majtas Jo Djathtas. Prishtine*: Prishtine : Ora.

_____,(2003b) *Les Mots dans La Communication Politique en Albanie*. L'Harmattan: Paris.

Goffman, E. (1959) *Public Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday.

Gumbel, A. (1997) 'Albanian Democrat turned Dictator', *The Independent*, 9 March. Available at: http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qn4158/is_/ai_n14092514 (As accessed on 11 November 2008)

Guzzini, S. (2005) 'The Concept of Power: A Constructivist Analysis', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 33(3):495-521.

Iser, W. (1974) *The Implied Reader. Patterns of communication in prose fiction from Bunyan to Beckett.* Baltimore; London: John Hopkins University Press.

Hansen, Lene (2006) *Security as Practice. Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War.* London and New York: Routledge.

_____, (2002) 'Introduction' in L. Hansen and O. Waever, (eds.) *European Integration and National Identity. The Challenge of the Nordic* London and New York: Routledge, pp. 1-19.

_____ and Williams, M. (1999)"The Myths of Europe: Legitimacy, Community and the 'Crisis' of the EU", *Journal of Common Market Studies,* 37(2):133-49.

Hatibi, E. (2005) 'Pashallare te Kuq dhe Blu: Mbi Islamizimin me dhune te armikut ne diskursin public shqiptar' ['Red and Blue Pasha-s. On the Forceful Islamisation of the Opponent in the Albanian Public Discourse'] in Hatibi, E. *Republic of Albanania*, Tirana: Ora.

Hatzopoulos, P. (2008) *The Balkans Beyond Nationalism and Identity. International Relations and Ideology*. London and New York: I.B. Taurus.

Haughton, T., Fisher, S. (2008) 'From the Politics of State-Building to Programmatic Politics'-*Party Politics*, 14(4): 435-454.

Hopf, T. (2002) 'Introduction: Constructivism at home' in T. Hopf. *Social Construction of World Politics, Ithaca and London*: Cornell University Press.

_____,(1998) 'The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory', *International Security,* 23(1): 171-200.

Howarth, D. and Stavrakakis, Y. (2000) 'Introducing discourse theory and political analysis' in Howarth, D., Norval A. J. and Stavrakakis Y. (eds.) *Discourse theory and political analysis: Identities, hegemonies and social change*, Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press.

_____,(1995) in D.Marsh, D. and G. Stoker (eds) *Theory and Methods in Political Science.* New York: St. Martin's Press.

Huysmans, J. (1998) "Security! What do you mean? From Concept to Thick Signifier"", *European Journal of International Relations,* Vol. 4 (2), pp. 226-255.

Laclau, E. (1990) 'Building a New Left', in Laclau, E. (ed.) *New Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time*, London and New York: Verso.

_____, and Mouffe, C. (1990) 'Post-Marxism without Apologies' in Laclau, E (ed.) *New Reflections on The Revolution of Our Time*, London and New York: Verso.

_____, and Mouffe, C, (1985) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy. Towards a Radical Democratic Politics.* London: Verso.

_____, (1979) *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory*. London: Verso.

Lampe, J.R., (2004) 'Introduction' in Lampe, J.R. and Mazower M. eds. *Ideologies and National Identities. The case of Twentieth Century Southeast Europe*. CEU Press: Budapest, New York.

Lani, R. and Schmidt, F. (1998) 'Albanian Foreign Policy between Geography and History', *The International Spectator*: *Italian Journal of International Affairs,* 33 (2): 79 – 103.

_____, (2004) *A Long Road*. Contribution of the author in the debate at the Five Years of Stability Pact Commemorative Event on 8 June in Portoroz, Slovenia. www.stabilitypact.org (10 December 2004)

_____,(2001) 'Albanian Parliamentary Elections. A Mission Impossible?', *AIM*, 21 June 2001. Available at: http://www.aimpress.ch/dyn/trae/archive/data/200106/10623-006-trae-tir.htm (As accessed on 02.April 2009).

Larsen, E. (1997). *Foreign Policy and Discourse Analysis: France, Britain, and Europe*. London: Routledge.

Leka, A. (2001) 'Fantazma e Shqiperise se madhe' shetit neper politiken shqiptar', [The ghost of greater Albania wanders around Albanian politics'], *AIM TIRANA*, 23 April. Available at: http://www.aimpress.ch/dyn/alba/archive/data/200104/10424-003-alba-tir.htm (As acessed on 8 December 2006).

Lilleker, D.G. (2003) "Interviewing the Political Elite: Navigating a Potential Minefield", Politics, Vol. 23 (3): 207-214.

Lindstrom, N. (2003) 'Between Europe and the Balkans: Mapping Slovenia and Croatia's "Return to Europe" in the 1990s', *Dialectical Anthropology*, 27:313-329.

Lubonja, F. (2002) 'Between the Glory of a Virtual World and the Misery of a Real World' in Schwandner-Sievers, S. and Fischer, B.J eds. *Albanian Identities. Myth and History*. London: Hurst and Company.

_____, (2004) 'The Political Introduction of Political Pluralism in Albania: Contradictions and Paradoxes' in Barjaba, K. ed. *Albania's Democratic Elections 1991-1997; Analyses, Documents, Data. Berlin*: Sigma Editions.

Lukes, S. (1974) *Power: A Radical View*. London: MacMillan.

Jarvis, C. "The Rise and Fall of Albania's pyramid schemes", Finance and Development, March 2000, Volume 37, Number, 1, Available at: <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2000/03/jarvis.htm>

Johnson, A. M. (2001) 'Albania's relations with the EU: on the road to Europe?', *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, 3(2):171-192.

Jørgensen, M. and Phillips, L. (2004) *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*. London, Thousand, Oaks and New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Judah, T. (2002) *Kosovo. War and Revenge. 2nd Edition*. New Haven and London: Yale Nota Bene/Yale University Press.

Kajsiu, B., Bumci, A. and Rakipi, A. (2002) *Albania: A weak democracy, a weak state*. Albanian Institute for International Studies: Tirana.

_____, (2006) 'Politicising Democracy in Albania. A local perspective', *CeSPI Working Papers*, Centro di Studi di Politica Internazionale. No. 29:1-22. Available from http://www.cespi.it/WP/WP29_Kajsiu.pdf (as accesed on 12.06.2008).

_____, (2007) 'Demokratizim pa Politike: Baza Konceptuale e Qasjes Nderkombetare ne Shqiperi', ['Democratization without Politics: The Conceptual Basis of the International Approach in Albania'] *Polis,* 4: 25-40.

Kiefner, J. (1998) 'US removes its diplomats from Embassy in Albania', *New York Times*, 17 August. Available from: http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9A06E2DE163DF934A2575BC0A96E958260, (As accessed on 20 November 2008).

Kola, P. (2003) *The Search for Greater Albania*, London: Hurst and Company.

_____, (2005) "Albania Vote Keeps EU door Ajar", *BBC*, 5 July 2005. Available from: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/4649263.stm, (As accessed on 27 June 2007).

Koka, V. (1985) *Rrymat e Mendimit Politiko-Shoqeror ne Shqiperi ne Vitet 30 te Shekullit XX*, [*Currents of Political-Social Thought in Albania during 1930s*], Tirana: Akademia e Shkencave e RPS of Albania, Instituti i Historise.

Kratochwil, F. (1989) *Rules, Norms and Decisions. On the conditions of practical and legal reasoning in international relations and domestic affairs*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

_____ and Ruggie, G. J. (1986) 'IO as an Art of the State: A Regime Critique', *International Organization,* 40(4): 753–75.

