

# Minorities and minority language education in inter-war Albania.

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**The education of Greek and Vlach minorities in their ethnic languages in Albania has been a political and nationalistic issue since the country's formation in 1912. The Albanian government in the 1920s and '30s resisted opening ethnic language schools, fearing disruption of the country's attempts to develop national identity and unity. Albania's conflicts with Greece and Romania over the opening of schools and with Serbia over the educational rights of Albanians there continued through World War II and are re-emerging in the 1990s.**

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The south-western section of the Balkan peninsula has long been a mix of ethnicities. The ethnic tensions the region is experiencing today have their roots in disputes which began smoldering in the nineteenth century, were left unresolved or even exacerbated by World Wars I and II, and are now re-emerging in post Cold War and post-communist societies.

One of the most contentious issues in present day relations between Greece and Albania concerns each country's obligations under international law to provide education for minorities in their mother tongue. Since Albania emerged from communist dictatorship in 1991, ethnic Greeks, suppressed under the regimes of Enver Hoxha and Ramiz Alia, have begun to request permission to re-establish Greek language schools. Also, Albanian citizens of Vlach origin have reasserted their ethnic identity and have sought to perpetuate their cultural heritage through Rumanian language schooling. For its part, the new democratic government of Albania has sought from Greece recognition of the historic presence of Albanian minority communities in Greece.

This article reviews the roots of these contemporary social and international issues during the inter-war period in Albania. The author was granted access to previously closed documents at the Albanian State Archives. Over several months, he located and examined documents which chronicle decisions made by the Albanian government between 1920 and 1929, as well as some from the period of the Italian fascist occupation, 1939-1943. He examined the texts of diplomatic demarches made by the Albanian, Greek and Rumanian governments regarding minority education, correspondence between Albania and the League of Nations on this issue, and intra-government memoranda and reports describing problems local education officials faced in trying to administer Greek and Vlach (which for Albanian officials meant Rumanian) language schools.

After World War II, when Enver Hoxha had consolidated Communist Party control of Albania, he began a campaign to eradicate all vestiges of minority identity in Albania. Ethnic Greeks and Vlachs feared speaking in their mother

tongues, and both communities faced severe education restrictions. Especially after Greece became a member of NATO in 1952, ethnic Greeks, more so than Vlachs, were regarded as an "enemy within."

Today, as Albania attempts to build a democratic society, old minority issues are re-emerging. This piece begins with a short background to the issue of minority education in Albania and then focuses on the inter-war period. It ends with a short update on recent developments in minority language education.

Background: The Albanian State and Minorities After World War I

Ethnic minorities have lived on the territory of present day Albania, among Albanians who comprised a majority of the inhabitants of those lands, for hundreds of years. Greeks and Albanians have lived among each other for centuries in the region of northern Greece and southern and eastern Albania referred to as "Epirus." Distinct Albanian communities existed throughout Greece long before and even after World War I. Large numbers of Albanians lived in the area of Northern Greece known to them as "Cameria" until they were expelled to communist Albania after World War II, accused by the Greek government of collaborating with the Nazis.

During Ottoman rule in Albania many Greeks came to Albania to work for Albanian and Turkish land owners. Dozens of ethnic Greek villages grew up in the southern Albanian districts of Gjirokaster, Delvine and Saranda. Schools were opened. Foreign diplomats stationed in northern Greece in the latter part of the nineteenth century occasionally met with Ottoman officials governing Albanian territories to discuss concerns for ethnic Greek communities.(1)

Vlachs first moved to land now within the Republic of Albania during the seventeenth century. To Albanians they are usually referred to as "Vlachs" or "Arumuns," people with their roots in Rumania. Though the Vlachs of Albania consider themselves to have close ties to Rumania and to speak a language similar to Rumanian, they are, nevertheless, a distinct group. Though predominantly Orthodox Christians, they are distinct from ethnic Greeks,

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Slavs and Albanians living in inter-war Albania. Until the mid-eighteenth century they lived predominantly in eastern Albania near the present day city of Korca. However, during the 1750's when Ottoman forces burned Vlach villages, including the city of Voskopoje (which had a population of over 20,000), many Vlachs scattered throughout Albania. By World War I, most Vlachs living outside of eastern Albania had been fully assimilated. However, beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, those Vlachs remaining in eastern Albania began to work for the right to open Vlach (Rumanian) language schools and churches. Between 1885 and 1915, 28 Rumanian language schools were opened, including a high school.

Albanian independence was proclaimed on November 28, 1912, leaving its new government little time to organize prior to World War I. During the war some villages in southern and eastern Albania were attacked, occupied and then burned by Greek military forces. Some villages in the north suffered the same fate at the hands of Serb military forces. After the Versailles Peace Conference, at which its continued existence as an independent state was supported, Albania assembled its first real government. Leaders began to address such minority problems as how to satisfy domestic ethnic demands and also convince international political groups that minorities were being guaranteed full rights.

Albania applied for membership in the League of Nations in 1920. In a letter dated January 11, 1921, to Albanian Prime Minister Ilias Vrioni, Secretary General Eric Drummond wrote that "...the Assembly requests that [Albania] should take the necessary measures to enforce the principles of the Minorities Treaties and that [it] should arrange with the Council the details required to carry this objective into effect." Drummond's letter made it clear that approval of Albania's application for full membership in the League was contingent upon it satisfying the concerns of its neighbors, in particular Greece, about treatment of minorities.(2)

Prime Minister Vrioni responded in a letter dated February 9, 1921, asserting that "Albania adheres entirely to the general provisions relating to minorities and that it considers it its duty to inform the League of this situation." Vrioni went on to note that "Albania has been mutilated as a result of the 1878 Treaty of Berlin and the Conference of Ambassadors in London in 1913, leaving more than one million Albanians outside its political frontiers." He asserted that the ethnic Greek minority in Albania numbered "only 15,000 who have been established in Albania for centuries and are integrated. They are dispersed throughout the south and do not form a compact nucleus."

Vrioni certified that his government offered "full educational

freedom to all Greek communities," as well as Slavic communities in northern and eastern Albania. Vrioni reported that the Albanian government had established Greek language schools and was defraying all expenses related to their operation, including the salaries of staffs. He pledged that private schools would be allowed to open and given the "same freedoms as other non-state institutions" to teach in the Greek language. Finally, he certified that "all political, administrative, judicial and military institutions are comprised of persons of the three [main] religions (Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Muslim)." Vrioni concluded his letter by reaffirming that the Albanian government was completely committed to religious freedom and equality for all citizens.(3) Based on these assurances, Albania's full membership in the League was approved.

