MODERNIZATION IN POST - COMMUNIST COUNTRIES AS MULTIPLE MODERNITY. AN OBSERVATION WITHIN STATE - SOCIETY RELATIONSHIP TO UNDERSTAND THE ALBANIAN PATHWAY TO MODERNITY

Settore scientifico-disciplinare: SOCIOLOGIA DEI FENOMENI POLITICI

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APL</td>
<td>Albanian Party of Labor</td>
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<td>ASP</td>
<td>Albanian Socialist party</td>
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<td>CEE</td>
<td>Central and Eastern Europe</td>
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<td>CIVICUS</td>
<td>World Alliance for Citizen Participation</td>
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<td>CS</td>
<td>Civil Society</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organizations</td>
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<td>DP</td>
<td>Democratic Party</td>
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<td>DPA</td>
<td>Democratic Party of Albania</td>
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<td>ESS</td>
<td>European Social Survey</td>
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<td>EVS</td>
<td>European Value Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPO</td>
<td>Non for Profit Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>OJF</td>
<td>Organizatë Jo Fitimprurëse [Non for Profit Organization]</td>
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<tr>
<td>OJQ</td>
<td>Organizatë Jo Qeveritare [Non-Governmental Organization]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OMONIA</td>
<td>Democratic Union of Greek Minority</td>
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INTRODUCTION

The swift collapse of communist regime was widely interpreted as the clear victory of a singular model of modernity throughout the world. This is clearly manifested in the way scholars and the policymakers’ world, and especially in Albania have analysed the changes as such and have designed policies to be implemented in order to guarantee a smooth transition process for the post-communist countries.

The debate on social change in post-communist Eastern Europe has been dominated by transitology, whose fundamental argument is based on modernist approaches. Modernist approaches perceive the transformation process in Eastern Europe as a mechanical process (although difficult) of implementing the Western model. Thus, the panacea of all problems that Eastern Europe faced was the Western Modernity, attributing this way a universal quality to modernity and modernization. In more concrete terms, these countries need to adopt Western political, economic, legal and financial institutions and to rearrange their state structures according to Western norms, transforming their communist societies into Western-type capitalist and democratic ones.

Apart the fact that transitology accommodates a variety of approaches, its basic premises are widely shared: the Soviet model is seen as having failed in competition with the west, and its legacy reflects everywhere similar after-effects: dysfunctional patterns of development and mentalities updated to the market and political system continue to obstruct the progress of transformation. The victorious western model has, by the same token, become a precondition for the future, and the agenda of the transition can be defined in terms of measures and policies which would bring the countries in question closer to this really existing ideal (Arnason 2000).

“In the economic sphere the centrally planned economy was placed in sharp contraposition to the self-organizing market, thereby evaluating the philosophy of the scientific management of society through the state as traditional and counterproductive, and the allegedly spontaneously evolving logic of the market as the archetypal modern solution.
State planning was associated with inertia and de-differentiation, and market forces with dynamism and differentiation. This contraposition of the state to the market was further exemplified in the distinction between self-reliant, closed economies, as opposed to open market economies, that were deemed highly functional in a globalized economy. Similarly, in the political sphere, the vision of a homogenous society totally subordinated to the monopolist party-state under communism was contrasted with the Western democratic pluralist party system of institutionalized political conflict and a counterweight to state power in an autonomous civil society. On the level of the individual, (implicit) assumptions are made of an atomized, apathetic, state-dependent individual under communism (*homo sovieticus*) as opposed to a participative, socially active, rationally calculating, and autonomously acting individual (*homo economicus*) in modern societies” (Blokker, 2005).

Reasoning in this route, we see that many classical theoretical approaches on transition and social change in post-communist countries, converge on the structuring of a homogenizing and teleological paradigm. Therefore, my discussion begins with a journey within the theoretical debate that has been provoked by this perspective. I evaluate this as a crucial starting point, attempting to determine not only the theoretical premise but also the heuristic premise in researching the phenomena that I have chosen to treat. In my point of view, many of the developments in post-communist countries in general and in Albania in particular cannot be understood or can be misinterpreted if the analysis does not start from this worrying perspective. This is because, as I will try to explain in the following chapters, this does not carry only an epistemic importance but also because it becomes an important factor in the practical construction of the new system through predetermination and external legitimacy of the change agents.

The most significant indicator is how the society cannot be reproduced or fabricated in any way politically, because whatever structure we are able to produce, superstructure is difficult to be changed. Not by chance Dahrendorf predicates the rewinding "The clock of the citizen": reshaping of this deep culture level will demand several generations (Dahrendorf, 1990). Focusing mostly to the political sphere, when unable because of objective and subjective reasons to grasp through inside this study other domains of social change in Albania, except as variables that help the analyses, I try to explore exogenous and endogenous factors that have implicated a dysfunctional relationship between the society and the state.
This firstly, because I consider it difficult to explore other significances of social life, as a developing society is very liquid and characterized by many invisible layers of cultural change as a result of the relation of the society with an unsustainable system of norms and values, due to internal transitory developments and due to side effects of globalization. Social life in Albania is very fluid as a result of the combination of the imported modernization and unstable terrain of normative and value’s system. Modernity in itself does not guarantee a stable and safe life but its opposite in some cases: if we refer to Bauman (2002), it becomes even more impossible for a suburban society living between two worlds.

For instance, if we undertake a study on the lifestyle in their daily life of citizens in the Albanian capital, we could find many similarities with the contemporary style of life in Western countries, especially in younger age groups, especially those that have lived most of their life during post-communism. Albanian contemporary individual tries to look very modern in every possible aspect of his/her life from the moment he/she was liberated from the constraints of communism, starting from the dressing style, to the relationship with information technology. We can say even that an unbalanced trend for more and more fashion continues to dominate, because "fashion" comes gross from a virtual reality, unfiltered, raw and chaste from the daily rituals. But one can rightly say that this is a superficial perception, as long as it is not based on a deep study and it is focused only in urban areas. Actually, referring to studies of this nature¹, by comparing the local centre that in this case is Tirana and the periphery that represents any model of typical rural and conservative lifestyle, we note that despite the latter represents in some cases a great resistance to the modern lifestyle, this is reflected mostly as a conflict between generations than in the comparison between the same age-generation living in the periphery and centre. The most important indicator is that 98% of youth in suburban areas would leave their town or village toward any Western country or at least towards the capital if was given the opportunity. According to them beside the economic reasons, an important motive for the "escape" from their country was demanding a modern lifestyle, in an attempt to escape from gatekeepers (middle generation and third generation) of traditional values in these small conservative communities. When asked what they understand with modernity - for them it means

¹ Study on social change in Albania. A qualitative study realized in the context of PhD.
more freedom - as independence from the family, more economic independence, more sexual freedom, desire to explore the world and themselves to decide what they want to do with their life.

Or if we will simply rely on analytical observation of the show "Big Brother" (without wanting to give to this indicator any scientific methodological value) which I tried to follow from five years to understand the attitudes based on values that young people today believe, in relation to modernity and evolution of these attitudes, we are confronted with the same difficulties. Although aware of the impossibility for identification of any significant scientific fact, due to the ambiguity created by the report stage - background (if we rely on the concept of Goffman on the importance and invisibility of the background) we cannot neglect the presence of a social fact which is to be evaluated somehow, because after all we are dealing with human experiences charged of culture.

To avoid being extended because this is not to be considered in this study, comparative was the coexistence within the same environment of young Albanian nationality individuals grown up in the west, abroad Albania who also had difficulty in articulating themselves and the classified Albanian youth and adults grown up in Albania. From this assessment we can admit that there are no substantial differences in their mentality despite the fact that they have been cultivated in different social environments, but rather a point of convergence among them becomes significant in my view, their common articulated expression - "I am myself, I believe, this is my choice, no one has the right to judge me." The frequency of incidence in the articulation of this expression manifests in a particular optic the concern to repeatedly confirm the modernist view according to which individuality is very important.

If we refer to more complex data to understand changes in non-material culture of the Albanians along transition, again we find the same methodological problem or cramp. For example, based on the data of the European Social Survey² (we will further explore on it during the following chapters) we find that Albanian citizens are more tolerant towards other religious beliefs but are not at all tolerant towards different sexual orientations, such as of gay, lesbians etc.

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² European Value Study, Albania 2012. Tables and graphics will be introduced during the following chapters.
Obviously all these elements demonstrate the existence of a social trend to follow a modernist path to social change, with a clear vocation to be more similar to the West. But as I noticed above, all these cultural components (mentioned above or through the previous text) represent a very fluid reality, with such a dynamic change which makes very difficult to achieve any objective conclusion. In addition, another problem is that these behaviours are more "reachable imitations" of Western models of life influenced by globalization (mainly through information technology), or trace of a society that is gaining the shape of a consumption society under the influence of the market economy, rather than substantive changes. In this sphere it is easier to talk about a modernist uni-linear development, than in the sphere of politics.

I would consider as a substantial change “hardly reachable” for post-communist societies in general and in particular the Albanian, a position where the citizen overcomes his behavioural profile or political culture, of those values that are rooted in the so-called Soviet mentality characterized by apathy, dependency on the state, atomisation of society etc..

Indeed, achieved or not, the model of Western modernity does not constitute in itself a concern because otherwise we would depart from the very criticized homogenization premise of the classical theories of modernization, but as long as it is noted that the achievement of this model is consistent with the social willingness since from the so-called revolution onwards, then it should be taken into consideration. Because, just starting from this premise we discover that not occasionally, achieving political modernization or cultural change in line with the new political system - democracy appeared more difficult. Therefore reveal other sides of cultures, institutions and structural organization of society, inherited from the communist regime or cultivated during the transition, which are more stable and sustainable and become deterministic in defining the non homogeneous path but heterogeneous path of modernization of post-communist countries.

This is because, the large evidence or bet with modernity for the members of these societies was not copying the Western style of life which comes packaged through the mass media, but the relationship with the new political system. Because in a simple phenomenological observation, expressed in other terms, it is quite cynical a social environment in which you have the opportunity to dress with the best brands in
fashion, but have to pass through an extremely polluted environment, where even if truly you possess a beautiful last model car, but the police asked unjustly money from you, or having just come back from the hospital where beside the problematic quality service you got, you just gave bribe to the doctor, or coming from any court room where your right has been denied through a flagrant violation as a result of corruption. And you have recently voted the same politician who was caught by the media in a blackmail act to obtain a big bribe. In this way there is created not only a very complex reality with many invisible layers, but almost a new culture that implies vitalization of a bipolar subject, on the one hand modern and European in appearance and on the other side medieval where it really needs to make accounts with the political modernity.

Albanians benefited from freedom everything they had the opportunity to acquire easily, but none of the political freedom which is the real challenge for members of post-communist societies and for the latter we are all aware how important it is for the functioning of the modern state that claims to be raised over the foundations of democracy.

In relationship with the political system, with the state, with the public sphere Albanian citizens have difficulties based on the principle that it is "not something that belongs to us", “this is the work of others”. It is clear that during this process of change of society, even if it assimilates some components of imported modernity, referring to the aforementioned aspects, it is difficult to change in its cultural essence despite its vocation, in case waives form its "polis". For exactly in the political habitus, the individual is required to be active, to be creative in his every-day, to be the anti-conformist, to really challenge the norms and values rooted in the past or at the imposed present. Put in literary terms, this statement is exactly the mirror where the individual in modern society should see himself, or “litmus” tests components of modernity. Otherwise, this society is like a beautiful house from the outside, and distorted from within, which risks to collapse at any moment.

In this sense the study of society - state relationship is not the goal in itself but an important link in analysing the social changes oriented towards the Western modernization. In other words, I think this is the habitus where is best manifested the profile of development of the society and the most important which are the actors and
social classes that participate in the construction of new social and political environment. It serves as lens, which helps in the understanding of a reality where the reminiscences of the past tie in a complex network, with current phenomena produced locally and those arising from any systemic universal authority as a result of globalization. In my point of view, the interaction of actors within the political sphere, despite its hidden layers, reflects a more naked reality, as the dialectic between social active forces inside this sphere in the claimed modern state (without which the modern society itself would not have sense), clearly reflects the kind of society we are talking about and its development trajectory. So if we want to understand what kind of modernity we find in post-communist countries, and above all what consequences carries the modernization approach we should read deeply the trajectory of development of political attitudes of citizens in post-communist countries.

Obviously this relationship includes a wide range of actions of social actors in a very dynamic environment, and as we will be observing during the following text, this research space will narrow only on a few phenomena that are likely to be addressed within the framework of this study.

If we stick to the normative discourse of some modernization approaches, after more than two decades political attitudes of society should have any essential change or at least an evolving curve as an important agent of structural change of the state. The society was to be able to concept inside its different social cells in the dimensions of an active civil society, as a counterweight to the state power. While as many researchers warn (Dahrendorf 1990, Sztompka 1995, Muller 1992, Alexander 1995, etc.) that may require several generations to change, unlike other domains. But even if starting from this affirmation, despite the potential understanding, the picture that probes empirical data proves the opposite as result of the consistent growth of the level of political alienation of citizens in Eastern Europe (Howard 2003, Mishler & Rose 2001, Lagerspetz 2009), and especially in Albania. The degree of vertical and horizontal trust of citizens questions the very existence of society in its political dimension.

Citizens in post-communist countries and in Albania in critical levels do not trust neither the state institutions nor each-other and either the civil society organizations, even those with religious profile, despite the fact that they continue to be societies largely believing in god in comparison to societies in western countries.
Such a perversion of social solidarity in post-communist countries, which acquires the dimensions of social alienation and not only political alienation, needs to be explained widely because, as we will see in the relevant chapter, it cannot come only as a result of the transition of the normative-value based system, but it is mostly a consequence of incongruence or dysfunctional relationship between society and the state.

In this sense, besides political and sociological theories of transition which will be discussed as following, the classical sociology first comes to aid through conceptualizing- analytical keys in the coverage of change of Western society towards modernity.

For example, by virtue of Durkheim comes to support his concept on anomie, but certainly not the causes leading to this delineation of this situation of post–communist societies.

By referring to Weber we would find a better coordinate from where we began our reflection on the diverse phenomena that are associating the process of change in these countries, by referring to his analysis on the process of rationalization of modern society, according to which not occasionally happens in the west, where the culture and economy associate each-other, although with a prevalence of the first to the second, in Eastern Europe these instances do not travel together, but the political-economic system is installed the first and culture should follow it.

In this context, by appealing to classical approaches, there is the risk of a twofold alienation, one that according to Marks comes after capitalism in itself, and the other as a result of the incongruence between the new political-economic system and the culture of society.

Many scholars (Howard, 2003; Rose & Shin, 2001, among others) analysing transition, have raised concerns over the political disenchantment and the lack of notable improvements in political attitudes among citizens of post-communist countries. Even recent studies show that they are still characterized by scepticism and a low confidence in political authorities, low levels of political efficacy and associational membership. Yet, the reasons behind this are still not fully understood.

Definitely, the political attitudes of society that follows its cultural pathway, slightly affected by the structural changes of state and trade, more than any other social action,

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3 The most substantive source in the analysis of change towards western modernity remains the classical sociology, although it is difficult to explain lots of concrete specific phenomena that develop in post-communist societies. We will discuss more widely on this argument during the following chapters.
probe that not only the unilinear projected modernization is a wrong premise in the analysis of this reality but also its criticism. As proposed by the neo-modernist theories, it reopens the field of theoretical and empirical research in relation to this object of study.

Let’s try to examine at the empirical level through quantitative and qualitative study and at the theoretical level through several complementary theories (cultural approach, institutional approach, social capital approach), what are the exogenous and endogenous factors, historical and contextual factors which have produced these relations between state-society, trying to look deeper into the so-called modernization process. We're in this way looking for an agent of change beyond the political elite or the new bourgeoisie to which this mission was tasked as the only link that could lead these difficult processes of institutional and legal reforms as based on a hegemonic logic (Eisenstadt 2000). In reality it should be seen as an open field of play, as many scholars have seen a turbulent configuration of new actors and new opportunities for action emerging when the old regime loses its repressive grip on society (Elster, Offe, and Preuss, 1998).

Where is civil society? Why are not citizens participating in the public life of the country? Which are the values that will prove a congruent relationship between the culture of a society in adjustment and the political structure?

Based on a critical and not merely descriptive - analytical approach, the goal of this research is not only observing the pessimistic situation in relation to the functioning of civil society, through negative indicators of participation, but it is a one more impulse to seek the path of liberation of other strata in their functioning as a change agent of public by dismantling the distorted of public with private in these countries. In this context, we try to get to know better ourselves in the present and in the past - willing to discover some forgotten features of our social DNA which can reappear into important precondition of re-modification of our culture. We're in this way looking for a modest finding of a modernist path, which besides being universal through the predefined indicator of hegemonic Western modernity can also be local, and also Albanian.
AIM OF THE STUDY

Despite the effort that unfolds in this study inspired by neo-modernist theories, not only as a criticism towards the homogenizing paradigm of modernity but also in search of a more original Albanian modernity, especially in the political sphere, this assignment is bound to remain within the limits of modesty. This is because of objective, historical and geopolitical reasons such as for example even when referring to Eisenstad’s reasoning on “multiple modernity”, important country reference coordinate that ‘crystallized the first successful non-Western modernity’ (Eisenstadt 2001, p. 328), is of course Japan. Albania in this direction does not seem to represent a significant place, not only because it is a small country, but also because its history does not prove the existence of a society that is able to produce independent thoughts and actions (Ferraj, 2010). After all, it is questionable whether to the Albanian or other post-communist societies in general it is required nothing more, but to simply legitimate the new system.

In Albania, there is a long-standing effort to find authentic roots similar to those of western European civilizations, and in some cases even probing being precursor of this civilizations. This was a nationalist wind, created especially during the communist regime through its propagandistic institutions which as we know were totally controlled by the state (in fact this effort is earliest, as we will see in the following chapters). This thesis essentially continues to be a dominant perspective even in today's politicians and scholars discourses, although articulated in different terms outside the framework of nationalist background. According to this perspective, Albania is European and a place within this family belongs to it (this means integration into the European Union) because it has been as such always, except for two dark moments in Albanian history, Ottoman occupation and the communist regime, when Albanians fetched away their natural way.

As we can easily notice, this is an entirely teleological approach as is the classic modernization discourse- thus a society that has its aim predetermined, even her 'fate'. In fact, it is not only the willingness of the political elite, but of the whole society that converges at this point, excluding some voices of isolated Euro-sceptic intellectuals (Kajsiu, 2002, Sulstarova 2010). This is a vocation clearly articulated
since the first days and calls after the collapse of the system, the main slogan was - "We want Albania like the rest of Europe". Obviously the problem is neither Europeanization spirit, nor democratization and modernization of all strata lying in the Albanian society\(^4\) but its negative implications in relation to the political participation of society.

As we will see in the relevant chapter, consequences of this mentality (although, as it will be explained in the following, even for several other factors) have exhausted the debate within the country in terms of development alternatives, and have affected the numbness of civil society itself, subject to a principle that only promotes social passivity – it is just enough to do the homework and everything is solved because recovery comes only through integration into the European Union. I do emphasize again, that for me this becomes an important discourse not only because represents a defining paradigm of developments in Albania and elsewhere in post-communist countries but also because at the research level it does not allow for a degree of depth and serious observation of reality or said otherwise, a honest perception of yourself. Although in this sense it is clear that key problem is not the classical modernization theory itself, but the appropriation without any critical filter of modernization paradigm from local actors.

This requires in advance making a journey through all modernization theories that try explaining social-political change in the post-communist countries in general and in particular in Albania. I do start off by a critical approach to some of these theories because, as I will try to clarify during the following, they not only affected the academic and political discourse on development of these countries, but also have legitimized inadvertently the uni-linearity of the trajectory of their economic and political development. This perspective has generally benumbed any alternative development while neglecting the necessity of plurality of participating actors, and therefore the potential of creation of dialectic between society and the imported model of development. From some of these approaches, the past is evaluated as uniform, short of the need to be considered as reading lens of the current political-economic developments or even more, as the cornerstone in building the future. The conflicting theories that are mainly those of historical sociology (path dependency and civilization block culture) do earn more valences not only because they produce a full

\(^4\) Gallup 2009, Balkan Monitors, insights and perception. 84% of the people in Albania think that EU membership is a good thing.
and complex explanation of transition, but also because they increase the possibility for a diversified, non-linear, non-teleological development, also with a predetermined end. The agents of change are not taken for granted but the whole discourse on which can be agents of change is reopened. The area of research is left open, is released in this way from the normative interpretations of reality, so it is not as it should, what steps need to be casted, what reforms should be implemented, what should people do to get organized, but what do they know, what can, what they want and with what motivation the members of a given society can process a certain endogenous vision of the self-development in relation to their present and past.

As we know the post-revolution societies (to the extent that may be called as such the reversing of the communist system in Albania and elsewhere) suffer trauma or social problems in the forms of different social pathologies, because it is inverted not only the political system but also their axis of reference, their value-normative based system. Especially a society that experienced an orthodox communism, completely isolated from the outside world, that did not even recognize other earlier stages of anti-regime actions, similar to what is defined as “heroic and romantic phase of the revolution” (Sztompka, 1998, 10) unlike other eastern countries, constitutes an interesting research laboratory in finding different phenomenological shades reflected in the post-communist reality. So, if we start reasoning from the logical premise of a plural modernity, it is very important that the phenomena apparently similar to post-communism be examined from a non-holistic point of view. Specifically, it is necessary that the state-society relationship in Albania is explained as a specific case, considered as a specific entity in space and in time, and not by an a-historical view which tends to observe the communist past and the post-communist present as a homogeneous category.

In this light, being liberated from this paradigm, in a second phase by building another theoretical framework, we try to analyse the society-state relation in Albania (this relation is an important research laboratory for all the reasons listed in the introduction) as based on several theories:

The cultural approach of path dependency (Sztompka 1998, 2000; Jeffrey C. Alexander; Kennedy, 2002; Howard, 2003; Inglehart, 2006; Rose & Shin, 2001), that

---5 The theoretical framework is firstly explained in the first chapter and largely through the text, when I analyze different and specific issues.
tends to judge present phenomena interlinked with the past, because values and beliefs internalized early in life are resistant to change.

The social capital approach (Bourdieu 1986; Pietrzyk Reeves, 2008; Stolle & Rochon, 1999; Uslaner, 2008, Putnam, Leonardi, & Nanetti, 1993), that stands in the same framework as the cultural approach but specifically not in line with the path dependency, according to which civic attitudes develop in interaction with other people.

The institutional perspective (Madsen, 1987; Venelin I. Ganev 2001; Brehm & Rahn, 1997; Stolle, 1998; Rothstein & Stolle, 2003; Rothstein, 2004), which analyses this relationship in a vertical dimension, according to which the political statements of citizens are consequences of the present, products of institutional performance.

The critical perspective (Arnason 1999; Eisenstadt 1999, 2000; Blokker 2005, Muller 2000, Sztompka 1998) towards the modernization homogenizing paradigm, cultivated internally and externally, which implies not intentionally an apathetic civil society by calling into question the internal democracy. It channels all the conversion process as a formal and bureaucrat transformation by creating only a developmental centre, both at the discourse and practical levels, mainly occupied by the political class.

Besides the above mentioned four theoretical lines that on my opinion are not exclusive but explain the same phenomena through different perspectives, while elaborating certain elements we will be referred also to the classical thinkers of sociology (Durkheim, Weber, Marx).
Research problem and hypotheses

In this study, as we said before we will try to observe some important phenomena of transformation of post-communist countries following the vector of modernization, focusing on political sphere of post-communist modernity in Albania, combined in some cases with a comparative analysis (when estimated as a necessity to reinforce argumentation) with other countries of Eastern Europe.

The main problem according to me, spotted even from the quantitative and qualitative data, is the dysfunctional relationship between state and society that is manifested in:

a) Increasing political alienation of society, expressed through low level participation, which is the opposite of claims of some modernization and democratization theories that appeal for the necessity of active citizenship to enable well-functioning of democracy. A dichotomy status hardly to be undone is created- in the meantime the whole social, economic and political change is conceptualized and projected as formal change - as institutional one. More and more the society evaluates the state and the public as “a foreign body” inside its organism.

b) Additionally, another indicator that confirms the apolitical and non-communitarian position of society, thus its political alienation which we identified above, is the loss of its vertical and horizontal trust.

c) Civil society is not at all present, reducing this way the political role of society in just being voter, and not in continuous collective action in a dialectic relationship with the authority. This makes impossible transformation itself; often it is acted controversy to the social will, making impossible the existence of demos itself, if we believe that the existence of the last is manifested at the political habitus and not physical habitus. The society is atomized increasingly, trusts decreasingly in the political class, and trusts decreasingly in its social political power and in collective actions. The individual from “homo sovieticus” is reduced more to “homo corruptus” than to “homo-democraticus”, inheriting from the past the indifference towards public and by being subject to a very corrupted current system, that consolidates further the indifference towards state. Meanwhile, according to Sztomppka it is needed at least “Some minimum level of trust in
democratic regime and the rule of law, some minimum awareness of citizens’
rights but also duties and obligations, some minimum commitment and
mobilization to participate – are the virtues indispensable for the operation of
democratic polity….. The sad fact is that inherited culture of the past is
incongruent with the culture adequate for the present.” (Sztompka 1998, pp.21).

d) Beside internal problems affected mostly by internal factors, there exist other
problems that derive from a supra-state dimension. Albanian citizens believe more
that their problems will be resolved by European Union politicians rather than
from local politicians or from them themselves, by perverting their willingness to
actively participate in the functioning of the new social order. From the other side
the political class that is the main agent of social-political change, further
politically alienates the citizen by protecting its interest.

How is it possible that for more than two decades the civil society is very little or not
at all present in Albania? Its relative being and its contrariwise development related to
expectations, expressed through political increasing alienation of society (for
empirical data see chapter 2) does not constitute a problem only because there is
missing an important chain in the functioning of democracy. But this is due to lack of
participation of different social layers and classes in the political-economic change
process. Or we can say they are participating just as passive spectators.

As consequence this status implies even a second essential problem, the “new state”
that is being constructed during transition and the society (to a larger stand) are two
alien entities, each following its own independent path, propelled by different forces.
Consequently, relationship between them is dysfunctional.

In line with these arguments, naturally some essential questions analysing the post-
communist transition in Albania are conceptualized, which constitute even the main
research coordinates in this study:

1) If the society is invisible, apathetic, surrendered, and if the individual has lost
the trust on state institutions, then which social layer, class, formal or informal
group or individual commands the “wheel of change” in these countries? What
if probably the modernization and Europeanization approach acquired by local
actors has implied spontaneously an elitist approach? Articulated in other
terms, who has the power in Albania and how it is related to other groups?
2) Why is this condition created? The agency is simply surrendered to the structures by complying with its impotence as result of disenchantment from politics or the structure itself does not allow any space to the agency?