Kristeva, J. (1989) *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*. Edited by Leon S. Roudiez; translated by Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine and Leon S. Roudie. Orxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd.

Kubalkova, V (2001) "Foreign Policy, International Politics and Constructivism", in V. Kubalkova (ed.) *Foreign Policy in a Constructed World*, M.E. Share: New York, London.

Kulla, N.(2003) *Antologji e Mendimit Shqiptar, 1870-1945* [Antology of the Albanian Thought, 1870-1945]. Plejad: Tirana.

Kuus, M. (2004) "Those Goody-Goody Estonians. Rethinking Security in the European Union Candidate States" *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* available from http://www.geog.ubc.ca/~kuus/articles/EPD_forthcoming.pdf (As accessed on 20/06/2006).

_____, (2002) "European Integration in Identity Narratives in Estonia: The quest for Security*", Journal of Peace Research*, (39) 1: 91-108.

O'Brennan, J. and Gasse, E. (2009) 'From Stabilization to Consolidation. Albania's State Capacity and Adaptation to European Union rules', *Journal of Balkans and Near Eastern Studies,* (11)1: 61-82.

Malcolm, N. (2002) 'Myths of Albanian National Identity: Some Key Elements, as Expressed in the Works of Albanian Writers in America in the Early Twentieth Century" in S. Schwandner-Sievers and B. J. Fischer eds. *Albanian Identities. Myth and History*. London: Hurst & Company.

Manners, I. (2006) 'The European Union as a Normative Power: A response to Thomas Diez', *Millennium*, Vol. 35(1): 167-181.

Marcussen, M., Risse, T., Engelmann-Martin, D., Knopf, J. H., and Roscher, K. (2001) "Constructing Europe? The Evolution of Nation-State Identities." In *The Social Construction of Europe*, eds. Thomas Christiansen, Knud Erik Jørgensen and Antje Wiener. London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

McSweeney, B. (1999) *Security, Identity and Interests: A Sociology of International Relations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Merxhani, B. (1996) *Formula te Neo-Shqiptarismes*. [*Formulae of Neo-Albanianism*] Tirana: Apollonia.

Milliken, J. (1999) "The study of discourse in International Relations. A critique of Research and Methods", *European Journal of International Relations*, 5(2), pp. 225-254.

Misha, P. (2002) 'Invention of a Nationalism: Myth and Amnesia' in S. Schwandner-Sievers and B. J. Fischer eds. *Albanian Identities. Myth and History*. London: Hurst & Company.

Moravcsik, A. (1998) *The Choice for Europe. Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Mouffe, C. (2005) *On the Political*. London: Routledge.

Murati, S. (2003) 'Pse u Bashkua Shqiperia me Aleancen e Vullnetit', ['Why Albania joined the Coalition of the Willing'], *South East European Times*, 14 March. Available at: http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/sq/features/setimes/articles/2003/04/030327-SHABAN-001 (As accessed on 27 April 2008).

Myers, S. L. (1997) 'U.S Long Shot in Albania fails to pay off', *New York Times*, 27 March. Available at: http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9401E4D81E38F933A15750C0A961958260&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=2, (As accessed on 10 November 2008).

Neack, L. J. A.K. Hey, and P. Haney, eds. 1995. *Foreign Policy Analysis: Continuity and Change in its Second Generation*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Neumann, I. (1999) *Uses of the Other: The East in European Identity Formation. Manchester:* Manchester University Press.

_____, (1994) 'A Region-Building Approach to Northern Europe', *Review of International Studies,* (20)1:53-74.

_____, (2007) 'A Speech that the Entire Ministry may Stand for' or: Why Diplomats never produce anything new', *International Political Sociology*, Vol. 1: 183-200

Norval, A. (2000) 'The things we do with words. Contemporary Approaches to the Analysis of Ideology', *British Journal of Political Science*, (30):313-346.

Noutcheva, G. (2007) 'Fake, Partial and Imposed Compliance. The Limits of the EU Normative Power in the Western Balkans', *CEPS Working Document*, Nr. 274. Available from www.ceps.eu   (As accessed on 13 July 2008).

Qosja, R. Qosja, R. (1991a) 'Shqiptaret dhe Evropa Dje dhe Sot', ['Albanians and Europe Today and Yesterday'] I, 5 June, *Rilindja Demokratike*, p. 1.

_____, (1991b) 'Shqiptarët dhe Evropa, dje dhe sot'['Albanians and Europe Today and Yesterday'] II, *Rilindja Demokratike*, 8 June.

_____,(1998) *Strategjia e Bashkimit Kombetar*, [*The Strategy of National Unification*] Tirana: Toena.

_____,(2006) *Ideologjia e Shperberjes* [Ideology of Dissolution], Tirana: Toena.

Radaelli, C. (2004) 'Europeanization: Solution or Problem', *European Integration Online Papers*, (8)16. Available at: http://eiop.or.at/eiop/texte/2004-016a.htm (As accessed on 06 March 2005).

_____,(2000) 'Wither Europeanization? Concept stretching and substantive Change', *European Integration Online Papers,* 4(8). Available from*: http://eiop.or.at/eiop/texte/2000-008a.htm (As accessed on 05 June 2005).

Rasza M., Lindstrom, N. (2004) 'Balkan is Beautiful: Balkanism in the Political Discourse of Tudjman' Croatia', *East European politics and Societies*, (18)4: 628-650.

Ringmar, E. (1996*) Identity, Interest and Action. A cultural explanation of Sweden' Intervention in Thirty Years War,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rosenau, J. N. (2006) *The Study of World Politics. Theoretical and Methodological Challenges*. London: Routledge.

Roudiez, L.S (1989) 'Introduction' in Kristeva, J. (1989) *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*. Edited by Leon S. Roudiez; translated by Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine and Leon S. Roudie. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd.

Pace, M. (2006) *The Politics of Regional Identity. Meddling with the Mediterranean*. London: Routledge.

_____, (2004) 'Collective Identity. The Greek Case' in W. Carlsnaes et. al. (eds). *Contemporary European Foreign Policy,* London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publishers.

_____, (2007) 'The Construction of EU Normative Power', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 45(5): 1041-1064.

Pano, N (1997) 'The Process of Democratization in Albania', in K. Dawisha and B. Parrot (eds) *Politics, Power and the Struggle for Democratization in South-East Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pettifer, J., M. Vickers (2007) *The Albanian Question. Reshaping the Balkans*. London: I.B. Taurus.

Pearson, (2006) *Albania in the Twentieth Century III: From Anarchy to the Kosovo War*. London: The Centre for Albanian Studies in Association with I.B. Taurus Publishers.

Pierson, P. (2004) *Politics in Time. History, Institutions and Social Analysis*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Pollo, S. (1993) *The Truth on Kosovo*. Encyclopedia Publishing House: Tirana.

Pula, B. (2006) 'Qytetaret e Perandorise: Ligjerimi Nacionalist Shqiptar dhe Perandoria Fashiste 1939-1943', ['Citizens of the Empire: The Albanian Nationalist Discourse and the Fascist Empire 1939-1943'], *Perpjekja*, 12(23): 103-134.

Puto, A. (1984) *Ceshtja Shqiptare ne aktet nderkombetare te periudhes se imperializmit* [T*he Albanian Question through International Documents of the period of Imperialism*], Albanian Edition, Vol.1. 8 Nentori: Tirana.

_____, (2002) *Neper Analet e Diplomacise Angleze*, [Along the Annals of the British Diplomacy], 3rd Edition. Tirana: Albin.

_____, (2003a) *Historia Diplomatike e Ceshtjes Shqiptare*, 1878-1926 [The Diplomatic History of the Albanian Question] Akademia e Shkencave, Albin: Tirana.