One of the central figures of Albanian political and religious life in the 1920's was the Albanian-born leader of the Albanian Orthodox Church of the United States, Bishop Fan Noli. Noli, a staunch Albanian nationalist, had written much about the need to keep the Albanian Orthodox community from falling under the domination of the Greek Orthodox Church. In October 1921, Noli, acting on behalf of the new Albanian government, traveled to Geneva to confer with League officials about which ethnic minorities Albania would recognize as present within its borders, and what obligations it would assume toward those groups.

All that survives of those meetings are Noli's own handwritten notes, entitled "In Defense of Minorities in Albania," which was signed by Fan Noli and Eric Colbani, who was identified as the director of the Administrative Commission on Minorities for the League.(4) Some of the most significant points agreed to by the two were included in the following articles:

Article Three - "Every person born in Albania is considered an Albanian citizen. He has the right to speak his language and practice his faith. Persons who lived in Albania before the war (with wife and children) can request (within two years) Albanian citizenship. Albanian citizens who lived on land considered Greek according to the Treaty of Leures (10 August 1920) are Greek citizens."

Article Four - "All Albanian citizens are equal before the law without consideration of race, language or faith. Minorities have the right to form (with their own money and authority to spend it) any residential or religious organization, schools, educational institutions. Within six months the GOA will propose to the League of Nations statutes on minorities."

Article Six - "On the issue of education, the government has pursued a favorable policy in the way it makes

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possible education in their (meaning Greeks') elementary schools. The Albanian government has not obstructed this vow. Yet, it has an obligation to provide instruction in the Albanian language. The government, through its budget and through local governments, will help and support education for minorities."

Article Seven - "The Albanian government guarantees it will support international statutes on minorities."

By the beginning of the 1921-22 academic year, the Ministry of Education (MOE) in Tirana faced practical problems of how to administer a school system in which no Albanian national curriculum existed, while at the same time trying to cope with increasing demands for Vlach and Greek language instruction. Confronted with requests for private schools at a time when the public education system had not yet been organized, the Minister of Education proposed to the Council of Ministers a ban on the opening of new schools. Council Decision 760, adopted on September 13, 1921, decreed that those private academies already open would be allowed to continue to operate, but no new private schools would be permitted to open until further notice. The only exceptions to this order were to be two Greek language schools in the Delvine district for "political purposes." The MOE followed up on September 21 with its own decree, based on the Council decision, that district and local-level Ministry of Education officials should approve the opening of no new schools until specifically given the authority by Tirana.(5)

The Ministry of Education was by this time beginning to understand that education of minorities in mother tongues would have domestic and foreign political ramifications. The Minister of Education sent a note to the Foreign Minister prior to the Council decision, declaring that "the majority of Christians in Albania are not Greek but of Vlach origin. If we let them (Greeks) open schools, we will have to open more. And we have a majority of Vlach speakers in some areas of the country. This would not be good for national unity." Indeed, a MOE internal memo prepared soon after the decision on private schools by the Council of Ministers addressed the issue of the religious affiliation of Vlachs and Greeks, and how the Greek government might claim that all Orthodox Christians in Albania were ethnic Greeks.

Shortly after the circulation of this MOE memo, the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MOIA) was tasked to prepare a report on the religious and minority character of communities throughout Albania. The MOIA asked each of its offices throughout Albania to prepare a profile of the population of individual districts.

The responses MOIA received from around the country

reflected strong nationalist sentiments excited by the war and the verbal and physical skirmishes which had periodically flared in its aftermath. For example, the MOIA office in the south central city of Berat, known to have ethnic Greek and Vlach minority communities, reported to Tirana that "There are no minorities who are not Albanian in blood, race and language."(6) The MOIA in the port city of Durres sent the following telegram to Tirana:

15 June 1922 - Note From Durres to Ministry of Internal Affairs

"In regard to N. 8288 (6-6-22), I notify you that in the Prefectura of Durres, Catholics and Orthodox, from the point of view of 'kombesis' [nationality] none can be called minorities and from the point of view of language and blood. All are Albanians."

While the government's attention throughout the 1920's was focused principally on the domestic and foreign consequences of its own policies towards minority education, it did follow with concern education problems confronting the ethnic Albanians in the Kosovo province of Serbia. Relations with the Serbian government remained strained throughout the inter-war period. Nevertheless, borders between Albania and the predominantly ethnic Albanian region of Serbia were open and contact and interaction regular. The MOIA, MOE, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) obtained much of their information regarding education in Kosovo from Albanian military outposts in the north. Officers would travel, albeit infrequently, across the border for contacts with their Serbian military counterparts. They would also debrief Albanian citizens who traveled to Kosovo to visit relatives or friends.

In their reports to Tirana, Albanian military officials described the slow progress of ethnic Albanians in Serbia to secure Albanian language education within the province. Military reports were sent to Tirana throughout the 1920's from outposts in the northern provinces of Bajram Curri and Dibra, along the borders of present day Kosovo and Macedonia, respectively. They indicated that some school were being opened, but that ethnic Albanians were dissatisfied with the commitment of authorities in Belgrade to Albanian language education.

The Albanian governments of the 1920's and 1930's did attempt to exert some pressure on Serbia, through bilateral discussions and multilateral institutions, on behalf of the ethnic Albanian communities in Kosovo and Macedonia. Parallels were drawn between the Albanian government's record in providing Serbian language instruction in Albania and the absence of full opportunities for Albanian language education in Yugoslavia. Serbian

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language instruction was offered by several schools in northern Albania, including one in the city of Shkoder, which were administered by the Orthodox Church.(7) However, in 1930, after discussions with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Yugoslavia regarding Albanian language instruction in Kosovo, the Serbian language school in Shkoder was finally ordered closed.(8)

### Vlach Community Schools During the 1920's

The center of the Vlach community in Albania has for over two hundred years been the eastern city of Korca. By the late 1870's there were sufficient numbers of Vlachs in the city of Korca and outlying areas that they petitioned Ottoman authorities for permission to open a school with instruction in the Rumanian language. Orthodox churches in the area were also permitted to use Rumanian in their services.(9) Vlachs in eastern Albania maintained close contacts with other Vlach communities in the region, particularly in nearby Ohrid (in the present day Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), but with others as far away as Shkoder.(10)

The Vlach community suffered greatly through the years of World War I. Vlachs, by and large, supported the new Albanian state, fighting with Albanians against Ottoman, and later Greek invaders in eastern Albania. Thus, after the armistice in 1918 and the beginning of the Albanian state government, Vlachs pressed local and national political and Ministry of Education officials for the opening of Rumanian language schools.

