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Thyamis

"...in the linguistic aspect, many academics and linguists, including Egerem Çabej, the origin name of Chameria is close associated with the name of Thyamis River, which is known as an Albanian territory, that proves the autochthony of this province."

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INSTITUTI I STUDIMEVE PËR ÇAMËRINË
INSTITUTE OF CHAM STUDIES



Expropriations after the occupation of chameria from greek reactionary government (1912 - 1913)



Some of the most powerful voices of albanian diplomacy in protection of the cham issue



Beqir Meta: "For the cham issue ..."



Tower of Suli

This newsletter we have decided to name "Thyamis" because of the close association of the name Chameria with the name of the river that crosses it, Thyamis, in antiques. On the origin of the name Chameria, earliest thesis belong to foreign researchers, as W.M.Leake, Pouqueville, etc., who are focused on the toponym of this name. Albanian linguist Eqerem Çabej, supports the same thesis, noting the continuity of the two terms of Thyamis into Cham, explained through Albanian languages phonetic rules: First Part (- thy) of the composition (-thyamis), derived from the Albanian verb – thyej (in English means *break*), while the second part (-am), derives from Illyrian language and means *Ames (mother, entirety)*. So in a native sense, which as a forming word (thy + am = thyam) goes to the logical conclusion of Albanian expression, *broken Ames*, with the meaning of the "*Broken Pelasgians-Illyrian Ames*". It is believed that the Albanian etymology of the name of the river *Thyamis*, lingual is related to another form of Albania, where from "*thy amë*" was established synonymous forms *ça amë*, that corresponds to the Albanian verb break (*cleavage of Ames-mother*). In this way, according to supporters of this thesis is created Albanian forms -*ça am(ë)*, (*u*) *ça ama*, and where with the falling of vowel – *a*, is created the word *cham* (*ça + amë*). In the indefinite form, to the name *cham* is added the suffix -*ri*, forming toponym *Chameria*.

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Institute of Cham Studies (ISÇ) is a non profit organisation. It was established in May of the year 2004 in Tirana, with initiation of a group of 17 intellectuals from different fields, such as: Political science, Jurisdictional, Historical, and Sociological of international relations e.g. The purpose of this institute is to nationalize and internationalize this issue.

To make known a large extent history, ethnographies, ethno linguistic, docks, customs and beautiful culture of Chameria region. All Cham community requires a right solution, the first step is to go back to the past and remember always its history and the reasons, in order to seek justice.

The main aim of our institute is to show values of Cham people that have had and continue to have, while inherited them to the new generations through culture and dialect that characterizes. For this reason, the Institute of Cham Studies, aims that through activities of diversified and different themes that addresses to make aware the masses for the values of this community have.

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EXPROPRIATIONS AFTER THE OCCUPATION OF CHAMERIA FROM GREEK REACTIONARY GOVERNMENT (1912-1913)

After the end of the First Balkans War and especially after the official publication of the Agrarian Law in Greece, the Greek Government on purpose occupied almost all the rural properties of the Albanians of

Chameria supported by the dispositions of the Treaty of Athens in 1913, according to which

every Greek citizen who owned the deed of property, their properties

were considered safe or secured. The Greek Government did not respect these engagements being signed on the treaty but put into practice many straight and oblique ways in order to plunder the properties of the Albanians. The moment an owner appeared to the court with his documents of one's properties, the court issued a decision proving that their properties were taken away by the Christians. On the other hand, compelled the opposing side to take to court the real owner. This procedure was never applied to the favour of the Albanian owner. In this way the Cham owner even being a

Greek citizen was deprived from one's property. After the Treaty of Lozanna thousands of Greek refugees coming from the Asia Minor were put in the houses and lands of the Muslim

Chams. Four to five Cham families were got together into a big house and

their houses were occupied by force by Greek refugees. They became not only the owners of the houses of Chams but also of the land, agricultural products, pastures, olive plantations etc. The Albanian Chams countrymen could not make any reaction towards these actions because the Greek refugees had the support of the gendarmerie (=police) and Greek local administration.

Through the Laws of the Agrarian Reform which were especially very hardly applied only on the properties of the Cham Albanians,

the Cham felt oneself expropriated not only of one's lands used to secure agricultural production in order to feed their families but also even from their gardens of their houses. In this grave situation, when Albanian Cham families were threatened by famine and misery, both the country and town people organized reactions and complaints towards the Greek Government and addressed to League of Nations to intervene to the Greek Government to put things right.