3) Which are the reasons for the loss of vertical and horizontal trust? What consequences derive from the lack of social cohesion in relation to the functioning of democratic state?

4) Loss of trust, political alienation of citizen, lack of political participation are results of incongruence among political culture inherited from communism as per a soviet model and the culture that is required in the new political-economic system? Results of problems generated during transition or of both?

5) Secondly, from another point of view, we understand that society cannot be homogeneous, than layers within it should be found, layers that manifest a stronger tendency for public participation and for increasing in quality and in weight the substrata of civil society in Albania. Are there premises within social layers that individuals or certain groups be more active intellectually and practically, able to make resistance to the power but also to be articulated as guide to an Albanian more modernist pathway?

6) Is there really a uni-linear development approach acquired by local actors that derives from a homogenizing paradigm of modernization and Europeanization with the final goal of integration in European Union? What are the consequences of such an approach in development of internal democracy in Albania and in participation of different actors in development of the country?

7) Maybe probably the whole process of socio-political change in Albania and in other post-communist countries in general, while attempting to install the new political-economic system, is reduced to a bureaucratic process of reforms, which grips in this position not only the political class but also the civil society?
Based on these questions similarly the hypothesis articulated in this study lies first in space and in time. In space, primarily because Albania is considered a specific social environment, distinct although in some aspects manifests the same problematic as the other post-communist countries. Secondly, because the social-political change factors of transition are endogenous and exogenous. Time related, because causes that affect existing situation are historical and actual.

The dysfunctional relationship state-society verified through the indicators of political alienation of society, of loss of vertical and horizontal faith and a non-participatory civil society observed at a theoretical-empirical plane lead us to formulation of the following hypothesis:

First, I hypothesize that post-communist countries in general and Albania specifically, are characterized by a weak relation between citizens and the state. Although otherwise than a structural conflict that could be healthier in my point of view, this conflict derives from lack of communication between these two instances. The society feels alienated from politics because they do not trust political authorities, nor believe in their own ability to challenge them and to take part as an important agent in the transformation process of their country. Thus, the relations between citizens and the state should not be complimentary but rather substitution and such a state would be considered dysfunctional;

Second, relying on cultural theories as path dependency approach, the disenchantment of citizens from politics and their civic passivity is a legacy of the communist regime. Beyond the theoretical analysis and in order to support it, I expect to find through empirical data, that political attitudes of the citizens relate to age. In post-communist countries, the correlation should be negative the longer a person lived under the communist rule, the more distorted perceptions we expect to see (see Sztompka 1998, Inglehart, 2006);

Third, regarding institutional approach, unacceptable performance of political authorities, decreases citizen's self-confidence in political matters, and spreads distrust
throughout the society, thus alienating citizens from politics and discouraging all kinds of political participation.

Fourth, political class is very corrupted based on the perception of the population, and as such tends to possess every source of goods, in order to guarantee its power. The only dialectical relation that exists among social forces is channelled through political parties by polluting the role of any other institution that approaches bottom-up.

Fifth, lack of horizontal faith makes difficult the cultivation of social cohesion as an important chain in structuring the necessary social capital for functioning of an active civil society.

Sixth, the paradigm of top – down, centre- periphery development makes impossible advancement of civil society as an agent of change and reduces it to a bureaucratic extension of the state apparatus, in a technocracy that does not produce anything.

Modernization, uni-linear and teleological paradigm, aiming integration in EU does not allow the creation of plural and participatory society. Represented by all the local actors, those political and those of civil society, this approach has reduced development in Albania in only a technical-bureaucratic process of reforms by: a) attributing more power to political authorities as leaders of change, b) creating the idea that citizens generally do not need to do anything, rescue comes from EU and from other international actors, c) by transforming the civil society itself in a mass of technicians and bureaucrats which lacks totally any critical frame of active intellectuals. This way it is born or reborn a profile of rational individuals in the modernist meaning of the critical school, that simply implements without criticizing.

In the empirical part of the thesis we intend to fulfil these objectives:

To collect information on the indicators related to political alienation and state-society relations (political trust, participation, generalized trust) in post-communist countries; to compare indicators of state-society relations among different
countries, in order to find out if there is a certain pattern concerning post-communist countries;
To find out whether participation has an impact on generalized trust (or vice versa) and democratic attitude of the citizens.

To test whether the performance of institutions has an impact on political alienation, and if the vicious circle of negative top-down political socialization exists. To prove also, that overestimation of the EU integration has a negative impact on civic activism.

To test whether the political class is the most important centre of power in Albania, diming the activity of all other social groups taking place in transformation process of their country.

To find out whether the social and cultural conditions exist for some social groups inside the Albanian society to participate more and to be more active in creating an endogenous path to modernity.

**Instruments used to realize the empirical research are:**
To find out quantitative data, rely on international surveys is being used European Social Survey (2012); Gallup 2009, CIVICUS; Balkan Monitors, insights and perception.

**Regarding qualitative data used:**

1. In depth interviews: More specifically, this “qualitative study” was realized during 2011-2013. Taking advantage of my position as an external consultant for two youth organizations (addressed in chapter two) I have managed to organize in-depth interviews about 80 students of social sciences aged between 18 and 28 years old
2. Participative observation: Two youth organizations are intentionally selected, because rightly, different researchers (Howard 2003, Putnam 2002) think that there are differences between generations in their tendency for social and political activism. Primarily these approaches depart from the logic of socialization (for a detailed explication of this approach see chapter III) according to which some of the values, may they even be political, are embraced in relation to the socio-political environment in which an individual is formed culturally. Thus according to this premise, an individual who has lived more years in democracy has had the opportunity to acquire some new values of a political democratic culture and consequently to enjoy a stronger orientation towards participation. On the other hand, through participatory observation we have the opportunity to observe dynamically the stance of individuals engaged in the activities of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Analyzed in this way, as Outhwaite and Ray argument, the construction and consolidation of civil society should be viewed as a process rather than a fixed presence or absence (Outhwaite, Ray 2005, 173).
CHAPTER I: Theoretical perspective

1.1. A critical view on modernization and transitology

Differently from other revolutions which have been seen in history, Eastern European revolutions did and do not have a utopia, thanks to the east – west dialectic and contradictory nature of the liberal capitalism culture. (Tamas 1994, p.9)

This chapter is conceived as a kind of orientation map on some of the theories that will be discussed extensively throughout the text. To be more precise, the goal in this chapter is not the exhaustion of the theoretical discussion but simply a general overview of the theoretical binaries that will serve as analyzes lens of phenomena addressed in this thesis. Let's first start in an overall discussion of theories that deal with the concept of modernization.

The discourse on modernism concept, as we know starts much earlier (Arnason 2000, 62, Jeffrey C. Alexander, 167) than the period of overturn of communist regime. Even though we can accept as important moments where the theory of modernism (known nowadays as classical modernization theory), is born and developed are the years 60s. This approach (elaborated mostly by authors such as Parsons, Moore, Smelser, Hoselitz) was focused on Third World, and the ways to achieve the level of advanced model countries (“reference societies”) “transplanting” Western institutional patterns. But after strong critics based on empirical, theoretical and ethical grounds, the theory of modernization was totally abandoned in the seventies. According to Alexander (1995, pp. 75–76) the moment when classical modernisation theory expired was: ‘Sometime in the mid 1960s, between the assassination of President Kennedy and the San Francisco ‘summer of love’”. It died because the emerging younger generation of intellectuals could not believe it was true’. The classical model was challenged by a range of radical theories, focusing in particular on the relationship between the core and periphery of the world capitalist system. But again in the 1980s the modernization paradigm was revitalized (Tiryakian 1985), and especially after 1989's it clearly finds a new focus in the endeavour of post-communist societies to “enter or re-enter Europe”. As discussed in the introduction after 1989 its revival was inevitable because the collapse of the communist regime at the same time meant the triumph of Western modernity, so the
solution was the modernization of the ex communist countries, in accordance with the Western model. Therefore the restructuration of politics, the economy as well as the conception of a civil society in Eastern Europe after 1989 largely seemed to proceed according to notions from the West. But these changes were also accompanied by the emergence of “neo-modernization theory” (Tiryakian 1991) or “post-modernization theory” (Alexander 1995), that differently from the past modernization theory, takes into consideration the experience of post-communist world, and in effect modifies its central assumptions.

For instance, according to Sztompka we have to consider the fact that there is a crucial difference between modernizing processes in the third world and in the post-communist second world, due to the legacy of “real socialism”. “Whereas in the post-colonial countries, the starting point was usually the traditional, pre-modern society, preserved in more or less unchanged shape, in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, both the ruling ideology and the highly politicized, centralized and planned economic system, were for many decades involved in the promotion of modernization. But as a result, what has been achieved is far away from genuine modernity. It may be called “fake modernity” (Sztompka, 1998, 15). Although by reflecting on the Albanian case we notice that this statement is questionable (this is elaborated more in the following chapters) because in many aspects such as in urbanization, industrialization and women’s role, during communist regime Albanian society recognized for the first time a form of modernization. Anyhow, if we judge by referring to the consistence and success of this model, certainly we must accept the position of other researchers that stand in this frequency of the analysis, evaluating the modernity in post communist countries as fake or false modernity.

Reasoning in more general terms, the Soviet – communist “experimental” model of developmental manifest an effort to create an alternative modernity, but in the end failed to create a coherent alternative social order (Arnason 1993). According to Arnason it is necessary to dismiss the scholars who argue that the communist episode represented ‘a failed revolt against modernity’, because the Soviet system was ‘a distinctive but ultimately self-destructive version of modernity, rather than a sustained deviation from the modernizing mainstream’ (Arnason 2000, 61). So in this sense it was not anti-modern but mis-modernised. We should consider Soviet-style communism as mis-modernized, not because of any essentialist view that there is one correct way of achieving modernisation, but simply because this form of modernity
was ultimately unsustainable” (Sakwa 2010, 15–16, 94–99). “Soviet adaptation to the challenges of modernity, while responding to some of its contradictions, failed to develop a coherent model to cope with the whole ensemble of challenges represented by modernity. The Soviet system was founded on the notion of emulation of the Western form of modernity while claiming to resolve its defects, but ultimately was unable to find a way of achieving similar goals by different methods. The Soviet system was thus a failed model of modernity because of its limited adaptive potential; yet this is not to deny its substantial modernising achievements, albeit at great cost” (Sakwa, 2012, 49).

The study of communist modernity becomes very important for understanding from which premise derives the discussion on post-communist modernization. In this framework, by observing deeper the communist reality, at least three factors are noticed that produced a “fake modernity”: (a) imposed modernity in some domains of social life, coupled with (b) the relics of traditional, pre-modern society in many others, and all that dressed up with a makeup of the symbolic ornamentations, pretending to imitate Western modernity. “Forced modernization brought about extensive industrialization, with obsessive emphasis on heavy industry, the shift from agricultural to industrial sector, proletarization of population, chaotic urbanization, the growth of bureaucratic apparatus of administration, police and army, strong autocratic state” (Sztompka 1998, 16). Sztompka argues that communist regime not only produced fake modernity but also pre-modernity because not randomly many features of a pre-modern development appeared after the regime collapsed, confirming that everything was hidden under the façade of unified socialist bloc (Ibid, 16).

However there are other scholars who claim that in one form or another communist regime was modern (for a broader analysis on this topic see chapter 5). For instance, Eisenstadt highlights that “Both the constitutions and elections attested to the fact that these totalitarian regimes, in their mode of legitimation, in their relations between the center and the periphery, but also in their overall cultural and political program, were modern regimes” (Eisenstadt 1992, p.32). Fake, false or pre-modern all those historically unique conditions of former communist societies require serious rethinking of the theories of modernization, once they are applied to this new domain (Sztompka, 1995).
But beside the call from some researchers to evaluate through other criteria the post-communist cosmos because of the distinctive past, many of the theoretical perspectives that are elaborated within the so-called transitology renovate the same conceptual problems.

The most fundamental premise of transitology is that the current western constellation of capitalism, democracy, and the nation-state (there are differences of opinion regarding the last one) represents a universal and definitive model on its way to global ascendancy (Arnason, 2000). This means that theoretical concepts as well as models of modernization can be applied to the current experiences without much amendment. In other terms, the crucial argument is that the ‘democratic market society’ is ‘universally applicable’ (Bönker et al., 2002).

“The announcement of the ‘end of history’, which implied the triumph of a singular modernity, concomitantly recreated the modernist dichotomy between the traditional and the modern. From this perspective, the institutional and cultural legacies of communism embodied the traditional, whereas (a specific image of) Western society represented the ultimate goal of any modern project (although as I claim above in my opinion this is questionable.) Although modernists reproached the communist project for its self-acclaimed capacity to reshape society from above, they proposed an equally ‘designer’-type of project in which the post-communist elites should copy and impose key Western institutions on their societies” (Blokker, 2005, 507).

One of the continuities of modernization approach in Eastern Europe is that the transformation process are mostly elite-driven project, carried out by relatively small groups of individuals in society who are capable of initiating projects of social change (see Eyal, Szelenyi, Townsley 1998; Higley, 1998) (for a detailed discussion on this issue see chapter 4). According to Eyal et al, in classical modernization theory, the agents of modernization were urban bourgeoisie or the entrepreneurs. In post-communist countries we face another social structure, because there are ‘functional elites’ or ‘change agents’ identified with radical reformers on a political level that will construct a new order on the basis of Western institutions are. As a result of a change project that is based on the transfer of appropriate institutions the right actors who can sustain the new order can emerge, the citizen and the entrepreneur, who are believed to share rather similar characteristics that are congruent to the new order. Eyal et al argue, that modernist thinking is based on the assumption that ‘if you create the proper institutions, they will shape the individuals that occupy them so that individual
behaviour will conform to institutional constraints and imperatives’ (Eyal et al 1998, 8–9). Radical reformers and reforms they implement, implicate the extraction of the state from society, creating more economic and political freedom because individuals are less restrained by the state in their actions. So according to Eyal et al citizens and entrepreneurs who hold the right capital for the reproduction of the new order emerge, because the role of the radical reformers is of a transitional kind. However beyond these arguments, the existence of the transformational elites that lead the modernizing project is taken for granted in most cases (Arnason, 2000; Kennedy, 2002).

In synthesis, is necessary highlighting that modernization approach is mostly “inspired” by the triumph of the Western model as the only and universal one, whereas the communist systems are primarily understood negatively. Exactly the main reason why modernist approaches have been criticized is because their paradigm is unilinear and teleological, neglecting the historical legacies of every post-communist country. In contrary, alternative, critical approaches rely on the historical nature of the current transformations because they do not observe transformation as basically ‘a one-way process of change from one hegemonic system to another’ (Pickles and Smith, 1998: 1). Relying on some of critical approaches, current social change must be seen as strongly connected with old social relations and institutions (although this approach should not be deterministic) and therefore can only be understood in a historical way, resulting in various trajectories from the past to the present. The presentation of social change as a mere process of ‘catching up’, achieved by adopting the right institutions is rejected (see Arnason, 2000; Burawoy and Verdery, 1999; Pickles and Smith, 1998).

If we are not critical with modernist approaches we should accept that it is not happening any essential change but just the change of one ideology with another. As we know, the essence of communist ideology inspired by Marxist principles was clear - alteration of base will bring necessarily to the transformation of the super-structure. In this context, will be “born” the new socialist man who would be leaded from a series of new values. Although the essential alteration is that that system collapsed by the willingness of society, hence the principle from which derives willingness to

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6 In fact relying to the Albanian case, we will observe that this is not true. The radical reformative role in Albania is leaded by the political class and this has neutralized the role of all the other social groups.
establish the new system is not transcendental and utopia any more but is imminent and empirical. From another point of view we notice that despite it misses the above mentioned elements, we can notice clearly the physiognomy of a quasi-ideology. As long as the alteration process is read simply as a mechanical process through instalment of adequate institutions and identification of required actors to lead and administer these processes, the society beside its inherited culture will follow blindly “the sound that will indicate the pathway”. In this way of thinking, the new capitalist and democrat human being is supposed that would born and develops as by a magic stick, enough that respects and follows the “commandments” of the new dogma. In the meantime, as following we will observe theoretically and empirically how exactly this political human being, is not that easy to be conceptualized and it is even more difficult to grow up because of his culture.

That’s why some the critical approaches focus on diversity, particularity, and continuity with the past in order to explain and understand (diversity in) contemporary social change in Eastern Europe. The communist world is not then regarded merely as an aberration (as in totalitarianism) leaving behind only structures that need to be dismantled as soon as possible. Rather, its modern features are (often implicitly) acknowledged.

That’s why I reflect in the title of this thesis the idea of multiple modernities; or differently expressed countries can be modern in different ways, and thus the equivalence between Westernization and modernization is challenged. Rightly, over these principles is based the analysis of Albanian modernity, focusing more on the state-society relationship for the above mentioned reasons.

In the elaboration of this relationship, at the theoretical level we will be focused in some researchers of social and political sciences that expand their thoughts and thinking in three theoretical tracks which explain the same phenomena from different point of views, whose elements I do consider complementary and not mutually exclusive. Even though we will evaluate even other different theories, because as we can admit since now, similarly to what Kennedy accepted, the problem is not only the communist past, but the global present (Kennedy, 2002).
1.2. The theoretical view in analysing state – society relation

As we know, there are many scholars from different perspectives of social sciences that tried to explain the social change in post-communist countries and specifically phenomena related to state – society relations. Trying to categorize these theories we can identify three main lines:

a) Cultural, path –dependency approach (Sztompka 1998, 2000; Jeffrey C. Alexander 1994; 2006; Kennedy, 2002; Howard, 2003; Inglehart, 2006; Rose & Shin, 2001);

b) Institutional perspective, up – down development (Madsen, 1987; Venelin I. Ganev 2001; Brehm & Rahn, 1997; Stolle, 1998; Rothstein & Stolle, 2003; Rothstein, 2004; Elster, Offe, and Preuss, 1998).


Relying on the cultural perspective the values and habits of individuals can be seen as ‘path-dependent’ and resistant to change. From the point of view of cultural theories the disenchantment of citizens from politics, and their civic passivity creating a dysfunctional state – society relation, is a legacy of the communist regime. Sztompka call it cultural – civilizational approach, claiming that it is necessary to not underestimate the importance of cultural rules, values, norms, dominant mentalities, forms of discourse, pervasive symbols, rituals, etc. On the contrary we shall neither be able to comprehend and maybe to overcome the obstacles that inhibit the processes running at the more tangible, institutional, or organizational level (Sztompka 1993, 89). Is the same vein, though in a different aspect, for David Stark and Laszlo Bruszt, underlining the importance of institutional patterns of the past for the emerging forms of the present (Stark and Bruszt 1998). In other words, cultural theories in the logic of path dependency claim that current and future developments can only be fully understood if the past is reflected upon, so that the constraints and confinements as well as the possibilities for current social, political and economic changes become clear. The path – dependency reject the modernist assumption of a capitalism-by-design that can be imposed from above, creating institutions that will have similar outcomes everywhere.
Regarding this approach the attitudes of people, their beliefs and the way they choose to behave are seen largely as a result of early-life socialization. Both individual and collective experiences, such as facing a repressive regime, matter. From this perspective it is believed that past legacy have damaged interpersonal trust, discouraged any out-systemic initiatives and created a very specific type of political culture characterized by political apathy, scepticism and distrust towards authorities. In this vein, many scholars see also political alienation in post-communist countries as a phenomenon caused by lack of trust in political authorities, and the weakness of civil society as part of the communist heritage (Howard, 2003, Jowitt, 1992; Sztompka, 1998; Inglehart, 2006). The communist regime is considered responsible for creating a “Soviet mentality”, and a very specific typology of political culture, one which is characterized by political apathy, low self-efficacy, a passive acceptance of government decisions, and disengagement from the political realm, an inability to make proper use of new opportunities, scepticism, and distrust of authorities.

However, if we take for granted as an imperative the core argument of the path dependency approach - that early-life socialization and the culture in which an individual has been brought up, determine to a notable degree his/her political attitudes - there is not much we can discuss about this issue. But also within this approach, other scholars suggest more some interpretative key of social and political changes in post – communist reality than a deterministic view. Therefore, I try to benefit various interpretative keys from these theoretical perspectives without considering deterministic none of them but either complementary. However, in the following analysis of political alienation, civil society, trust and participation we will see that are inevitable some estimates about these theoretical lenses, in order to evaluate which of them helps more to understand these phenomena of transition. For instance, there are scholars like Kennedy that within a cultural view, believe that we must discuss more on a sort of a transition culture than about shadows of the past (Kennedy 2002).

Beyond other critics and different views within this perspective, the weakest point of cultural, path – dependency approach is related to the empirical data. To overcome this obstacle some researchers (e.g. Howard, 2003; Makarovic et al., 2007) have used qualitative social research methods (in-depth interviews) to uncover the communist legacy. But, even though this methodological approach certainly may have a lot of benefits, it is not possible to quantify or effectively compare the obtained
results. As consequence, it is also not possible to argue about the weight or significance of the influence of the previous culture in the current attitudes of the society toward the state. I also try to understand the causes of low political participation of Albanian society through a qualitative study, using as instrument in-depth interviews (explained in detail, in chapter 3).

However, besides the difficulties this approach face, the historical observation proposed is necessary because is a correction of the assumption of timeless social mechanisms and a way to bring out ‘the historical specificity of our times’ (Eyal et al., 2003: 17). In this context what I embrace from this theory is the sociological suggestion - not a deterministic view of historicism but historic one. It assumes that social processes are contingent, open ended and driven by human decisions and choices within the context of received tradition. History is made, constructed of available historical resources and does not follow any predetermined path (Sztompka 1998).

Other theories that stand in the vein of Cultural Approach although not in the same line with path-dependency perspective are social capital theories. An important difference between them is related to the assumptions that political attitudes and the predisposition of citizens to participate are something that can be influenced relatively easily (social capital), or it will take a generation (path dependency) (as suggested by, for example, Eric Uslaner, 2003, Marc Morje Howard, 2003, and Ronald Inglehart, 1999) to achieve a significant change. There is a lot of debate within this theories but the point of convergence in explaining state – society relation is that civic incompetence and passivity are a result of inadequate transmission of democratic norms, skills and values trough family, school, workplace and voluntary associations. The social capital theories assume that by interacting with each other, people learn to trust their fellow citizens, reciprocate, acquire self-confidence, belief in the responsiveness of the political system, and all kinds of civic values. These values are then projected onto institutions and result in better informed, more engaged, efficacious, politically active and democratically responsible individuals. The social capital approach is in its essence a sociological approach, and as such it analyze the concept civil society and state-society relations in a broader context - with regard to norms, values, attitudes and relations currently persisting in a society.

It is an important perspective to analyze trust and civil society, because lack of social trust is believed to be hugely responsible for the low citizen involvement in
political life, and voluntary groups and associations. This is essentially a bottom-up approach and the role of the public institutions in facilitating social trust and participation is seen as limited.

The concept of “social capital” is mostly related to social networks and relations. However, social capital theory has different approaches that are often contradicting (for wider discussions on social capital see the chapter 2 and chapter 3). These differences are mainly caused by how one specific approach considers the social capital - as an individual or public good (see Portes, 2000).

For instance, Pierre Bourdieu defines social capital as:

*The volume of the social capital possessed by a given agent depends on the size of the network of connections he can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected (Bourdieu, 1986, 51).*

While, according to the holistic perspective, social capital is a collective good, an asset of social structures and is the typology of social relations that help or not to facilitate social action and to achieve objectives that someone have (Coleman, 1994). The nucleus of social capital can be found in informal values and norms, relations and attitudes which facilitate social interaction and oriented the society to better economic, political and social performance. (Putnam et al., 1993; Coleman, 1994; Fukuyama, 2001; Grootaert, & Braithwaite, (1998).

From a different point of view (in line with Bourdieu's arguments), James De Filippis (2001) argues that it is wrong to generalize and analyze social capital at the national or community level at all, because does not exist such thing as social capital of a nation or community, a community cannot possess anything. There are only different social groups in the society with different attitudes and values and benefits derived from them might be economic, social, informational, etc depending on their nature. Just one of those networks is composed the inhabitants of a country.

Besides the theoretical debate, social capital theory in general, became an important approach in analyzing trust and civil society in post communist countries. It is also an important key to read the interaction between social actors during communist regimes and its extensions in post-communism. Jowitt for instance, claims that during communism “Most communist citizens developed a cautious relationship to public and formal activities. Private relations, in contrast, became even more
vibrant and meaningful, since people could only speak openly in front of others they knew and trusted, and also because connections took on an important role in the shortage economy, where people had to rely on their family, friends, and acquaintances in order to get things done, rather than going through official channels” (Jowitt, 1992, 36).

Furthermore the fall of communism was accompanied by many political and economical problems, creating chaos that stimulates high uncertainty and instability for every social group (Letki & Evans; 2005; Howard, 2003; Rose-Ackerman, 2001). In a climate of uncertainty social trust is lower and as a consequence actors are less predisposed to invest in their exchange relations (Cook et al., 2004), as the returns are not sure. Thus, they help each other less, especially in relation with them who are not part of their affective network. Post-communist legacy of general distrust and relying on strong informal ties, and unwillingness to get engaged in civic public good oriented, activities represented by voluntary organisations, has been frequently identified as one of the main obstacles against consolidating democracy in the region (Putnam, 1993).

The general weakness of civil society (for a larger analysis see chapter 2 ) in post-communist Europe is seen related to both the lack of trust in official institutions, as well as to the strength of informal networks that allow to achieve goals without investing in collective action and shared goods (Howard, 2003, see also Paldam & Svendsen, 2000; Rose, 1999). According to Jowitt, lack of social cohesion led people elites and ordinary citizens alike to think primarily in terms of individual self-interest, rather than about the larger public good (Jowitt 1993 ).

Analyzing the social capital theories is not the goal of this study but this perspective is necessary because it serve to better read phenomena such as lack of confidence and problems in the functioning of civil society as an important obstacle in the engagement of various actors in the so call process of modernization. It brings an important and different point of view, fulfilling the theoretical landscape, because the state – society relation is not explained either as path dependent or as consequence of vertical linkage but as a significant horizontal linkage focusing in three assumptions:

a) Civic attitudes develop in interaction with other people;

b) Trust, efficacy and civic competence developed in associations and groups further reinforce participation and civic activism;
c) Trust developed in small groups is 'projected' to larger groups and institutions. Empirically, I will try to investigate just a few aspects of social capital like generalized trust and associational membership in Albania. This correlation is important to prove whether we can find any significant data to understand the position of civil society in Albania, comparing to other post-communist countries.