The Albanian government found itself in an extremely confused state immediately after World War I. Organization of ministries and definition of their mandates were not worked out until 1922. In 1921, even following the exchange of letters between Prime Minister Vroni and League of Nations Secretary General Drummond, ministries in Tirana often did not respond to requests for instructions from districts on how to respond to local ethnic community requests for new schools. In this fluid context, a mix-up occurred which, in the view of the Vlach community, would not be rectified for years to come.(11)

On May 1, 1921, the Vlach community of Korca officially requested that the Ministry of Education open a new Rumanian school in Korca, of which Ministry of Education authorities in Korca informed Tirana on May 7. Under strong pressure from Nikolla Ballamaci, head of the Vlach/Arumun community and administrator of the pre-war schools, and having not received any word from Tirana, the local officials granted permission for the opening on May 14, an action of which they informed Tirana that day by telegram.

The local approval to open the schools drew a stinging response from the Ministry of Education in Tirana. The Minister himself declared, "Only Tirana gives the approval for schools to open. The school is to be closed immediately." Copies of this telegram were also sent from MOE Tirana to Ministry of Internal Affairs in Tirana on June 4, establishing a precedent of involving that domestic security watchdog organization in keeping track of activities within minority communities.

The Council of Ministers' decision in early September to suspend additional openings of schools did not dampen the enthusiasm within the Vlach community for schools. The Ministry of Education argued in a memorandum to the Prime Minister that ethnic Greeks would benefit the most from permission to open schools, but that Vlachs would use the precedent to demand more schools, too. "There are a majority of Vlach speakers in some areas of the country. Minority language schools at this time would not be good for national unity," it concluded.

Nevertheless, on October 29, 1921, Tirana finally granted approval for the re-opening of Rumanian language schools, though in only two locations - Korca and Shpëskë (near Korca). Local authorities quickly learned why Tirana had been hesitant. Within a few days of the opening of the Rumanian schools, ethnic Greeks in areas without Greek language instruction began arguing for schools. Ethnic Greeks noted that if Vlachs were permitted to open schools, they should be, too.(12) This was the first instance of a problem the government in Tirana would face throughout the inter-war period. Tirana regarded Vlachs as "solid citizens," committed to the new Albanian state. Yet, the government was suspicious of ethnic Greeks and the Greek government's involvement and support for them. Ethnic Greeks would argue that if the government opened schools for the Vlach community it should also do so for ethnic Greek communities. It did not want to alienate them by refusing to grant cultural requests for schools. Yet, it was cautious that the trend should not accelerate out of control.

At this early juncture the Rumanian government also became involved in arguing for the Vlach community. In a letter to the new Albanian Foreign Minister, the Minister of the Rumanian Royal Legation in Tirana wrote that "...according to the League of Nations and the Albanian Constitution Article 206, the Rumanian language school in Korca is legal. The Albanian Ministry of Public Instruction should apply the statutes to private and public schools of the Rumanian minority."(13)

Yet, this diplomatic intervention did not produce the desired results. During the 1920's, the Rumanian government, through its Legation in Tirana and through the

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Albanian Legation in Bucharest, continued to urge the Albanian government to establish more schools in which the language of instruction was Rumanian (i.e., Vlach). The exchanges of notes were for the most part cordial, though one Rumanian demarche in Tirana requesting the opening of twenty-five schools was met with a stern refusal by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.(14) The Rumanian side usually cited international agreements and the Covenant of the League of Nations as obliging Albania to provide education to Vlachs in "their mother tongue, Rumanian." The Albanian side usually pleaded budget problems, claiming it could not afford the expense of new schools in the five or six districts in which Vlachs had requested them. In 1926, when the Rumanian government countered this argument by offering to fund the building and staffing of a Rumanian language school in Korca, the Albanian government strongly rejected the proposal.(15)

The suspicions of the MOIA and authorities in Tirana about the sympathies of the Vlach community persisted. Vlachs had been early supporters of the Albanian state. They took pains to express their loyalty to the Albanian government and to reject overtures from ethnic Greeks that the two groups, both being of Orthodox background, work together for greater political and cultural autonomy within Albania. In a letter on behalf of the entire Vlach community of Albania to the Foreign Minister, Korca-based Vlach school administrator Nikolla Ballamaci wrote:

No Albanians more than Vlachs are happy with the freedom Albania has won after the terrible centuries. Albanian history is filled with examples of fights against enemies and loss of freedom. Now we [Vlachs] seek a small piece of the freedom Albania has won for ourselves. We seek the opportunity to cultivate our language and culture after Turkish occupation and suppression. During the period 1885-1915 there were twenty Rumanian language elementary schools and gymnasia. Now there are only three. We ask permission to open a national school where there is a need, which will conform with all the educational laws and regulations. We will teach the history of Albania.(16)

In 1924 the Albanian government expelled from Albania two teachers at Vlach schools in the Korca area for "subversive activities." A report from the MOIA office in Korca to Tirana stated that the two men had been teaching with maps which different national boundaries and city names than maps used in Albanian schools. Teaching materials, including maps, and money were sent to Albania by Vlachs from the Korca area who had emigrated to Bucharest and Istanbul. Though problems regarding these resources from abroad occurred occasionally, the permission to accept them, granted by the Council of Ministers, was never rescinded.(17) Problems with the schools and MOIA questions about the loyalty of Vlach teachers continued through 1928.

By the late 1920's exchanges between the two countries had grown more frequent. The Rumanian government at one point indicated a willingness to put the school issue before the World Court at The Hague for adjudication. A series of articles in Bucharest newspapers criticizing the Albanian government stance on opening new schools caught Tirana's attention. Even the Albanian community in Bucharest printed an editorial on the front page of the October 27, 1927 edition of its newspaper Tribuna calling on the Albanian government to provide Vlachs in Albania the same rights of schooling which Albanians were afforded in Rumania.(18)

With the increase in Rumanian public awareness of the issue of Vlach (Rumanian) schools in Albania, the Rumanian government increased pressure on the Albanian government for a resolution to the problem. Rumanian political and educational authorities argued in briefs presented to the Albanian legation in Bucharest that the opening of Rumanian schools "would not set a precedent for the opening of Greek schools."(19) In 1928, Albania finally signaled a willingness for a high level meeting to discuss differences over schooling. Albanian Foreign Minister Hyssein Vrioni traveled to Bucharest, where he met with a Rumanian delegation headed by Rumanian Minister of Education Angjelesku. At their first meeting Vrioni made the following statement, declaring:

Rumanian schools had been established in Ottoman times. In 1926, the Albanian MOE decided to take control of 2 or 3 Rumanian schools in the south and administer their budgets. This decision was not intended as a hostile action against Rumanians, who are like brothers in the defense of Albania. But, unfortunately,

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in Rumania, we have seen that chauvinism and schools may be used to advance the "de-nationalization" of Vlachs in Albania. The Rumanian MFA has expressed the displeasure of the Rumanian government about these decisions. The Rumanian press has written about it, too.