In the long run of letters, memorandums, petitions, requests that the Cham Muslim local dignitaries, village groups of Margelliç, Paramithia, Filati, Igumenitsa etc. sent to the important people all round the world it is worth mentioning two of them, first: Safet DINO, a very rich owner in Paramithia.

On December 10, 1923 he addressed a plea to Venizelos, prime

minister of Greece in Athens where among other things he wrote: 'Measures taken by the Greek Government through



History

Government to intervene in order to be returned back to him even a small amount of his properties to meet the demands of his family not to die of hunger.

In respect to the seizure of properties of the Albanians of Chameria from the Greek Government harshly reacted even the Albanian press of the time, as well.

‘Democratia’ newspaper, published in Gjirokaster, in November 18, 1930, in its editorial published a material titled: ‘State thievery’ where among other things stressed: ‘Greece has not stepped back toward nothing even in front of crime to realize its program of extermination of our brothers out of the other side of the border which had to protect their property, their heavy life under the heel of oppression of the Greek office workers... In these inhuman behaviours lies



also the problem of properties of the Albanians of Chameria. The agrarian reform we are putting into effect, but we have to give to the Chams repayments, even a recidulous one. But this is not enough. Their property must be

plundered, without giving them even a farthing...’

It must be stressed that this tension situation went on even in the years to follow. In the ‘Tomorri’ newspaper on September 11, 1940 it is



stressed: ‘One of the hardest forms of the persecution of the Albanians from the Greek land is the one that hits the real estate, just because it is deprived from a kind of legality and generalization of principles, while practically it was directed only against

the poor Chams and inspired from the expropriation of all the properties of Albanians in Greece...’ The above mentioned article has

this paragraph as a conclusion: ‘Despite all the most sly craftsmanship, the Greek Government has tried to grab the right of the Albanians of their lands, that belong to them from a reliable property, since ancient times,

when the Albanian race lied on all that region, but neither the development of time nor the wars or revolutions, invasions

and foreign occupations which followed on another could not make be forgotten the primitive rights.’

SULI

Suli is a small town in the region of Chameria in Albania. It is situated 45 km. in south-west of Ioannina in a mountainous place fortified by the nature. Its inhabitants, christian Albanians, together with the population of the villages around protected the right to carry arms, taking the responsibility in case of war the duty of fighting within the ranks of Otoman army. In 1790, Ali Pasha



Tepelena in order to displace the Suliots (habitants of Suli) of their place sent military forces but suffered heavy losses. In 1792 the Suliots stood heroically, but to the attacks of 1800 and 1803 the population of Suli could not stand it, considering the only solution or way out moving in to Parga which at that time was under the domination of England. Since that time Suli fell into ruin. At the last Greek revolution, the most brave leaders were from Suli.

Alongside the known and proved bravery during the years of wars led from the Cham men, a



prominent characteristic which made this study possible is the bravery and beauty of the Suli women. These features of Cham woman, perhaps would create an exact mental image of the beauty of Albanian women that according to Dora D`istra: `they`re the

most beautiful women of East Perninsula... You get amazed with the pleasant valleys of Chameria, with the beauty of its virgins, with their black eyes, wonderful hair of sunburnt in dark brown colour that reach to their heels...` (Dora D`Istra)



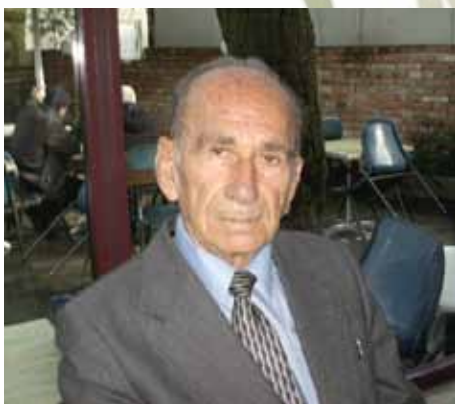
Next to the beauty, as a nature gift, the bravery of Cham women has been and has its place in the borders of the legend. Narratives transmitted generation after generation, the legends, the songs but even the archive documents of the time, bring clearly into light this indisputable fact. The facts which testify this are connected with fierce battles in 1792, when

Suli was attacked by heavy forces of Ali Pasha Tepelena, where the women of Suli for which honor was more important than life itself grabbed the arms sacrificing their lives. It`s already well known the heroic act of the Suli women happening in Zallong. More than 100 women holding tight their children on their breasts and followed by their daughters, jumped into the deep stony precipice in Zallong.