_____,(2003b) 'Disa Aspekte te Perceptimit te Periudhes Osmane ne Historiografine Shqiptare te Periudhes se Socializmit', ['Some aspects of the perception of the Ottoman Period in the Albanian Historiography of the Socialist Period'], *Perpjekja*, 18: 91-104.

Olsen, J. P. (2002) 'The Many Faces of Europeanization', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 40: 921-952.

Salleo, F. (2000) *Shqiperia: Gjashte muaj Mbreteri* [*Albania: Six Months Kingdom*]. Shtepia e Librit dhe Komunikimit, Instituto Italiano di Cultura:Tirana.

Sakwa, R. (1999) *Postcommunism.* Buckingham, Philadephia: Open University Press.

Sarto, R. Del (2006) Contested State Identities and Regional Security in the Euro-Mediterranean Area, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Schopflin, G. (2002) 'The Nature of Myth: Some theoretical aspects', in S. Schwandner-Sievers, and B. Fischer eds. *Albanian Identities. Myth and History*. London: Hurst and Company.

_____, (1997) 'The Functions of Myth and a Taxonomy of Myths' in Hosking, G. and Schopflin, G. eds. *Myths and Nationhood*. London: Hurst and Company.

Schwandner-Sievers, S. (2002) 'Narratives of Power: Capacities of Myth in Albania' in S. Schwandner-Sievers and B. Fischer eds Albanian Identities. Myth and History. London: Hurst and Company.

Semini, L.(2001) 'Terrorism through daily press in Albania: Stable Covering of International Topics', *Southeast European Media Journal*, 23 November. Available at: http://www.mediaonline.ba/en/?ID=150 (As accessed on 11 November 2008).

Siedentrop, L. (2000) *Democracy in Europe*. London: Penguin.

Smith, S. (1999) "Social Constructivisms and European Studies: A reflectivist Critique", *Journal of European Public Policy* 6(4):682-91.

Smith, A. M. (1998) *Laclau and Mouffe and the Radical Democratic Imaginary*. London and New York: Routledge.

Sulstarova. E. (2003) *Ligjerimi Nacionalist ne Shqiperi* [The Nationalist Dicourse in Albania] Aferdita: Tirana.

_____, (2006a) *Orientalizmi Shqiptar: Nga Naimi te Kadareja*. [Albanian Orientalism: From Naim to Kadare]. Tirana: Aferdita.

_____, (2006b) "Evropa e Sigurte e Kadarese", *Perpjekja*, Vol.XII, No. 23: 103-134.

Szajkowski, B. (2003) 'The Parliamentary Elections in Albania June-August 2001', *Electoral Studies*, 22 (2): 361-367.

Torfing (1999) *New Theories of Discourse: Laclau, Mouffe and Zizek*. Oxford and Malden: Blackwell Publishers Inc.

_____,(2002) 'Discourse Analysis and the Post-Structuralism of Laclau and Mouffe', *European Political Science* (EPS). European Consortium for Political Research: ECPR Central Services, Florence. Available at: www.eps.com (As accessed on 23 April 2009).

Trencsényi , B. and Kopecek, M. (eds.) (2006) *Discourses of Collective Identity in Central and Southeast Europe (1770-1945): Texts and Commentaries*. Volume 1: Late

Enlightenment. The Emergence of the Modern 'National Idea', Budapest: Central European Press.

_____,(eds.) (2007) *Discourses of Collective Identity in Central and Southeast Europe (1770-1945): Texts and Commentaries*. Volume 2: National Romanticism. The Formation of National Movements, Budapest: Central European Press.

Triadafilopoulos, T. (2000) 'Power Politics and Nationalist Discourse in the Struggle for 'Northern Epirus':1919-1921', *Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans*, 2(2): 149-162.

Trimcev, E. (2005) *Democracy, Intellectuals and the State. The Case of Albania*. AIIS: Tirana

Vachudova, M. (2003) *Europe Undivided*. Oxford University Press: Oxford.

Van Dijk, T.A. (ed.) (1997) *Discourse as Structure and Process*, Sage Publications: London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi.

Vickers, M. (2008) 'The Role of Albania in the Balkan Region" in Batt, J. (ed.) *Is there an Albanian question?* Chaillot Paper Nr. 107, January, EU Institute for Security Studies.

_____,(1998) *Between Serb and Albanian. A history of Kosovo*. Hurst and Company: London.

_____, and Pettifer, J. (1997) *Albania: From Anarchy to a Balkan Identity*. Hurst & Company: London.

Zavalani, T. (1998) *Histori e Shqipnis* [History of Albania]. Phoenix: Tirana.

Zehfuss, M. (2002) *Constructivism in International Relations. The Politics of Reality.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Zhelyazkova, A (2001) *The Albanian National Problem and the Balkans*-Fieldwork. Imir, Sofie.

Ypi, L. (2007) 'The Albanian Renaissance in political thought: between the Enlightenment and Romanticism', *East European Politics and Society*, 21(4): 661-680.

Waever, O. (2002) 'Identity, Communities and Foreign Policy: Discourse Analysis as Foreign Policy Theory', in L. Hansen and O. Waever eds. *European Integration and National Identity. The challenges of the Nordic States.* London and New York: Routledge, pp. 20-47.

_____, (1998) 'Security Analysis: Conceptual Apparatus' in Buzan, B., Waever, O. and de Wilde, J. (eds.) *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Weltman, D. and Billig, M. (2001) 'The Political Psychology of Anti-Politics: A discursive Approach to the End-of-Ideology Era', *Political Psychology*, 22(2): 367-382.

Wendt, A. (1999) *Social Theory of International Relations* Cambridge University Press. Cambridge.

Wetherell, M. (1998) 'Positioning and Interpretative Repertoires: Conversation Analysis and Post-structuralism in Dialogue', *Discourse and Society*, 9(3): 387-412.

Williams, M. C. and Neumann, I. B. (2000) 'From Alliance to Security Community: NATO, Russia, and the Power of Identity', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 29(2): 357-387.

Widder, N. (2004) 'Foucault and Power Revisited', *European Journal of Political Theory*, 3 (4): 411-432.

Wodak, R., de Cillia, R., Reisigl, M. and Liebhart, K. (1999) *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*, trans. Angelika Hirsch and Richard Mitten, Edinburgh University Press.

PRIMARY SOURCES

Albania (1999a) Kosova, lufta e te gjithe shqiptareve' ('Kosovo, the war of all Albanians'), Interview with Sali Berisha, 17 February, p. 3.

_____, (1999b) 'Berisha: Kosova zgjohet Perendim', 11 June, pp. 1-3.

Alia, R. (1991) 'Fjala e Shokut Ramiz Alia ne Plenumin e 10-te te Komitetit Qendror te Partise', ['Statement of Comrade Alia in the 10th Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party'], *Zeri i Popullit*, 19 April 1991. pp. 1,2,3.

Balkan Web (2005), 'Berisha: Pavaresi e Kushtezuar per Kosoven' ['Conditioned Independence for Kosovo'], 10 October. Available at: www.balkanweb.com. (As accessed on 12 November 2007).

Albanian Telegraphic Agency (1994) 'Albania: political leaders comment on Greek 'veto' to block EU Aid', ATA News in English: BBC Monitoring. 8 June.

Balla, A. (2006) 'Albanian Border Remarks Anger Neighbours', 24 March, *Balkan Insight*. Available at: http://www.birn.eu.com/en/1/110/2976/ (As accessed on 5 April 2006).

Bejtja, A. (1997)' Nano, prape Athines, perballe Romes', ['Nano close to Athens, faced with Rome'], 19 October, *Klan*.