Therefore, it has been decided by the Albanian government:

(1) The Albanian government will give authority to the Vlach community for its schools.

(2) For schools in Korca and Shpaska, the government will give the community the authority to administer them.

(3) Teachers, who are Albanian citizens, should be proposed

and nominated by the community with the approval of the MOE.

(4) Courses in Albanian language, history/geography are required.

(5) Schools and churches are to be self-administered.

Gifts and income supplements from the community are permitted by GOA.

Vrioni went on to restate another statement previously made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

Rumanians in Albania have always worked and fought for Albanian freedom against the Ottomans and the injustices of the London Conference. We ourselves have complained about the behavior of the Serbs and Greeks against the Albanian minority, especially in the field and from the perspective of education. Rumanians are not

like the Greeks or Serbs. They have performed well on the issue of schools. They have requested Vlach schools in Yugoslavia and Greece but to no avail.(20)

Ethnic Greeks, Greece, and Greek Language Schools During the 1920's

An overriding concern of Albanian authorities in the immediate post-war period was how to forge a nation from the disparate groups which inhabited the territory of the new Republic - how to create an Albanian national identity, allegiance to the new state and government in the face of tepid international support and the associated foreign policy problem of the existence of an equal number of Albanians residing outside the borders of Albania - in Yugoslavia and Greece - as in the new republic itself.

Nationality and religion were closely related. In several statements to the League of Nations, Prime Minister Vrioni, on the basis of memoranda from the Ministry of Education, declared that "All Christians in Albania are not Greeks, but rather either Albanian or Vlach in origin." The MOE report went on to state that "If we let them [Greeks] open schools, we will have to open more and we will have a majority of Vlach speakers in some areas of the country. This would not be good for national unity."(21)

In this context surveys by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MOIA) described above played an extremely important role. The presence of minorities in Albania, for the most part concentrated in certain geographic regions, had been documented for decades by foreign diplomats, Albanian government sources, and through the correspondence exchanged by leaders of different ethnic minority communities and government officials on such matters as education and religious practice.(22) The series of MOIA memos previously noted were perhaps a political response to the desire of senior government leaders to forge a sense of "national identity" and the growing demands of minorities throughout Albania for increased privileges which would enable them to preserve their own distinct cultural heritage and maintain their own identities, in defense of which they had struggled against Ottoman rule.

Tensions with Greece over minority education were particularly sensitive. Albanian government responses to the demands of ethnic Greeks were always calculated with more emphasis on what international, rather than domestic, political consequences might ensue. The two Greek language schools opened in Delvine for "political reasons" were done so at the time in order to ease pressure from the League of Nations and Greece. However, shortly after the decision taken by the Council of

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Ministers the Ministry of Education advised the Ministry of Internal Affairs that, in the absence of any laws regulating minority language education in either public or private schools, the district of Delvine should not be allowed to exercise that authority to approve the opening of other Greek language schools.(23)

The MOE in Tirana sought to calm tensions in the predominantly ethnic Greek populated districts of Gjirokaster, Saranda and Delvine by instructing its Gjirokaster office to assure citizens that Tirana had their best interests in mind.(24) Despite these assurances from Tirana, villages in which ethnic Greeks comprised a majority of citizens continued to press for more schools, including the opening of a "theological institute" in order to train clergy for service in Orthodox churches in the south.(25) A seminary was opened in Delvine to train ethnic Greek priests.

At several junctures in the 1920's the Albanian government was forced to respond to hostile reports in the Greek press that it was targeting special repressive measures towards ethnic Greeks in southern Albania. The Albanian embassy in Athens was attuned to the repercussions of these charges in the Greek body politic, and provided quick translations of articles for MFA officials in Tirana.(26) Replies were usually directed through diplomatic channels. Albania remained sensitive to accusations by Greece in international forums that ethnic Greeks were not being afforded all rights guaranteed them under the League of Nations.(27)

Throughout the 1920's, in response to inquiries from the League, Albania provided Geneva with population statistics regarding minorities. The Ministry of Internal Affairs was tasked by the Council of Ministers with maintaining lists of the number of students attending Greek, Macedonian, and Vlach language schools, Orthodox churches in which worship services were conducted in the Greek, Serbian, and Vlach languages.(28) No records exist in the Albanian State Archives about what responses these periodic updates drew from League officials in Geneva. However, it was clear from the increasingly heated exchanges between Athens and Tirana over the issue of minority education that Greece did not accept the data as accurate or reflective of the real opportunities for ethnic Greek children to receive a decent education in the Greek language. Memoranda and other exchanges from the Ministry of Internal Affairs to the Ministries of Education and Foreign Affairs indicated that the MOIA basically did not accept that there was a sizable Greek population in Albania.(29)

Instruction in Minority Languages in the 1930's

By the 1930's minority education had become the sticking point in relations between Albania and Greece. Unlike the differences over Vlach education which had been raised to an official level between the two governments, and largely resolved in the late 1920's, Albania and Greece escalated their rhetoric and the Ministry of Internal Affairs increased its surveillance of ethnic Greek leaders. Greek language schools in southern Albania became the major issue in bilateral ties. Albania viewed Greek government insistence that schools be opened in certain regions along the Albanian Ionian Sea coast (especially in an area known as Himara) as a provocation, and rejected Greece's "unjustified assertion" that ethnic Greeks resided in those areas. Albania feared that Greece would later use the existence of the minority in those areas as a pretense for making territorial claims, and might someday argue that "abuses" of the minority justified its intervention to safeguard their rights. Education became for the Albanian government not a cultural issue but one of national sovereignty and, indeed, national defense.

In 1935 talks with the Greek government came to a dead end on the issue of Greek language education in certain specific areas of southern Albania, including Himara. It was then that Greece sued Albania in the World Court in The Hague over the issue of schools in the Himara area. Both governments dispatched teams of lawyers to The Hague to argue for their side. Telegrams to Tirana from Ministry of Education, Public Order, and Ministry of the Interior officials throughout southern Albania described the intense interest with which the Court's answer was being anticipated.(30)

The Court decided by a vote of 8 to 3 in favor of Greece. Albania was ordered to open schools in specific villages of Himara and to guarantee that instruction would take place in Greek. Messages from government officials in the south relate the joy with which ethnic Greeks greeted the news and the disappointment of Albanians in those areas.(31)

Yet, the Court decision was not immediately implemented. Indeed, two years after the decision was handed down the Albanian and Greek governments were still engaged in discussions over the exact details and obligations placed on Albania. In an exchange of notes between the Greek and Albanian foreign ministers in 1937, Albania finally agreed to implement the World Court decision.