They took an off-hand decision in order to be protected of dishonor, shame and torture. Holding each others hands and on the level ground of the rock they played the `death dance`.

HAJREDIN ISUFI

SOME OF THE MOST POWERFUL VOICES OF ALBANIAN DIPLOMACY IN PROTECTION OF THE CHAM ISSUE



The Greek military bands occupied Chameria in February 1913. Seizure of Chameria was followed by a wave of crimes and terror on population and particularly on Cham population. What the Greek Government was accused at the time was the opening of the prisons of

Ioannina for the Crete criminals, and supply of them with arms and the undertaking of attacks toward Albanians of Chameria and to those of the south of Albania. The Crete band barbarically massacred 72 Cham people from the local dignitaries, burned and ruined a lot of Cham villages: as in Gardhiq, Dhragomia, Karbunari etc. The Greek Government filled the prisons with Albanian Chams. In the dark jail cells of Ioannina were put 35 Chams from Filati, and a lot of others from the districts of Margelliçi and Paramithia. The same violent scenes were repeated in other districts in the south of Albania as well: in Delvina, Korçë, Kolonjë, Leskovik, Përmet etc. More than 600 citizens from Korçë and Kolonjë were imprisoned

in the prisons of Follorina and Thessalonika in 1913. More than 300 Albanian villages were burned in the south of Albania from the Greek bands and armed military forces. Many women, children and men from the local dignitaries of the South of Albania were barbarically executed. In that period neither in Chameria nor in south of Albania did exist any press or journalists working in the terrain, and neither diplomatic representatives in European states in order to raise their voice and inform what in Albania was happening.

The first spokesman speaking about the criminal events taken place in Chameria and in south of Albania in 1913 – 1914 was Mit'hat FRASHERI. He had strong friendly relations and collaboration with a great friend of Albania, Aubrey Herbert. In 1913, Albanian Committee was founded and one year later he became a member of that Committee. Mit'hat FRASHERI collected a wide and exact information on the crimes carried out of the criminal Greeks. The list was delivered to Herbert who wrote a long article at the British prestigious newspaper: 'The Times'. The information given by the newspaper shook up badly the Athens and its diplomatic circles. The Greek minister in London, Gennaidius tried hard to deny calling them

unfairful fabrication of Herbert, but Herbert was very exact, concrete and argumentative in his facts and in the articles that followed gave the names of every killed person of the Albanian local dignitaries. He also wrote in the same newspaper 'The Times' on April 15 about the burning of 14 houses in Delvina and also all the houses of Muslims in Ogrene and also the house of the priest called Melan.

The Greece never respected the treaties and conventions that had been signed in respect of the Cham minority. In 1913 the Greeks had signed a treaty with the Turkish Government according to which the Athens will respect the rights of the citizens of minorities in the territories occupied by it, in the same way as its citizens. In the article six it was clearly expressed that to the minority will be guaranteed the right of property of the owner for his property... This commitment of the Greek Government was only not respected but they undertook wild measures on the expropriation of the Albanians from their motherland since in 1913 and also they made plans for their ethnic cleansing, they were also accused for lack of citizenship rights: where was not allowed their education in their ancestral language, institution of cult and mosques and the towns of Chameria were turned into stables. In this extremely grave situation

some distinguished personalities of Albanian diplomacy came into light and some strong voices of the patriotic circles of Chameria took the responsibility of a high diplomatic mission in order to raise the voice of protest wherever and whenever they could toward the Greek Government, League of Nations, Albanian Government etc. In the beginning of the year 1923, Albania established diplomatic relations to Greece and the first diplomatic representative of Tirana in Greece was appointed Mit'hat FRASHERI, born in a great patriotic family, an intellectual with wide cultural capabilities and a determined patriot, very decisive and for him the National Issue was above all. Since in the beginning of his activity he collected a wide information about the hard situation that the Cham community was facing and he often spoke with hard notes about the complaints and the lack of rights of the Albanian minority in Greece. The silence of the Greek government compelled the Albanian diplomat that at the end of November 1923 to meet Mr Veroniq, General Director at the ministry of Greek Foreign Affairs to protest in front of him on behalf of Albanian Kingdom. From March 1923 till November of the same year he had sent to the Directorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 120 notes receiving not a single answer at all. The high Greek official, in order to facilitate the Greek Government and the sector he headed proposed to Mit'hat to compile a new complaint to study it in a preferential way. Which were the complaints that the representative of Albanian Government addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Athens? First of all the unjust expropriations contrary