The institutionalist perspective promotes the 'top-down' development of political attitudes and behaviour, and its core argument is that institutions have a big role in promoting cooperative values and behaviour among the society. The current performance of institutions, whether they promote growth or not, are effective in enforcing and implementing laws, avoid corruption or not, as well as whether they prove to be responsive and trustworthy, affects the norms and values that will dominate in the society: the attitudes, expectations and perceptions of people regarding other people, themselves and their role as citizens. Thus we have another theory that departs from another premise in time and space.

Scholars representing the institutional view within social capital approach argue that institutions have a very important role in stimulating the creation of social trust, and that institutional trust is reflected down to interpersonal trust, rather than inverse (Brehm & Rahn, 1997; Uslaner, 2002). Political institutions can influence generalized values such as trust and reciprocity, as a consequence the vitality and the level of participation of community networks and civil society is largely a product of the institutional environment (Levi, 1996; Rothstein, 2004, among others). “When people feel that their governments treat them fairly, they will also believe that their fellow citizens are trustworthy” (Uslaner, 2002, 219). From this perspective, governments, institutions and policies seems to have the power to shape the capacity of citizens to form cooperative networks and develop cooperative attitudes (North, 1990; Skocpol, 1999b; Keefer & Knack, 1997). Stolle discovers that people make deduction about their system experiences, amplificate it and distribute to everyone else living under the same system. In more concrete terms this means that those who have experienced the negative effects of the dishonesty of politicians, institutional unfairness and unresponsiveness, transfer those experiences and views to other people. A similar argument is articulated by Rothstein (2004) who identified corruption of the authorities as a main source of social distrust. According to him, in order to live in a society where corruption, bribery and various forms of nepotism are
systematic, citizens must also begin to take part in bribery, corruption and nepotism, even though they may consider it morally wrong (Rothstein, 2004).

But also these claims are criticized - if there is a lot of corruption, people do not make a link between corruption (the domain of elites) and trust in people (Badescu & Neller, 2007). We need to examine it in Albania, but in Romania, for example, according to world value survey, there is no correlation between generalized trust and perception of corruption.

But except the effects discussed above, the institutionalist approach in my opinion becomes an important perspective because the whole process of change in post-communist countries is primarily evaluated as a process of installing the right institutions imported from Western Europe.

In this context some scholars claimed that see - a new consolidated institutional order under which agency is institutionalized and a measure of sustainability (or "consolidation") of these agency-shaping institutions is achieved. (Elster, Offe, Preuss, 1998, pp.1). The most fundamental question that may pose questioning this perspective is whether the structure dominates the agency remains any free space for a free agent to participate actively in the process of modernization of the country. As I argue in the chapter 4 on top – down development, the institutionalist view is internalized from local actors interpreting the transformation of Albania merely as a process of formal adaptation. Perpetuation of this approach has really overestimated the role of the formal institutions and its effects, provoking the creation of a vicious circle in discourse and act.
CHAPTER II: Civil society in Post-Communist countries

*He who is unable to live in society, or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a God*

ARISTOTLE, *Politics*

2.1. The concept of civil society

One among the first, speaking about the civil society like an important link in the functioning of the modern state and democracy was for sure Alexis de Tocqueville in his notable book, "Democracy in America". He talks about the 'habits of the heart' treating others as fellow citizens rather than strangers, competitors or enemies, and he also notes the importance of trust in creating this societal substratum. In line with traditional political tradition, he thought that association, the coming together of people for a common purpose, would bind Americans to an idea of nation larger than selfish desires. He believed that people learn democratic values and civic virtues of moderation, cooperation, trust and reciprocity at the grassroots level, by participating in formal and informal associations (Tocqueville, 2004). Precisely starting first from this premise for me it’s very important to focus in an analysis of civil society in Albania and beyond, like one of the most important links that connects society with the state and gives the individual an opportunity to participate publicly just like an important agent of modernization and democratization. But before we try to bring an empiric analysis on civil society in Albania, it’s important to sail in some of the approaches and multiple definitions of the concept itself. Though through a modest attempt because the difficulty presented in finding any clear definition is apparent firstly due to the existence of diverse interpretations, and secondly because it is difficult to be saved from an eclectic approach, this as a result of the theory stretch that this elaboration of the concept bears in time and space (though this seems an analysis that risks to remain superficial, since the focus of this study is not the civil society).
First of all the concept is impossible to be elaborated outside of the historical context, because in different time periods it gets re-conceptualized from thinkers or different researchers in relation with other developing areas of social life. In a historical view, the idea that there is something in the relations of people which is influencing the overall performance of a state is articulated since the ancient Greece. In a normative affirmation the importance of civic virtues was already stressed by the classical Greek philosophers, Plato and Aristotle. They talked about the importance of the civic virtues (such as wisdom and honor) and people dedicating themselves to the prosperous functioning of the political community, to the polis. The relationships between the state and its citizens were later extensively analyzed by political philosophers of Enlightenment, where there is emphasized the idea of a rational society and self-determination that needs to be released by the traditional authority. The civil society like a notion with a better understanding starts to become part of the civil dictionary, precisely at the end of the 17th century.

Many theories of democracy from Locke through Hegel and Tocqueville, claim that in complex societies, relations between individuals and the state are mediated through a sphere of civic activity and values. As we know, two important historical moments as the French revolution and the industrial revolution (that caused major changes in the organization of production agriculture and manufacturing) created conditions for the spread of industrial capitalism and the emergence of modern society. These fundamental changes sparked another stream of studies that took a broader view on human values, attitudes and relations, analyzing their importance and not just the functioning of democracy, but also the economic performance of the country and modern development in general. According to Alexander in the first period of its modern understanding, civil society was endowed with a distinctively moral and ethical force. In this first period of capitalism, according to Alexander, develops that what he names “civil society I”, according to which market society was valued in positive moral and ethical tones.

This point of view of thinkers of that time changes dramatically in the period of industrial capitalism development. In this period, capitalism is judged in pejorative terms as an instrumental and dehumanizing system, like an antisocial force. In these conditions, many thinkers culminating with the economical and sociological theory of Marx, value as necessary and inevitable the creation of an antagonist relation between
an egoist and devilish market and society in the moral and collective sense (Alexander, 2006, 25). In these circumstances according to Alexander (Alexander, 2006, 26) conditions are created for development of a different concept of civil society, “civil society II”, which is seen simply as an instrument of capitalism market.

In an exceptional way, according to Marx, the civil society is assessed as a superstructure that serves simply as a political and legal arena, in which the domination of the capitalist class is camouflaged. According to him, the society is entirely alienated from the market and it is just an instrument of the economic system, consequently there can’t be an independent civil society but only the existence of domination. In fact, according to Marx, in conditions of the industrial capitalism there cannot exist the society solidarism, because society in the collective and moral sense had dissolved into a morass of particularistic interests. In this social and intellectual context, according to Alexander, it is not by chance that in the middle of the 19th century, civil society as an important concept in social theory shortly disappeared. "If it was no more than an epiphenomenon of capitalism, than it was no longer necessary, either intellectually or socially" (Alexander 2006, ibid).

According to Alexander, for many thinkers of the 20th century the elimination of public life is an axiom since capitalism and mass societies were considered as a social environment in which “private” dominates. Even for Max Weber, though from a cultural point of view in contradiction with the economical determinism of Marx, the rationalizing disposition of modern society makes inevitable it's "self-confinement" inside the iron cage. In this sense, he is added to the pessimistic voices of the thinkers of that time, by reasserting the disability of creation of society groupings which could make the social order more plural, out of a bureaucratic atmosphere that categorizes western capitalist societies. But in the last decades, as a result of social and political developments, and especially as a consequence of communist regime overthrow, the debate on civil society is revived. The return of academic interest on this concept, is put on track once again like a dimension revived, that of which Alexander calls civil society I, even though he doesn't agree with this model. (Alexander 2006, 28-29). It's clear that the historical analysis of Alexander and the historical categorization of civil society is one among different historical interpretations. As we mentioned above, there are many kinds of interpretations on civil society from different thinkers and researchers. For instance, according to
Outhwaite and Ray, ironically the revival of civil society comes as a result of communist parties’ commitment in Western Europe in the 70es, and the anticommunist movement in Eastern Europe. According to Gramsci, one of the most inspiring thinkers of the communist movements in Western Europe, civil society stands in a cultural and institutional background more than an economical background. Gramsci conceived civil society like a cultural space among the state and the economy, although as a part of hegemony.

In this framework according to him, a cultural and ideological war was needed towards the ruling class, liberating the civil society from hegemony. Creating counter-hegemony of worker's clubs, social and educational organizations, assisted by the activity of "organic intellectuals". Meantime, on the other hand, the major revival of civil society theory in anticommunist movements was popularized by writers such as Bernhard (1996), Fehér and Heller (1986), Geremek (1992), Havel (1988), Konrád (1984), Ost (1990) and Vajda (1988). The meeting point of these theories was the necessity to create a social space where public discourse of free citizens and organizations does not bend to the state nor is an elongation of the market.

In order not to extend any further in the historical circumstances of formulation and reconstruction of the concept (because it is not the occasion) I would focus on the principles in which the concept itself is supported. It’s unclear where the ideal type ends, and where the reality starts in the discussion of many researchers on this concept. Among many contemporary researchers that have in their investigation this study object, Cohen and Arato (Cohen, Arato 1992), bring us a complex and quite significant definition of civil society, conceiving it as: "a sphere of social interaction between economy and state, composed above all of the intimate sphere (especially the family), the sphere of associations (especially voluntary associations), social movements and forms of public communication. Modern civil society is created through forms of self-constitution and self-mobilization. It is institutionalized and generalized through laws, and especially subjective rights, that stabilize social differentiation. While the self-creative and institutionalized dimensions can exist separately, in the long term both independent action and institutionalizations are necessary for the reproduction of civil society" (Cohen, Arato, 1992, IX).
From my point of view this definition is important to be highlighted, because it underlines the importance of continuance and consistence of civil society, by integrating in a balanced manner two elements. On one hand, the spirit that conceives civil society is the willingness of individuals that is materialized in a creative and independent act from the state, but in public function. On the other hand its institutionalization is necessary, like a manner that assures its legitimacy and continuation. Based on these principles the civil society has the possibility to breathe freely and serve as an environment in which all social differences can be accommodated. And even more, as a possibility for these differences enabling their activity to shape a political character. Many different researchers articulate the willingness of individuals as their basic principle in which the structure of C.S. is based

So in a structural dimension, the civil society is made by organizations created by the individuals themselves, in an independent manner. In this context, according to social scientists, the core of civil society is composed by voluntary associations, especially those with idealistic and altruistic goals. Many of them emphasize the network of NGO's or other politically oriented organizations, as crucial democratic agents, the central means of mediation between the individual and the social political system (Putnam, 1993, Putnam, 2000, Siisiainen, 1999). However, the institutions of civil society are very different: these are activist groups, local community organizations, cultural groups, sports clubs, trade unions, religious organizations, environmental groups and other associations. Another interpretation from where important components may deviate in the constituting idea on C.S. comes once again from Alexander (2006, 44) according to whom, civil society is a form of social and cultural organization, rooted simultaneously in a radical individualism and thoroughgoing collectivism. In this optic, we have the opportunity to understand, that another important feature is the combination of the individual and collective (public) sphere, of micro and macro. As a way through which perhaps the not self - sufficient human being - such as it is from nature, according to an Aristotelian significance - is fulfilled and completed when it is united with its similar kind and through the collective spirit that does cultivate C.S. In general terms, according to Alexander, the basic principle in which the civil sphere is founded in general is that societies are not only led by the pursuit of egoist interests of each of its members, but also by
solidarity. Regardless that, the critical issue on this case is precisely to understand how it is structured, which its outlay is, and where the social solidarity is supported in different social environments. Although, on the other hand, solidarity itself is possible because people don't abide only to the present interests but also to the ideals, for which they hope to be eternal (Alexander 2006 p.3). In this sense, solidarity is an important precondition for the functioning of civil society, because in those environments where it has undergone certain erosion, as it happens in countries in transition, its negative effects are apparent. In these countries, the absence of solidarity resulting from an anomy situation has disabled the constituting of a public consciousness of society and every collective form of the civil urban organization.

For Habermas, in an ideal concept of the public sphere, civil society may serve as a space in which the public discourse may be released from systematizing effects of the state and economy. Precisely because in this environment people can discuss matters of mutual concerns as peers, and learn about facts, events, opinions, interests and perspectives of others, in an atmosphere free of coercion or inequalities that would incline individuals to acquiesce or be silent. The core of civil society comprises a "network of associations that institutionalizes problem-solving discourses on questions of general interest inside the framework of organized public spheres" (Habermas, 1996, p.367). In this context another important principle of the functioning of civil society is articulated, by treating it as a possibility to restrain the state and market power. Because, according to Habermas the life-world is colonized by the functional imperatives of the state and economy, characterized by the cost of efficiency and the inappropriate deployment of technology. Therefore as a result, the task of a democratic civil society is one of de-colonizing the life-world (Habermas, 1987). In the same vain stand many more researchers, for instance Janoski, according to whom "Civil society represents a sphere of dynamic and responsive public discourse between the state, the public sphere consisting of voluntary organizations, and the market sphere concerning private firms and unions" (Janoski 1998: 12). Even though according to Seligman, the combination of these concepts, notably in Eastern Europe is problematic and open to various, sometimes conflicting interpretations, because they have different origins (Seligman 1995).

Furthermore in this configuration of civil society concept, it is important to underline another important aspect, which is made evident by many researchers,
amongst them Mennell (1995). According to him civil society is not at all a homogeneous and a single dimensional mass, but rather an environment that guarantees civil plurality. In the modern world, where societies are very complex, due to converting from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft, people belong to groups within groups, their sense of identity is always multi-layered. It means that civil society as a network of institutional and moral links is not monolithic but accommodates a plurality of "groups within groups, their sense of identity... always multi-layered" with many possible "we-images" along with corresponding images of the other (Mennell 1995,10). Whereas Outhwaite and Ray in their analysis of civil society in post-communism, conceive civil society as an instrument that constitutes a defense against both excessive state power and atomized individualism, while the rise of authoritarianism and totalitarianism is attributed to its absence or destruction. So beside others, it’s a way to diminish the civil atomism as a joint attribute of modern society, particularly in those countries where public consciousness is quite brittle as can be the Albanian case or of many other countries in transition.

In fact, social life on the 21st century is more complex and even more internally differentiated than in the early modern societies according to Alexander. Therefore we need to restructure the concept, and even a new concept of civil society, Civil Society III (CSIII). "We need a new concept of civil society as a civil sphere, a world of values and institutions that generates the capacity for social criticism and democratic integration at the same time. Such a sphere relies on solidarity, on feelings for others whom we do not know but whom we respect out of principle, not experience, because of our putative commitment to a common secular faith". (Alexander, 2006 p.4). This should be thought as a sphere that can be analytically independent, empirically differentiated, and morally more universalistic Vis-à-vis the state and the market and other social spheres as well (Alexander, 2006, 31). Another important aspect that helps in understanding the civil society is connected to the many sided effects that it bears in relation to modern society and democracy. Beside different profiles of civil society organizations (where are included even those who don't have authentic political intentions) according to many researchers any kind of participation provides opportunities to build networks, learn new skills, gain information and political competence, at the same time building trust and cooperative habits. Putnam claims that a vibrant civil society facilitates and encourages a vibrant
civil society, and the same line of arguments that social involvement increases the propensity of political involvement, is defeated by Morten Olson (1971) and other authors (see Maloney & Rossteutscher, 2007). So it helps in the growth of public consciousness, in creating conditions for more public participation of society. Also, according to Outhwaite and Ray despite different emphases, though many theorists understand civil society as a public realm of voluntary association, essential for the stability of democracy (Outhwaite, Ray, 2005,149). It's thought to have an important impact also in the horizontal and vertical faith as an important link in conceiving the society cohesion. According to Putnam, trust creates reciprocity and voluntary associations. Reciprocity and associations strengthen and produce trust (Putnam 1993, 163-185). The same argumentation may also apply for solidarity - if solidarity is low it may be stimulated and encouraged much more through memberships in organizations.

But on the other hand the engagement in activities with common interests demands that people be empathic among each other, in order so there can be created a sensible collectivity towards the public. Anyhow it doesn't only have an intermediate character but also a constructive one.

According to Linz and Stepan (1996) it is the "arena of policy where self-organization groups, movements and individuals relatively autonomous from the state, attempt to articulate values, create associations and solidarities and advance their interests" (Linz/Stepan 1996: 7). Apart of the political, economic and social aspect, the cultural and symbolic dimension of civil society is highlighted since Gramsci wrote on this. According to him civil society plays an important role in the formation of values, action-orienting norms, meanings and identifications. Judging from this perspective, civil society does not only transmit or inculcate established practices or beliefs; it should also be a site of social contestation in which collective identities, ethical values and alliances are forged (Gramsci, 2006, 71-85). From my point of view, despite the time, circumstances, and the ideological shaft in which this approach is supported, it highlights an important coordinate in the orientation of civil society, particularly in post-communist countries. For the reason that civil society is not presented only as a transmitter of reality through a consensual logic, but the right tone is given to the need to be creative and dialectic with the power even if we stripe it of its ideological context.
2.2. Civil society in Post-communist Europe searching itself; from efforts in the past to the present weakness.

In tracks of development of civil society in Western Europe is articulated also the concept of civil society in Post-communist Europe, although from different researchers are noticed some specific components that model the organization physiognomy of C.S. in these countries. In fact as rarely, developments occurred in communist countries before the collapse of the Berlin wall become also an incentive of returning the debate on civil society in Western Europe. We are dealing in a kind of way with the collapse of the usual scheme of the center-periphery interaction, although as a consequence of casual circumstances. The main impulse was the revolt of intellectuals in Eastern Europe in the 80es, which topped with the so called solidarity movement in Poland and other anticommunist movements in Hungary and in the former Czechoslovakia (Outhwaite, Ray, 2005, 147). The echo of these social movements surpassed the borders of the communist blockade, appealing the attention of the Western Europe researchers, by returning in this manner the importance of the debate on this important social factor. As following, what strengthens even more the importance of the civil society are the developments that unfolded in 1989 which were broadly interpreted as a triumph of civil society, although this does not correlate much for the Albanian case.

Civil society became a central concept through, who many participants in the anticommunist revolutions theorized these diverse moments and offered outlines on the shape of post-communist societies. According to Havel one of the most important dissidents in former Czechoslovakia, a strong civil society is a crucial condition for strong democracy. He offered a vision of a future of "living in truth", in which, against the anonymous impersonal power of industrial civilization,

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7 In Albania, the main social force that gave life to the movement for the overthrow of communist regime was a spontaneous student organization of the University of Tirana. Up until the movement won serious proportions, no one from the organized groups had joined with the protesters. This happened because beside the control from the state over syndicates and all other organizations, Albania had never before known any decisive movements from the intellectuals as it happened in some other communist countries.
civil society reaffirmed the validity of nature and values of democracy, rights and spirituality (Havel, 1994).

There can be observed so much enthusiasm among researchers, such as Cohen and Arato (1992) reasoned that in the new sphere in the Post-communist Europe could be cultivate a new model of civil society that may review its dimension of what's found in the west. Empowering civil society was a central concern for the project of democracy, just as the question on how to best think about such empowerment was important to social and political theory. It was valued in optimistic terms as an important agent of the transformation of these countries towards modernity and democracy. For example, Habermas in one of his analysis on this concept argued that the revolutions of 1989 gave Europe a second chance to create a communicative civil society (Habermas 1994: 72). On the other hand Sztompka (1993: 73) highlighted that civil society was the key to closing the gap between public and private realms. It involved pluralism of voluntary associations, interest groups, political organizations, local communities, markets and representative democracy as institutional arrangements, linking the public and personal choices of active and informed citizens. So to say, the challenge for these societies was in achieving to structure a strong civil society inside them, like a passage bridge towards a more active society which would be the guaranty of the functioning of the new political-economic system. The central idea of many theories that have treated the concept of civil society in post-communist countries was to find neither the way of creating a social space for the public discourse of citizens, which would not be a market instrument nor an elongation of the state. But the enthusiasm of the first post revolution years was replaced by disappointment. The optimist expectations for a renaissance of citizen commitment are replaced by the identification of citizen demobilization, towards an unimaginable passivity.

Civil society that was thought to serve as a kind of a transformational locomotive was never able to win this proportion, manifesting in this way both the inherited problems of the past and those generated along the transition. Nowadays the majority of researchers (although there are critics among them) conclude that civil society in post-communist states is fairly weak by not fulfilling its role (Howard, 2003; Bernhard and Karakoc, 2007; Jowitt, 1992; Sztompka, 1998; Rose & Shin, 2001; Uslaner, 2003; Rothstein, 2004; Inglehart, 2006). Ever since there was a causal interaction
ascertained between democracy and civil society, in accordance with the principle articulated by many researchers (see, for example, Tocqueville 2004, Almond and Verba 1965, Putnam et al, 1993), that a vibrant civil society helps in the reinforcement and quality of democracy. Its absence in communist countries is treated as an obstacle challenging the functioning of democracy. The display of post-communist countries that is reflected through literature is that of "a democracy without citizens" in which the local political elite has been successful in installing center ordered democratic procedures, but has failed in creating spaces for reviving a participation culture (Ekiert and Foa, 2012, 2).

In this sense, among others a dysfunctional relationship between the citizens and the state is created, a dichotomy situation by constructing a new state that is foreign to the common individual, (as something that doesn't feel his/her own, so long that he/she hasn't participated in its construction) in which it is impossible for the citizen to get accustomed to. In other terms, this situation for me implicates the feeling of being an immigrant (newly arrived) in your own country. In fact, the difficulty in the organization of an active civil society that would serve as an alternative public space in citizen participation has been early warned by Dahrendorf on his argumentation on the citizen's hour which moves much slower than that of a politician and even that of the economy. He argued how hard it is to build a functional system, and how hard it is for these spheres of social life to function in absence of a congruent citizen culture. According to Dahrendorf "The third condition of the road to freedom is to provide the social foundations which transform the constitution and the economy from fair-weather into all-weather institutions... and sixty years are barely enough to lay these foundations.... Civil society is the key.... The hour of the lawyer and the hour of the politician mean little without the hour of the citizen" (Dahrendorf 1990: 92-3).

Expressed in a summarized way, the inconsistency of idealist expectations with the reality created since the first years after the collapse of the regime, is expressed fairly clearly with the approval of Mistzal. According to her "Instead of being a period of learning how to cooperate and build consensus, the first several post-communist years have reinforced the culture of distrust, the habit of informational dealings and the strengthening of particularistic visions and elements" (Misztal 2000: 218).

But which are the weakness indicators of civil society and what are the reasons for its malfunctioning?
The indicators of failure are diverse and verified through different empirical studies, although not all researchers read the same sad panorama. The indicators that reflect the existence of a weak civil society are primarily: low participation of citizens in voluntary organizations, the type of organization activities (private or public), their impact on the citizens’ engagement, low participation of individuals even in public activities of an unconventional nature.

The reasoning and approaches in explaining this phenomenon are among the most diverse referring to different researchers. Most of them put the accent on the communist heritage as a primary obstacle in the development of a strong civil society as a consequence of cultivation of a civil culture of passivity and indifference. According to Outhwaite and Ray (2005), to understand post-communist civil society, we need to acknowledge that the particular form it assumes, reflects the way the communist system worked (Outhwaite-Ray, 2005,162). Primarily according to this perspective, the citizens of these countries must change their thinking, values and attitudes to become successful. For the peripheral societies of eastern and central Europe, the civilization competence so called by Sztompka, has never had the chance to evolve. "The decades of real socialism not only blocked the appearance of civilizational competence, but in many ways helped to shape contrary cultural syndrome-civilizational incompetence" (Sztompka 1993, p.89). Misztal (2000) stands in the same line: according to him the totalitarian system left a "deficit of civility and degeneration of intimacy" (Misztal 2000: 207) in which the state systematically invaded and undermined relations of trust, privacy, and intimacy. As a consequence of the instruments used by the dictatorial state apparatus, people had completely lost trust in one-another and one of its destructive elements that is manifested after the collapse of the regime was the erosion of civil solidarity. The situation of fear created in many communist countries including Albania as a result of the totalitarian system, didn't spare anyone, continuously adding to the rows those who served the system through moral self-denial and the actions based in the instrumentalization of reason.

The intervention of state agencies (especially of secret security of state) in everyday

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1 According to Ekiert and Foa there is a research needed with complexity and objective in the status comparison of civil society in the post-communist countries. The number of indicators used has been small, resulting in this manner in not very deepened and steady results on associational life. As a consequence these two researchers suggest the use of a broadened set of indicators (Ekiert/Foa 2003,3).
life of the individual, through reporting of the other for any declarations or acts (although the majority of them were based in false testimonies) that could be considered as penalties, had taken proportions that no one could be trusted\(^9\). In this manner, the culpability had won collective proportions reinforcing continuously a model of functioning that resembled a criminal network which could be overcome only by paying a heavy price. The systematic dehumanization and the mechanical-like way of everyday life eliminated every possibility of building a common society layer, increasingly atomizing the society and producing a completely different effect from what was claimed by communism. The awakening from such a nightmare that happened as a result of the fall of the regime would need to be accompanied with a strong idealist concussion that would provoke a cultural catharsis of these societies (in fact from my point of view this never happened). It was the moment that the members of these societies pretended to regain the freedom as a possibility to win back their creative skill. In this manner the conditions would be created for a building agent of the world that surrounds him (like a homo faber) and not the man prefabricated by the factories of bureaucracy, regardless of how these systems change in their structure. What is offered in fact to the individual of these countries (even what he is able to ask for) is still a mechanical process and not a creational process. But as Dahrendorf says, the civil culture needs time to change. Reconstruction of public self-consciousness, regeneration of the social structure, the remodelling of connecting joints of a common culture as well as the moral rehabilitation of society are hardly realized in a society that did not function as such for long. According to Havel, the destruction of civil relations in communism represented something more pernicious, the triumph of impersonal rationality, in which communism was a complex mirror of all modern civilization. One among the most important reasons for the people implication in the crimes of the system was a way to confirm publicly their trust and devotion towards the ideology of the party. They were not doing anything more than fulfilling their duties, something that was noted earlier by Weber on his discourse on bureaucracy of the modern society. Someone for his survival and some other one in order to live in wellbeing were transformed in gears of the regime, feeding daily "with meat the Leviatan" and continuously eroding the solidarity of society. Naturally its

\(^9\) In Albania after the 90es many public testimonies can be found of individuals prosecuted along the regime, who were not only reported by their friends but even had served as witnesses against them in court.
consequences appear clearly in the post-communist period. But beyond the theoretic debate (see for example the approach of Arendt on totalitarianisms or that of Bauman on concentration camps) if they are elongations of modernity as a consequence of society rationalism or a pathologic accumulation, in general the twentieth century totalitarianisms have left deep footprints in the culture of societies touched by this phenomenon.