By late 1937 the Albanian government was prepared to open the schools. However, it introduced a condition to the openings. Greek schools would be opened in Himara after Albanian language schools were opened in northern Greece, known as Cameria. The Albanian government, through its embassy in Athens, presented the Greek side with a list of ten villages in that region of Greece in which a

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majority of citizens were not Greeks but Albanians. It argued that these persons had been forgotten by the Lausanne Treaty of 1923 which entailed exchanges of populations between Greece and Turkey. Greece had sought to expel the Albanians of Cameria to Turkey, since most of them were of Muslim background. However, when they were not included, Albania charged, Greece tried to exclude them from Greek society and compel their return to Albania. One tactic used to accomplish this, contended the Albanian government, was the denial of education in the Albanian language.

The impasse over Greek schools in Himara and Albanian schools in Cameria was never solved. On Easter Sunday, 1939, Italian forces invaded Albania. Mussolini proclaimed Albania's annexation to the Kingdom of Italy, and Italian forces moved through Albania to the Greek border. Greek language instruction continued in those areas where it had existed before the invasion.

The Vlach community also used the World Court decision to press the Albanian government for more schools. The Rumanian government also again entered into discussions with Albania through its Legation in Bucharest on behalf of the Vlach community. In 1937 Rumania requested that Albania reopen the twenty Vlach schools in fifteen cities which had existed before World War I. Rumanian officials also cited the agreement reached between the two countries in 1928 during the visit of the Albanian Foreign Minister to Bucharest regarding the opening of more schools, which had never been implemented by the Albanian government.(32) The Rumanian government noted that there were areas of eastern and central Albania which had large Vlach communities but no schools.(33)

Albania responded that it wanted to address the concerns of the Vlach community and the Rumanian government. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Albanian Legation in Bucharest engaged Rumanian authorities and moved quickly to meet their demands.(34) In August, 1937, the Council of Ministers agreed to honor Albania's 1928 commitment to open five additional Vlach schools. Thus, at the time of the Italian invasion seven Vlach schools were open.

### War Years - Vlach Schools Open, Greek Schools Closed

Italian, and later German, occupation of Albania did not immediately lead to a decline or an end to Greek and Vlach language education. Vlach schools continued to operate as before the war. However, by 1941 Italian officials in Tirana planned to reduce the number of minority language schools. Vlach schools which had been opened as a result of the Rumanian government's diplomatic pressures in the late 1930's were closed.(35)

As it had done during the inter-war period, the Vlach community appealed to Italian officials for the reopening of its schools. In a letter from July, 1942, leaders pointed out that Vlachs had opposed the efforts of Greece and ethnic Greeks to pressure Albania into territorial concessions. At the time Greece and Italy were at war. The community also noted that:

We resisted the Turks for years and the influence of Greek Hellenism. Vlachs made great contributions to the independence of Albania. Vlach blood flowed for Albania and Vlachs are Albanian patriots. In 1942, Greek propaganda in Korca goes on. The fight against Hellenism from across the border is great. A "Greek despot" was killed in the center of Korca. We recall the seven great Vlach martyrs during the period of Greek atrocities in 1914 [when Greece occupied parts of Albania], including Father Haralamb Ballamaci. We opposed the declaration of the Patriarch of Istanbul [Greek] that Albanian and Rumanian Orthodox believers are Greek and only Greek. Therefore, we appeal for:

- (1) Recognition of Rumanian schools. Assistance of an Albanian education specialist who speaks Rumanian.
- (2) Development of all facilities for Rumanian schools as agreed in regulations published in the "Official Gazette" No. 58, 12 November 1935.
- (3) Schools in Voskopoje, Shpaska, Lunke, Grabove, Nice and others.
- (4) In Dishnice, where more than 40 Rumanian families live, we've learned that the MOE Inspector from Korca has decided not to recommend to you that a school should be opened. It should.(36)

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In response to the community appeal, MOE officials, with Italian approval, authorized an increase to four hours per week of instruction in Rumanian schools in the Korca district.(37) An "increase" to four hours per week struck some MOE officials in the Korca area as odd. Korca education officials asked Tirana for clarification, because "now the whole program is in Rumanian and only 5 hours a week are in Albanian."(38) Korca education officials reported throughout the war that students at the Vlach schools in the area finished their studies with a very poor understanding of Albanian. They recommended rigid enforcement of the MOE Tirana order limiting Rumanian language instruction. Vlach language education was limited during 1942 and 1943 by the poverty and destruction brought on by the war more than by decrees from Tirana.

Schools in predominantly ethnic Greek areas fared worse than the Vlach schools. With Greece and Italy at war, ethnic Greeks were regarded with great suspicion by the Italian occupiers. The few telegrams which remain in the State Archives from southern MOE and MOIA officials from the war years chronicle the activities of alleged "Greek propagandists and agitators," in some cases intimating the harsh actions which should be taken against them.(39)

With the demise of fascist Italy and the transfer of occupation duties from Italians to Germans in 1943, some easing of minority language education rules were permitted. In the spring of 1943, the MOE in Tirana ordered the opening of 44 schools in the Gjirokaster area, most in ethnic Greek areas. Officials in southern areas were also trying to cope with an influx of ethnic Albanians from Greece. These Albanians were being expelled by the Greeks and arriving in southern Albania. Frictions were increasing between ethnic Albanians and ethnic Greeks, whom the Albanians blamed for their evictions.(40)

However, these changes and challenges were short-lived. With the intensification of fighting between the Germans and Albanian partisans, as well as Allied aerial bombardment of Albania, schools were ordered closed. The 1934-44 academic year was canceled due to the fighting. Schools would not reopen until the liberation of Albania on November 28, 1944.

### The Present - Minority Language Issues Again at the Fore

Since the fall of communism in Albania, Vlach and ethnic Greek minority communities have begun to organize and request of the Albanian government permission to open schools. As during the inter-war period, tensions in Albania between ethnic Greeks and Albanians and frictions in bilateral ties between Albania and Greece have increased

over this issue. Albania has recently raised the issue of Albanian minority communities in Greece and their right to education in "their mother tongue."