Berisha, S. (1991a) 'Fjala e mbajtur nga Prof.Dr.Sali Berisha ne seancen e komisionit te sigurimit dhe bashkepunimit evropian' ['Speech given by Prof. Dr. Sali Berisha in the parliamentary session of the Commission of European Security and Cooperation, at the American Congress'], 29 May, *Rilindja Demokratike*, p. 1-5.

_____, (1991b) 'Zeri i Demokracise u Ngjit. Interesat Kombetare kane qene e mbeten interesa supreme per PD' [The Voice of Democracy Rose. The National Interests are and will remain supreme interests for the DP'], 20 April, *Rilindja Demokratike*, p. 1.

_____, (1992a) 'Mesazh i Presidentit te Republikes, Sali Berisha me rastin e 70-vjetorit te Kishes Autoqefale Shqiptare', ['Message of the President of the Republic, Sali Berisha on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Autocephalous Albanian Church'], 20 September, Rilindja Demokratike, p.1.

_____, (1992b) 'Veper e madhe ne historine e kombit shqiptar-Fjalim i Presidentit te Republikes, z. Sali Berisha ne Sheshin e Flamurit', ['Great Achievement in the history

of the Albanian nation-Speech of the President of the Republic Mr. Sali Berisha in the rally in the Flag's Square'], 29 November, *Rilindja Demokratike*, pp. 1-3.

_____, (1992c) 'Mesazh i madh i botes se qyteteruar' ['Great Message to the Civilized World'], 25 July, *Rilindja Demokratike*, pp. 1-4.

_____, (1992d)'NATO: Aleat shpirteror dhe mbrojtes i fuqishem i shqiptareve', ['NATO: a Spiritual ally and a stout defender of Albanians'], 19 December 1992, *Rilindja Demokratike*, p. 1-2.

_____, (1993a) 'Mesazh i Presidentit te Republikes drejtuar Kuvendit Popullor lidhur me festen zyrtare te Dites se Clirimit' ['Message of the President of the Republic to the People's Parliament on the occasion of the official Day of Liberation'], 13 November, Rilindja Demokratike, p. 1.

_____, (1993b) 'Qeveria Greke perputh qendrimin e saj me qarqet nacionaliste qe perpiqen te destabilizojne Ballkanin' ['The Greek Govermment aligns its position with the nationalist circles which attempt to destabilize the Balkans'], 17 July, *Rilindja Demokratike*, p.1.

_____, (1993c) 'Angazhimi konkret i NATO-s duhet konsideruar seriozisht: Fjalimi i Presidentit Sali Berisha në diskutimin "Kriza e Ballkanit"... mbajtur në Forumin Ekonomik Botëror në Davos të Zvicrës më 30 janar 1993'['The concrete commitment of NATO should be considered seriously: Speech of the President Sali Berisha in the discussion "The Crisis of the Balkans…", which took place in the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, on 30 January 1993'], 6 February, *Rilindja Demokratike*, p.1.

_____, (1993d) 'Shqiptaret jane te vendosur qe ate qe kane arritur ne liri ta zhvillojne me tej: Nga Fjala e Zotit Berisha ne Samitin e Keshillit te Evropes qe u mbajt ne Vjene me 8-9 Tetor 1993' ['Albanians are determined to further develop what they have achieved in freedom: From the Speech of Mr. Berisha in the Summit of Council of

Europe, help in Vienna on 8-9 October 1993'], 12 October, *Rilindja Demokratike*, p. 1.

_____, (1994) 'Pavaresisht nga Kriza, marredheniet shqiptaro-greke kane shanse permiresimi' [Despite the crisis, the Albanian-Greek relations have chances for improvement'], 3 September, *Koha Jone*, p. 4.

_____, (1996a) 'Aleance e Rrezikshme Anti-Shqiptare' ['Dangerous Anti-Albanian Alliance'], 17 March, Rilindja Demokratike, pp. 1, 5.

_____, (1996b) 'Shqiptaret jane ndare nga socializmi njehere e pergjithmone' ['Albanians have left Socialism behind once and for all'], 27 March, Rilindja Demokratike, pp.1-3.

_____,(1996c) 'Shqipëria në perëndim', ['Albania in the West'] 17 March 1996, *Rilindja Demokratike,* pp. 1, 3.

_____,(1997a) 'Ne Emer te Zotit, votoni per demokracine', ['In God's Name, vote for democracy'], 1 June, *Rilindja Demokratike*, p. 3.

_____,(1997b)'Berisha: Ne jemi nje Komb me tre fe dhe nje Besim: Europen'['Berisha: We are a   Nation of three religions and one faith: Europe], 15 April, *Rilindja Demokratike*, p. 4.

_____,(1997c) 'PD ka mbi supe historine dhe te ardhmen e demokracise e te integrimit ne Europe'. ['DP carries on its shoulders the history and the future of democracy and EU integration'], 15 April, *Rilindja Demokratike*, p.1, 3, 4.

_____, (1998)'Intelektuali dhe Sfidat e Sotme', ['The Intellectual and today's challenges'], 29 October, *Gazeta 55*, p. 2, 3.

_____, (2000a) 'Berisha: Ja Mesazhi im per Shqiptaret e Kosoves', ['This is my message for Kosovo Albanians'], 15 June, *Rilindja Demokratike*, p. 3.

_____, (200b)'Izolimi tjeter i Shqiperise' [The other isolation of Albania'], 12 December 2000, *Rilindja Demokratike*, p. 3.

_____, (2006) 'Krimi tentoi te me blinte por une zgjodha ta luftoj ate' ['Crime attempted to buy me but I chose to fight against it'], 4 May, *Tema,* p. 2.

_____, (2009) 'Po Bashkohemi' ['We are becoming one'], 1 April 2009, *Gazeta Express*. Available at: http://www.bashkimikombetar.com/politike-f1/interviste-me-sali-berishen-kosova-dhe-une-t2560.htm (Accessed on 3 June 2009).

British Broadcasting Company (2005) 'Kosovo set for 'breakway talks', 7 October. Available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4319566.stm (As accessed on 12 December 2005).

Bushati, A. (2001) 'Speciale. Intervistë: Nano rrefen takimin e Athines-I akuzuar: Deshmo per Koshtunicen' [Special Report. Interview: Nano confesses about the Athens meeting-Accused One: Tell us about Kostunica'], 30 December 2001, *Klan.*

_____,(2006) 'Frika Greke e Berishes', ['The Greek Fear of Berisha'], 2 June. http://www.gazetatema.net/arkiva/02qershor2006.html, (As accessed on 27.09. 2007).

Council of Europe (1996) *Recent Parliamentary Elections in Albania*, Doc.7592, 25 June. Available from http://assembly.coe.int/Main.asp?link=/Documents/WorkingDocs/Doc96/EDOC7592.htm (As accessed on 10 December 2006).

Commission of the European Communities, *Albania 2007 Progress Report*, Brussels, 06 November 2007, SEC(2007) 1429. Available at http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2007/nov/albania_progress_reports_en.pdf (As accessed on 20 December 2007).

Eide, K. (2007) 'Letter dated 7 October 2005 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council'. Available from: http://pbosnia.kentlaw.edu/kai-eide-report-N0554069.pdf (As accessed on 20 September 2007).

European Policy Centre (2009) *Albania at the Gates of NATO and the EU*, Report 28 April. Available at:

http://www.epc.eu/en/r.asp?TYP=ER&LV=293&see=y&t=2&PG=ER/EN/detail&l=
&AI=805, (As accessed on 16 May 2009).