The systematic intervention of the state in the sphere of private life of the individual brought one of the hardest consequences to be dismantled - the citizen became hostile towards the state and alienated him from public sphere. As we know, nothing and no one could have a life beyond the borders specified from the state-party. The censure apparatus that was built by the communist state interfered even in the restructuring of collective memory, because a turf rebuilt from the beginning was naturally needed for the embedment of new ideas. The specialized organs had censored and deformed everything, including the lived history from first hand individuals because in a manner, the society was not allowed to have a different memory beyond the one that was imposed by the regime. In this prism, according to Rupnik, the transmission of collective memories of events and cultural practices that would normally take place through civil society was interrupted by the imposition of official histories consistent with Marxism- Leninism (Rupnik, 1999, 161). In Albania for example the official history that was manipulated entirely, not only had deformed events and characters according to the nomenclature directives, but insisted through a demagogic pedagogy, that World War II was a war of the people for liberation - a class war more than a war led by nationalist ideals. In this manner, so to say, these societies experienced a kind of collective amnesia that made even harder the social integration and reinforcement of corresponding community through weakening of the joint identity. Despite the propaganda that was usually proclaimed, the purpose of these regimes as any dictatorial order, was to further isolate the individual, to keep him separate from "people resembling him", in manner that it could be impossible for a public consciousness to be created which sooner or later could mean a collective action. Here I don't mean for any society which in different conditions would act as an individual homogeneous mass that moves in a uniform manner but for a plural society where different groups are able to participate in the public, creating the public internally. Based on Arendt we should understand the development of totalitarianism in light of accumulation of pathologies that had undermined the conditions of possibility for a
viable public life that could unite citizens, while simultaneously preserving their liberty and uniqueness, thus the condition that she calls "plurality". The heavier the centralization of power is the less plural the society is, although in reality this "social experiment" produced continuously its contrary-effects. Because on the other hand, the more the state's violence and pressure grew, the more the individual dispelled from uniformity that the system imposed, the more the private sphere contracted, the more the state would swell. The cause of this relation was the absence of real communication between these two spheres, both were deceived reciprocally trying mostly to exploit one-another. Although that which precipitated in the end of this dialectic relation was the degeneration of the public sphere. The individual found ways to survive as he always did, but in a hidden way, private, in collaboration with others but still maintaining a safeguard from "the others". In this way he simply manifested and continuously reinforced a “Hobbesian” self, uncovering in an involuntary manner an existence that was supported on primordial egoism. The possibility didn't exist and gradually also the willpower dimmed for finding common solutions to problems, to articulate a collective knowledge that emanated from bottom-up. Even if resistance signs are observed, resistance appears more in configurations of a quiet individual reaction or in interaction with a network of trustworthy people, but never achieving to be articulated as a communitarian will. For example, although in Albania the practicing of religion was prohibited by law (as a consequence of a very mechanical interpretation of the Marxist principles from local nomenclature) many individuals found different ways to perform their religious rituals, although modified depending on the circumstances. But this never brought a united movement of the religion practitioners for resistance against the state in returning the freedom of religion, or at least so they could create informal networks as a community form of quiet reaction. Or another example could be that of the censure in information, by stopping the citizens’ action in alternative media resources beyond those who were controlled and guided by the state structures. But a fragment of the citizens found a solution even to this problem by making up situational tools (antennas and boosters produced in a handicraft way) to get access to foreign media.

10 Although from different Albanian researchers it’s discussable, on how much fanatic the Albanian practitioners were even before the collapse of the regime (see Fuga, Sulstarova). In this sense this may not be the most suitable example because it was hard for religion to constitute a strong motive for any certain community that could create any gathering, even any informal one.
channels (even western television or radio channels) depending on the geographic area where they were situated.\(^1\)

But even in this case, without ever reaching to articulate a united voice to at least demand the creation of a broadened scale of program that in any case didn't damage "the moral health" of the new socialist man. Thus said in a summarized way, the regime didn't allow for a long time any form of voluntary individual collaboration in articulation of common interests, beyond the doctrine imposed from the nomenclature through the diverse lawful and unlawful instruments.

But what is worse, from my point of view the common routine of this situation led straight towards the cultural anchoring of these societies for the impossibility to act collectively, a culture that continues to dominate even in the post-communist period. This happened after all because people got used to living a bipolar existence, different was the public role (the stage) and different was that which happened behind the stage. The more this ambivalent situation of the individual reinforced, the more his political potential was ruined, the more the individual was accommodated to the private sphere. The maximum of the citizen’s interaction beyond the institutional frames was in the form of informal networks which didn't have any joint political intentions but were channelled as a reciprocal aid for resolving any private problems. According to Outhwaite and Ray the deficiencies in the central allocation of resources were partially filled through informal networks, and by symbiotic exchanges between the informal sector and the state, based on patrimonial protection through mutual security and political corruption (Outhwaite/Ray, 2005, 162). This informal network became a second reality for the society, producing as a result a second society inside the same system that was anyhow more real and genuine than that which appeared in public. The first society was the one that was advertised, even glorified in public (through a system of propaganda curated in details, and a citizen pedagogy that lied in every level and age groups of society), the one of the sacrifice, of the distinguished

\(^1\) Among many people that I've asked, many of them have confessed on how they used to listen to foreign music secretly, or watched in foreign televisions any programs that were prohibited inside the state. For instance, my grandparents knew many of the Italian singers of the seventies because in secrecy they used to follow the “San Remo” festival which they considered a very important event in their life. Watching this festival took the proportions of an event because their relatives would gather (primarily the most trusted) to follow this musical show, although with a low volume.
labourers, of the felicitous cooperativist, of the work hero and that of whom fought with heart and soul for the fatherland and the construction of socialism. While the second society was that which took part in the informal networks of trade, of reciprocal favours, of bribery in nature, this was a society that began to sense and value the state as a foreign entity, although it is controversial that the state itself might have tolerated activities of this nature as release valves for society tensions. In Albania this happened particularly along the difficult financial period of the country, after the seventies and particularly after the development phase of an extreme nationalization and disengagement of diplomatic relations even with the communist-block countries.

According to Hankiss (1991) these two social categories that inhabit inside the same society, which he labels with the terms "official" and "second" societies, do not refer to two groups of people, but to two dimensions of social existence governed by different organizational principles. These were, nonetheless, dependent one upon the other, in that the second society provided a degree of flexibility not permitted by the rigidity of the planning mechanisms (Hankiss, 1991, 310). In state socialism the artificial and stereotyped discourse of the public sphere, combined with the rule of secretive and clientelistic Party, left private networks, horizontal links, and face-to-face trust relations as crucial avenues for resource distribution. These internal changes of communist societies, although motivated by individual interests, conceived the preconditions of formation of the civil society and anti-communist movements, at least in countries such as Poland and Hungary. This is at least how Szalai (1989) would be expressed, according to whom the concept of civil society that is born and developed in the communist Europe is articulated as a private sphere that is derived from informal networks and the so called second society. The civil society of the anti-communist movements was located in the "de-bureaucratized social spaces" (Ray 1996: 125-8) that emerged parallel to the formal, state sector. But anyhow, these circumstances do not constitute absolute preconditions for the birth of civil society in the Eastern and Central Europe, because in Albania there wasn't any movement similar to that of Poland, although it can be ascertained the creation of similar informal networks. The Albanian society didn't know any dissident movements, as a consequence it missed this foundation stone in the formation of an active civil society, may be as a result of living under the hegemony of one of the harshest dictatorships in
Eastern Europe, as well as natural elongation of political culture of this society, the roots of which must be searched deeper in the history of pre-communist regime.

A synthetic analysis of civil societies in the socialist block comes from Kennedy, according to whom the models of organization of civil society, and of intellectuals’ capability to represent them, varied across societies. Poland was, across the board, the most "developed" in its expression of civil society; Hungary was not so developed on the broad social movement side, and certainly not so much in the labour movement, but its second economy and intellectual opposition were among the most developed. East Germany had an important network of opposition figures organized around the churches. Czechoslovakia, especially the Czech part, had its prominent dissidents, but little else. Bulgaria had little in any regard, and Romania and Albania less, until 1990 (Kennedy, 2002, 55).

Although, even in central and Eastern Europe countries, where anti-communist movements emerged as a result of the civil society development, several researchers express a concern about the degeneration of the spirit inherited by such movements in the very first days of the post-revolution period.

This partial historical analysis of some of the social and political factors that we may consider significant in terms of having determined the trajectory of the civil society development in the post-Communist Europe shows that two logical concerns remain still unanswered. The question that naturally arises is how we can explain the destruction of the entire spirit of volunteerism and collective action of our society after the anti-Communist revolution, given the dense associational structure inherited by the old regime. The regime saw as quite important the organization of people in different groups (although controlled) as a bridge between the nomenclature and the people. All citizens were forced or encouraged to join party-state imposed mass organizations (once dubbed ‘transmission belts’), spanning the entire spectrum of activities from leisure, to professional sphere, to neighborhood life, to high politics. The extraordinary organizational density and forced mass participation was one of the defining characteristics of totalitarian and post-totalitarian regimes in comparison to authoritarian regimes (Kubik 2000: 184). In all communist countries there was a

\[12\] It is not the purpose of this article to structure an exhaustive historical analysis, but simple to give an overview of some of the elements that we consider important for the impact they have had in the journey of the Albanian civil society in the post-Communist Europe, being aware of many other important aspects that may not be mentioned here.
massive state controlled sector comprised of mass organizations, including youth organizations, trade unions, farmer unions, professional associations, recreation and leisure organizations, sports clubs, women’s organizations, veteran’s and retirees’ unions. This sector was generally similar in all the countries of the region, although in terms of formal or informal practices and level of political control, there were considerable differences even among the different countries of the Communist bloc (Ekiert, Foa, 2012, 2-6). However, despite the various dimensions and profiles of these organizations at various levels and in all functional domains, without autonomy and a legally defined public space and enforceable rights and liberties, one may say that European communist countries had what can be described as incomplete civil societies (Ekiert and Kubik 1999; Kubik 2000). East European countries had a discrete ( politicized, bureaucratized, centralized, and comprehensive) model of associational life and interest “representation”. The presence of this type of social organizations was a defining element of totalitarianism and one of the most fundamental institutional differences between it and other political regimes. On the precise basis of such experience, however, the post-revolution society saw these organizations as rudiments of the old system. Being that every memory of the regime in the first stage of the post-Communist transition was like a nightmare of which the society was trying to liberate itself, even those positive experiences, as positive as they could be, which could be adopted to the new system, were perceived the same way. Everything was seen as an output of the regime, and was therefore destined to be eliminated during the process of a radical social change. In my view, another important reason that led to the elimination of traditions that we can consider positive and useful even in light of the new political and economic system, was the dissolution of every community that was created within that social structure. This is at least what happened in Albania, i.e. communities living in the areas surrounding the enterprises for which they worked, ended up being dissolved along with the physical dissolution of those enterprises. Consequently, one of the first social groups suffering a deep metamorphosis was exactly the one considered to be the core of the old system, i.e. the proletariat. Naturally, this transformation process down to dissolution included all the social groups, which were created, based on individual structural, cultural, and geographic positions from the cooperativists to the intellectuals. Together with these groups, individual identity was also crushed, as was the culture they had cultivated for a long time, losing thus even every positive experience gained during the regime
years. In fact, things could be in no way different, as the fall of the ideology followed by a transformation of the principles of political economy, law, governing philosophy, and moral norms led to a total transformation of the production system and social structure. Although there were trade unions, they could no longer exist, because there were no more large factories and enterprises in the first place. The rural life changed entirely following the dissolution of cooperatives and re-distribution of land. The intellectual communities were destroyed because of the change of their social function. Youth organizations were entirely ideologized, as, among others, they served as a source of pedagogy for the young people, and they fell along with the regime. The society mobility on the other hand through emigration to Western countries, and internal migration, affected all the social groups, leading to their extreme re-composition. In a few words, it is understandable that in structural terms, the fall of the system was eschatological, as it affected every level and every social player. Hausner and Nielsen (1991) wrote of the “protracted death agony” of state socialism leading to a systemic vacuum, in which the old regime disintegrated in such a way that new social forces failed to emerge.

It is however easy to understand the relationship between the post-Communist society and the formal organizations created and commanded by the Socialist state apparatus, but as it was noted above, the loss of the tradition established by the revolutionary segments of the civil society remains still enigmatic. As we know, alongside the transformation of state controlled organizations, independent or oppositional civil society networks emerged in many East European countries since the mid-1970s. Reflecting the decline of political repressions, growing intellectual and cultural dissent, the de-privatization of religion, and increasing opening to the West, autonomous social initiatives, human rights organizations, cultural, environmental, and religious movements were gaining ground in communist societies (Ekiert 1991, Tokes 1979, Havel 1988, Skilling 1988, Judt 1988, Sielawa-Kolbowska 2002). These independent social and political initiatives were often described as the formation of rudimentary forms of autonomous civil society (Arato 1981, Keane 1988). The diminishing of such experience does not only make it more difficult to solve the ‘equation’, but it also shows that the past cannot be the only explanation of the post-communist situation. The causes that were or were not presented above are not enough to explain the situation of the civil society today, and we have to identify the
numerous factors that affected and continue to affect the transition in order to better understand the situation. Many researchers emphasize what was already noted at the very beginning of this thesis as a crucial argument - the way the process of democratization and modernization of these countries was channeled after the year 1989. The uni-linear vision of change limited many of the local important players, which could lead to a more gradual and endogenous social transformation process. The elite-driven strategies of democratic reform and economic liberalization implied the need for demobilization of the public and further marginalized incipient civil societies (Staniszkis 1999, Howard 2003). Hausner and Nielsen consider the social disembedding of market reforms, shock therapy as a “revolution from above” combined with the disappearance of mass-based social movements (Hausner, Nielsen, 1991, 7-20). There is, however, a variety of interpretations of the demobilization (however embryonic) of the civil society, as well as of its overall continuity during the transition. For example, an important argument comes from Michnik (1999), who claims that “after 1989, the ethos of solidarity was replaced by the ethos of competition”. Even if the Soviet-type system did not manage to transform individuals into the Socialist men (I hereby refer to the theoretical, rather than to practical ideological intentions), it did manage to culturally transform them (particularly in Albania) into an anti-capital man. In this view, if we would make a Weberian analysis (I hereby refer to Weber’s argument in his book “Protestant Ethics and the spirit of capitalism”), we may find that these societies had no principle of capital ethics that would help in achieving a gradual transformation towards absorbing the capitalist system. Although the claimed Socialist ethics converted easily into an unconditional acceptance of the capitalist ethics, the social conflict it caused shows that this is not about just a formal problem in the implementation of the system or a consequence of capitalism in itself (in a Marxist approach), but a pure cultural incongruence. Economic freedom was misunderstood by *homo sovieticus* degrading thus into a tough competition, and the latter made the distinction between private and public sphere even more blurry, establishing a conflicting relationship between the two.

In addition, Howard, (2003) as one of the researchers who protects the idea of a weak civil society in the Eastern Europe, identifies the following (this is a synthesis of his analysis) as some of the most important causes:

1) Strong feelings of mistrust of voluntary organizations;
2) Private friendship networks that were crucial to survival in the former system, persisting into post-communism;

3) Disappointment with the new political system

Other researchers see this situation as a product of some negative phenomena that emerged and developed during the transition such as widespread disorder, criminality, and collapse in social welfare. According to Outhwaite and Ray, (2005) where people are preoccupied with economic insecurity, fearful of crime, and distrustful of political institutions, there is insufficient social capital to generate active civic life. It is not by accident that both these researchers and others consider trust as the essential element of the organization and functioning of civil society, as it guarantees the existence of norms of reciprocity and civic engagement. But the development of trust (for a more detailed analysis of trust, see Chapter IV) is dependent on a number of conditions, including a legitimate and legal–rational state, relative (or perceived) absence of corruption in public life, active regulatory bodies, and embeddedness of economic and political institutions. Practically speaking, as long as such elements are missing, high levels of impersonal distrust are likely to be combined with trust based in personal commitments, client networks, and strong particularistic identities (Outhwaite, Ray, ibid). Reduction of social trust of the society in the Eastern Europe is seen by many researchers as one of the main causes that have led to the current situation of the civil society, as it is perceived as kind of virus that keeps eroding the social solidarity. According to the social capital approach in particular, trust is what keeps social capital, and consequently the civil society, together as according to Putnam civil society is the result or expression of social capital of the community, and he speaks about them almost as if they were synonymous (Putnam, 2002, 9-10).

Continuing as following with the reflection of this general map (a detailed argumentation can be found in the analysis of the case of Albania) examining the situation of CS in Eastern Europe I would stop and highlight the argumentation of Bernhard (1996) who highlights four factors responsible for the weaknesses of the civil society:

a) demobilization resulting from the manner in which agreed transitions privilege elite negotiations and cooperation at the expense of popular forces, collective action and grassroots organizations;
b) the ‘decapitation’ of the civic movements organizational leadership through its migration to the new state bureaucracies, political parties and democratic institutions;  
c) the legacy of totalitarian rule undermining social trust and volunteerism;  
d) and the demobilizing social consequences of the economic recession and structural adjustment.

Likewise, what completes the picture of diverse prospects in the analysis of CS is the argumentation of Outhwaite and Ray, in identifying four main reasons: a) New cleavages and inequalities; b) residual effects of communism c) shock of marketization d) new privatization and consumerism.

Based on various and general analyses on the civil society’s failure in post-communist countries, it is clear that reasons vary from the communist heritage to consequences of new phenomena that got born during transition. Which one of them weights more, for me is not important because among other reasons it is difficult to distinguish where the communist heritage does end and where the post-communist reality does start. In addition, we should understand that CS disfunctioning is consequence of the culture of that society in general, and a structural problem of the manner of internal functioning of organizations that compose civil society.

2.3. Civil Society in Albania, a missing agent of the social - political change. Faked in the past and failed in the present.

Let’s analyze the Albanian case to understand better some specific aspects of the organization of civil society in Eastern Europe. In any case, it should be clear from the beginning that this case study does not constitute any attempt for any nomothetic or inductive reasoning.

This case is treated as an independent case, although obviously many of its arguments and findings are valid as referral points that derive from many other different studies on this phenomenon, because anyhow in many aspects, the past of Albania is similar to those of many countries of the ex-communist bloc. This does no-how mean that the analysis starts from a homogenizing logic because, beside the common features,
I’m quite sure that significant features exist which derive from a peripherical development in time and space of the Albanian society under the influence of internal and external factors. As we may claim that the post-communism is not linear, so even the communism wasn’t completely linear beside the homogenizing paradigm upon which this system was constructed. The soviet profile system was the convergence point for all the block countries including Albania, both at ideological level and in the praxis. However, this does not mean that among these countries essential differences did not exist, which were reflected later in their social reorganization during the post-communist period. In this context we should consider the fact that in some aspects the communist past of civil society in Albania is not similar to that of other countries in Eastern and Central Europe. As I have mentioned above, no organized dissident movement occurred in Albania (even it is questionable even if there existed any sporadic or individual case of dissident intellectuals), which could precede the conception of civil society as it happened in most of the other communist countries, as the regime repressed with violence every kind of attempt, even latent ones, to articulate any alternative opinion in relation to the dominant ideology. The collapse of the regime didn’t come from the gradual resistance and opposition of intellectuals and other social groups but was more a sporadic act that followed the fall of the Berlin wall and the popular revolts in many other communist block countries. If we depart from this premise, as for many other reasons, the system created in Albania can be considered as one of the harshest dictatorships, therefore the society that derives from such a socio-political environment is in some dimensions different from others. In this direction, to be more concrete, we can list some peculiarities of the Albanian dictatorship by referring to different scholars; peculiarities which evidence at certain extent its severity level:

Collective punishment of all the social networks judged as opponent to the regime, not based on personal reasons. As a consequence, fear was capillary overspread by influencing the dissolution of social trust.

Legal prohibition of religious practice- Albania is the only Eastern Europe country that formally protected atheism. This constitutes another key factor that influenced the hardening of some social circumstances in which every opportunity for the individual to cultivate one identity and culture different from the one imposed by the regime was faded.
Isolation level in Albania was at the highest degrees in comparison to other communist countries of the bloc, making this country and its society one lost entity that existed only physically in the world map. Everything resembled to a big concentration camp where no one could enter or leave without “gatekeepers” authorization. For the Albanian society free movement towards other countries was impossible (even towards eastern countries) and emigration involved one of the most serious penalties in the Albanian legislation. This situation turned the integration of the Albanian society into the western modern culture more difficult and complicated the work of the international organizations responsible for “exporting” democracy and trade economy to Albania.

Another reason illustrating why the Albanian nomenclature projected one of the harshest dictatorships was the heterogeneous composition of the population, not based on ethnical views, but on provincial-geographical, religious, cultural ones, due to low interaction between different communities within the country before the communist regime. The unifying logic of the society followed by the communist regime was materialized through pressing and flattening violently the specific features, thus creating a boomerang effect - the further erosion of social cohesion. Obviously, such a totalitarian system certainly leaves tracks in the cultural formation of the society by engraving even some distinguished features of this society. Not occasionally the citizens’ passivity culture materialized in the political potential and even in the capacity to act collectively as civil society, is manifested in critical size during the post-communist period in Albania. Certainly, by evaluating the nature of this system installed in Albania is easily understandable how impossible was during the regime for any form of social organization to exist, form which could precede any modern and democratic model of civil society.

Thus in the communist context in Albania, like for other countries of the communist bloc (as we explained above) where freedom of expression and self-organization are missing, and where an un-definite division between private and public exists, it is impossible to speak about civil society with the meaning we try to define nowadays. In the historical aspect, we can identify some more latent forms of civil society organization (if we can consider those as such) during the Albanian renaissance (XIX century). Although these intellectual communities of the Albanian Diasporas didn’t have an authentic structure of C.S., their activity (although sporadic) aimed exactly at
the creation of the public space between the citizen and the power, in a continuous attempt to empower the citizen towards power (Thengjilli 2004, Sulstarova 2010).

Anyhow, returning to our subject, it is obvious that the communist past left the Albanian society unprepared for the development of the civil society. This was appeared clearly in the moment when this opportunity arose after the fall of the system. But, did the Albanian society succeed in regenerating itself and in benefitting from the freedom to get self-organized?

As it is made clear until now, I affiliate to the chorus of different researchers who agree that civil society in Eastern Europe is weak. To protect this positioning we will try to verify through an empirical analysis of the Albanian case, in what aspects this weak condition appears. On the methodological level we will try to combine the quantitative data with the qualitative data by trying, besides presenting the situation through figures, to understand from internal point of view some of the primary reasons that led to the creation of this situation. But before we get started with the presentation of these data, we must determine again what typology of CS we are talking about, in order to be able to understand in what direction it has failed. Here, the term “failure” is not used incidentally but it is judged in a conscious way to have this superior level of negative evaluation on CS in Albania. I affirm this by incorporating the main topic of this thesis that compels me to observe at what level and with what quality CS in Albania manages to be participant into the process of social transformation towards democracy and modernity.

2.3.1 An ideal type – the necessity of an emancipative Civil Society

In this thesis I am inquiring about civil society as a change agent and not about any common concept of civil society, a civil society that through different groups can achieve communication between the private and the public, the citizen and state, the center and periphery, in function of an endogenous development. Precisely in this prism we ascertain that CS in Albania has failed in creating a public space for the citizen where his interests can be reflected and protected and an environment where active citizenship can be educated. Although in a critical optic, Alexander's assertion should be seriously considered, because we must distinguish real civil society from
idealized civil society. According to this perspective, the risk in this argumentation is to be not realistic by wondering off the frame of CS potentials and competences and by loading to it a heavier haul than it can carry. In fact on my point of view by analyzing the concrete case, this risk does not stand for two reasons. First, if we refer to the articulated aspirations, whether through public discourse of important exponents of CS and through what is written in many of the programs of non-for-profit organizations in Albania, that which we were handling above is precisely reflected. And secondly, because countries similar to Albania, which are countries with new democracies, it is necessary that the activity of civil society is supported by a normative approach if it really pretends to obtain a role in the process of democratization and modernization of the country.

This helps us to deliberate even our reasoning from the past dependency, because after more than two decades of development in freedom, the current status of CS cannot be read in a simpler way as a consequence of the culture cultivated along the regime, but should be searched among the conceptual and structural mistakes according to which the development of CS was poorly-oriented along transition.

Which are the constituting features of the ideal type of CS, constructed in a hypothetical manner based on a normative approach, which leads us at such a critical judgment on CS status in the Albanian reality? As we saw from the above presentation, although the civil society notion has evolved, it has maintained its political dimension, as an essential chain in the functioning of the society-state relationship. From the antiquity it is appealed the necessity of a political and virtuous citizen who in organized manner should participate actively in the political organization well-functioning (because even as due to the nature of polis the civil society was not divided from the political one). Even though, in the modern period of the political though, it is noticed a tendency not to judge in normative terms, but through a reconstructive approach over the state and the Sovereign. Once again the necessity of civil society functioning as an intermediate chain is highlighted. Weber for example invites us to understand in general the authority’s and state’s typology starting from the nature of legitimacy. So, as it were, we should dig in the cultural annals of a certain society, we should understand from which principles are encouraged the activities of the members of the society, which is the organizational structure of society on the authority, to be able to understand deeper the society-state relationship.
Beside this, as we emphasized above, many scholars from different disciplines and approaches are focused on examining civil society in post-communist countries not only for academic reasons but mostly because we have to do with a needed idealization of this sphere, in the absence of which the new economic and political system that is being installed in these countries can downgrade into a hybrid and not functional system. In other terms, analyzing civil society as a change agent in Albania and abroad during post-communism gains a fundamental importance in understanding the trajectory of transformation. This due to the fact that modernization cannot be understood without democracy and the last cannot function without the civil society.

On my point of view, civil society (by creating an ideal type of civil society, but without over-passing the borders of this concept by deforming the concept itself) is every type of social state-formative organization that is not reduced to the voting act during elections, that is continuously active in creating an alternative public sphere between private (family) and state. I consider this as an alternative because it does exist even a public sphere that is founded from mass-media and political parties which, specifically in Albania, create generally an environment commanded by the power and not a citizen’s public sphere. In fact political parties are seen by many researchers as an integral part of civil society and as long as they are voluntary gatherings of individuals, fulfill one of the structural preconditions to be considered civil society. But from a more objective point of view, political parties in post-communist countries in general, and specifically in Albania, are reduced simply to organizations that seek power and not representation. Their legitimacy from the people is suspected as long as during all elections, at least in Albania, serious irregularities are found by international organisms and elections have been disputed several times by the losing party as unfair, and dishonest.