to all the norms of international right carried out on Albanian owners, and their properties were grabbed by the Greeks and the Cham Albanians were turned into their servants. Secondly the Greek refugees arriving from Asia Minor supported by the local administration had occupied all the properties of the villages in Chameria included also the pastures and unjustly occupied their houses too, and the Chams were settled in their stables etc.

Thirdly, the Greek government had undertaken a wild cleansing campaign to send the Chams from their motherland to the regions of Anatolia considering them as Turk citizens.

Fourthly, in order to make the life of the Muslim Chams difficult and intolerable the Greek bands moved in villages in order to cause fear, anxiety and terror killing and putting into jail innocent people on false accusations as if they were sheltering criminal bands aiming to knock down the Greek government. In April 1923 Mehmet KONICA was appointed Plenipotentiary Minister of Albania in London. He was a well-known politician and diplomat, he had a vast circle of friends and supporters of Albania in London. He used all his energies to protect the Albanian Issue in general and that of Chameria in particular. In 1923 he began direct contacts with the highest officials of English diplomacy. Firstly visiting the Foreign Office where verbally he had presented the grave situation of the Albanian Chams and had asked the intervention of the British Government to the Greek one in order to respect the commitments taken to the Treaty of Lozana in 1923 (the Greek government had promised that the Cham Muslim population would

not be included in exchange toward Turkey). The answer the Albanian diplomat received was: 'Albania as an independent country has to deal with its problems by itself and the British opinion didn't like to have its government intervened in different foreign affairs which were not in the interest of Great Britain.' At that time the political situation in Great Britain was not quiet. It had happened an unexpected Parliamentary interruption and in a short time new elections were planned to be taken. Mehmet KONICA was a good expert of British policy. He was aware that Britain had never shut its eyes in front of requests for mercy, especially when this request coming by a people who believed that could have it asked directly to Great Britain. Mehmet KONICA could not understand why the case of the Albanian minority in Chameria could cause no pain or emotion in England! There were two schools in England in connection with its foreign policy: The first school, had existed since in the period of Byron, which believed and relied on Garibaldi. This school did the impossible to help the small countries and helping powerless peoples. The second school was a particular one, never intervened or doing anything out of its own interests. In 1923 the situation in Chameia was highly tensioned, the pressures of the Greek Government for robbing the properties of the Albanians and their wild actions in order to bound them silently to declare with their own mouths that were pleading to be displaced had created a serious uneasiness at the elite of Albanian diplomats, which did not waive from patriotic duty, trying constantly looking for a solution.

To be continued on the next edition...

MUSA DEMI



Musa DEMI, was an Albanian revolutionary and writer. He was born in 1878 in Filat, in that time a small town of Otoman Empire. His father, Hamit DEMI was a land owner of DEMI family, in Filat.

Musa DEMI had his first lessons in Filat, while he attended the high school in Ioaninna.

He became one of the most famous active activists of National Movement. In his formation, alongside his parents, a very important role played also his elder brother Rexhep DEMI which dealt with dense political activity. In 1895, Musa DEMI and his brother had developed wide collaboration relations with many Cham patriots. Through Albanian patriots acting abroad, they were able to have Albanian books and newspapers which

they distributed not only in Chameria but even in other places. Although their activity was very attentive, the Turkish authorities picked up their trail in 1895 and Musa DEMI was condemned by the tribunal of Ioaninna serving one year and half in prison. Though this patriotic activity took his liberty away for a while, Musa Demi after his imprisonment went on with a stronger devotion to it.

After 1905, Musa DEMI was known in all the patriotic circle of that time in Albania. Through his links he had carried out with his collaborators, he remained well informed about everything happening in Chameria and this information was used for the patriotic press as a strong weapon in the service of National Issue.