European Policy Centre (2006) 'Stability and prosperity: key steps in Albania's European
Union vocation. Speech of Minister of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Albania, Besnik
Mustafaj at a Breakfast Policy Briefing hosted by the European Policy Centre in
collaboration with the King Baudouin Foundation. 27 October. Available at:
http://www.epc.eu/en/r.asp?TYP=ER&LV=293&see=y&t=2&PG=ER/EN/detail&l=
&AI=543. (As accessed on 7 November 2007).

European Commission (2003) *Albania: Stabilization and Association Report*. Available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/albania/com03_339_en.pdf (As accessed on 16
November 2007).

———, (2004), *Albania: Stabilization and Association Report*. Available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/albania/cr_alb_en.pdf (As accessed on 16
November 2007).

http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/albania/cr_alb_en.pdf

Human Rights Watch, *Human Rights Watch World Report 2003 — Albania*, 14 January 2003.
Available at: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/publisher,HRW,,ALB,3e2818540,0.html
(As accessed on 13 February 2006).

Independent International Commission on Kosovo (2001) 'Why Conditional Independence',
The Follow-Up of Kosovo Report, Produced in Cooperation with the Olof Palme
International Centre and Global Reporting. Available at:
http://new.heimat.de/home/illyria/kosovocommission.org_report_english_2001.pdf
(As accessed on 05.12.2007).

International Crisis Group (2005) *Kosovo: Toward Final Status*, Europe Report Nr. 161,
Prishtina, Belgrade, Brussels, 24 January. Available at:

http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3226&l=1 (As accessed on 15.11.2007).

Gazeta Shqiptare (2005) 'Mustafaj-Drashkovic: Perplasja per Kosoven', [Mustafaj-Draskovic: The conflict over Kosovo'], 17 November, p. 3.

Gjymshana, V. (2006a) 'Berisha: Islamizmi Shqiptar, Evropian', 23 June 2006, *Korrieri*.

_____, (2006b) 'Shqipëria në Konferencën Islamike: PE, amendament në marrëveshjen e MSA', ['Albania in the Islamic Conference: EP proposes amendment of the SAA'], 12 July 2006, *Korrieri*.

Islami, K. (1999) Per nje Konfigurim te ri Politik, [' For a New Political Configuration'], Tirana: Toena.

Kadare, I. (1991) 'Fatet e nje Kombi jane ne dore te tij', ['The fate of a nation is in its hands'], 1 June, *Rilindja Demokratike*, pp. 1, 5.

_____, (2006) *Identiteti Europian i Shqiptareve* [*The European Identity of Albanians*] Tirane: Toena.

Koha Jone (1994) 'Berisha po e Izolon serish Shqiperine. PS nuk eshte tufe me dele', [Berisha is isolating Albania again. SP is not a sheep flock], 26 July, p. 5.

_____, (1996) 'Semundjet e Europes Moderne, nacionalizmi dhe Shqiperia',[The illnesses of modern Europe, nationalism and Albania'] 9 July, p. 5.

_____, (1997a) 'Homologu Shqiptar I Milloshevicit', ['The Albanian counter-part of Milosevic'], 2 February, p. 6.

_____, (1997b) 'Intifada Shqiptare' ose Revolta e Deshperimit', ['Albanian Intifada' or the Revolt of Despair'], 6 February, 4, 5.

_____, (1997c) 'Berisha, diktator delirant', ['Berisha, delirious dictator'], 27 April, p. 3.

_____,(2006) 'Pack: Qendrimi i Mustafajt eshte Cmenduri', [Pack: Mustafaj's position is madness'], 19 March.

Korrieri (2005a) 'Berisha: Pse i Ftoj Themeluesit e PD-se', ['Berisha: Why I invite the founders of DP back'], 20 March.

_____(2005b) 'Berisha: Nano, ikje si Presidenti i Kirzikstanit' [Berisha: Nano, departs like the President of Kirgizstan], 27 March.

_____(2005c) 'Berisha e Pashko, bashke ne 14-vjetorin e protestave te dhjetorit' [Berisha and Pashko together in the 14th anniversary of the December protests'], 9 December.

_____,(2005d) 'Kryetari PD: Nano si Janukovici', [The DP leader: Nano like Janukovic], 13 January.

_____, (2006a) 'Berisha 'Qytetar Nderi' i Gjakoves: 'Ne nuk i kemi borxhe askujt', ['Berisha"Honorable Citizen of Gjakova": We are not indebted to anyone'], 18 June.

_____, (2006b) 'Meta: Spanja na mbivleresoi', ['Meta: Spain overvalued us'], 8 February, p. 8. Meidani, R. (2006) 'Shqiperia-Pertej Kanunit dhe Trashegimise Socialiste', ['Albania: Beyond Kanun and the Socialist Legacy'], 23 June. *Panorama,* pp.18-19.

_____, (1998) 'Fjala e Presidentit te Republikes Rexhep Meidani. Ulen Flamujt e Partive, ngrihet flamuri i Kombit' ['Speech of the President of the Republic, Rexhep Meidani. Party flags down; National flag up'], 7 March 1998, *Zeri i Popullit*, p. 3.

Meksi, A. (1992) 'Shqiperia po ecen pandalshem ne rrugen e demokracise' ['Albania is walking unremittingly in the direction of democracy'], 2 October, *Rilindja Demokratike*, pp. 1-4.

_____, (1997) 'Ne luftuam per demokraci, jo per mbajtjen me dhune te pushtetit' ['We fought for democracy, not for the staying in power through violence'], 15 April, *Rilindja Demokratike*, p. 5.

Meksi E. (2004) 'Integrimi dhe Sfidat pas Tij', ['Integration and Challenges which follow it'] *Shekulli*, 29 May 2004.

Meta, A. (2005) '4 Pikat e Programit Qeverises',[4 Points of the Government Programme'], *Korrieri*, 5 July.

Metropol (2006) 'Spanja kerkon ndihme per siatuaten ne vendet arabe', 7 February, p.2. Available at: http://www.gazetametropol.com/print.php?idt=23636. (As accessed on 16 July 2006).

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Albania *(2000a) Negotium,* Vol. 1 Tirana: Toena.

_____, *(2000b) Negotium,* Vol. 2 Tirana: Toena.

Milo, P. (1997) 'Diferenca Euro-Amerikane per Shqiperine?' ['Divergenes between Europe and America about Albania?'], 23 February, *Koha Jone*, p. 10.

_____, (2000) 'Kosovo, a priority to our foreign policy', *Negotium*, Vol 1. Tirana: Toena, pp. 4-14.

_____, (2001) *Greater Albania. Between Myth and Reality*, Tirane.

Moisiu, A. (2005) 'Tolerance Nder-fetare ne Traditen e Popullit Shqiptar', [The Inter-religious tolerance in the tradition of the Albanian people'] 9 November, *Korrieri*, pp. 1,3.

Mustafaj, B. (2005a) 'Deklarata te Ministrit te Puneve te Jashtme per ceshtjen e Kosoves', ['Statements of the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the Kosovo question'], 23 September. *Official Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, Available at: http://www.mfa.gov.al (As accessed on 20 September 2007).

_____, (2005b) 'The Information Meeting of the Foreign of Western Balkans with the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Ohrid, Macedonia, 12 February, *Official Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.* Available from: www.mfa.gov.al (As accessed on 31 October 2006).

_____, (2005c) 'The Address of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Besnik Mustafaj on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the membership of Albania in the United Nations', 14 January, *Official Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.* Available at: www.mfa.gov.al (As accessed on 31 October 2006).

_____, (2005d) 'Speech of the MFA of the Republic of Albania, Mr. Besnik Mustafaj at the 60-th Session of UN General Assembly, 22 September, *Official Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.* Available at: www.mfa.gov.al (As accessed on 31 October 2006).