In a country like Albania, it becomes indispensable that the foundation of the civil society is more a critical stance than a social factor that guarantees consensus and plays only a simple complementary role with the state; its ethos should be a dialectical relationship with political power, by creating alternative models of social, political and economic changes. This is true if we take into consideration that during the 23 years of transition, in Albania an abusive authority is constituted that adapts power to the interests of a small group of people and against the interests of the society. One of the most important indicators that reflect abuse of power by the political parties is the
perception of individuals about corruption, which, besides other things, becomes a strong motive for the political alienation of citizens (see chapter 3). Among other things, considering that we live in the globalization era, it is more and more difficult to discuss about the civil society, the vision and activity of which can be extended only to a specific area, especially when we talk about peripheral countries of the Eastern Europe, such as Albania. For this reason, the philosophy of the civil society in these countries should also approach the global dimension of problems, especially when it is the cause for local problems. More than a civil society divided into formal groups - that fragment the society even more (but this doesn’t make it more plural), because it is reduced into groups of experts that make the system even more bureaucratic - it should be an instrument to cultivate active citizenship in Albania and in the wider context.

This is a way to perceive civil society as a solidarity sphere in which individual rights and collective obligations are intertwined among them. We should consider it as a normative, universal and particularistic concept, which of course can be studied empirically. (Alexander, 2006, p.53). Here, as I emphasized earlier, I am talking about a civil society closely related to the functioning of democracy, and maybe it could not exist without this system.

In fact, many theorists understand civil society as a public realm of voluntary association essential for the stability of democracy. It is the “arena of polity where self-organization groups, movements, and individuals, relatively autonomous from the state, attempt to articulate values, create associations and solidarities, and advance their interests” (Linz and Stepan 1996: 7).

Furthermore, not occasionally, in Albania the weight that civil society gets in public discussions, as an important factor in the modernization and democratization of the country in the years after the fall of the regime, is very huge. The perception of citizens about civil society in these years seems to be an idealized instance. This continues further on during transition, especially after the honeymoon with democracy and after an early disappointment with political parties, there is an increasing need of the individual to “be sheltered” in other organizations of the civil society, as an instrument that can save democracy. Nevertheless, as we will see below, civil society in Albania does not respond to the aspirations and vocation
articulated during the first years after the fall of the regime. At a time when the whole new political-economic system was idealized, it was normal that even the civil society would be idealized. According to Howard (2003), civil society has come to be seen as one of the main ingredients of the success of advanced Western democracies, and as a consequence, in the post-communist countries it has been valued by the scholars of modernism and democratization as one of the most important elements.

Nevertheless, a normative approach over civil society crosses the time and space boundaries of Albania and post-communist countries in general. Referring to Alexander, we need to have a concept of civil society as a civil sphere, as a world of values and institutions that generate the possibility for social criticism and democratic integration at the same time. “Such a sphere relies on solidarity, on feelings for others whom we do not know but whom we respect out of principle, not experience, because of our putative commitment to a common secular faith”(Alexander 2006, p.4). A normative theory of civil society has to include the following functions: protection of the people against abuse of power by the state, mediation between state and private sphere, socialization, integration and communication (ib.11-14).

In other words, I refer to an ideal typology of the civil society, which should have existed in Albania, and maybe even in other post-communist countries in the form of a plural social structure, which converges into a common result – the political participation of the individual, the increase of public self-consciousness, the creation of a public space that allows the normal citizen to become an agent of change.

In this sense, not every form of organization can be considered as civil society, but only those groups that are formally, or not, self-organized (NPO; NGO), which aim at undertaking public activities that serve the interest of specific social groups or of the entire society, and where the participation in these groups comes from the free will of the individuals. In my opinion, this last component in structurally defining the civil society is very important because we might find definitions, which include business companies and different trade organs in the civil society. This study clearly states that these organizational forms are excluded intentionally because first of all, the commitment of individuals in these economic organizations does not come from a clear vocation, but it is imposed by the market economy, as the only possibility to
guarantee material goods, and secondly, because in itself, the final objective of these market subjects is to extend the financial profit.

On my point of view, it is clear that we do not need a concept of civil society, which includes all forms of organization, and which would compromise the meaning of civil society itself. Albania is a country in which the political elites have too much power because of the past and because of the political developments of these years (for a more detailed analysis of this topic (see chapter IV). Nevertheless, this is not valid only for Albania, because for example Webb (2002) argues that the reliance of parties on professional campaigners and organizers, has led them to treating citizens as passive observers who only need to be mobilized at the time of elections to support the party.

In these circumstances, it is necessary to have social organizations that do not further atomize society and further alienate it politically, but organizations that do the contrary – create possibilities for the citizens to be participants. In the best scenario, organizations do not function only as advocates of the interests of special groups, but they are transformed into schools, in which public self-consciousness, reciprocal trust and active citizenship are cultivated. Putnam (2002) claims that a vibrant civil society facilitates and encourages a vibrant political society, and the same line of arguments that social involvement increases the propensity for political involvement is defended by Morten Olson (1971) and other authors (see Maloney & Rossteutscher, 2007).

This is the way through which different social and individual groups can participate in the country’s transformation process with the role of important agents of change, by enabling a plural and endogenous development approach.

I am aware that by referring to different studies even in the Western European countries, we cannot find the active par excellence and we cannot find this ideal typology of the civil society. But in my opinion, this is not very important, because if this kind of civil society is absent in post-communist countries, modernity in general terms and democracy or market economy will just appear by chance and develop as a foreign body within this social organism. As a consequence, we would have a simple system without actors, and of course a dysfunctional relation between the state and the society. For Kennedy, civil society in Eastern Europe depends for its formation and democratic vitality on critical intellectuals (Kennedy, 2002, 52). In the same line of
reasoning, what I am trying to say is that the Albanian society needs a critical civil society which can help in an internal transformation of reality, by integrating the interior vision with the one that has been imported from outside.

On the contrary, what happened in reality is clearly expressed by Lubonja\(^\text{13}\) (2006) in his argument on the failure of the civil society in Albania:

“I like to compare this phenomenon with the trees, but the problem is that civil society was not growing from upwards. Why? Because this tree was nourished the West, and it did not came in life because of the needs of the people. The second element why this society was different is related to the fact that often this society replaced the social state (welfare state), by reducing its role in a kind of manager of humanitarian assistance. Of course the civil society even in the case of Albania is related to the idea of Antonio Gramsci, according to which, the civil society can have an impact in the flux of ideas. Of course there have been some successes… But in the end, this tree should return to its normal position, with the roots down, but this did not happen.”

Nevertheless, it is clear that two factors that we discussed even above had influence in the creation of a failed civil society in Albania:

On one side, the Albanian society was culturally unprepared to generate this typology of the civil society because before anything, there was an absence of the communitarian sense, which according to Putnam, is indispensable for strengthening the social capital, and as a consequence, even the civil society. On the other hand, the elites that formed the majority of the civil society organizations were oriented in the wrong directions, by acting like extensions of the central power (international organizations) or of the local power (political parties and the government). By trying to be more concrete, let’s observe the empirical data.

2.4. An empirical observation, searching to better understand the model and the role of civil society in Albania

The empirical analysis is structured as a combination of quantitative data with qualitative data, as a possibility of integration of macro-research with micro-research.

\(^{13}\)Fatos Lubonja is a well-known publicist and activist of the civil society in Albania, and a former political prisoner during the communist regime. This quote was taken by his speech in Boston, 2006, titled “Post-totalitarian societies, the case of Albania”, invited by the Institute of Human Sciences, Boston University.
It’s conceived in this way because it is valued as necessary that beside quantitative data that mostly reflect the existing situation of CS, the inner process of its structuring and functioning has to be observed through qualitative study. The reasoning on the condition of CS is very complex because as we articulated it above, it needs to be measured both the willpower and society’s potential altogether in the constituting of a successful CS, as well as the performance of the leading actors that have shaped this sector in Albania. Thus in front of this complexity presented by an analytical exploration of CS in Albania and anywhere, it is clear that I am not pretending to bring any ultimate analysis of this phenomenon, but at least we can touch some neuralgic aspects of this case. Although there has been caution in reference to many critics (See for example, Ekiert and Foa, 2012) towards empirical studies on CS in eastern countries, in order to bring a complete analysis I will try to understand from inside what happens with the organizations of CS in Albania, besides from outside through general statistics. The quantitative and qualitative indicators that will be analysed should help us to examine better the causes of failure of CS in Albania. Trying to understand that how and how much it influences in the existing situation of CS the cultural orientation of society as a whole in proportion with the tendency for participation, as well as how much does the organizational and functional manner of CS organizations in Albania affect the creation of a suitable environment for the citizen to be more participatory and more active in relation to the state.

The dataset of quantitative data is originating from international researches such as: CIVICUS 2010 (World Alliance for Citizen Participation). Whereas the qualitative study is based on participatory observation.\(^{14}\)

Two youth organizations are intentionally selected, because rightly, different researchers (Howard 2003, Putnam 2002) think that there are differences between generations in their tendency for social and political activism. Primarily these approaches depart from the logic of socialization (for a detailed explication of this approach see chapter III) according to which some of the values, may they even be political, are embraced in relation to the socio-political environment in which an

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\(^{14}\) The author of the dissertation has been engaged since the year 2002 with different activities of CS in Albania. Besides the direct experience of at least two years, he was engaged as a foreign consultant in at least two youth NGOs, taking advantage in this manner to observe closely in a dynamic way the manner of their organization and function.
individual is formed culturally. Thus according to this premise, an individual who has lived more years in democracy has had the opportunity to acquire some new values of a political democratic culture and consequently to enjoy a stronger orientation towards participation. On the other hand, through participatory observation we have the opportunity to observe dynamically the stance of individuals engaged in the activities of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Analyzed in this way, as Outhwaite and Ray argument, the construction and consolidation of civil society should be viewed as a process rather than a fixed presence or absence (Outhwaite, Ray 2005, 173).

2.4.1. An analyses of Civil Society Organizations through quantitative data

We would prefer to start the presentation of quantitative data by reflecting in general terms: a) the number of CSOs among the years, starting from the year 1990, b) by making evident how many of them were and are still active; c) their categorization according to different profiles based on the kind of activity they perform in order to observe in time the trajectory of CSOs’ development in Albania. But this is impossible if we seek to incorporate accurate records, as their registration time by state institutions as well as by other institutions since the year 1990 to the present has been rather chaotic. This is due to several reasons: until 2001 associations and other organizations of civil society, also known as NGO (OJQ and after 2001 OJF15), were registered in central institutions as the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labour etc. based on their profile. But they could also be registered in town halls of different cities of Albania or in First Instance Courts, lacking in this manner a central archive for the registrations of all organizations. Whereas after the year 2001, the registration should be made only in the Court of Tirana, but even here any exact information can't be found in relation to the number of NGOs, as well as related to their influence, structure and activity. The only sources of information in this direction are several information directories created by some local and international organizations, which are not too reliable because they are expressed in approximate terms, and because they have differences

15 OJQ is the Albanian language acronym for NGO, while OJF is the Albanian acronym for Non-For Profit Organizations (Organizata Jo-Fitimprurëse in Albanian language)
in figures among them as well as because the collection methodology of these records is fairly problematic.

Currently the only trusted source of information but limited only to the supply of the number of CSOs in Albania and not of their type of activity and their structure is the list of registered NGOs at the taxation authority’s bureau\(^\text{16}\) according to which the number of CSOs in Albania is 1,651.

However, despite that these records could be useful to observe the trajectory of CS evolution in Albania, this does not constitute any considerable shortage in the framework of analysis that we are trying to bring in this study. Our primary interest is to research and understand: the type of their engagements, the durability of their activity, how legitimate and representative are the composing organizations of CS and above all their approach towards the citizens in general. That is to say that the essence of this observation is to understand, how much they have served as structures in which the citizen activation and protection of interest of certain society groups are cultivated. Briefly the primary goal in the analysis of empirical data is to understand how consistent is the ideal type of CS (which we discussed above) with the concrete activity of CSO. Another obstacle that we face in this effort is the difficulty in realizing a comparative analysis over time, among Albania and other eastern European countries, because until late Albania had not been included in any of the joint studies of international character where some of the CS indicators are examined, although currently this is possible through the resources mentioned above. As a start let’s see in what proportions do we find the citizens engagement in Albania in the social and political dimension, comparing it with other eastern European countries, as one of the most significant indicators in this analysis.

\(^{16}\) https://www.fint.gov.al
For measuring citizen engagement in the social and political aspect these variables were considered: the membership rate in society and political organizations; the involvement scale in voluntary social and political work; and the involvement scale with work in the community.

According to the data it appears that (see Figure 1):

The primary motives of citizens to participate in the actions of CS are the common values (44%) and personal interest (31%).

From the data it is clear that the involvement and engagement of citizens in the initiatives and organizations of CS is characterized by high levels of indifferentism. Naturally the same question is highlighted: whether we must read this situation as a failure that flows from the inner organization, so from the structural and functional aspect of CSOs, or the culture of the society in general.

In fact, even from the reasoning developed so far, it’s clear that both factors influence in the creation of this situation. From one hand the culture inherited from communism and the one cultivated along the transition has much influence in the potential of the citizens to get mobilized in different social groups aiming at public participation and activism. And on the other hand this depends as much on whether the activity of CSOs is articulated as an emancipating factor, as Kennedy (2002, 49) would be expressed, or as an extension of negative phenomena of the transition. It’s also logical
that we consider these two entities as reciprocally dependent on one-another, so the dysfunctioning or malfunctioning of one leads to the dysfunctioning or malfunctioning of the other, although we are in front of the fact that in Albania about 1651 CSOs per 2.8 million residents are actually found. This figure shows that, regardless of how we might evaluate the cultural orientation of the society, the social organization at least in the level of formal CSO has existed. Besides this, the data show that either the willingness, or the motivation of citizens to be active are not missing because besides the low levels of civic participation, the major part of the interviewed persons remains open to these opportunities as long as they see “common values with the initiative” (44%). Or as long as they see their personal interest in the participation in common activities of social or cultural character (31%).

Though besides the reasoning about the indicated cultural components in the past and the present that have favored or prevented active citizenship, reasonably we should even ask what the roles of these organizations were in the process of social and political transformation of Albania. Ultimately the low membership and low participation of citizens in the activities of CSOs is a meaningful indicator that testifies their failures in several dimensions as follows:

1) They have not functioned as an intermediate actor in the relation between the citizen and the state, because otherwise the membership and participation would not reach these figures. Participation in larger proportions would show that these organizations are truly representative of the interests of different society groups, or in some occasions (according to their profile) of all the society in proportion with the entire state, and also with the ruling authority in particular. Undisputedly there are other forms of society participation (for a more expanded discussion see chapter III) through the voting process, but as we have previously discussed this is insufficient, specifically in a democracy under construction.

2) Consequently in these circumstances, the CSOs have not served as a link that would help to place an equilibrium between the vector of top-down development and that of bottom-up development. The citizen’s inactivity in political activities and in the activities of organizations indicates that the organizations themselves have not convinced him on their powers and potentials.
3) Non-participation testifies that CSOs have not managed to even create a space for the individual in the public discourse, helping in pluralizing the political and social central scene through alternative attitudes in relation to the unilinear approach to development.

On the other hand as we argued above (referring to different researchers) not only in Albania but even wider, this problem cannot be simply treated as a CSOs structural problem. It is clear that the enthusiasm and optimism of the ‘90es was replaced soon by disappointment and by a general apathy of the society. If in the first years after the collapse of communism the society infatuated by the discourse on the representative democracy\(^\text{17}\) hoped that a fair system could be built where the citizen would have the possibility to influence the decision-making, but very soon it was understood that this was difficult to be achieved. Apart past, which affects the cultivation of a culture of passivity, fading enthusiasm of a society eager for freedom of thought and action (although it is attempted to be explained from different point of view), again remained a difficult equation to be solved.

We will resume in the upcoming chapter, in the analysis on the political alienation of the society, a more complex discussion on the factors that along the transition influenced the consolidation of a passivity culture, which - as we mentioned above - influences on the manner the functioning of CSOs. Here it’s important to continue with the interpretation of data to understand the inner causes of dysfunction of CSOs. But with reason someone might ask how the CSOs may function if the society does not answer "their call". We Are confronted with the fact that CSOs were created since the first years of transition and continue to exist, but are they elite segments inside society that occupied this sector or were they authentic social movements from the bottom that led towards the creation of these organizations?

This also founds an important question. I say this, because if in principle these society organizations would need to be voluntary unions of individuals and pronouncement of citizen’s activation that breathes from the bottom, but in reality they are conceived in

\(^{17}\) If we observe the public discourse in Albania since the first days of transition until today, referring to the written and electronic media, there can easily be concluded the density of discussions on the representative democracy and market economy. All the citizens from the political leaders to the common citizens, discussed about the system, trying to continuously compare that which was in principle with that was happening in reality, until practice starts to gradually fade away every principle and conceptual discussion on the system as a consequence of absorption and acceptance of the created reality along the transition as the system itself.
this manner from the embryo, then this becomes a determining condition for their perspective.

But on the other hand it couldn't happen differently because the Albanian people were crushed from the past system and needed time to get rehabilitated and adapted with the demands of the new system. Many of the communities that before the 90es made up the base of social organization changed together with the change of the system, and as a result there didn't exist anymore a steady social foundation on top of which an active spirit in a collective level/approach could start to develop. The structures of CSOs were designed precisely with this intention (the originators were the international organisms) as some of the instruments that would support the democratization and modernization process of Albania. Thus in other terms these structures would need to forerun the development of culture by preparing the path of where the society would pass by speeding up the rhythm of the road towards modernity and democracy.

Naturally in a country with consolidated democracy, that has by tradition the citizen engagement, there is no need to constitute some formal organizations to create the necessary conditions for the organization of citizens, but in a country in development this is necessary. Therefore the ideal type that we reasoned above does not simply stand in a normative approach but is also based in the real experiences.

Although from the data that we read until now and from other ones that we will see below (figure 2), it doesn't result that SCOs might have fulfilled the intended role.
We can easily ascertain a climate of disbelief on CSOs if we interpret the figures according to which 34% of interviewees, express that they do not trust CS, combined with 56% (see table of figures, fig 3) of them who think that CSOs are not transparent. Another indicator that strengthens even more the idea that CSOs are not trustworthy in the fulfillment of their mission is based on the fact that 81.3% of interviewees think that CSOs are capable up to a point in working for public interests in contradiction with their mission. Although this information is based only on perception, it gives an important source for understanding how much CSOs have achieved to create an environment where individuals can feel their public interests are protected. The lack of trust (see chapter III for a broader discussion of the concept and phenomenon) in CS in one hand shows that the social connecting tissue is missing in the creation of a necessary social cohesion for the functioning of CSOs, but on the other hand testifies that these last ones have not achieved to serve as a communication bridge among individuals in the consolidation of trust. It’s understandable that political parties are the less trustable organization (see chapter III) from society because primarily they are defined as corruption hotbeds and abusive power altogether, but the low level of trust towards the syndicates talks much about the situation of CSOs in Albania. It is worth emphasizing this discovery because it’s supposed that the syndicates would need to be the most trustful organizations, since practically they would need to derive more than any other social and political organization from genuine necessities and interests of its composing members. But these data make me think that even this structure in Albania is not the result of the willpower articulated from bottom-up but it is contaminated from the function's dominating model of CS in Albania, where there exists a considerable distance between the directors or staff of organizations and the community this structure pretends to represent. We can achieve this conclusion by referring to the secured data from Civil Society Index Albania (certified by the international study CIVICUS), a study that doesn't focus only to the general perception of the population but even tries to realize another mass search on other indicators of performances of CSO.
This data (figure 3) confirm the lack of a voluntary organization from bottom-up which indicates that the philosophy and activity of CS is compromised from its genesis. In these organizations an excluding hierarchy and a considerable absence of inner democracy exist, something that makes even more impossible their live communication with the specific community, the interests of which are pretended to protect and represent. More than some structures that can help in the configuration of a decentralization model in the governance of public interests and help the growth of different alternatives of political, economic and social development, are constituted as a usual elongation of traditional authority in Albania. And naturally even less can be pretended they can be guided from any idealist perspective as emancipated organisms by deforming even more in this manner the purpose of their existence.

The fact that in only 8% of organizations the decisions are made from members shows that the membership of these organizations doesn't have any important roles. The majority of CSOs were created from the start by individuals that have treated it more as a work occasion than as an instrument that materializes their vocation for citizen engagement; therefore the decisions are made primarily by nominated directors or by a nominated board. In these circumstances it doesn't seem to be a lot of space for the citizen in order he can feel as being part of these political groups and fight in a political way for common causes. As we previously discussed, with reason different researchers think from another optic that organizations may socialize their members into a democratic culture, teaching them trust and cooperation, solidarity, and public-
spiritedness (Putnam, 1995; Brehm & Rahn, 1997). Otherwise what we are seeing until now talks about a different reality; the organizations are structured as private enterprises in which the values mentioned above cannot be cultivated.

![Attitudes and perceptions towards CSOs](image)

**Figure 4: Attitudes, perceptions towards CSOs**

Although the perception towards CSOs as untrustworthy may also be the result of a general situation of distrust, typical for countries in development, the data (figure 4) show that these attitudes are based in the transparency indicators of CSOs.

The refusal of being transparent about the sources of their income is one more added reason for society not to trust these organizations the same as it does not trust the political parties, the government and the state institutions in general (for this information see chapter III). As it is seen from the data in a considerable percentage, the CSOs themselves don't deny the existence of corruptive occasions by letting us know in this manner that the society's lack of trust does not derive from the overall disappointment but is based in a correct perception. The implications of this situation are multi-folded because in this manner the CS not only does not become a welcoming environment for the citizen but it further demoralizes him. The individual now doesn't find any social links that can make resistance to this negative phenomenon in front of a state that he considers totally corrupt\(^\text{18}\) by loosing even further the hope that things may improve through his civil and political act when there

\(^{18}\)Regarding the corruption index of Transparency International, (TI) 2013 Albania is ranked as the most corrupt country in the western Balkans in 116th position, followed by Kosovo, which is positioned 111th in the index. ([www.transparency.org](http://www.transparency.org))
is willingness. CSOs on the contrary of what was expected are transformed in a social actor that reinforces the moral wastage by legitimizing even further the system of corruption. CS not only doesn't act as a change agent but it creates an opposite effect by transforming into an actor that guarantees the protection of the status quo, among those even the worst disease of the Albanian transformation, corruption. From a structure in which would have to be cultivated a public-spiritedness in reaction towards injustice acts, are transformed in ordinary elongations of negative phenomena rooted in the culture of transition. In relation with the state, its dysfunction is expressed even more distinctly, and the idea that it doesn't have a meaningful role in the process of democratization and modernization of the country is reinforced.

**Figure 5: State – CSO relation**

The dysfunctional relation between CS and the state is evident (consequently between Society and State) because not only the dialogue between them is limited but even the interference or influence of the state in the actions of CS joins critical proportions. This means that CS not only has not achieved to include in the State's agenda the citizens’ interests but also the relation works in the counter direction. It is the state (meaning different state institutions according to their interests) that interferes in the agenda of the organizations. This makes even clearer that the action of CSOs is not grounded in the volition of different society groups but in the elites that lead these organizations, in contrary there is no reason to accept the State's interference. So they, in addition to others, have not been capable of doing any resistance to the power
instances by not achieving to create a possibility for the citizen in being more participant in the State's common affairs and to react against the political power whenever he considers it necessary. In a simple interpretation of this information, it is clear that the state interferes whenever its interest or image is at stake but if it would be facing a functional CSO it would at least have a dialectic relation between them, regardless who would win at the end. But from the records it seems that CS is dependent more on the state than on the citizens.

Apart from the speculation done so far, in reading the situation one question still continues to bother me: from where does CS win its legitimacy?

Data and arguments that appear to now have to add the fact that in the priorities of CSOs dialogue with citizens is in the extent of 7%, thus confirming that these organizations do not gain legitimacy by society. Consequently the nature of legitimacy determines even the physiognomy of these organizations. The relation with the citizen is utilized (the citizen is only useful to the organizations as a target to formally fulfill their objectives) because it only constitutes an instrument for CSO and not a purpose.

Ironically and not by chance the main source of legitimacy of CSOs are the international institutions, if we refer to the information according to which 75.3% of CSOs consider the donator priorities very important for their agenda. The lack of alternative financing and the length of actual financing influences negatively on the stability and impact of CSOs.

Certainly, the organizations may be compelled to act in this manner but for as long as their agenda is determined by the donators, this dim it, so not to say that it eliminates the possibility of legitimacy from the society. This in fact contains the essence of CS’s function in Albania where its organizational model is determined from top to bottom making impossible the creation of a public alternative space. Here we are not intimating non rational and non-ethical intention in the donators (different EU states and more) but this relation in essence is contradictory. Howsoever reasonable and objective may the intentions be, this is one of the factors that deform in essence the model of organization and functioning of CS in Albania, because society is not part of the process but a predetermined finality. Certainly the final objective is interference for solving the problems of a specific community, but how well the interests of
society are read from above and how efficient the manner of interference (regardless what methodologies are applied) its discussable.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 6 The manner of CS functioning in Albania**

In one hand the state (in this occasion its more reasonable to say the power) that interferes if its interests are at stake, the donators who determine the priorities and the society who doesn't attend in this process bring an overturned scheme (see Figure 6) of what would need to be CS in normative terms. Let's return in this manner to the central argument of this thesis, the capillary expansion of the teleological and homogeneous vision of the development of Albania both from the local actors and the international ones. I couldn't say what vision the society would have produced if it were in a wider mass, part of CSO, but this overview which we face today in my point of view can only be read in this manner. The reason why CSOs are accommodated in this scheme is even a consequence of small - minded and pragmatist interests but even because in their mentality as in that of many other actors in Albania it doesn't come to doubt or the critical stand doesn't exist among internationals (otherwise at least priorities would be negotiated among CSOs and the donators).

On the other hand maybe internationals operate according to the logic of market - the money is ours and we decide where we will invest it. In these circumstances it is understandable that CSOs are not an actor that follow the dynamics of social change and act in accordance with it, but one more actor that imposes an elitist vision to the systematic transformation of society. As a consequence it is visible that their influence is inconsiderable referring to the perception of society according to which:
Figure 7: Society perception on the level and nature of Civil Society influence

From this group of data the only positive indicator is the support for marginalized groups which shows that this direction was worked better than some other directions. In fact, despite we are dealing here with a positive development, it is clear that we cannot escape the dominating model because this development comes as a result of the increase of donator's interest towards these groups influencing in this manner the agenda of CSO. Although it is not the occasion to enter in specific analysis, we must make evident that the work efficiency of CSOs towards the marginalized groups is discussable, regardless the perception\textsuperscript{19}. According to the data the extremely low impact of CSO is visible both towards politic making and the social context in general. It cannot be differently because being CSOs distanced from society, they do not enjoy either the legitimacy or the power of crowds that in other circumstances would be established on the pure willpower of individual members. In this manner would be the cause or common interest that would unite the people and not private interest as it results to be in Albania, according to the data reading.