At the start of the 1993-94 academic year, seventy-three state-funded schools in which the language of instruction is Greek were opened in southern Albania. As of yet, no schools in which Rumanian is used have been opened. Legislation soon to be introduced to the Albanian parliament would allow minorities to open private schools. Many of the arguments and terms cited above from the debates of the 1920's and 1930's about minority language education are again being used. In the volatile Balkan region, respect for minorities' rights still requires monitoring on the part of international institutions. Adherence to international standards on minority education will continue to be an aspect of nations' human rights records which will require monitoring in order to sort accusations from reality and to strike a balance between minorities' interests in preserving culture and traditions and governments' interests in training citizens to be members of, and economic contributors to, the state and society at large.

### NOTES

Description of Notes from Albanian National Archive  
Entries are set up in the following manner:

G -- Source pertaining to ethnic Greek minority

R -- Source pertaining to ethnic Vlach/Arumun/Rumanian minority

S -- Source pertaining Serbian/Macedonia minority

(1) Albanian National Archive Reference Number, consisting of Fondi #, Kutia #, Dosja # Faqe #, Poza #, brenda kontroll #, Group #, Box #, Dosia #, Page #, Paragraph #, Internal reference #;

(2) Date of the source;

(3) Description (From whom, where, language - Albanian unless otherwise noted, etc.).

(1.) (G/R) PA XVI/76, F. 143, K. 24, D. 1079, PG. 1-39, P. 60, XH. 1221: March 3 1881, Graf Beust van Haymerle, Dispatch No. 15-E to Paris (German). Description of the ethnic composition of S. Epirus. (G/R) PA XVI/77, F. 143, K. 25, D. 1083, PG. 1017, P. 24: May 19, 1881, Vice Consul van Haymerle in Prevesa (Greece), Dispatch (German), meeting with Mustafa Pasha of Valone (Vlore), Omer Bey of Berat, Kaymakam Suleyman Dino of

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Margarita and Mehmet Bey of Berat.

(2.) (G/R) F. 251, K. 4, D. 199 PG. 1-10, P. 12, XH. 476  
(English): Geneva, January 11, 1921, letter from Eric Drummond, Secretary General to Albanian Prime Minister Ilias Vrioni.

(3.) (G/R) F. 251, K. 4, D. 199, PT 1-10, P.12, XH. 476  
(English): February 9 1921 letter to League of Nations Secretary General Drummond from Ilias Vrioni, Prime Minister of Albania.

(4.) (G/R) F. 251, K. 4 D., 212, PG. 1-3, P. 9: October 5, 1921, handwritten note, F.S. Noli "Defense of Minorities in Albania."

(5.) (G/R/S) F. 295, D. 39, PG. 9-17, P. 10, XH. 566: 1921 telegrams, inter-ministry memos on ethnic language schools; September 13, 1921. Council of Ministers' Decision 760 September 21, 1921, Decision 3874 of MOE, "No new schools of any kind right now."

(6.) (G) F. 295, D. 39, PG. 18-20, P. 3, XH. 567: 1922, Albanian government interministerial correspondence.

(7.) F.295,K. 1,D.2,PG. 144-152,P. 10, XH,3: 1922.

(8.) (G/S) F. 251, K. 21,D. 288, PG. 1-36, P. 41, XH. 738: 1930, Various MFA notes: MFA Internal mem. 69/9 - Serb schools in Shkoder closed in 1930 following discussions with the Yugoslav MFA. Referred to as the Orthodox school of Shkoder, instruction in Serbian; Kingdom of Albania, MFA to MOI, March 8, 1930; Note from Albanian Consulate in Skopje, "Re. Srebre Petroff, we again hear his echo from Albania." He is a Bulgarian journalist who has been in Albania ever since Turkish times, was the director of Bulgarian school in Tetov and Vice Prefect for Tetov during the war. Bulgarians have protested the closing of the schools in Shkoder, but not the Serbs. Why?"

MFA Internal Memo Number 73 of May 21, 1930: The GOA cannot allow a "Bulgarian" school because there are no qualified teachers. But two are being trained in Normale in Elbasan. After that it will be possible to redress the issue; Macedonia/Bulgarian schools in Shoslin-Fostec, Gllomace-Gerha, Vidov. Gllomace one was not opened because there were no teachers who could instruct in both Albanian and Bulgarian. One will be opened, but only when there is a competent Bulgarian/Albanian teacher who can use Bulgarian as a "secondary language."

(9.) (R) F. 141, K. 3, D. 112, PG. 1-1, P. 3, XH. 151: 1893, Notes from Registry of Metropolitan of Korca: Rumanian language books introduced into schools in 1868. The local

community began teaching the Rumanian language in school and using it freely in church in 1878. Another Rumanian school was built in 1882.

(10.) (R) F. 54, K. 9, D, 70, PG. 11-45, P. 60, XH. 359: 1892-1893, letters from S. Vrilua (Bucharest) to Sotir Kolia (Ohrid) - writes of church matters; speaks of Vlachs and ties to Shkoder.

(11.) F.295,D.39,PG.9-17,P. 10, XH. 566: 1921.

(12.) (G/R) F. 295, D. 39, PG. 9-17, P. 10, XH. 566: 1921 (after October 29), telegram: Urgent telegram from Prefectura Korca to MOIA Tirana. Rumanian language school has been opened. Now Greeks want school. Greeks agitating, Using "anti-Albanian propaganda. Don't let the Greek school open."

(13.) (R) F. 251, K. 4, D. 217, PG. 1-, P. 2, XH. 494: October 2, 1921, letter from Rumanian Royal Legation, Tirana, to Albanian FM (in French).

(14.) (R) F. 295, K. 8, D. 78, PG. 4, P. 5, XH. 1440: 1925, Demarche by Rumania government asking for 25 schools. Demarche made November 16 1925, in the name of the Rumanian FM to the Albanian FM Hyssein Vrioni. In response, Albanian Consulate General in Bucharest delivers note December 7, 1925, which, among other things, declared "Parliament is taking up the issue of the Albanian and Rumanian Orthodox Churches in Albania."

(15.) (R) F. 251, K. 14, D. 214, PG. 1-9, P. 11, XH. 468: 1926, Rumanian language schools in Korca. Rumanian government still pushing for more schools in Korca. November 13, 1926, letter from the Albanian Ambassador in Bucharest to Rumanian FM declared: "The Government of Rumanian has no right whatsoever to establish an autonomous school in Albania. No Rumanian teachers or professors will be allowed to teach in Albania."

(16.) F. 251, K. 13, D. 234, PG. 140, P. 54, XH. 443: 1925 letter from N.H. Ballamaci Korca Arumun schools administrator to Albanian Foreign Minister.