_____, (2006) 'Politika e Jashtme e Shqiperise ne Vizionin e ri te Qeverise', ['Albanian Foreign Policy in the new Vision of the Government'] Keynote Presentation at the Roundtable *Foreign Policy Vision of the New Albanian Governmen*t, organized by the Albanian Institute of International Studies (AIIS), Tirana, 10 October.

_____, (2007) 'Deklarata të Ministrit të Punëve te Jashtme, z. Besnik Mustafaj për Cështjen e Kosovës' ['Statements of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Besnik Mustafaj about the Kosovo Question'] 2 January 2007, *Official Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs*. Available at: www.mfa.gov.al (As accessed on 16 January 2007).

Nano, F. (1992) 'Speech held in the first Congress of the Socialist Party', *Zeri i Popullit*, 21 June, p.1.

_____, (1997a) 'Te vendosur per transformimin e vendit ne partner te besueshem' ['Determined for the transformation of the country into a credible partner'], 28 September, *Zeri i Popullit*, p. 2.

_____, (1997b) 'Nano: E ardhmja jone e lidhur me Evropen, strukturat euro-atlantike, me parimet demokratike. Kryeministri Nano flet para ambasadoreve te NATO-s: Zgjedhja tani eshte bere dhe ne jemi te sigurte se nuk kemi gabuar' [Nano: Our future is tied to Europe, the Euro-Atlantic structures, the democratic principles. The Prime Minister Nano speaks in front of the NATO ambassadors: The choice is already made and we are certain that we have not erred'], 11 September, *Zeri i Popullit,* p.2.

_____, (1997c) 'Ja njeqind ditet e qeverise time', [Here are 100 days of my government'], 9 November, *Zeri i Popullit*, pp. 2, 3.

_____, (1997d) 'Shkodra, shembull i shembjes se diktaturave' [Shkodra, the example of bringing dictatorships down'], 26 June, *Zeri I Popullit*, p.3.

_____, (1997e) 'Bashkepunimi rajonal, prioritet i politikes sone. Fjala e Kryeministrit Shqiptar Fatos Nano, mbajtur ne Samitin e Kretes' ['Regional Cooperation, priority of our government. Speech of the Albanian Prime Minister Fatos Nano at the Crete Summit'], 4 November, *Zeri i Popullit*, p.2.

_____, (1997f) 'Platforma e Rindertimit Evropian te Shqiperise', [The Platform of the European Reconstruction of Albania'], 29 July 1997, *Zeri i Popullit*, pp. 3, 4.

_____, (1997g) 'Fitorja merr udhe ne Vlore' ['Victory starts in Vlora'], 19 June, *Zeri i Popullit*, p.3.

_____, (1997h) 'Platforma e Rindertimit Evropian te Shqiperise. Programi i qeverise se re, paraqitur ne Kuvendin Popullor nga Kryeministri Fatos Nano', ['The Platform of the European Reconstruction of Albania.The Programme of the new Albanian Government introduced in the People's Parliament by the Prime Minister Fatos Nano'], 29 July, *Zeri I Popullit*, pp. 3, 4.

_____,(1997j) 'Zgjedhjet, shpëtimi i Shqipërisë: Fjala e kryetarit të PSSH, Fatos Nano në mbledhjen e Komitetit Drejtues të PSH',['Elections: the Salvation of Albania. Speech of the SP leader, Fatos Nano at the head Committee of the Party'] 17 April, *Zeri i popullit*, pp. 2-5.

_____, (1998a) 'Patriotizmi i Paster mbi Nacionalizmin e verber' ['Pure Patriotism over Blind Nationalism'], 11 June, *Zeri i Popullit*, p. 3.

_____, (1998b) 'Beogradi ten dale Dhunen dhe Terrorin', [Belgrade should stop violence and terror'], 7 March 1998, *Zeri i Popullit*, p. 2.

_____, (1998c) 'Shqiperia, pale preferenciale ne negociatat per Kosoven' ['Albania: Preferential party in the negotiations on Kosovo'], 21 March 1998, *Zeri i Popullit*, p.3.

_____, (1998d) 'Qeveria shqiptare respekton vullnetin e popullit të Kosovës: Interpelancë në Parlament', 7 July, *Zeri i Popullit*, pp. 3-4.

_____, (2000) 'Nano: Shqiptaret dhe Ballkani para nje sfide historike', ['Nano: Albanians and the Balkans are faced with a historical challenge'], 3 December, *Zeri i Popullit*, p. 2.

_____, (2002) 'Nano: prioritet partneriteti dhe bashkepunimi me SHBA dhe BE', ['Nano: Partnership and collaboration with USA and EU is a priority'], 31 August, *Zeri i Popullit*, pp. 2, 3.

_____, (2003) 'Nano: Po i Kthehemi Ambjentit qe i perkasim' ['Nano: We are returning to the environment to which we belong'], 6 September, p. 2.

_____, (2004) 'Albania, the Balkans and the process of Transatlantic Integration', *Mediterranean Quarterly*, 15 (3):1-11.

_____, (2005) 'Sfida e te gjitheve qe mbajne mend, sfida e te gjitheve qe mbajne mend. Fjalim i Fatos Nanos ne Kongresin e PS-se' ['The Challenge of all those who remember, the challenge of all those who think. The speech of Fatos Nano at the SP Congress'], *Zeri i Popullit*, 6 May 2005, *Zeri i Popullit*, p.2.

Nazarko, M. (2006) 'Ne kerkim te gurit qe ra ne uje' ['Following the Stone Thrown in water'], 8 February, *Shekulli*, p. 15.

_____, (2000) *Presidenti Meidani dhe Kosova. Permbledhje intervistash, fjalimesh dhe njoftimesh shtypi, 25 Korrik 1997-30 korrik 1999*, [*President Meidani and Kosovo. A compilation of interviews, speches and press releases 25 July 1997-30 July 1999*], Tirana: Toena.

Ndrenika, D. (2006) 'Mustafaj: Qendrimi per Kosoven nuk ka ndryshuar', ['Mustafaj: My Position on Kosovo has not changed'], *Korrieri*, 17 March.

Rilindja (1993)'Shqiperia eshte cliruar me 28 Nentor' ['Albania was Liberated on 28 November], 11 November, p.1.

Rilindja Demokratike (1991a) 'Qeveria Amerikane angazhohet per mbeshtetjen e forcave demokratike ne Shqiperi- Interviste e Dr. Sali Berishes dhene redaktorit tone',['The American Government is committed to support the democratic forces in Albania. Interview of Dr. Sali Berisha to our editor'] 8 March, p. 1.

_____,(1991b)'Qeveria Amerikane angazhohet per mbeshtetjen e forcave demokratike ne Shqiperi- Interviste e Dr. Sali Berishes dhene redaktorit tone',['The American Government is committed to support the democratic forces in Albania. Interview of Dr. Sali Berisha to our editor'] 8 March, p. 1.

_____,(1991c)'Aleance e rrezikshme anti-shqiptare' ['Dangerous Anti-Albanian Alliance'], 15 August, p.1.

_____,(1991d) 'Mirupafshim Zoti Bejker! Amerika mbeshtet nje qeveri te lire dhe te pavarur', [Good-bye Mr. Baker! America supports a free and independent Albania'], 26 June, p.1.

_____, (1991e) 'Platforma Elektorale e Partise Demokratike' ,['Electoral Platform of the Democratic Party'], 2 February, pp. 1, 2.

_____,(1991f) 'Bashkepunim i frytshem per integrimin e Shqiperise ne Evrope', ['Productive Cooperation for Albania's integration in Europe'], Interview with Sali Bersha, 3 August, p. 1, 6.