\textsuperscript{19} From an observation of electronic and written medias. (gazeta shqip, panorama, shqiptarja.com, shekulli) in Albania from February until August of 2013 it results that a strong public debate has taken place on the destination of millions of Euros accorded by EU for the ROMA community (one of the most marginalized groups) because their situation in Albania continues to be extremely difficult.
Consequently, their influence in the social and public reality would be wider because it would derive from the consciousness and power of society. However as we discussed it’s not only the organizations’ fault that individuals don't join civil society activities, because after all if the society willingness existed, it would be materialized in individual autonomous conjunctions beyond the existing formal organizations. But on the other hand we must understand that the model of CS and its practices keep the citizen away from public participation because they don't in the least arouse trust.

Expressed in a synthetic way, it is understandable that the influence of CSOs will be minimal because:

1) their intention is suspicious as long as it doesn't uphold the necessities and interests articulated directly from the public;

2) it’s closer to the spheres of political power (the state and internationals) than to the community;

3) even if it aimed at drawing near to the community it would first need to change the kind of approach because the existing model implicates disbelief;

4) the approach is consensual and not critical or conflicting because they don't compete for alternative models of social change, and as a result they cannot be an essential change factor but simply a reproductive one.

Thus CS cannot serve as an intermediate link between the citizen and state, by leading to the state the interest of the individual/s, something that would liberate this last one from the political alienation and would make the relation between the state and society more functional. Different social groups remain out of the transformation process of a state in transition where many formal and social institutions that were formed from the beginning have an incongruent approach with society itself. We reach the same conclusion even through observation of the activity of two youth organizations.
2.4.2. Understanding the peculiarities of CSOs in Albania through an participative observation

As a start let's see the associations’ profile:

1) The first organization has the NPO status (Non for Profit Organization) and is created by the youth of the Roma community in Albania. Referring to the formal documents of this organization (status) said in a summarized manner, their intention is the protection and representation of interests of the Roma community in Albania. This means the undertaking of different activities for improving the condition of the Roma community in Albania by negotiating with the central and local government even with international institutions. The organization was created around 2008 and formally in official documents they count around 20 members.

2) Also the second organization has the NPO status and it was created by the students of Tirana Universities (public and private ones). By referring to the formal documents of this organization, expressed in a summarized manner, their intention is the protection and representation of interests of all students in Albania. This means undertaking activities to improve the situation of the higher education in Albania and the student status. The organization was formed around 2007 and formally has around 30 members.

Both organizations secure their financial support primarily from different foreign donators.

Being that both organizations indicate the same problems despite their different fields of activity, and given that in the structural aspect they don't have major differences between them, the secured findings are articulated in a summarized manner as follows.

In the first contact with the staff of these associations everything seems in accordance with an ideal model of CSO. Asked about the values that lead their work, the staff of these organizations makes evident a series of elements as voluntarism, good contacts with the community they pretend to represent, orientation towards participation and citizens activation, transparency towards the public. Even in connection with actual activities developed until present, the staff recognizes them as successful despite their
possibilities and capabilities for realizing the aimed objectives in an optimal manner. Furthermore, their program seems to be formulated in the most ideal manner as it reflects all the values (voluntarism, participation, representation etc.). But by observing their activity in the field we ascertain several problems (some of which confirm what we mentioned until this point) that manifest the presence of a deformed model of CS that goes beyond these organizations that we are examining. These problems include:

1) *The establishment manner of the organization* - The initiative in building the organization was from three individuals in the case of the first organization (O1) and of the same number of individuals in the case of the second organization (O2) meanwhile the member number results to be 20 in the first case and 30 in the second case. It’s understandable that weren't the members who - voluntarily motivated from their concern or interest - intentionally organized themselves to create a stable institution for protecting causes or common interests, but they simply joined the organization on request of the leading staff. One might rightfully say that someone must take the initiative even if others won't do it, notably this is necessary in a country like Albania where the communitarian attitude is missing and also the individuals’ experience for organizing in associations and joint activities. So starting from this premise, we are not saying that this organizational form is compromised from the genesis, because anyhow it remains as a good opportunity for people interested to be engaged through membership. But we start to better understand the incompleteness and weaknesses of this form of organization by observing it and the decision making, which will be elaborated in the following point.

2) *Decision making and membership (internal democracy)* - The membership of these organizations was not present in any of the activities of these organizations except for occasions when some of them would be called by the leaders to participate, in occasions when more people were needed. There wasn't any genuine process of decision making besides discussions among the staff composed of two or three individuals, primarily focused in fundraising and the operational aspect of the activities. In these conditions it is clear that the internal democracy of these organizations is missing, their members not
having any roles or functions inside these structures don't create any corresponding groups or any tendency for taking initiatives or by voluntarily joining the activities undertaken by these associations. It’s understood that this way of functioning excludes even the possibility of other individuals’ engagement (outside of these organizations) who potentially don't lack the will or participation in civil and political actions. The lack of internal democracy and a membership without a role lead towards the reduction of these organizations into some private enterprises similar to some small businesses which serve as a possibility for self-employment. This is far away from what CS is pretended to offer in a country like Albania, environments where the spirit of active citizen is educated and inscribed. This form of decision making and functioning of membership, determines even the kind of activity and civil function of these CSOs.

3) The function and typology of activity - The director and his close staff\(^{20}\) in both occasions (O1,O2) were the most active individuals because they considered their engagement as their everyday job. The primary job of him/her and the staff composed of two individuals in the case of O1 and of three individuals in the case of O2 consisted in fund collection from different donators (International Institutions) as the only means in realizing any activities. As a consequence the initiatives taken by them were simply a mechanical answer towards the donator's priorities. There wasn't any voluntary activity taken even in possible circumstances when it was possible to act without financial support. The community in which organizations operated was not asked about its needs, necessities and interests, or in the best occasion was only asked for feedback in a sporadic manner whenever it was a condition posed by the donors. The dependency from financial support had consolidated even the dependency we mentioned above, the dependency from donors and had neglected the community itself towards which specific

\(^{20}\) The hierarchical direction typology of the organization depends from its status. Several organizational forms of associations are foreseen by the Albanian legislation in basis of which is foreseen the decision making in a detailed manner, and also the organization's composing organs. In the actual case these two organizations have the status of association where membership, as according to their status, has an important role in decision making also in the determination of the organization's action. From now on I will refer to the leading group with the term staff.
initiatives/ actions were to be oriented. In this context it’s understandable that this practice alienated existing members and kept any potential members outside of the walls of this structure. It is worth mentioning again that this had influenced first of all the relation with the community, the interests of which these organizations intended to represent, at least formally.

4) *The relation with the Community* - the community feels excluded and unrepresented and consequently it evaluates the initiatives of these CSOs with skepticism and disbelief. On the other hand, what's more important, the staff of these associations, being more oriented towards personal profit than towards society, is not interested in creating a more attractive or comfortable environment for citizen participation. Their activity is aimed more at the level of expertise than civil or political action. More concretely, in the O1 case, the community that is aimed to be represented is one of the poorest and most marginalized social groups in Albania.

The activity of this organization was primarily focused in the technical intervention of the type: training for capacity developments, conferences and workshops with local and international actors, roundtables and in the best occasion recommendations for new policies through different reports. Even in the case of O2 the character of dominant activities was similar regardless of the society group that this association pretends to represent. In both occasions, members and representatives of community were simply invited to participate in a passive manner and not as a part of the process, in relation to the staff's needs and typology of activity. Regardless that these activities can be considered important, an essential element of civil or political action of more comprehensive character was missing, where there could be used pressure mechanisms for solving the problems of the Roma community in the O1 case and to the student community in the O2 case. The lack of these instruments distanced the respective society group even more from the organization for two reasons:

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a) The more the expertise of the staff grew, the more the distance with the respective community grew because an incomprehensible technical language is being spoken by the staff;

b) "The true act" is missing, the act of facing the local or international responsible institutions, something that could reconstruct the trust interrelation between the respective social group and the organization because it would serve as proof.

5) The truncated legitimacy - Another problem that reinforces the lack of trust towards these organizations is definitely the lack of transparency. None of the organizations were transparent either with their members or with the public in general because they didn't have any means for public information (website etc.) where their income as well as their activity in general could be declared. Only accountability towards the donors exists, as it also results from the data of the quantitative study. As a consequence, the lack of transparency, disincorporation of members, lack of trust, the formulation of priorities as a mechanical interpretation of donor's priorities, and not as a result of respectful social communication with the targeted communities, the centralized decision making where the community and members are not present, activities of a technical and not participatory character, lead towards a typology of organization that above all is missing legitimacy from the bottom.

6) The Consensual approach - From the observation done so far we understand that the approach applied by these CSOs is a consensual approach. This is clearly seen because there is no civil or political action taken even when injustices are ascertained or when it is tried unsuccessfully to negotiate in an institutional manner for solving the corresponding problems. By attempting to understand why something like this happens, what I uncovered along the research brings me to the conclusion that this is an inevitable consequence of the structuring and functioning manner of the organizations. The problem derives from an essential contradiction - in one hand it has to do with the interest of the engaged members in these organizations (in my opinion this element can be ascertained only through participatory observation) that aim at keeping excellent collaboration relations with local and international institutions, regardless what the result is. This happens because the structure itself as we mentioned above bears an embryonic deformation since it is not
constructed as a result of a natural movement from bottom - to top but in contrary. Whereas on the other hand when asked why they don't articulate a more conflicting posture whenever it is necessary, the primary answer is that they are powerless because they are not supported by society. In this way the civil society’s contradictory aspect appears clearly, in one hand the community is needed because its power is read very clearly and on the other hand it is kept far away at a safe distance (manageable distance) because it threatens the private interest. From my point of view this approach remains a foundational problem in the configuration of the CS model that operates in Albania. Consensus in this occasion means conformity with the existing system\textsuperscript{22} - consequently disability to bring alternative attitudes or to represent the willpower of different social groups towards the centers of the power that have their "destiny" in hand. Meantime the opposite, as we mentioned above, is necessary in a country where the principles in which the new social order is based are being re-founded.

In these circumstances only a technocratic/elitist model of CS can be constituted. From what we've discussed until this point, as in the interpretation of the quantitative data and in the analysis of the two cases, we ascertain that the dominating model of organization and functioning of CS in Albania is more technocratic/elitist than a model that guarantees participation and activism. Primarily from my point of view it is important to understand that we are dealing with a model, because the practice and behavior of different CSOs, apparently separate and specific, has been routinized by extracting the features and valence of a model.

In this manner every initiative of CSOs, is accommodated in this solid model created from long ago by not achieving to be creative and critical at all and to function as an agent of change. The most meaningful evidence for this is the absorption of this model even from these two youth associations. It is clear that by being new in this habitus they don't create their own model but simply find it ready and submit to it, by showing us in this manner that a similar one exists and it is difficult to surpass it.

\textsuperscript{22} By system I don't intend to say for the representative democracy and capitalism itself but for the typology of an unclear political and economic system that is actually found in Albania. It is clear that we are going towards democracy but without any serious presence of CS in this process.
It is elitist because it is a movement from top - to bottom, in all senses beginning from the moment of creation and related to the whole activity of these organizations. With elite, in this instance I mean a small group of individuals that occupy this space by leaving the citizens out, and from there they impose them the model of social change.

And naturally with these preconditions it’s also technocratic because the aim (generally) is to offer expertise and not to offer public action as a form of pressure for changing a certain situation, such as the improvement of the Roma community in the case of O1 and of the higher education and the students’ status in the case of O2. Here is not intended the mobilization of the society group as an important actor, whether in usual activities or in collective actions where all the necessary legal and extralegal instruments can be used. But the whole activity, as we have also seen above, is focused in reports, trainings, roundtables and political recommendations concentrated in a small group of individuals in close collaboration with the donors and the central and local government and much less with the community. Of course the result of all this is the increase of some individuals’ specialization in specific matters, the growth of the experts group but not the education of citizens to participation and activation. Certainly this operation philosophy brings a considerable contribution in function of public interest but the expertise is insufficient for improving the democracy in the country and for increasing the public participation in this process. In today’s Albania there is no shortage of experts or bureaucrats but lack of the active citizen and a public space where he can meet and test his potential. The formula' of CS operation in Albania is based on the wrong premises - from the structure to the act and not vice versa. So everything is first prepared in the offices of CSOs in a very bureaucratic manner by the group of individuals that now are transformed in experts, in collaboration with the donor and subordinated to the political power, to present themselves to the citizens as the resolving key to their problems. While a capsized trajectory would produce that which in normative terms would be pretended by CS - the act through articulation of collective willpower of members and non-members is born first, and after the structure is put in motion to simplify the process. Although even inside this reality for ideas to be conceived from the top, it’s important that the citizen is included, but in order for this to happen he/she must believe on the willpower of CSO, to perceive it as his /her own space and not as manipulated by the elites. This CS model is not of service as a school for the education of the active
citizenship; it does not emancipate the society but simply reproduces the existing culture. The minorities, vulnerable groups, groupings or different subcultures, the needy and the middle class (for as much as it can be talked about for consolidated classes in Albania) are not very present in the CSO’s activity so they do not have any active role in the process of social-political change of the country. Actually\textsuperscript{23} in Albania the CSOs do not do anything more than strengthen the role of local elites and international institutions without achieving to produce a public space between the private and the state for the common citizen and where different cultural nuances of a plural society can be contrasted. Thus, CS in Albania not only presents many weaknesses but its role is completely overturned - as a one more actor that guarantees the teleological vision of development and of a uni - linear and homogenous process of modernization.

But despite that, we can conclude that CSOs have not helped as much as needed in increasing the level of Albanian society participation in the process of change, this problem is very complex, thus let’s further analyze it in the following chapter in parallel to some other aspects of this problem.

\textsuperscript{23} It is important to emphasize that this might be a temporary situation because anyhow the society in Albania continues to change. Although the worry remains that CS might be institutionalized in similar proportions until the critical capability of the actors that operate in this field for observing the weaknesses of this model and for changing it in a radical manner has been lost.
CHAPTER III: Political Alienation

Human beings are compelled to live within a lie, but they can be compelled to do so only because they are in fact capable of living in this way. Therefore not only does the system alienate humanity, but at the same time alienated humanity supports this system as its own involuntary master plan, as a degenerate image of its own degeneration, as a record of people's own failure as individuals.

Vaclav Havel

3.1. Some features of political participation

Through the analysis done so far we argued that CSOs are an important factor in the definition of the model and the typology of participation in Albania, as due to the manner how these structures are built and how they function. But on the other hand as we emphasized above, if we had a society oriented towards the citizen participation and activation, it's understandable that CS would be more active and as a result we would have a functional relation between the society and the state. Therefore before we try to find the historical and actual facts of internalization of a passivity culture by the Albanian society (apart from what we discussed up to this point) materialized in the best possible way in the political alienation phenomena, let's again make a summary on the concept of participation. The importance that is being attributed to this concept is understandable as long as one among the primary concerns articulated in this thesis is to understand which social actors have participated in the building of the new system in Albania and in other post-communist countries (as long as there might exist similarities among these countries).

In this reasoning lane we reformulate a fundamental question - Why is participation so important?

In fact not all researchers share the opinion that a broad civic participation is something necessary. Mainly in this theoretician’s group - which converges in the common approach that can be categorized as "electoral determinism" - take part important theoreticians of political sciences as Dahl (1956) or Sartori (1987). The
central argument of this perspective is that democracy is a political method, where the vote is a sufficient instrument for the participation of the citizen and all other forms of participations are unnecessary and even dangerous.

However, these theories are rather criticized because they neglect many important elements of democracy in praxis. Many daily practices of a representative democracy exist that make the instrument of vote insufficient, particularly in new democracies such as the one of Albania. These practices include: non free elections (manipulated in the case of Albania), political marketing, the lack of representation of particular social groups (in a particular manner of those marginalized), the lobbing power etc. Therefore in contradiction with this approach, a considerable group of researchers exists that conceptualize the civic engagement of citizens as crucial for the quality of democracy (Selle, 1999; Newton, 1999; Putnam 1993; Maloney & Rossteutscher, 2007). Also in this reasoning lane Inglehart affirms that: "Mass mobilization is a prerequisite for the contemporary version of democracy" (Inglehart, 1997, 169). Every form of participation has a value (as we discussed in the previous chapter) despite being conventional or not, institutional or not, political or not political. Although researchers were careful to classify in specific categories different forms of participation and the kind of organizations that enable the collective action of society, and often have been very critic in this regards, I think that in the essence all these instruments raise the power of the citizen. It's understandable that this happens if he is really present and not as in the CSOs’ case in Albania. From long ago Almond and Verba (1965) separated in two primary categories the forms of institutionalized participation, in political and not political organizations. Under this perspective the political organizations have as a goal the representation of their members’ interests towards political institutions, whereas other organizations are completely social without any explicit political intention. However these are two complementary models of social organization and not exempted; because the first ones aim directly to the political action, whereas the second ones at least raise the social cohesion through socialization. In an ideal situation each of them creates a possible space where the human being appears as a social and political being. In fact according to some researchers even those organizations that seem not to have any political role (associations concerned with leisure pursuits) are in a manner transformed in a political habitus because they widen individual's potential for
political involvement and activity, (Putnam, 2000; Maloney & Rossteutscher, 2007). According to this logic as we reasserted above, any kind of participation provides opportunities to build networks, learn new skills, gain information and political competence, at the same time building trust and cooperative habits. Even if these organizations do not influence the raise of the individual's political competence, as long as they function correctly, they remain one of the most efficient instruments for materializing the positions, interests and ways of thinking of different individuals of a complex urban society, may this be modern or postmodern. This applies even more for countries in transition where every instrument that at least serves as a remedy against atomization and social disintegration is useful.

Although except formal models of organization people may also be engaged in non-institutional forms of political action (boycotting, writing to the representative) or join a collective initiative (demonstration, strike, signing petitions etc.). Political participation can be conventional or non-conventional (Teorell, 2007; Kim, 2005). Conventional political participation stands within the normative frame and has much probability of reinforcing the status quo, while unconventional political behavior can be broadly defined as disruptive of the usual functioning of the government, openly challenging political authorities, frequently outside of sanctioned channels, or even violently. Anyhow, the Albanian case proofs that consideration of an act as conventional or unconventional depends on the cultural context, because not occasionally during 23 years of transition the activities of civil society that can be considered unconventional are limited.

In the discussion on participation even an important debate exists among researchers about which formal or informal institutions influence more in the education of civic attitudes. Up to this point we have widely discussed the effects of the voluntary associations on the creation of a participation culture, by referring particularly to the theoreticians of the social capital, and what happens when voluntary associations do not function (as in the Albanian case). According to the social capital theoreticians, participation in voluntary associations is considered so effective that it even has an impact on the individual's political culture because it provides practical training in political skills (such as negotiating, oral presentation, etc) and democratic actions, and has a positive effect on the psychological attitudes of an individual regarding his civic responsibilities and capabilities (such as political efficacy and interest in politics).
(Olson, 1971; Putnam et al, 1993; Morales & Geurts, 2007). However there are many researchers (Coleman, 1994; Uslaner 2003) who say that we shouldn't glorify the role of voluntary associations because they are not the only environment where the individual may internalize some values and attitudes. Of course there are many other different social environments which have a more important socializing role and even more influence in the formation of the individual, like the family and the workplace. As there are in fact many forms of social interaction, whose political and social implications, although fairly important, can hardly be grasped and studied in an exhaustive manner. For instance Welzel (2005) ascertains that another form of interaction like elite-challenging mass action may produce even more positive effects than the membership in a voluntary association.

Many studies (notably at the micro level analysis) dispute the role of civic participation and associational membership in the development of trust and democratic attitudes (Hooghe & Stolle, 2003; Armigeon, 2007). Based on this critical approach, the thesis of Putnam about the strong relation between participation and trust cannot be taken as absolute because there are many studies which uncover that the relation between these two variables varies, it is significant in some countries but not in others, among some social groups but not among others, and for some sorts of organizations but not others. Also even the traditional function of associations is evaluated in critical terms as intermediate democratic structures between citizens and the political system and political institutions. Different researchers have argued even through a historical view that although potentially an association may perform that function, in reality it may have neither the ability nor the necessary willpower to do that, as we ascertained in the Albanian case.

For instance Maloney and Rossteuscher (2007) make evident that many associations during the Weimar Republic did not contribute to democratic development, and in fact paved the way for the success of National Socialism.

Voluntary association not only in Albania or in many countries of the eastern Europe show rather much weakness, but they might have changed everywhere (Per Selle, 1999) and maybe they do not resemble at all to the classic typology which is referred by Putnam but in my opinion this does not dissolve their importance and even more the importance of participation itself. The objective and at the same time critical reading of the reality does not mean that every idealistic point of view should be
eliminated, but on the contrary it can serve as a drive for the dimensioning of the model of social organization and for the reconceptualization of participation itself. Participation (regardless of forms and tools used) at the least has an integrative function as it teaches solidarity, reciprocity, tolerance, mutual respect, trust, respect for justice, the rights of others and other civic virtues that allow for more effective cooperation. The individual gains a greater sense of belonging to the society; this makes him understand that consideration of the public interest (not merely his immediate selfish interests) can be beneficial. When people are united, informed and confident, and organize in bigger groups and associations, they become a power that one should reckon with.

Uncooperative and completely individualistic influence attempts can only lead to dysfunctional results (Almond & Verba, 1965, 153). Certainly every sort of debate on the organizational forms, the competence and political responsibility of the participating subject (the citizen) is necessary to understand how the participation should be oriented.

But to understand what happens when the political being is reduced at the voting act, when it is not participatory in other forms or accepts in a passive way everything that comes from above, it's sufficient to look at Albania during these two decades. If we placed, like in a puzzle, the negative phenomena such as a rough and unjust competition, poor governance, corruption, political authority with a centralizing tendency and a truncated legitimacy, the unfair ratio of the private and public sphere, anomie, the loss of the vertical and horizontal trust, and many more, we understand that one of the keywords that can solve the puzzle is the absence of public conscience. The most significant indicator is the level of political alienation of the Albanian society, which states in a manner it's surrender as a consequence of multiple disappointments from two decades and as a result the loss of trust (to be illustrated below through empirical data) towards the state, towards the system itself, but even towards the members of this society. Therefore in these circumstances I don't think that the mechanical usage of citizenship reduced at the voting act would fulfill any integrative function at the service of the social cohesion, would raise the public awareness or would return trust of the individual, to his similar citizens and the state. The same way I don't believe that participation is a panacea, but in a country like Albania I believe that it is necessary above all to enable the individual to feel that he
is part of a bigger universe rather than the "micro cosmos inside the fence of his own house". In those places, like Albania, the risk is not the tyranny of the majority but the continuing reproduction of minority's tyranny although not in the proportions of a genuine dictatorship, but anyhow, systems or governing models which discourage in a consistent manner the demos’ participation and consequently make the vitality of a modern democratic state impossible. I dread that the individual in Albania never had the chance to embrace the art of citizenship while in a paradoxical manner after the 90es he was placed to face a new political system as democracy that is presupposed not to function without the active citizen. The citizen seems to have “traveled in time” only on political - social environments that have continuously alienated him, or he was himself predisposed to be alienated (this remains to be discussed in the following). Therefore the more spaces and instruments that guarantee participation and activation, the more the possibility is increased for the political being to appear inside the Albanian society. The relation with the public sphere, the state, the 'polis' may become functional only when the individual perceives it as his home by breaking free of political alienation, through participation.  

*But what do we understand with political alienation and which are the factors that caused it?*

### 3.2. The concept and dimensions of political alienation

The concept of political alienation may be interpreted under the simplest definition possible as political disenchantment or disengagement from the whole political system or simply from political institutions. Thus it is the opposite of political support and participation, which means a confident relation with institutions and altogether a legitimate political authority. Logically in an ontological understanding, to be alienated means that a previous condition of the being existed that is transformed into a condition in a manner foreign (alien) to the being. Apart of the concept of political alienation, in the theoretical outlay the discussion on the notion of social alienation in general continues since the antiquity to nowadays through the most diverse arguments and approaches. But remaining inside the boundaries of this thesis, we cannot neglect (in a short and modest interpretation) the debate of some of the most outstanding thinkers over this concept. According to Hegel (who knowingly is the base of the
Marx's thoughts) 'alienation' is a process by which 'finite Spirit', the human self, externalizes itself, and then confronts its own other being as something separate, distinct and opposed to it. Marx, the same as Hegel, judges self-alienation as a social and historical phenomenon which is destined to be overcome with historical development and progress (Sayers, 2003, 118). But differently from Hegel, he claims that alienation is not a phase that has passed; on the contrary it is an inevitable phenomenon of the capitalist system and can change only with the collapse of this system.

Inside the capitalist structure of production the individual is alienated because his relation with work as a human process now is deformed because work is not an expression of the human potential anymore but an instrument for reaching the goal, making money. Thus we get alienated from work by getting alienated even from our true human nature (George Ritzer, Douglas J. Goodman, 2008, 51) On the other hand Durkheim, Simmel and Weber - although they might have not articulated the notion of alienation in an explicit manner - in their argument allow us to find it as a base problem of modernization. This is because in an exceptional manner in the modern society it is thought that the structure is imposed to the individual transforming him/het in an actor without a role. According to Seeman (1959) we can find the alienation argued by Durkheim in the description of "anomie" as a precondition of normlessness. As we might know, society is faced by an anomie state when social norms that lead the behavior of the individual have fallen or are no longer effective (Seeman, 1959, 787).

Whereas for Simmel money creates an objectivity that stands over against individuals as a natural entity (Simmel 1990, 453); this supraindividual world as a culture of things confronts the individuals as something alien.

Although he, differently from Marx, does not think that alienation will be eliminated through revolution because despite it is the modernity that intensifies the experience of alienation, in substance it is a phenomenon inherent in the human condition, an enigmatic relationship, something we have to learn to live with. For Weber, also differently from Marx, it is not the economical structure but the rationalization and bureaucratization of the modern society that lead towards its alienation. Therefore the overthrowing of this system is not sufficient in order for the alienation to disappear, or said differently, for the individual to be freed from the iron cage; what is experienced in the modern society is an inevitable situation.
In essence (despite different approaches and endless arguments which would be impossible to be treated in this thesis) alienation is the process through which people get transformed into strangers for the social-political order in which they are living. The lack of individual control over the world that surrounds him, injects in him a condition of powerlessness, something that usually leads him towards a possible isolation. It does not matter whether it is a social, economic or political force in front of which the individual feels powerless to change or remodel it in accordance with his desires and ideas, but in every occasion the result is subordination and as a consequence the alienation.

Anyway rightfully Wright has expressed that 'alienation continues to be one of the most ambiguous and hardly defined, despite being one of the most used concepts in explanation of social and political behavior” (Wright, 1981, 17). The definition of this concept depends at least on three important components:

Locus of alienation; mode of alienation and the referent of alienation. Different researchers start from one or from the three of these elements for analyzing the phenomenon of alienation in general or the political one in particular.