(17.) (R) F. 295, K. 8, D. 78, PG. 4, P.5 XH. 1440: 1924, telegram from Korca Mayor to PM. Teachers expelled from Rumanian school in Korca for use of controversial maps in class and conducting "nationalist activities." They were foreign citizens (Rumanian, not Albanian). Nevertheless, contributions continue to be sent from Albanian Vlachs in Bucharest and Istanbul to schools in Korca area. Albanian authorities agree the schools can accept contributions to help pay expenses.

(18.) F. 251, K. 12, D. 208, PG. -151, P. 60, XH. 382:

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1927, letter from Bucharest, re: article in Adevarul, October 13, 1927: "Gjesti i Qeverise Shqiptare," by N. Batzaria. Police in Korca closed the Rumanian school, arrested the director, and confiscated the archives, seals, school materials, etc. "This is an example of thoughtless chauvinism. The Albanian Government says it closed schools for budget reasons. Poor excuse. There are a lot of poor countries in the world which provide minority language education. The school presented no danger whatsoever to the Albanian government. We await action by the Rumanian government."

October 14, 1927, "Albanian Government Opposes Funds for Rumanian School," by Ioan Dragu, in Dimineata. There are three Rumanian language schools currently in Albania. Lyceu of Korca was closed based on a decision by the Council of Ministers. Tension used to exist between the Albanian and Rumanian communities before World War I in Tirana, Durres, Berat, Elbasan, Korca, etc. Minister of Education Pertef Pagonin said, "We have no agreement with the GOR to provide schools or churches. In its absence, the GOA is not required to do so and pay for them, too."

More about the school closings in Albania. According to the article, 250,000 Rumanians lived in Albania in 1927. There has been an Albanian school in Bucharest for 20 years.

(19.) F.251,K. 16,D.290,PG.. 1-49,P.60, XH. 538: 1928.

(20.) Ibid

(21.) (G) F. 295, D. 39, PG. 18-20, P. 3, XH. 567: 1922, Inter-ministerial correspondence. MOE Tirana letter/telegram to Delvine. Two Greek language schools are a source of faction between the two peoples. Albanian and Greeks should study together, which would ease problems between them. Not separate schooling, but together.

(22.) (G/R) PA XVI/76, F. 143, K. 24, D. 1079, PG. 1-39, P. 60, XH. 1221: March 3, 1881, Graf Beust van Haymerle, Dispatch No. 15-E to Paris (German). Description of the ethnic composition of the geographic region of Epirus, which encompasses northwestern Greece and parts of present day southern Albania.

(G/R) PA XVI/77, F. 143, K. 25, D. 1083, PG. 1-17, P. 24: May 29, 1881, Vice Consul van Haymerle in Prevesa (Greece), Dispatch (German). Meeting with Mustafa Pasha of Valone (Vlore), Omer Bey of Berat, Kaymakan Suleyman Dino of Margarita and Mehmet Bey of Berat, local Ottoman rulers in present day southern Albania.

(23.) (GIRTS), F. 295, D. 39, PG.. 9-17, P. 10, XH. 566: 1921, Telegrams, inter-ministry memos on ethnic language schools: September 13, 1921, Council of Ministers' Decision 760; September 21, 1921, Decision 3874 of MOE. Both decisions declared that the Albanian government would approve "no new schools of any kind right now."

(24.) (G) F. 295, D. 39, PG. 18-20, P. 3, XH. 567: 1922, MOE Tirana letter/telegram to Prefectura of Gjirokaster. Description of the rights of "language minorities." The MOE in Tirana requests that the Gjirokaster Prefectura send a letter to Delvine, informing the people that they believe that the MOE in Tirana has the best interests of all Albanian citizens in mind, as well as inter-ethnic cultural development and harmony.

(25.) (G) F. 295, K. 1, D. 2, PG. 79-87, P. 10, XH. 23: 1922, September 2, 1922 Telegram from Prefectura of Gjirokaster to MOE Tirana. The Prefectura of Gjirokaster and Delvine are to form a commission about schools. Requests for opening a theological school at Delvine and other Greek language schools near Gjirokaster.

(26.) (G/R) F. 251, K. 12, D., 101, PG. 1-55, P. 60: March 14, 1922, Various Notes between ministries. July 7, 1922 - MOIA Note to MFA: "Greeks say Albanian government is internig, deporting and taking the land of Greeks in 'Northern Epirus'."

(G/R) F. 251, K. 13, D. 234, PG. 1-40, P. 54, XH. 443: 1925, Note from Greek MFA to Albanian MFA regarding newspaper articles (in French) that GOA refuses to open schools in Greek in Gjirokaster. Greek MFA calls the GOA decision "arbitrary." Published in Messenger d'Athenese t'Athines. MFA asks MOIA and MOE to prepare responses.

November 30, 1925, MOE answers: Greek language schools in Gjirokaster refused permission on the basis of Decision No. 418 of august 13, 1925, taken by the Council of Ministers.

September 7 1925, Simea in Greek (Albanian MFA makes translation into Albanian for FM) - "Schools in Northern Epirus" - "We have good ties with Albania, but the closures of schools violates the Treaty on Minorities." Eliniki - reports the same thing.

(G/R) F. 251, K. 16, D. 290, PG. 1-49, P. 60, XH. 538: 1928, Articles in the Greek press - MFA memo, January 5, 1928. GOA press officer declares that they are not based on facts. Seventy Greek schools continue to function in Albania. But it appears that some of the teachers the GOA has named/approved for Greek schools do not know

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Greek (for example, a Mr. Valiarates).

Greek MFA letter to Tirana, October 11, 1928. Ask that teachers be approved. This is a problem at the start of every school year.

Answer in reply from the Albanian PM to Greek MFA, October 26, 1928.

(27.) July 3, 1922 - Document 10834 of MOIA, answer to MFA Document 1599. "Northern Epirus - The people are Albanian, not Greek. Albania is a sovereign state. We can't have Greeks telling us what to do on our own land. This is Greek interference in our internal affairs. Greeks (who number 60) in Billisht want to break away from Korca Prefectura. Greeks allege anti-Greek discrimination. But the Ambassadors' Conference of March 25, 1912, agreed that Billisht should be part of Albania. Greeks allege that Greek businessmen in 'Northern Epirus' are being discriminated against and aren't paid what they are due. This is not true."

(28.) (G/R) F. 251. K. 12, D. 101, PG. 1-55, P. 60: March 14, 1922, Various Notes between ministries. Sent from the Ministry of Education to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for its forwarding to the League of Nations.

(29.) (G/R) F. 295, D. 39, PG. 18-20, P. 3, XH. 567: 1921, after October 29, Telegram. Urgent telegram from Prefectura Korca to MOIA Tirana. "Rumanian language school has been opened. Now ethnic Greeks in the area want their own schools. They have begun agitating, using 'anti-Albanian propaganda.' Don't let the Greek school open."