_____, (1991g) 'Europa u thote Shqiptareve: Fati Juaj eshte ne Duart Tuaja-Interviste e Dr. Gramoz Pashko, dhene gazetes menjehere pas kthimit te tij nga vizita ne disa vende te Evropes', ['Europe tells Albanians: Your Fate is in your hands-Interview of Dr. Gramoz Pashko, given to our newspaper immediately after his return from his visit in a number of European countries'], 26 February, pp. 5, 6.

_____, (1991h) 'Deklarate e Perbashket e Partise Demokratike dhe Lidhjes Demokratike te Kosoves', [Joint statement of the Democratic Party and the Democratic League of Kosovo'], 23 shkurt.

_____, (1992a) 'Shqiperia eshte per nje Politike te Hapur', ['Albania is for an open politics'], 11 December, pp. 1, 4.

_____, (1992b) 'Politike e hapjes, politike e hapave konkrete', ['Politics of Opening; Politics of Concrete Steps'], 6 December, 1.

_____, (1992c) 'Deklarata e Ministrise se Puneve se Jashtme' ('Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 24 October, p.1.

_____, (1992d) 'Rezolute e Kuvendit Popullor te Republikes se Shqiperise mbi gjendjen ne rajonin e Ballkanit dhe masat per parandalimin e shtrirjes se konfliktit ne Kosove', ['Resolution of the Albanian Parliament about the situation in the region of Balkans and the measure for preventing the spill-over of the conflict in Kosovo'], 4 December, p. 1.

_____, (1992e) 'Akti i Helsinkit ishte vdekjeprures per diktaturat komuniste-Nga fjalimi I Presidentit Berisha ne Mbledhjen e KSBE-se ne Helsinki' ['The Act of Helsinki was a deathly blow to the communist dictatorships-From the Speech of President Berisha in the EU Security Council in Helsinki'], 11 July, pp. 1, 4.

_____, (1993a) 'Takim i Presidentit te Republikes, zotit Sali Berisha me Perfaqesues te Shtypit. Z. Berisha iu pergjigj disa pyetjeve mbi marredheniet shqiptaro-greke' ['Meeting of the President of the Republic, Mr. Sali Berisha with Representatives of the Press. Mr. Berisha replied to some questions regarding the Greek-Albanian relations'], 30 June, pp. 1, 2.

_____, (1993b) 'Nga Takimi i Presidentit te Republikes, Sali Berisha, me Ministrin e Jashtem Grek Karolos Papulias', ['From the meeting of the President of the Republic, Sali Berisha, with the Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs, Karolos Papulias'], 17 November, pp. 1,4.

_____, (199c)'Mesazh urimi i Presidentit Berisha Presidentit te ri Bill Klinton', [Congratulatory Message to the President Bill Klinton',23 January, p. 1.

_____, (1994a) 'Presidenti Berisha prononcohet per marredheniet me Greqine',[President Berisha speaks about relations with Greece'], 31 May, 1, 4.

_____,(1994b) 'Deklarata e Qeverise se Republikes se Shqiperise: Akt Kriminal ndaj Sovranitetit te republikes se Shqiperise dhe stabilitetit ne Ballkan',[Statement of the Government of the Republic of Albania: Criminal Act against the sovereignty of the Republic of Albania', 13 April, p.1.

_____, (1994c) 'Kuvendi i Popullor i Republikes se Shqiperise denon akti kriminal', ['The People's Parliament of Albania denounces the Criminal Act'], 13 April 1994, p.1.

_____,(1994d) 'Deklarata e Qeverise se Republikes se Shqiperise-Akt Kriminal ndaj Sovranitetit te Republikes se Shqiperise dhe stabilitetit ne Ballkan',[Statement of the Government of the Republic of Albania: A Criminal Act against the sovereignty of the Republic of Albania and stability in the Balkans'], 13 April, p. 1.

_____, (1996a) 'Berisha, S., 'Ne do t'i fitojme zgjedhjet se alternative jone eshte me e mira', ['We will win the elections, for our alternative is the best'], 12 March, p. 3.

_____, (1996b) 'Nenshkrimi i Marreveshjes "Partneritet per Paqe"-Nje Akt me Rendesi per Integrimin e Shqiperise ne NATO. Bashkimi Evropian do te Vazhdoje te Ndihmoje Shqiperine ne Infrastrukture dhe Fusha te Tjera. Parlamenti Evropian-Viktime e nje Informacioni te Pasakte per Ceshtjen Nano', [The Signing of the Agreement "Partnership for Peace"-An Important Act for Albania's Integration in NATO. European Union will continue to help Albania in Infrastructure and other fields. The European Parliament-A Victim of Misinformation on the Nano Issue'], 24 February, p. 1.

_____, (1996c) 'Shqiperia nuk do te akceptoje kurre nje ndarje te Kosoves' ['Albania will never accept Kosovo's partition'], 18 August, p. 2.

_____, (1997a) 'PD do te fitoje me diference te madhe nga PS' ['DP will win with high difference from SP], 13 may, p. 3.

_____, (1997b) 'Fitoren e kemi nga Zoti' ['Our Victory is from God'], 28 June, p. 2.

_____, (1997c) 'Meksi: Qeveria Shqiptare nuk u ka ofruar Sazanin Amerikaneve', ['Meksi: The Albanian Government has not offered Sazan to Americans'], 2 May, p.1.

_____, (2000) 'Skenar Anti-Shqiptar per Himaren', ['Anti-Albanian Scenario for Himara'], 17 October, p.3.

_____, (2007) 'Kosova: Pavaresia, garancia e vetme per siguri rajonale', ['Kosovo: Independence, the only gurantee for regional security], 28 December, p. 2.

Panorama (2005) 'Flamuri Blu mbulon miting e PD. Demokratët nisin zyrtarisht fushatën nga sheshi "Skënderbej" për votimet e 3 korrikut', [The Blue Flag covers the DP rally. The Democrats star officially the campaign for the elections of 3 July in the 'Skenderbeg' Square'], 22 May. p. 5.

Radio Free Europe (1997) 'Albania: Nano Proposes Albania Be An Italian Protectorate', 11 December. Available at: http://www.rferl.org/content/Article/1087584.html (As accessed on 13 October 2007).

Rama, E. (1997) 'Intifada Shqiptare' ose Revolta e Deshperimit" ['Albanian Intifada' or the Revolt of Despair'], 6 February, *Koha Jone*, pp. 4, 5.

Serreqi, A. (1992), 'Drejt nje Zgjidhjeje te Pranueshme per te Gjithe' ['Towards an Acceptable Solution for All'], 28 August, *Rilindja Demokratike*, p. 1, 4.

Shekulli (2001) 'Godo: Nano dikton Milon nga Athina', ['Godo: Nano dictates Milo from Athens'] 23 January.

_____,(2003) 'Sabri Godo: Qeveria luan lojen e Athines', ['Sabri Godo: Government plays Athens' game'], 11 March.

_____,(2006)'Mustafaj: Shqipëria do të përcjellë mesazhe tolerance për rajonet muslimane', ['Mustafaj: Albania will transmit messages of tolerance to the Muslim regions', 17 February 2006.

TV Alsat (2006a) '"Kontrast": Interviste me Ministrin e Jashtem Besnik Mustafaj', ['"Contrast": Interview with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Besnik Mustafaj'], 14 March.

_____,(2006b) ' "Kontrast": Interviste me Europarlamentaren Doris Pack', [' "Contrast": Interview with the Euro Parliamentarian Doris Pack'], 13 July.