On August 25, in 1908 together with other nationalists, opened in Filat the first Albanian School. Mehmet SEJKO put into disposition his house for the education of future generations. This happy news, Musa DEMI through a telegram, published it at 'Liria' newspaper: 'Feeling very happy, we break to you a cheerful news that we opened with too much pride an

Albania school and we exchanged many patriotic words...' The first teacher of that school was just Musa DEMI who together with Rasih DINO made possible the funds of the building of the school.

Musa DEMI was one of the chief founders of the club 'Brotherhood' of Filati founded in

1908. The club was engaged since in the beginning on National Movement. Except 30 initiators, there were also taking part even common people of the town and villages around. The club turned very soon to be a national nerve center where were discussed the national delicate problems and those of Chameria in particular.

The first writing of Musa DEMI was published in 'Liria' newspaper in Thesaloniki. His national activity went on with his principal role in the foundation of the newspaper 'Awakening of Albania' ('Zgjimi i Shqipërisë') This newspaper marked a great success not only in Albanian Club of Ioaninna but also in general Albanian press. In his writings on the pages of this newspaper, Musa Demi strongly protected

the demands and rights of the Albanians. Wherever they were and unmasked openly the arbitrary acts of the Young Turks and Greek chauvinist circles.

During the years 1908 – 1913, thanks to his abilities as a politician and a born diplomat, cool-headed, mature, sober and capable to get out of every difficult situation he managed to get into continuous contact with all the foreign diplomats in Ioannina.

During the insurgency of 1910 – 1912 he found himself in the fighting unit of Muharrem RUSHITI carrying the duty of political commissar and with the responsibility of the representative of 'Vëllazëria' society of Filat. According to the representative of Austro-Hungarian Government, Bilinski, Musa DEMI was focused in front of straightforward attacks of Young Turks` which at that time were in possession of the government. They felt disturbed from his activity because it had a great influence on the attitude of the Albanians of Filat especially toward the Arab alphabet with Arab letters which could be used for writing the Albanian language. The Albanians of Filat considered him as the most distinguished leader of the

National Movement. For this reason the 'Young Turks' not in rare cases had expressed themselves that against Musa DEMI



Musa DEMI was also co-worker of Ismail Qemali during the Balkans War and at the same time the director of the Albanian Customs. During his participation in National Liberation Anti-fascist Front he was selected the leader of Council.

The period between 1913 – 1922 was characterized by the augmentation of the Greek pressure toward the Cham population. In every district of Chameria the Greek armed bands were acting terrorizing the Albanian Muslim population. The anxieties of Musa DEMI about Greek crimes and massacres, were openly expressed at the permanent complaints directed to the

Greek Government and to the foreign consuls working in Ioannina, Preveza and Corfu. During this period, Musa DEMI during his meetings with them let them know about the scenes of violent massacres toward the Cham population. In the circumstances of a violent terror, Musa DEMI and other patriots began to travel to Manastir, Vlorë, Durrës, Shkodër etc. in order to sensitize the representatives of the Great Powers and to raise the national opinion on the Cham Drama. These were only some great efforts of the Cham patriots, as Musa DEMI was, in protection of national interests. His attempts to solve the Cham Issue went on incessantly up to 1944 – 1945. In all ordeal of these years Musa DEMI did the impossible to reach an agreement with the Greek Government, but everything came to nothing.

In 1945, the decision of the Presidium of People Assembly declared him: 'Patriot of National Renaissance'. Musa DEMI passed away in 1971, while in 1978 on the occasion of 100 anniversary of League of Prizren, the Presidium awarded him the Medal: 'For Social and Patriotic activities'.

BEQIR META: "FOR THE CHAM ISSUE HAS TO BE SOUGHT A SOLUTION SUITABLE TO THE MODERN TIME"



Speak about yourself and personal experiences!

The high studies I have graduating at the University of Tirana, at the Faculty of History-Philology, History branch. After that I was appointed to work at the Archives General Directorate at the sector of publication of historical documents as the chief of the Branch of Scientific Document Refinement. Later I worked as a person in charge of the Sector of the Publication of Historical Documents in the History Institute. Later I went on Scientific Searching Activity as a researcher at the Department of History of the modern period of Albanian state just in the History Institute.