Even on a more specific discourse on the concept of political alienation (although we can consider it a derivative of political alienation concept or one of its dimensions), a wide range of scholars has tried from long time ago to determine it, beside that some of them highlight that it is difficult to identify a well-structured theory that defines it (Denters, Geurts, 1993, 445).

According to Finifter (1970) four dimensions of political alienation exist, which might help in better determining the concept:

1) 'Political powerlessness', may be explained as the feeling of the individual that he cannot influence the decision making of political authority although this may be against the interests or wishes of the individual. Thus it is the contrary of political efficacy;

2) "Political meaninglessness" has an objective and a subjective meaning - on one hand the individual is unable to see any meaningful political choices because he cannot read or clearly foresee the result, and on the other hand because the political choices are themselves nonsensical for as long as no one can predict their result and use them in the future for changing social conditions;
3) "Perceived political normlessness", which is based on the Durkheim’s anomie concept, and can be defined as the perception of an individual that the norms and common regulations of political relation are overthrown;

4) "Political isolation" derives from the disapproval of forms and intentions on which the other members of society are widely grounded. According to Finifter this dimension of the political alienation may be understood as a stand under which, voting or other acts "socially defined as political obligations are merely conformist formalities or indeed that public participation is inappropriate in the formulation of public policy" (Finifter, 1970, 390-391).

Some researchers (Miller 1974; Strama 1998; Oskarson 2005) try to distinguish someone's attitude that is alienated from politics from someone’s who simply is cynic towards politics. According to this "Cynical" definition, there is low political trust but a high political interest and there is the premise for being participatory, meanwhile the politically alienated neither has trust nor is interested in politics and consequently is not at all participatory. Anyhow it is clear that political alienation is a wider concept because it includes both dimensions in which the individual’s participating predispositions are manifested, that is trust and efficacy. Besides all, since our interest is to perceive a wider range of the state-society relation, it’s evident that is really important to focus on the phenomenon of political alienation Because it is not only the relation with the object but it’s the inner relation of the subject with his political potential that determines the political attitude of the individual. In essence, all the discussion on political alienation is an analysis on the dysfunctional relation between the state and society because its two dimensions affect both the nature and the extent of participation and thus facilitate or delay the development of civil society.

3.3. The phenomenon of political alienation in post - communist countries and Albania

In this chapter it is important to unveil the scale of political alienation and the causes that might have caused this situation in Albania, because as DiRenzo has expressed "The alienated person is an individual who is said to be in society but not of it and he
cannot be expected to manifest any significant degree of citizenship" (DiRenzo, 1990, 31).

Anyhow from my point of view, political alienation must be read and analyzed as very causative, dynamic and not homogeneous phenomenon.

**Very causative** because as we are about to see below (in the analysis of the Albanian case) the reasons are historical and contextual, produced from within and externally imported, thus any kind of struggling for analyzing it as a phenomenon that derives more from the past than the present, is transformed into a useless determination.

**Dynamic**, because the reality in post-communist countries continues to change regularly even because alienation doesn't make up a solid condition in eternity but may be a temporary attitude of an individual or a group of people.

**Not homogeneous** because society itself is not homogeneous but composed by different social groups. Not by accident different studies prove that the trust towards institutions and efficacy varies from one group to another. For instance, according to Inglehart, the well-educated and post-materialistic youths are the most unsatisfied with the manner of functioning of democracy nowadays in western countries and the ones that react in various manners aiming to improve it (Inglehart 1997).

Let's see where we can find this phenomenon materialized in the post-communist countries and according to which approaches it may be explained.

It's clear that political alienation is not a phenomenon that has only touched Eastern Europe and Albania but it has affected also Western countries (Stoker, 2008; Dalton, 2004). The level of occurrence of this condition and also the causes that have produced it are diverse, both between post-communist countries and Western Europe (this is connected with the level of democracy) and between the last ones and Albania. Although naturally we may find similar elements, it's necessary that first we expand an analysis of this phenomenon in post-communist countries and later we focus on the Albanian case.

According to many studies, post-communist countries continue to show a low level of trust on each other and politics, a low level of efficacy, and also a low level of political interest compared to the western countries (Letki&Evans, 2005, 522); (Rose
& Shin, 2001); (Lagerspetz, 2009). The level of civic engagement is very low, in
particular in the Eastern Europe countries (Fuchs & Klingerman 2006). Distrust and
skepticism for civil and political institutions is in significant proportions in these
countries (Mishler & Rose 1997, 424). Even today, after more than two decades,
despite that from different approaches researchers continue to reassert that the level
and typology of citizens’ political participation in these countries isn't
any substantially improved (Ekiert, Kubik, Vachudova, 2007); (Ackerman 2007);
(Pop-Eleches, Tucker 2013).

Rose and Shin (2001) argument that countries of the third wave of democratization,
have followed a different development trajectory towards democracy in comparison to
the countries of the first wave of democratization. These last ones, differently from
post-communist countries have first installed the institutions and standards of a
modern state as the rule of law, institutions of civil society and accountability of
governors and later the right of vote. According to these researchers, for many reasons
post-communist countries have an incomplete democracy, falling into the low level
equilibrium trap, where the poor performance and low trustworthiness of elites are
matched by mass skepticism, disenchantment from politics, low civic efficacy and

Anyhow post-communist countries certify that it’s impossible that the problems of
social apathy and of the political alienation, will be solved through formal
interventions in the system. In these countries it was clearly seen that the installation
of democratic institutions and political and civil rights (including first the right of
vote) could not encourage the activism and citizen responsibility or even generate the
social solidarity and trust in politics (Pietrzyk-Reeves, 2008, Inglehart 2006).

We know from the sociological perspective how important the experience is
(collected along the socialization process) and its interpretation in the opinion creation
and individual expectancies and this certainly serves in understanding the relation
between the individual and the political authority. If people record positive
impressions in their experience as a result of facing a honest and efficient political
decision-making in accordance with their expectations, then the trust towards politics
has the tendency to grow (Rothstein, 2004); (Catterberg & Moreno, 2006); Mishler &
Rose, 2001). Otherwise what can happen is what we observe in many post-communist
countries, distrust and inefficiency until the level of political alienation.
Of course this experience lies in the communist past of these countries as well as in the transitive present. The combination of a culture inherited from the past with the political and social phenomena of transition (as we made it evident above) are the primary tracks of the post-communist reality analysis. The culturalist approach underlines the importance of the communist inheritance in the formation of civic attitudes and behavior because according to this perspective, even the individual political predisposition is influenced by the culture in which the individual is raised (Sztompka, 1998; Inglehart 2006; Pop-Etches, Tucker 2013). Whereas other approaches as the institutionalist one (Mishler&Rose, 2001); (Howard 2003); (Letki, 2006) interpret these attitudes as a consequence of the institutional performance, and as a rational choice of the individual based on his actual experience.

According to the social capital approach, as we've seen above, civic attitudes are developed in interaction with other individuals and the apathy and distrust are consequences of unsuitable transmission of norms and democratic values from social and formal institutions that execute these social functions. (Almond & Verba, 1965; Putnam et al, 1993; Stolle & Rochon, 1999; Uslaner, 2008).

The political power misuse, the overspread corruption at every level, and the economic misery are some of the factors that contributed to the loss of trust and decreasing confidence in institutions. The disappointment is so deep that Rose and Shin (2001) found that many citizens are skeptic if the new democratic government acted more in accordance with their wishes and intentions than the government of the past regime (Rose&Shin, 2001, 347). Another factor that amplified even more the people’s dissatisfaction with politics and politicians was the so called post-honeymoon effect (Inglehart 2002); (Howard 2003). The lack of experience in professional politicians is also identified as another important element that has influenced the performance of institutions and as a result has negatively affected the society-state relation.

Although as we discussed above in the first chapter, it depends on which approach we are based for reading the post-communist reality. According to the institutional approach, political institutions as well as other formal or social institutions have an important role beside others even in modeling the political culture of a particular society. Since a modern state has much influence on the individual life because it
offers a wide range of services to which the wellbeing is directly linked, in no way this does not affect the society behavior and attitudes. In few words, according to this theoretical perspective, if the institutions would secure the economical development, would fight corruption, would guarantee the normal functioning of justice, thus they would verify that they were trustworthy, they would influence the normative-values system that dominates in a specific society. This not only in regards to the vertical relation of society with state but also in changing the social atmosphere in general, by increasing social solidarity and regenerating the citizen’s role, because in front of him a state is displayed towards which there is no reason to be cynic or indifferent. According to this logic the vector of social change is top-down and if the performance of state institutions doesn't change, it's impossible for the citizen’s performance to be changed. According to Letki and Evans, for example, east-central countries are the best instance in which levels of trust reflect rather than influence the effectiveness of political and economic institutions (Letki, Evans, 2005, 515). Said in a summarized manner by many of the institutional theoreticians, trust (as an important component of the participation predisposition) is more a consequence rather than a reason of institutions’ performance (Coleman 1994); (Hetherington 1998). Phrased from Uslaner words "When people feel that their governments treat them fairly, they will also believe that their fellow citizens are trustworthy" (Uslaner, 2002, 219).

Meanwhile the articulated thesis of the culturalist approach is fairly different from the institutional one - because the phenomena of the present can be understood by uncovering the roots in the past. As Rose and Mishler expressed, cultural theories, differently from the institutional ones, argue that the creation of individual political attitudes is exogenous and not endogenous (Rose, Mishler 2001, 32). The values and habits of the individual can be seen as path-dependent, resistant towards change and as a result of early life socialization. Thus in short, alienation is nothing more than the result of a culture inherited from communism, which is characterized by civic passivity and distrust towards authorities. In a special manner for Sztompka (2003), one of the worst consequences of "Block culture" was the widespread erosion of trust. The cultural code inherited from communism was the antagonism between two spheres of life - the private and the public or society versus authorities (Sztompka, 2003, 153). This inherited "hostility" doesn't encourage the individual to be active and to benefit from new personal and institutional opportunities. According to Sztompka
life under so-called "real-socialism" has produced the unique legacy of a peculiar cultural-civilizational syndrome, which determines even the transformation rhythm of these societies. Thus the representatives of cultural theories primarily insist in their paradigm that incomplete democracies will need time to change because even regulations of the elite, the individual values and political culture of society need time to change (Rose & Shin, 2001); (Uslaner 2003). Structural context and social environment in which someone is grown up, as well as socialization agents like family, school, community and media according to this theory play an important role in the individuals’ political view. Nowadays, many researchers continue in explaining under this theoretical perspective the topic of civic participation in eastern Europe countries (see for example, Pop-leeches, Tucker 2013); (Ekiert, Ziblatt 2013).

The social capital approach, differently from the institutional one, operates under a bottom-up\textsuperscript{24} perspective and differently from the cultural approach claims that the situation may change through improvement of horizontal relations. The key argument of the social capital approach is social trust, because its absence is valued as the primary cause of low citizen participation in public life. Civic passivity is the result of unsuitable transmission of political capabilities from important environments of socialization such as family, school, workplace, and volunteering associations.

Therefore as a result the major part of scholars of this approach argue that confidence in institutions is nothing more than the product of interaction among individuals, in other terms a projection of social trust (Almond and Verba 1965); (Putnam 1993); (Fukuyama 2001). As we have previously elaborated, according to this perspective, attitudes and democratic values that derived from a horizontal relation are later reflected even in the vertical relation by creating the conditions for a successful political process.

Anyhow as we have previously emphasized in this research, the discussed theories until this point are not seen in an excluding or contradictory manner but as complementary. As we will see below in the analysis of the Albanian case, I think that some elements can be explained through the institutional theory although I do not

\textsuperscript{24} Although, even within this approach we can distinguish different important authors such as Coleman that state that the trust level derives more from an up-down relationship rather than bottom-up (see for example Coleman 1994).
agree at all with the idea that the change of institutions’ performance is necessary for changing people’s behavior.

I think the heritage of the past, as the cultural perspective claims, is very important in the interpretation of many political phenomena of post-communism, but this does not mean we should wait for the "golden" generation to come which will socialize in the right socio-political environment so that homo-democratic us can thrive. On the other hand as we’ve previously discussed, the theoretical perspective of social capital - although from my point of view seems more balanced (because it tries to integrate top-down view with bottom-up view) - hardly can offer us a convincing solution on how the situation might change. In this thesis, we will try to explain the phenomenon of political alienation in Albania by combining the three approaches, because as different researchers confirm (Woolcock 2000); (Howard 2003) it's important not to underestimate either the weight of institutions or that of the horizontal interaction.

3.3.1. Some of the measurement instruments and indicators of political alienation.

Let's see first which the empirical indicators of political alienation are and how they can be measured.

In the second chapter we tried to explain how CSOs do not offer an appropriate environment for encouragement of citizen participation and in modeling a strong civil society in Albania. Although we considered it as an important factor, we didn't classify it as the only one; therefore we left an open discussion on participation, by searching other actors or factors that influence in the creation of this situation. It's worth recalling that the crucial concern articulated on this thesis, is to understand through the relation state-society the journey of the Albanian society towards modernity. Therefore from the beginning we are searching for the actors that have participated in the construction of the new social-political order, otherwise we are trying to understand why many of them have not participated. Apart from a general analysis in which by referring to different studies we tried to see why in the majority of Eastern Europe countries we encounter a low level of participation, let's specifically observe the Albanian case. The reason why until now we focused on the discourse on political alienation is because I depart from the hypothesis that the
individual in Albania is politically alienated. Certainly, we cannot expect to achieve and break down the discussion of this phenomenon in Albania through this thesis, because it is very complex, so from one hand potentially it could be a separate dissertation topic. But on the other hand we could not leave it without consideration because it is very substantial in understanding how the state and society function as two alien entities that cannot communicate with each other. Thus differently said, I don't pretend to bring any exhaustive empirical analysis, especially in the quantitative aspect but I aim to simply illustrate the existence of this phenomenon and open a discussion area for further research. By referring to researchers (see for example among others, Olsen 1969; Paiges 1971; Selligson 1980; Denters & Geurts 1993; Woolcock 2000; Oskarson 2005) different instruments exist for testing in quantitative terms the indicators of political alienation, which is its level and which are the motives that might have caused it. Many researchers prefer to classify differently the level and sort of participation and otherwise the lack of participation. For example Seligson (1980) by combining two indicators (which are used by the majority of researchers), classifies in four categories the trust and efficacy: 1) Allegiant activist; 2) Allegiant apathetic; 3) Alienated apathetic and 4) Alienated activist (Selligson 1980, 136).

Whereas Oskarson (2005, 129) combines trust with political interest and categorizes them in four specific groups:

1) High political interest combined with high political trust – Integrated;  
2) High political interest combined with low political trust – Cynic;  
3) High political interest combined with high political trust – Loyal;  
4) High political interest combined with low political trust – Alienated.

In spite of different categories in terms of level and type of political participation, most researchers combine these two dimensions to discover the level of political alienation in a certain society. According to the European Social Survey (ESS) 2012 we will analyze the following two indicators: political trust and political interest. The first indicator helps us to understand the level of trust (confidence) in political authority and the level of horizontal trust. Whereas the second one focuses primarily on the internal aspect of efficacy and helps us discover the political interest of citizens through the level of knowledge and understanding of politics and through their
tendency for participation. In synthesis, this model provides us with the opportunity to explore both the internal and external dimensions of the phenomenon, as, on the one hand, it reflects the citizens’ perception of the political authority, and the self-assessment over own competence and political capacity, on the other. As regards categorization by groups of participation, rather than using a complex scheme, like the ones mentioned above, I opted to adopt the simplest “equation” possible, which, in my view, exposes the situation adequately – low interest and low trust confirm the presence of political alienation. In fact, this is not an easy undertaking, because it is difficult to determine a level of trust and efficacy that is low enough to consider it as alienation. The ESS, however, uses a scale of 0 – 10, where ‘0’ implies no trust or no interest and 10 high trust or interest. Subsequently, in a value of 5 and less, we would consider the level to be low enough to categorize it as political alienation.

The components of Political interest are: a) level of interest in politics; b) inclination or disinclination to participate; and c) self-confidence or lack of it that one may influence on politics (political capacity of the citizen). In concrete terms, following is a list of variables that will be tested for the political interest index: 

B1) How interested would you say you are in politics; B11) contacted a politician, government or local government official; B12) worked in a political party or action group; B13) worked in another organization or association; B14) worn or displayed a campaign badge/sticker; B15) signed a petition; B16) taken part in a lawful public demonstration, B17) boycotted certain product.

Whereas the components composing the trust dimension are: a) Trust in politicians; b) Trust in national or international institutions; c) Horizontal trust. In concrete terms, the trust index will be examined in the following variables: 

B2 – Trust in country parliament; B3 – trust in the legal system; B4 – trust in the police; B5 – Trust in politicians; B6 – Trust in political parties B7 Trust in the European Parliament; B8 – Trust in United Nations. Social trust: A3 – Most people can be trusted; A4 – Most people try to take advantage or try to be fair; A5 – Most of the time people are helpful or mostly looking out for themselves.

The analysis of some variables, such as the one on social trust and interest in politics will be comparative, so that we may be able to compare the level of political alienation in Albania vis-à-vis other countries. In fact, I do not claim, through this
comparative analysis, to reach a significant conclusion, but I hope simply to identify the level of “gravity” of this phenomenon in Albania compared to other Eastern European countries, in particular the Western Balkans.

In addition, I would like to include in this study an analysis for a longer period, but this is impossible because, as I have explained in the previous chapter, variables of interest to us for Albania may be found, only in European Value Survey (EVS) of 2008 and ESS (2012). However, it should be emphasized that the interpretation of quantitative data reflected below are superficial and serves only to expose the situation and not as an in-depth statistical analysis. In order to complete the analysis on the causes and factors affecting the political alienation phenomenon, I refer also to data obtained from a qualitative study that I have realized.

![Time spent on watching news or political and actual programmes on TV during a random day (excluding weekends)](image)

**Figure 8: Time spent on watching news or political programmes**

![Interest in politics](image)

**Figure 9: Political interest**
Figure 10: Level of trust in institutions

Figure 11: Level of political participation and interest
3.4. Trying to explain the causes of political alienation in Albania—dehumanizing past, present difficulties and the one dimensional future

From the data displayed in these graphics, we may easily note that the citizens in Albania are politically alienated. If we read the index of political interest the low level of political interest clearly came out, expressed in two aspects. The first aspect is related to the direct question: Are you interested in politics? Respondents in firsthand answer in a considerable percentage that they are not interested. Second, this attitude strengthened even more through the low level of engagement in various civic or political activities from the citizens. The discrepancy between political information and political interest articulated by the citizens seems to be significant in the interpretation of political indicators. In a superficial interpretation this data creates the impression of the citizens as a good “political spectator” but not a “good actor”. To better understand what has caused this contradiction will need to see the qualitative data.

The low level of trust in institutions clearly expresses how confident Albanian citizens are with local institutions and political actors, as an important indicator that implicates the low predisposition for political participation. Here a deeper analysis is needed also beyond quantitative data, because it is important for this thesis to try understanding why the level of confidence in the institutions and international actors is significantly higher. While the horizontal level of trust (3.0, being the lowest in Europe) manifests a serious obstacle to social cohesion and consequently the predisposition of the society to engage in collective action. These elements and many others will be extensively analyzed below by combining quantitative and qualitative data. This is because in my opinion it is impossible to analyze through quantitative data only, the underlying factors contributing to the generation of such a situation. Of course, being a qualitative study, these data may not be generalized. However, given that the causes are rather complex, I think this is the most appropriate approach to address them. They are rather complex, because it is not a coincidence that we have at least three theoretical orientations that interpret the situation from three different perspectives, not taking into account their subdivisions. In other words, it is impossible to identify, only by interpreting quantitative data, the factors that have most contributed to generate this situation – cultural elements inherited from the past or phenomena.
arising from the transformation of the system, institutions or social capital, and even discuss on the conditions that have generated these factors.

More specifically, this “qualitative study” was realized during 2011-2013. Taking advantage of my position as an external consultant for two youth organizations (addressed in chapter two) I have managed to organize in-depth interviews with about 60 students of social sciences aged between 18 and 28 years old. The specific typology of the selected social group is another reason why these data may not be generalized. The sample, however, is selected on purpose for their specific features: 1) age group, as an important prerequisite if we refer to culturalist theories, because the majority of respondents were either born after the collapse of communism or have lived only a few years in that system; therefore, they are supposed to have been socialized in a modern and democratic social and political environment; 2) students of social sciences – because, in my opinion, this realm of study motivates individuals even more towards critical thinking and the tendency for civil activism.

As I pointed out earlier, in this (modest) study, I have tried to test some of the underlying factors from the three theoretical perspectives, excluding from the starting point any subjective attitude. The basis of the research in this qualitative study were the two main dimensions of alienation, political trust and interest, extending the reasoning to other findings, which emerged during the in-depth interviews. The study will be presented through synthetic data exposure and, in certain cases, illustrated through some representative answers by the respondents.

The discussion25 (interview) started with some general questions on the social and political situation in Albania. All the respondents in this study answered immediately and converged in a pessimistic perception of the reality such as – corruption has penetrated in all the aspects of the society, injustice, lack of meritocracy, abusive political power, and many other negative phenomena, which had one common denominator, no hope for the future. In fact, such evidence is not a novelty, but simply confirms what is identified by other quantitative studies (see for example ESS, EVS, and Transparency International 2011). These issues are broadly discussed by the public opinion in Albania, in the media and in other public and private environments.

This is confirmed also by the respondents, who confirm that they discuss very frequently with friends, family members and in other settings about the negative

25I consider it as discussion because the interview was organized as a free conversation, so that the respondent could be confident and sincere, like in a normal conversation with a friend.
phenomena of concern for the modern Albanian society. As we will explain in more
details below, this constitutes a fundamental contradiction in the present mentality of
the Albanian society. The ratio thinking – action is entirely asymmetric because, on
the one hand, the citizens words suggest that the interest for politics in general and
concern for the current situation is present. On the other hand, this does not
materialize in any political action of the individual, in an effort to change the
situation.

When discussion expanded to understand who the actors responsible for this situation
were, we find that they all identify the political class as the main responsible actor.
They rate the society as the second one, for not reacting against this difficult situation,
which does not correspond at all, according to them, to the aspirations and interests of
the society. Based on the second point, the discussion moved on to participation,
articulated first through the following question: As you say that failure of the society
to react is an important factor contributing to this situation, have you participated in
any conventional or non-conventional political or civil activity? Most of them
responded they had never participated in such activities, but said they were willing to
be engaged in such activities, although, as we will see, they were rather skeptical
about the impact. The only form this group of respondents had participated in, was
voting in local or general elections. Nonetheless, the reason for participating in voting
was far from a proper political action or civil engagement, because, according to
them, the vote would not significantly contribute to change the situation. They
responded they had voted for three reasons26: 1) curiosity for first time voters
(because of the age); 2) some of them had been spurred by family members to vote for
a certain political party for mere interest of the parents and their personal or indirect
relations with a senior official of a political party and 3) call of duty to vote although
they did not think their vote would have a significant impact on improving the welfare
of the society. This is what one respondent said “I voted because I had never voted
before and wanted to experience what it feels like; I was very enthusiastic, but seeing
what happened after the voting process, I almost regretted having voted. Elections
turned out to have been only partially fair. I am convinced that they think only about
their benefits and it is not worth voting.”

26Data related to the parties will be analyzed extensively in chapter four.
When asked about the reasons for not participating and not engaging in civil action, all the actors and factors contributing to the situation emerged:

Lack of confidence that the situation may change, even if they engage and participate through various forms and means of participation. This derives, first of all, from the reflection on earlier experiences either told by other people or experienced directly.

In this regard, respondent x1 said “There is no point in reacting; nothing may be achieved, even if you rally to protest. They will find a way to neutralize any form of civic reaction, because what we do not have, is the civil citizen. I do not recall any civic reaction, whether organized by political parties (mainly in opposition) or the civil society that has triggered a change in the situation in favor of the citizens (the respondent lists a series of earlier experiences, that, according to him, produced no impact)”. This is the reasoning of many respondents; even when I referred to an example of civil engagement, which we may consider as effective, respondents insisted in the relativity of the impact of this experience. At this point, it becomes insignificant whether their opinion is based on serious information or simply a perception, because we are facing here a clear attitude – it is not worth engaging, because the situation will not change anyhow. In fact, this is a wide-spread attitude in the Albanian society, as pointed by quantitative data mentioned above (see Figure 19. Variables E24, E26). This attitude manifests the presence of both dimensions that express the political alienation of the citizens. On one hand efficacy, because it is clear that the citizens do not trust their action will have an impact on the political process. On the other hand, as reflected in the quantitative data presented above, trust in institutions, governance and political authority is overall low. Furthermore, none of the respondents in the qualitative study trusts the domestic political authorities and hopes any political actor will improve their situation. On the theoretical aspect to explain this attitude, it is understandable that we may refer to both culturalist theories and institutionalist ones as they both affirm that political trust is something that is acquired, and is a combination of the past political trust with the recent experiences of an individual (Mishler & Rose 2001). The size of political alienation is even more evident when referring to the respondents’ level of interest in politics. Formulating the question as – how interested are you in politics? The respondents automatically reply they are little interested. The same situation is shown by the data of the ESS, according to which about 34% of the Albanian society are not interested in politics;
compared to other European countries they are ranked among the last ones. On the other hand, however, data suggest that about 60% of Albanians watch political news for longer than half an hour per day. The same answer is provided by the respondents in the qualitative study, whom we may consider as on average interested in political information, although they claim they are uninterested in politics. Trying to explain this contradiction, I find that rather than lack of interest in politics, we face the same problem we have been discussing earlier: it is a conscious form of refusing to approach politics seriously, as a consequence of disappointment or disenchantment by politics. Hence, the interest in political decision-making or other problems of concern for the country in general is present, but the political realm is considered now not only as an alien entity, but also as “adversary”. One respondent said that “In fact, I regularly watch political programmes; the same applies to my family and friends. We often discuss about politics, but I say I am uninterested in the sense that given the current corrupt political class, it is not worth getting engaged”

Following this logic, this is an intentional distancing from politics rather than an unconscious loss of interest. In the language of Olsen (1969), it is about discontent more than about incapability. However, given that this is a form of permanent discontent, with the passing of time, it becomes a collective disappointment by politics and, therefore, deteriorates to a social syndrome – incapability of the citizen to become an active actor in the transformation processes of the country.