SOT (2006), 'Blushi Nxit Percarjen Fetare', [Blushi incites religious conflict'], 8 October, p. 3.

TV Klan (2004) '"Opinion": Intervistë me Sali Berishen' ['"Opinion": Interview with Sali Berisha] 24 September.

_____,(2005) ' "Zone e Lire": Panel me Ministrin e Jashtem Besnik Mustafaj dhe gazetaret Baton Haxhia dhe Andi Bejtja' [' "Zone e Lire": Panel of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Besnik Mustafaj and the journalists Baton Haxhia and Andi Bejtja'], 21 October.

_____,(2006) ' "Opinion": Panel i gazetareve me Sali Berishen', [' "Opinion": Panel of Journalists with Sali Berisha'], 6 January.

TV Vizion Plus (2006) '"5 pyetje nga Babaramo": Interviste me Ministrin Shqiptar te Puneve te Jashtme, z. Besnik Mustafaj', ['"5 Questions from Babaramo": Interview with the Albanian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Besnik Mustafaj'], 16 March.

Televizioni Shqiptar (2005) 'News Edition of 16.00', 26 September.

Voice of America (2005) '100 Ditet e Para te Qeverise Berisha. Interviste me Kryeministrin Shqiptar Sali Berisha', ['The first 100 days of Berisha Government. Interview with the Albanian Prime Minister, Sali Berisha'], 21 December. Available at: www.voanews.com/albanian/archive/2005-12-21-voa5.cfm?renderforprint=1&textonly=1&&TEXTMODE=1&CFID=236804840&CFTOKEN=34791730 (As accessed on 7 November 2007).

_____, (2007a) 'Kryeministri Berisha në OKB: Pavarësia është zgjidhja e vetme për Kosovën' [Prime Minister Berisha in UN: Independence is the only solution for Kosovo'], 28 September. Available at: http://www.voanews.com/albanian/archive/2007-09/2007-09-28-voa1.cfm?moddate=2007-09-28. (As accessed on7 December 2007).

_____, (2007b) 'Berisha: Sollaku është ceshtje e Presidentit dhe e Parlamentit' [Berisha: Sollaku is a matter of the President and of Parliament] Interview for Voice of America, 28 September. *Democratic Party Official Website*, www.partiademokratike.al/lajme.htm (As accessed 15 November 2007).

Zeri i Kombit (1993) 'Detyre Kryesore e Kombit Shqiptar-Zgjidhja e Ceshtjes Kombetare. Interviste me Presidentin e Shqiperise, z. Sali Berisha' ['Main Duty of the Albanian Nation: The Solution of the Albanian Question' Interview with the Albanian President, Mr. Sali Berisha], 2 July, pp. 3-4.

Zeri I Popullit (1991a) 'Fatos Nano priti Prof. Anton Ceta'['Fatos Nano received Dr. Anton Ceta'], 29 August, p.2.

_____, (1991b) 'Partia Socialiste distancohet plotesisht nga PPSH si Parti e Tipit Monist, nga Politika dhe Gabimet e saj dhe te Enver Hoxhes', [The Socialist Party distances itself completely from the PLA as a monist party and from its politics and mistakes and of those of Enver Hoxha'], 27 October, pp. 1-2.

_____, (1991c) 'Evropa, Shqipëria, Partia Socialiste. Intervistë e Kryetarit të Partisë Socialiste, shokut Fatos Nano, dhënë redaktorit Hamdi Jupe' [Europe, Albania and the Socialist Party. Interview of the Leader of the Socialist Party, Comrade Fatos Nano to our editor Hamdi Jupe'] 22 qershor 1991, 2,3.

_____, (1992a) 'Ne kerkojme Shanse te Barabarta per te Gjithe Shqiptaret. Interviste e Kryetarit te Partise Socialiste, Fatos Nano', ['We ask for equal chances for every

Albanian. Interview with the leader of the Socialist Party, Fatos Nano'], 15 October, pp. 1, 2.

_____, (1994) 'Nano: As me komunizëm, as me antikomunizëm: /Intervistë e botuar në revistën "Koha" Prishtinë"', [Nano: Neither with communism, not without it. Interview published in "Koha" magazine'], 9 September, p.3.

_____, (1997a) 'Qeveria Nano, partnere e denje e Perendimit' [The Nano Government: A worthy partner of the West'], 25 September, p. 2.

_____, (1997b) 'Shqiperia eshte me ju', ['Albania is with you'], 17 June, p. 2

_____, (1997c) ''Nano: Nuk veproj si Enveri e nxenesi i tij. Interviste eksklusive e Kryeministrit para takimit me Milloshevicin', ['Nano: I do not behave like Enver and his student. Exclusive Interview of the Prime Minister before his meeting with Millosevic'], 30 October, p. 3.

_____, (1997d) 'Qendrimet tona per interest kombetare jane qendrime evropiane', [Our stance with regard to the national interests is a European stance'], 5 November, p. 3.

_____, (1997f) 'Nano: Une fola Shqip', ['Nano: I spoke Albanian'], 5 November, p. 3.

_____, (1998a) 'Shqiperia: Koha e Rigjetur. Interviste e kryeministrit Fatos Nano dhene gazetarit Marc Semo te Gazetes "Liberation" per revisten franceze "Politique Internationale', ['Albania: The re-found time. Interview of the Prime Minister Fatos Nano for the journalist Marc Semo of "Liberation" for the French magazine "Politique Internationale'], 6 February, pp. 8-9.

_____, (1998b) 'Ulen Flamujt e Partive, ngrihet flamuri I kombit' ['Party flags down; National flag up'), 7 March, p. 3.

_____,(1998c) 'Kosova nuk eshte nje ceshtje e brendshme e Serbise', ['Kosovo is not a domestic issue of Serbia'], *Zeri i Popullit*, 25 March, p. 2.

_____,(2002) 'Meta: Greqia, partneri yne strategjik ne Ballkan', ['Meta: Greece, our strategic partner in the Balkans'], 27 January, p.3.

_____, (2005a) 'Kryeministri dhe Kryetari I PS-se Nano zhvillon takime me banore te Shkodres', ['The Prime Minister Fatos Nano meets citizens from Shkodra'] 23 May, p.2.

_____, (2005b) 'Fatos Nano i afroi PASOK-ut dy anetaresime per emigrantet shqiptare', ['Fatos Nano offered to PASOK two memberships for the Albanian immingrants'], 4 March, p. 2.

_____, (2005c) 'NANO-Papulias: Shqiperia Progres ne rrugen e integrimit', ['Nano-Papulias: Albania is progressing towards integration'], 4 Mars, p. 2.

Cited Parliamentary Debates

Punimet e Kuvendit, 30 April 1990. Legjislatura e 12-te. [Legislature No. 12]

Punimet e Kuvendit Popullor, 9 October 1991. Legjislatura e 12-te. [Legislature No. 12]

Punimet e Kuvendit, 25 April 1991, Legjislatura e 12-te. [Legislature No. 12]

Punimet e Kuvendit Popullor, 28 July 1997. Legjislatura e 15-te. [Legislature No.15]

Punimet e Kuvendit Popullor , 28 July 1997, Legjislatura e 15-te. [Legislature No.15]

Parliamentary Debates, 10 November 1997, Legjislatura e 15-te [Legislature No.15]

Punimet e Kuvendit Popullor, 7 October 1998, Legjislatura e 15-te, [Legislature No.15]

Parliamentary Debates, 6 July 1998, [Legislature No.15]

Parliamentary Debates, 6 August 1998, Legjislatura e 15-te [Legislature No.15]

Personal Interviews

NAME	POSITION	DATE/PLACE OF INTERVIEW