Actually I am at the position of the director of History Institute, and at the same time vice director of the Center of Albanologic Studies. As a member of Science Academy I am awarded the 'Academic' title.

I have dealt with the study of Albanian history for about 35 years. I have written two volumes in Albanian and

English on Albanian-Greek relations: 'The Cham Tragedy' and 'Minorities and national structure in Albania – 1912 - 1924'. These publications and other ones connected with the Albanian-Greek relations have seen the light only after 12 years of hard work. To writing my studies I am based on the libraries and archives all round the world as in USA, at the Archives of the United Nations, New York, Oxford, but also at the archives of Foreign Ministry of Italy, France and Germany. The research in these archives was very hard but on the other side it was fruit-bearing because the information and documents about Albania were in good amount and important.

What is the Albanian identity and how is it represented in the foreign world?

Our identity has experienced evolution passing from of a population to that of a nation (XIX century) of a single language with the good luck of surviving and the bad luck of lacking being written. Nevertheless it is created a nation with conscience, culture and its own history. The foreign world classifies us based on three religious beliefs, not monotheist (believing in only one religion), cultivating

in this way the sense of tolerance. It is also valued the protection offered to the hebrews and also some particular qualities as faithfulness, hospitality etc. Despite that, in the perception of foreign nations have influence some of our defects as the intense selfishness of the political elites, poor political and economical development etc. In your background you have a scientific study called 'The Cham Tragedy'. Which was the goal of publishing it in English what feedback have you got after its publication? The goal of having 'The Cham Tragedy' put into English has been its internationalism, so the knowledge of this matter, which for a long time has been unknown because of the assimilating pressure of the Greek state which unluckily was finalized during the Second World War, profiting from this delicate period. My aim in this book is the transmission to the minds of the public opinion. This is the reason that it was sent to the European Parliament, Strasbourg etc.

Nevertheless, the scholar's work finishes in realization of a qualitative publication, its organization and distribution belongs to the government, different organizations, institutions etc.

It is something that has to be taken seriously having into consideration the vast impact that

this book has had in different countries including Greece, in only three years from its publication.

Being historian you have studied and commented in details the history of Albania. Which are the conclusions connected with the relations that Albanian state has had with Greece?

The Cham conflict as not been only a part of it. Though there has not been a war between these two countries, there have been difficult periods, with a history full of tensions. Two have been the most important reasons that have dominated these tensioned relations. The Cham Issue until it was reached the complete ethnic cleansing and the Problem of the south of Albania or that of Vlorë-Epirus as the Greeks call it. In the Vlorë Epirus in 1914, Greece has carried out the same genocid with the one done in Chameria later, but this time within the Albanian territory. While in Chameria, the first act was that of exchanging of population and farther, through subjugations, pressures, the cleansing was achieved at the final process of genocid when Chameria was hit in its heart.

Why the Greece has always aimed to adnex Albanian lands?

Because of the intension of expansion of orthodox belief. To Greece was offered a possibility to exten its borders. Of course, have not to be forgotten even economic reasons having into consideration the much coveted wealth of Chameria.

According to you, why the Balkans peninsula has always been so much confused, do you think that nationalism influences in it? Is this a cause deeply fed in the character of the Balkans peoples?

Nationalism is a present element in every nation or ethnic group. The national ideolgy in essence is nothing by nationalism. The real problem is not the last one but shovenism, that is characteristic of some nations. When nationalism is used in protection of the nation this is a very positive factor, but if it is aggressive then it has a negative influence in the nation. The Balkans nationalism rests on orthodox faith quite differently from the Albanian one which is based on the culture of the nation, adding the fact that our nation has never shown expansionist characteristics.

What did the transition bring to Albania and in the historical general outlook particularly connected with Cham developments?

It has had a positive influence in the reopening of this important issue. It was an important accomplishment because for nowadays Albanians the Cham Issue is clear and they are well-informed about its wounds.

Many institutions were set up in protection of this cause i.e. Cham association, the Institute of Studies on Chameria etc. which have played a positive role both in presentation and treatment

of this delicate important problem. Nevertheless the problem is raised gradually and attentively because of the position of the states, Greece and Albania. Greece is a consolidated state quite differently from Albania which is weaker. Another characteristic is the position of these states toward international attention. In the political aspect but also in the economic one, Albania differently from Greece is seen less powerful based on the factor of influence of the dictatorship period that Albania unluckily had to face.