(30.) (G) F. 295, D. 51, PG. 1, P. 12, XH. 1444: 1935, January 2, 1935, Telegram from Libove to MOE Tirana. Greek consulate in Gjirokaster is engaging in propaganda, has organized a strike of schools.

January 20, 1935, Delvine school director telegram to MOE Tirana. "According to reliable information, Greeks in the community hope to win after the decision of the World Court. Greek Hellenist propaganda continues. A telegram from the Archbishop of the Orthodox Church has stirred things up."

February 4, 1935, Delvine MOE Inspector to MOE Tirana. "Greek schools all 'on holiday.' No word when students will return. Greeks asking for plebiscite to solve problems."

April 5, 1935, Telegram Saranda Schools to MOE Tirana. "Please send us information regarding case of Greek language schools before the World Court. People are waiting."

(31.) (G) F. 295, D. 51, PG. 1, P. 12, XH. 1444: 1935, 8 to 3 in favor of Greece and Greek schools in Albania.

April 14, 1935 - "Delvine is celebrating."

May 4, 1935, Gjirokaster MOE Inspector telegram to MOE Tirana. Greeks of Vllaho-Psillotere also want their own school now.

June 20, 1935, Gjirokaster Prefectura cable to MOIA "Secret Office." "Greeks do want to accept Albanian government curriculum, etc. for Greek private schools. Using propaganda as materials of instruction in the schools. This will have bad consequences for Albania. Greek propaganda in the south is as heavy as ever."

(32.) (R) F. 251, K. 26, D. 261, PG. 1-52, P. 60, XH. 725: 1937, Rumanian schools. For the school year 1937-38, the Rumanian government wants schools which existed before WWI (and subsequently closed by GOA) to be reopened. Were schools in 15 different cities prior to war. Now only Korca and Shpëskë. Ask for schools in Nicca, Limka, Grabove, Fier, Elbasan and Berat. Request based on "official answer" from FM (at the time) Ilias Vrioni in 1928, who said that GOA would open Rumanian schools wherever size of Rumanian population warranted.

GOA apparently signed with GOR an agreement to open a professional school in Tirana. "Different Albanian governments, concerned about schools in the context of contradictions between Albania and Greece have delayed the realization of this idea even though Rumania supported Albania before the World Court at The Hague. Now Rumanians want to enjoy the same rights as Greek-speaking people in the south of Albania. Now, referring back to the Vrioni statement of 1928, the GOR requests schools in Nicea, Lumka (Llencia), Grabove, Moscopol and professional schools in Fier, Elbasan and Berat (in place of the professional school in Tirana)."

(33.) (R) F. 251, K. 26, D. 261, PG. 1-52, P. 60, XH. 725: 1937, Rumanian schools. Nicea, Lumka, Grabove - 50 to 60 students; Moscopol - none; Elbasan - 130 Rumanian families, 80 to 90 children. Teacher are available who speak Albanian and Rumanian.

(34.) (R) F. 251, K. 26, D. 261, PG. 1-52, P. 60, XH. 725: 1937, Rumanian schools. More notes exchanged July-August 1937 between GOA MFA and GOR MFA.

July 29, 1937, Albanian Legation Bucharest to Rumanian FM: request meeting Albania to be represented by new secretary at MFA to talk about school. "Albanian side wants to solve in a way agreeable to both sides. When Albania spoke before World Court at The Hague that it

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committed itself to give Greek language schools, meant for all Albanian minorities, including Rumanians."

MFA Memo to Rumanian Legation in Tirana (copy also sent to Albanian Legation in Bucharest, Consul Pandeli Nasse).

July 29, 1937, Press Announcement from Albanian FM Ekrem Libohava. "We have approved opening 7 Romanian schools in v. There are two already, four were requested, and we have given approval for another as well. FM will soon travel to Bucharest and give Rumanian FM a full report on progress."

Lumka, Nice, Voskopoje, Dishnice and Granieva. Est. 500 students. Nicolae Lahovart Rumanian Ambassador to Tirana, 1937; Koco Kotta, Albanian PM, 1937.

August 19, 1937, Council of Ministers decision: Approves Rumanian elementary schools in Voskopoje, Llango, Nice, Grabove and Frasheri (Dishnice). All state-funded schools, GOA pays.

Rumanian language school in Korca and Shipcke includes, in Rumanian language information on the geography, history of Albania. Classes I and II - 6 hours a week Albanian; others, 8 hours.

MOE certifies to the GOR that Korca and Shipcke programs in Rumanian language are good, effective teaching all the kinds of things children should know.

(35.) 1941: Report from MOE (Italian). As of December 1, 1941, Korca and Shipcke schools are open. Moscopol - closed, no teacher; Shpaska - as of December 1, 1941, under teacher Adam Musi. Disnita, Nicea, Grabove (Lunca) - all closed.

(36.) July 7, 1942, Rumanian community of Korca sends letter to MOE in Tirana (in Albanian, though under Italian control).

(37.) August 28, 1942, response from MOE to Korca: Authorize 4 hours a week in Rumanian language at the Haralamb Ballamaci school.

(38.) September 3, 1942, MOE Inspector in Korca, response to Tirana: "Only 4 in Rumanian. We interpret that to mean that the rest should be conducted in the 'official' language. If this is so, please inform us, because now the whole program is in Rumanian and only 5 hours a week are in Albanian."

(39.) March 1, 1943, MOE telegram to MOIA Tirana: "Jergj Bellani has taken the initiative to make propaganda for

opening of a Greek school in Himara. He is a Greek propagandist without doubt. The necessary steps to stop this should be taken."

February 26, 1943, Pirro Minga, MOE Inspector Vlore, note to Gjirokaster: "Jorgii Bollano has made propaganda to establish Greek schools in Himara. Agitating amongst the people."

March 26, 1943, MOE-MOM "Political Office": more about activities in Himara on behalf of Greek schools.

(40.) May 20, 1943, MOE Tirana Note 1971 to Gjirokaster MOE Inspector: There is a Greek school in the district of Vuckut, village of Cuke. But there are Albanian families there. Where should they send their children to school?

June 14, 1943, Gjirokaster MOE Inspector to Tirana MOE: There are 30 families. They have come recently from Cameria, deported by the Greeks and are now in the village of Cuke. Albanians all speak Albanian. Greeks only speak Greek, though they are all of "Albanian origin (Albanian citizens before occupation)."

David J. Kostelancik, The views contained in this article do not necessarily reflect the positions of the United States Government.