Which would be the most productive strategies in connection with integration and stability among the Balkans states without leaving aside or out of attention the Cham Issue?

Reconstruction of Europe has to be done through the join of values. Must be stressed both the

values and the existing problems. In the case of Cham Issue, it is political, juridical, economical and needs a right solution to be solved. Compromise has as intention: knowledge of the blame and the returning of the properties to ones they rightly belong. Only in this way starts the right way of solution of the Cham Issue. The step in the strategy of the solution is the limitation of chauvenist feelings. Even in Kosovo there was an imitation of chauvenism of cleansing just the same with that of Chams, but the privilege of Kosovo to solve the situation was that except the bigger number of population was also the international intervention who could not allow such criminal cleansing right in the middle of Europe. Cham Issue has to be studied and must be sought a solution to adjust with the recent time. The best way to become allies is through slowly steps but steadily and surely.

Through historical publication, especially in school books, the Cham tragedy seems very murky. Which are the motives that these tragedy is expressed only in some lines? Isn't it possible to be selected the necessary and wider information, or the political system is not interested to have shown all the details of this unforgettable

tragedy?

In the publications on the Albanian History there are a lot of weak points. In the publications of 2007 the Cham issue is treated well in real dimension. In respect to educational texts, there's seen an improvement too, the history of Chameria is in fact also treated but not at the dimension it needs to be done. Nevertheless the messages are clearly given. There is improvement in the publications but we want to deepen them in order to make it fuller. To have it realized there is need financial help from the government, for more other scholars etc. but the policy has not shown any interest about the albanologic studies in general so far.

According to you, why was Albania so hardy chopped?

This is linked with the balance of powers among the Balkans states and a small nation, divided, poor, unintegrated between one another. Albania was a weak state in the institutional, economic level quite different from its neighbour states. In other words, this is the history of a game among states, where the delayed lose.

Your great work in discover and collection of new documents at the archives of other states, do

you think that has influenced in the alteration of historical course of the Cham Issue, has it given more answers or what other influences has had?

Saying that the work at the archives and the discovery of new documents changed the source of history is too much, because this would mean to offer a solution. The truth is that this study work has brought about big positive changes. All these facts compose a big change, or rather a giant one in the knowledge and social mentality of the Cham Issue, this change is not only utilitarian, but it also serves even in our national formation. It is just this history that consolidates and forms the conscience of a nation and also its different institutions. So, historiography has served in bringing about big differences. We, as scholars, are very pleased that all this hard work has given its fruits. Deepness of the study, is very important and thanks to this our country is stronger and fully. Our last project which includes the evidence of different archive documents, has not an aim for a full overturn but for the knowledge and width of new facts. This project from two months now is part of a historian group and we are just waiting for the received results.

You have carried out many scientific papers or reports in connection with the Cham Issue and it seems that you have followed it step after step. Which is the reason that you have dedicated so much time and efforts to the issue?

I've not been the only one nor the first scholar dealing with the study of the Cham Issue but I'm among the first ones. The reason is the importance this issue carries in itself. The biggest defect in Albania is that with this important part of the history deal chiefly the Cham scholars. I am not Cham, but over all I am historian and deal with the history of Albania. The Cham Issue is a noble issue, while for me dealing with it is a spiritual, human obligation and scientific one as well. This is the reason that I engage myself to studying it in an objective manner however difficult this last one can be.

Being so much in the core of this issue, do you really believe that one day this problem will be solved and will take a decisive and final answer or the time is not favourable making the hopes fade away?

Your word 'believe' I would want to substitute with 'hope'. I hope that the future Europe will take us toward a compromise solution. I don't think that it would be left in the grass. The

future of the Albania-Greece relations has to lead toward the right solution recovering these deep wounds and this has to be realised through humanism.

The struggle through scientific reports, monographies and documentary publications on the Cham Issue in particular but even historic in general, does it helps in the influence of the solutions of these problems?

Of course, it does. Knowledge is strength, power. Writing of history through the historians is to bring into light the truth and through the right use of these information the corresponding institutions get improved.

After '90 continual efforts are done in having friendly relations between Greece and Albania, but in fact the situation has always been in tension? According to you why does it happen this way?

In the one hundred year history of the existence of the Albanian state, these relations have been the most positive ones. But in respect to Greece we still have delicate problems that are difficult to be worked out: beginning from the Cham Issue, then the efforts of Greece in the spread of Hellenism, and also the problem of the emigrants are some of them. All these tensioned relations I have clearly analyzed in my publication 'The Greek-

Albanian tension'.

Can you tell us something about your professional plans in the future? Any publication that can see the light? Anything about the Cham Issue?

For the moment I have in hand the second volume of the book that contains many facts, 'Minorities and national construction in Albania' where is partially touched even the Cham Issue. Another project is the study of History of Albania during twentieth century, a publication in two volumes respectively in years 1912 - 1944 and 1945 - 1990 with 2000 pages each. In this project is included a working group of 36-37 scholars. This will be a publication that will be included in school texts, nevertheless it will serve to those of publications and its goal is to bring into light new historical innovations and facts.

CHAMERIA AND THE ALBANIAN DIPLOMACY

Institute of Cham Studies on 26 April of this year opened the season activities with the scientific conference "Chameria and the Albanian Diplomacy", where for the first time were published documents information, unpublished before for the public about Chameria.

Once again, invited to the conference were professors, well-known scholars and historians. Historian Pellumb Xhufi during his referral analyzed the Cham issue and the situation in which Chameria was during World War II.

Professor Hajredin Isufi, this

time focused on an overview of the Cham issue and the Albanian diplomacy between the two Wars.

Historian Hamid Kaba conducted a detailed analysis of the case study on foreign policy on Chameria from Big Allies in 1945-1946 and the attitude of Albanian diplomacy between the two wars.


Professor Irakli Koçollari focused more on an artistic aspect to the presentation of Cham city and how it is presented in the works of foreign painters. He ignited incredible interest to the guests by present

ing rare sketches on Chameria, carried by travelers and foreign diplomats. These fascinating painting and sketches by professor Koçollari were presented exclusively for the first time at

this conference. The scholar Diana Mone focused her under the theme "Chameria's referral, history in the folklore", were aroused the folklore nostalgia by reminding us of beautiful songs of Chameria region, allowing us once again of the Chameria's folk assets in the Albanian culture.



FAIRY OF IONIAN SEA



Like the girl of waves waiting on the
brink of Ionian Sea
For the orange trees to bloom
To be filled with olives the ancient olive
trees
To narrate a song through the
shepherd's pipe
To be rocked in a cradle of winds.

As a fairy never stopped through days
and nights
You're a fisherman deeply in love with
the sea
In the wrinkled hand.
You are the sun in itself
That clouds of archives, treaties, historical
sludge
Never shut your beautiful eye.

Tired brave woman only for a moment
from the years
Among the new storms of life
Your step on the road, a little bit got
heavy.
During the years without your sons and
Cham mothers,
Without seamen's deeds
The forehead's wrinkles got deeper
A new gray hair was added
You sea of pains
You sea of longing
Infinite sea of love.

Cry, hey you mother, cry
About the bad luck given to you
And closed the door to, the door of loss
of memory!
Replant the frank joy in your lips
Dry, hey dry, the longing tears
And reawake
The spirit of unyielding resistance!

A new love garland
For you we to raise TOMORROW!

EYES OF CHAMERIA

Your eyes
Full of millions of flags
Of joy,
Of Hope
Full of clod of earth
Cooked with the solty tear of
the sea of longing.

Ah, your eyes!
Bottomless sea where the
pain its anchor throws
Where a pair of violins
where a voice shivers
That brings storms of wed-
dings
Storms
of tears and pain

Where one clog groans on
land
Bringing olive breeze
Crushing downs of avalanche
of snow that waste away.
Never forget you sky,
That opens the doors of light
every morning.

Never forget, you night
That melts away the seas,
longings, pathways
Never close the eyes of
Chameria!

Ah, the eyes of my Chameri
So deep that I can't measure.
Who has seen you so near
And friend with the legends
the one didn't become on
the spot.

NAMIK SELMANI

*Konferenca Shkencore:
Çamëria dhe Diplomacia Shqiptare
26/04/2014*



*Scientific Conference:
Chameria and the Albanian Diplomacy
26/04/2014*