This line of reasoning suggests a deterministic – fatalistic approach, because it is the structure that has determined the attitude of the actor. In simpler words, according to the institutionalist approach, this means that the performance of the political authority has determined a state of apathy of the citizens in Albania. Thus the insofar non-participation may be read as a phenomenon of the present, and a deliberate consequence, or unconditional surrendering of the citizen to the state apparatus that is too far from his aspirations. This a posteriori means that the willingness of the citizen is present, but objective circumstances generated from a top – down relationship paralyze this willingness (we will address this topic in more detail in chapter IV). The presence of this essential contradiction renders the analysis more difficult – the actor is interested, wants to be active and, above all, is conscious of the importance of participating, but does not act. Respondent y said that: “We understand the importance of participating, especially in a democratic system. We need to react, as this may be the only way for the situation in Albania to improve. But I see that it is
difficult for us to come together as one.” This is to say that we are not talking about a totally passive entity, acting beyond its will, but I am not certain whether we may speak of an entity that is sensitized enough to act.

If we were to borrow the neo–Marxist approach to explain this problem, drawing on Lukacs reasoning, we would say that when the class is made aware of its position and mission, it will act (Lukacs 1968, 76). While it may sound artificial, because in our case it is not about a class or a revolution, if we ignore the context, we may read it as a useful reference to understand the relation between conscience and action. If we judge the reality in this perspective, the available data suggest that if the necessary conditions are in place in Albania for a minimum awareness for action, then, why no action is taken? Have the individuals accepted the reality to the extent that they are unable to react? According to Marx, alienation is a result of the application of the domination structures. Would this case be an application of domination structures?

These questions lead us to look for other causes of political alienation beyond the interpretation of this phenomenon from an institutionalist perspective, because an anomaly such as political alienation may not be causal. To this end, the typology of the interviewed group comes in handy. It makes perfect sense that being young, they may not assume a solid political stance, and the experiences they have had to face so far cannot determine and their attitudes forever. For these reasons, I considered it from the beginning as a possibility that helps us understand somewhat the complicated set of visible and invisible factors that contribute to the formation of political and civic attitude of individuals in Albania. Let us now see a synthesis of some additional factors trying to answer one of the most fundamental questions in this study – why isn’t the individual acting, despite being sufficiently aware of the importance of participating?

The horizontal trust is definitively a determining factor. Respondents state that another reason why they do not engage even when they see it as necessary is that “we are incapable of getting ourselves organized. I may pioneer a certain civic initiative, but I am afraid that no one else will show up. I have seen some civic initiatives by the civil society failed because of poor participation. I do not really believe that the others want the situation to change. If you have a look around, most of the people are corrupt”. One of the reasons the Albanians do not “join forces” is lack of horizontal trust, although we come from a regime that sought the extreme and forced collectivization of the society. The ESS reveals that in Albania the coefficient of
social trust is 3.0, being the lowest in Europe. Interpreted in the light of the social capital approach lack of horizontal trust is a significant obstacle to cultivating social solidarity, and subsequently to social capital as a key element in the political and economic life of a country. Along this line, Putnam (2000) underlines that the main problem for the non-functioning of political systems nowadays is a product of the lack of social capital, which consists of civic networks, mutual trust and shared obligations in the society. Trust stimulates the individual to be more empathetic to the others and inclined towards cooperative behavior (Gambetta, 2000).

Despite the arguments articulated from different theoretical perspectives, even by a simple logic each of us can understand that social trust is an important marker in defining the horizontal relationships and as a result in defining the tendency of the members of a society to collaborate. It’s clear that even if we suppose that awareness on the necessity of civic engagement exist in individuals, it’s hard to say that the same awareness exists in groups since there is no social solidarity. In other words it’s hard to articulate common public causes if I don’t trust somebody, because in this case the public and the private are two categories that lack communication.

For Putnam (2000) the relationship between social trust and civic engagement turns into a vicious circle because none of them can do without the other. Therefore lack of horizontal trust disables the creation of a group spirit (beyond individual relationship) and the resizing of sensitivity to the public sphere which is necessary for the configuration of different forms of civil activation. Nevertheless this doesn’t mean that individuals in Albania are totally atomistic and trust nobody, but trust only stretches within some closed networks which are established on private relationships.

By not trusting “the others in general” if we use a Meadian (Mead 2001) language the individuals have the tendency to create closed groups which serve to fulfill only its egotistical interests and not the collective ones.

In these circumstances these social networks are transformed into another factor which affects the society’s incapability to act politically. Since there is no trust in others, there is a tendency to isolate yourself in some private and informal groups reinforcing the armature of the private life and enlarging the distance with the public. This might be an inherited dichotomy from the previous regime, if we refer to the cultural approach of Sztompka. In that period (as we have discussed in the second chapter) trust suffered an extreme erosion as a result of an antagonist relationship between the private and public spheres. According to this cultural code that we might
have inherited, the private (the particular) is good and the public (the universal) is bad (Sztompka, 2003, 153). In Albania we don’t only face such groups’s formation but one of their characteristics is that they continue to be based on blood relations and very often on regional relations. This characteristic is a logical derivative of the prevalent thinking- if I don’t trust someone, not only the collaboration with him/her is limited but I also have to be careful and protect myself from him/her, therefore the solution is the traditional communities. In other words these networks are certified as gatekeeper of the private. Usually, at the moment the individual accommodates in these networks, he doesn’t think it is necessary to fight for the common social issues. With the passing of time this has been transformed in a constant ritual and in a social habit because practically individuals can solve their problems individually by activating their network of friends/acquaintances. This has been the answer by most of the interviewees ” If I have a problem, I don’t need to protest in the street because I can try to solve it on my own, just like everyone else does, family and friends can help”. These attitudes have been cultivated since the collapse of the Communist regime as a result of a great insecurity that was progressively amplified in Albania. First, in relation to a state whose economy and institutions were being destroyed, the natural reaction of individuals in order to survive was the creation of this social network typology. The answer of the citizens to the formal unstable, inefficient institutions was the reinforcement of informality (see Howard 2003; Letki 2009; Sztompka 2003; Jowit 1992 among others). In fact as we mentioned earlier, it wasn’t necessary to invent these survival instruments but they were automatically activated because they were registered in our culture from the previous regime. Secondly, at a wider social level the more the individuals face a chaotic and liquid society outside home, where the structural positions of the individual and the social hierarchy change rapidly, the only solid and constant “shelter” for the individual is the private sphere. Although family as the main cell of the private sphere is contaminated by the spirit of radical social transformation, it still remains the last castle of the stability and continuity of tradition. Social groups inherited from the previous regime were dissolved or radically changed as a result of the transformation of social environment, as well as moral and formal principles which were the basis of these groups. As we have mentioned in the previous chapter, the so called important public spaces of socialization during communism, were completely destroyed.
I mean the manufacturing structures (factories, farms) which were either destroyed or privatized without preserving anything from their physical or social former structure. In my opinion if these structures were gradually transformed by being adapted to the new social conditions, they may have served as the centre for the constitution of interest groups. I am emphasizing the importance of these environments because if we consider the recent Albanian situation, an important factor which has affected the abrasion of social belief as a result of public awareness and incapability to act as a group, is the impossibility of sharing the common interests among the society’s members. Meanwhile ‘new’ social groups are fluid enough and regularly change their physiognomy, either as a result of modernism itself or as a result of a continuous transformation due to transition. One of the interviewees would say this “I can make a list of people I know whose life has changed in a strange way. He used to be a shepherd, and now he is a businessmen, a criminal who has become a politician etc.”. The new social groups are transitional; they are a cultural and economic production of post-communist transition so they have a temporary and unstable identity. Of course the members of these groups are also unstable and change their social status time after time moving from one group to another, from a hierarchy position to another (Fuga 2004, 212). In front of such a social chaos the individual is less strong to act, that’s why he gives up by strengthening the private and by being passive and cynical toward the public. Lack of trust in others, considered as the “anonymous” citizens, leads not only to the isolation in the private sphere but also sometimes to a limited social relationship in traditional communities as asserted above. These communities are considered as a solution because they are based on a moral, traditional code in which remains of a mechanical solidarity are reflected, if we refer to Durkheim language. In a rather speculative interpretation I would say that we have to do with an intentional return to the gemeinschaft because the individual trusts personal interactions more than impersonal or indirect interactions that compose the gesellschaft. There are of course more modern forms of social organization but if we compare them to the traditional ones (for the reasons we discussed earlier) they don’t have a clear identity yet and they are not solid at all. It’s clear that the “traditional communities” also operate in a modern interaction world, through rational transactions and it’s exactly a calculation of interests that has reproduced the gemeinschaft. Here I am talking about the groups of interest and not subcultures. According to Dahrendorf (1959) groups are composed as “an aggregation of people who have similar role interests” structured as
similar groups and later transformed in interest groups and after that in conflict groups that generate development and change. (Dahrendorf, 1959, 180). What I am trying to clarify here by this way of thinking is that the absence of social groups which are established on their structural interest, typical for a modern society, makes the resizing of the relationship between private and public difficult. Logically within a rational, formal and modern system, the individual and the social groups have to be culturally established based on the same principles, otherwise there will be an incongruence between them, and as a result a dysfunctional relationship.

If we will have the same level of trust among the citizens in Albania, it’s hard to have the conditions for social solidarity, beyond the social closed private and often traditional networks. Normally in this case it is difficult for the individual to escape from political alienation because there is no possibility to discover the importance of public sphere and resize its relationship with the state, by being transformed in a political community.

In this incoherent relationship with the new social-political system stands the family. If we would judge according to the cultural approach, family as an important environment of communism is the most important armor of culture inherited from the past regime.

As we know sociologically most of the cultural norms are acquired at an early age in the family. Not only this but according to Uslaner (2002) the tendency to trust or not trust others depends on the image of the world that is passed down from parents to children (Uslaner 2002, 77). Specifically referring to the qualitative study, it results that the family can be an obstacle in two main ways for the cultivation of the tendency to participate and to be active. First, directly as a result of the political attitude that parents induce in their children. Second, indirectly by serving as an umbrella for the individual, parents often don’t allow the child to have a modern individuality which surpasses the closed networks we talked about so far.

In order to identify the first type of obstacle am focused at the interviewees, because almost all of them say that their family has deprived them from participation. Some of them were encouraged to take part in political parties’ activities but they never took part in any activity which opposed this political party or the political authority in general. From the discussions with the interviewees I understood that the parents’ position (which we will fully discuss in the next chapter) is “inherited” but it is also a result of the relationship with the political authority during the two decades of
transformation. Although the hidden dimension of heritage is hard to discover I have noticed that the mentality of this parent’s generation can be very well reflected in an Albanian metaphor “Don’t play with water, fire and state power”. Here the state (government) is perceived as a natural force that expresses a condition which Marx would describe as implementation of the structures of domination. In order to understand why did I come up with this conclusion it’s helpful to refer to the interviewees words: “It was a protest organized by an association who works with students who wanted to change higher education law in interest of the student. For this reason I told my parents that I am going to be part of this protest in front of the Ministry of Education. Their reaction was immediate. It’s none of your business, mind your own interest. Have you ever seen us protest about anything? And the outcome hasn’t been bad, right? Even if you protest, do you really think you are going to achieve anything?”

Only by analyzing this statement and many more like these found out through the interviews, we notice the inherited way of thinking as well as the vision parents have about the world and how is this vision passed down to children.

This way we are evaluating a verbal expression of parents’ attitude but it’s also easy to imagine the silent pressure of parents on children through their model in everyday life.

Their fear comes from the past and it is inculcated in the present. Here are the words of another interviewee: My parents have always told me that dealing with politics is no worth it (here the political authority is implied). Nothing good comes from it unless you use it (it stands for political party) to find a job or benefit somehow. Nowadays politicians are just the same as the old nomenclature. From this point of view the state and the political sphere in general is mainly perceived as the political party, which expresses an approach passed down from the past according to the political party – state model (argument topic we will fully discuss in the next chapter). Here parents pass down to children what Sztompka describes as “civilizational incompetence”, by which he means lack of inherited capacities which today is understood as the incapability to use new institutional and personal opportunities (Sztompka, 1998, 20). Their tendency is articulated as disenchantment from the politics and is orientated to the political alienation. Parents’ attitudes don’t carry only traits passed down from the past because their memory (or the memory of older
familiars in general, like grandparents) has also involuntarily archived all the effects of the problems they have been through during the transition period. It’s evident that many of them have directly suffered the moral, economic and political metamorphosis; they have faced drastic changes of their social and economic status. They have seen everything they had built fall down just like a “sand castle”. They had to survive by all means beyond the moral values in which they had always believed, facing a rundown economy and a new political system which let them down very soon. They had to face a fierce competition that didn’t spare anyone or anything. In a few words their social and political role has been shaped along a social change curve with strong oscillations, which have led to a general disappointing situation, and more specifically towards politics. This is the image they pass down to their children, a reality full of problems that is hard to change; therefore the solution they suggest is investing their energy in the private sphere and not in public participation. Using a metaphor, the image that is passed down to children looks more like a “dark comedy”- it’s a cynicism to the important life phenomena - rather than a movie that inspires revolt to injustice or the social action for ideals or public causes. It’s understandable that this attitude doesn’t involve at the same level all the social groups in which certain individuals of this age take part, but all social categories manifest it at a critical level. For example if we analyze through figures the differences between villages and cities (see Figure 10) people living in the village trust the institutions and the political actors more than people living in the city, nevertheless in both cases the level of trust is critical.

In any case, from a direct or an indirect point of view, the family has a crucial role in factorizing or not the individual as a participant actor or a change agent from a bottom – up approach. As I asserted above I believe there is also an indirect way of influence of the family on the individual. In a developing country like Albania, the family has an important and universal influence on the individual’s existence. According to a survey carried out in Albania with young people aged 16-27, 84 % of young people still consider living with their families a constant element of their emotional and economic stability. (“Friedrich Ebert foundation, www.fes-tirana.org, 2011). “My family provides everything for me now, and I hope it will continue to do the same in the future. If my family won’t be able to guarantee me a good perspective, it is going to be hard for me to achieve my goals” says one of the interviewees in our survey. It’s clear that the positive aspect of the important position of the family is because it has
served as a shelter for the individual, otherwise his survival in such a poor country like Albania would have been more difficult and as a result the social problems in our country would have been worse. On the other hand the family’s basic position is also centralizing, as a result it reinforces the armor of the private. This relationship with the family neutralizes the individual’s subjectivity, by transforming it in a passive human being in front of the political/public sphere. This individual doesn’t have any incentive to look for a solution to his/her problems outside the private sphere. This happens even though the individual knows that most of his/her problems derive from outside, from the structure or bad performance of the government. In these circumstances a vicious circle is created – the lack of an efficient state forces the individual to seek for a solution inside his/her family while the family keeps the individual away from the public sphere. On the contrary the individual would be empathetic to “the other, the unknown one” only if they would have shared the same problems/worries which would have been articulated outside the private sphere- this way the public sphere would have been more valuable. Nevertheless I need to emphasize that I am referring to families that have been able to carry such a role for the individual. There are other families which for different reasons not only haven’t served as a shelter for the individual but have been transformed into conflictual bases and endless anomalies (Fuga, 2004, 370). Therefore the reasoning about the family domain has to be reconsidered because this kind of family typology hasn’t produced any different relationship with the public sphere, compared to “the umbrella family”. In any case we have to say that the family either when it serves as a shield for the child or the opposite, directly or indirectly, remains an important socializing environment which affects a lot the model of social and political action of the individual (according to the study we mentioned earlier (www.fes-tirana.org, 2011) about 64.1% of young people think that family affects a lot their decisions).

Despite the influence the family has, this is not determining compared to what the individual can perceive or try out himself. If we take a look at what we discussed so far we would conclude this discussion by saying that our tendency for participation or apathy depends a lot on the perception we have about the world around us. If the perception of the young people interviewed, created by different sources of information like (media, the internet), by the image the family passes down and by their direct experience is pessimistic, this leads to the loss of hope for the present and the future. Normally the result of this situation is not the tendency for civic
engagement but the opposite of it. Here it is what one of the interviewees said: *We see and hear about corrupted politicians everywhere, about economic crises, about unfair decisions of the court and about people who have become successful unfairly. It’s hard to believe that this country will ever be any better.*

In his reasoning about trust Uslaner claim that “Trust depends on an optimistic worldview: the world is a good place and we can make it better” Uslaner (2002). My reasoning on this subject starts exactly from this premise – the general idea that Albania is not a “good place”, affects the trust individuals have in each other (not by chance Albania is the last country in Europe regarding the social trust, (see Figure 14). But what’s more this is not a mere temporary psychological situation. It is being transformed in a way of thinking which surpasses the importance of social trust because it completely paralyzes the individual will to act in order to improve the situation.

It’s not by chance that in Albania, and this is confirmed by statistics as well, people think that life is becoming worse (see graphic x). It’s not by accident either that in our everyday life or from the interviewees’ speeches the most articulated sentence is “Albania won’t improve”. So the young people don’t think and don’t even have any inner or outer impulse to try to make this country a better place. Instead of a more idealistic and non conformist attitude which would fit the young people, they prefer to leave the country or take advantage of informal networks to guarantee their individual success. In all the surveys conducted by different institutions (FES 2011; EUNACAL 2010; ESS 2012) most of young people would preferably leave the country if they had the chance. Pessimism is on the increase and as a result also the apathy because most of the negative phenomena, which could be considered temporary, are now believed to be permanent and rooted in the system. This is happening because these phenomena are not outside the individual but are produced and incorporated in the individual, becoming constant social models. More specifically the young people say that (as we noticed above) they know too many people who have been successful through dishonest instruments at a moral level or illegal at a formal level.

It’s important to emphasize that these models have ‘corrupted’ the social moral by disorientating the relation value-anti-value. One of the explanations of this situation may be through the notion of normlessness as the perception of an individual that the norms and common regulations (political or not) are overthrown. A notion based on the anomy concept of Durkheim, although according to him this is a temporary
situation because the old moral norms are not applied anymore and the new ones haven’t been installed yet. According to Durkehim “nobody can know what is possible and what is not possible, what is fair and what is not fair, which of the requests and desires presented are legitimate and which ones are not and exceed the normal amount” (Durkheim, 1991, 280). In their most ‘naked’ appearance these social symptoms are manifested by young people. Ironically these phenomena that were supposed to be temporary are perceived as permanent and even as leading models after 24 years of democracy in the country. The critical evaluation of this model is often missing and it is considered as the only possibility to be successful in Albania.

When I asked the interviewees to tell me if any of their relatives or a public well-known figure had achieved success in his field by being honest, they had to struggle to mention anyone. This perception might be due to lack of information, or they might have a deviated information but this is important since it is believed to be true. This information may be exaggerated by the media, since media looking for effective news, reflects more the problems or the negative sides of the reality.

The fact that people and moreover the youth think in this way, reinforces this dominating moral and lack of hope. The most dangerous consequence in this case is that the anti-value becomes a value since the individual either doesn’t react against this moral by legitimating it in silence or voluntarily agrees by embracing it.

Referring to the data of ESS a considerable percentage of people think that “others would try to take advantage of me”. Even the reason people don’t trust institutions and political actors is because they are perceived as extremely corrupted (corruption perception index 2012, www.tia.al). This shows that the individual is aware of the situation, as we mentioned above, but because it doesn’t act, in a way agrees with the situation. The predisposition to believe that every authority, either an individual or an institution, is corrupted, unfair and immoral creates the idea of an “extraordinary situation” and you have nothing better to do but adapt yourself to it in order to survive. This general perception about the world around us eliminates every reactionary willpower to act, conforming it to the majority. In this way the reasoning and action enters a vicious circle-I don’t believe such a situation is going to change therefore I don’t act, although by not acting I support the existing situation and I lose trust and hope. The legitimacy that the above models attain from the silent or active acceptance from the individuals, transforms them into important sources of motivation of social action.
In a Weberian interpretation we would say that this *modus vivendi* is based on the instrumental rationality – the process through which I achieve something is not important, it’s important that I achieve what I want at any cost. This symptom is better expressed by young people who have no questions on the dominating models and the ethics in which they are based but they take it for granted and say this is the way you do it.

To sum it up the perception of the world in very pessimistic terms plunges people into apathy and into various alienations. But more specifically the individual loses its political dimension, because he loses the capability to understand what to change and how to do it - the individual is a passive participant of this world. According to Uslaner: “Trusting strangers’ means accepting them into our “moral community. Strangers may look different from us, they may have different ideologies or religions. But we believe that there is an underlying commonality of values” (Uslaner, 2002, I).

In contrast to Uslaner what we notice in Albania is that the moral and formal chaos has made the articulation of common problems and values impossible and as a result the political participation also. The individual seeks for a solution away from the reality he lives in and not in himself, as a result not believing in his own abilities to change the situation –Not by chance he/she trusts so much International Institutions like European Parliament (European Union) or United Nations (see graphic IV). So far we have noticed that there is no tendency into the Albanian society to take part, either at a group level or at the individual level. So in discussing the relationship between the state and the society we can come to the conclusion that it is difficult to find social actors which have affected the organization and functioning of the new political system in Albania according to a bottom –up approach. As we were arguing above, the passive forms of participation or better said the silent acceptance of the structure don’t give a social actor the status of the change agent. But on the other hand during the last few years Albania has changed a lot. Let’s see in the next chapter the social agents and approaches which have affected the post-communist Albanian transformation. Has it been only a political, economic and social change homogenous to a top-down approach, which has privileged only the political elites? And if so, what is the source of this change and its development perspective? In other terms do we have to do with the political structure that dominates the actor, or the actor himself no matter what social class he belongs to, has culturally absorbed this type of development approach?
CHAPTER IV: Modernization as top – down transformation

4.1. The predetermined way of transformation

So far I have tried to explain that Albania’s development during these last 24 years, its economic, social, and political transformation or - as it is articulated by the transitionalists - the modernism, doesn’t depend on a bottom-up perspective. We have already analyzed the role of the social civil society and came to the conclusion that it has been weak, either as a communism’s heritage or as a result of its organization and functioning during the transformation years.

I also tried to understand the political position and vocation of the individual out of the power structures and I found out that disappointment with politics has been transformed in a political alienation and the last one in a Modus Vivendi. In a few words, so far I have tried to observe the horizontal and vertical relationship, in order to understand what prevents the “ordinary” person to get the role of an active actor.

We have understood that the lack of participation creates a deformed relationship between the state and the society because the private and the public are involved in an essentially conflictual relationship. In fact from the beginning of this thesis I have articulated the idea that the transformation of post-communist countries and more specifically of Albania is based on teleological and homogeneous approaches.

This means that the goal for all post-communist countries perceived as a homogenous societies is predetermined, but not the way it is achieved, because the Albanian society was supposed to discover the way on its own. But in front of a weak social society and a politically alienated actor, it’s clear that many social classes and groups have had no influence in the transformation process, at least not directly. I am saying not directly because they have been passive consumers of what has been prepared in the structures of domination. Trying to understand what has happened except for the topics discussed in the previous chapters, we can notice that in this case the essence ontologically precedes the existence. Expressed more clearly, the predetermined goal forms the profile and the role of each of the society’s layers in the “path” of building a new system. As we mentioned in the beginning, since the process of transformation in Albania is thought to be a mechanical application of formal reforms at the political and economic levels, logically the elites are favored, especially the political ones.
It looks as if with this logical assertion we have found a solution to the “rebus”, but in fact this is a very complex issue. I am expressing myself this way agreeing with Elster, Offe and Preuss who emphasize the idea that the development of post-communist countries was not based in any clear program or strategy (Elster, Offe, Preuss, 1998, 14-15). This seems to be in contradiction with the reasoning we have developed so far, but in fact it stands in the same line and helps me in my reasoning. What I have discussed from the beginning is that the pre-defined goal determines the typology, the role and the importance of the social groups in the process of the country’s transformation, but this doesn’t mean that these groups were clearly formed since the first years after the collapse of the communist regime. It also doesn’t mean that these actors had a well-defined program but some general principles on which the new system would be founded although they would be dominating principles. As Elster, Offe and Preuss, say: “There is no clearly dominant plan or project of transformation because there is no victorious counter-elite (as in revolutions in the proper sense) that prevailed over the old regime and that can derive unequivocal legitimacy and a mandate for action from this accomplishment. As there is no clear answer to the question who exactly ”made” the old system go away, there is no answer as to who is entitled to lead the society into some better future” (Elster, Offe, Preuss, 1998, 15). As we can notice in this assertion, for many scholars it is important to first evaluate the nature of the revolution in order to better read the architecture of the system that is built later. Therefore the ruins of the old system become somehow the foundations of the new system. For Bauman the anti-communist revolution is a little similar to the others because it is a systemic revolution. But, what is more important, according to Bauman “The social forces which led to the downfall of communist powers (and so to the success of the political stage of the revolution) are not those which eventually will benefit from the construction of the new system” (Bauman, 1994, 16). Eisenstadt also notices that the anti-communist revolution, although similar to the classic ones because it overturned everything, is different in many aspects. Its reasons are different, its background is different and the way the process occurred is different. It is difficult to tell if it was a bourgeois or a proletarian type of revolution, which of the social sectors predominated, were the intellectuals, professionals or the workers the ones who had the biggest influence in the downfall of communism (Eisenstadt, 1992, 23). So as a synthesis it is important to start from this crucial moment: to see which were the social forces that brought about change, in
order to understand their role and their importance in the transformation process that came later. But before that, is necessary to focus on an important debate between scholars: whether what happened in these countries was a revolution or not.

There are some important elements that provoke the debate, like: the nonviolent nature of the system’s downfall, the existence or not of a proper movement which led to people’s revolt, the inner erosion of the political and economic structure. The scholars generally agree that the system was being eroded from inside, although nobody had predicted that it was about to collapse. Except for Rumania where there was a lot of violence, Eisenstadt says that in all other countries of the communist block the ruling elites easily surrendered (Eisenstadt, 1992, 24). Elster, Offe and Preuss stress the fact that the downfall of the communist regime was not only peaceful but it didn’t have a revolutionary nature because it lacked some basic characteristics like counter-elite, organization, theory, movement or any clear vision (Elster, Offe, Preus, 1998, 11). Although the critical position articulated by this group of authors stimulates reflection, most of the scholars agree that it was definitely a revolution (see Sztompka, 1993, 85). This is because first of all it provoked a radical change of the social, economic and political structure and secondly because the society’s mobilization had the proper size of a revolution. Maybe in the beginning nothing was clear and intentional from the actors involved in the revolt, that’s why it was made up of sporadic acts, but later it won the consistence and the valence of a real revolution. In a more conventional meaning, if we judge on the background, the way the anti-communist revolution was organized it is not like any other revolution but the effect and the result is similar to any other revolution.

4.2. The moment of regime collapse, as an important moment in the configuration of the social structure - What happened and who participated?

If we reflect in retrospective, in the Albanian reality of those years we can notice that everything starts from some sporadic, unclear cases with non-articulated goals, to get later on the form of a revolution. Fear of the communist repressive machine was so big that it took a long time for the timid, fragmental acts to transform in a popular revolt; therefore not occasionally Albania was the last country in the Eastern Europe to be liberated by the regime. This was due to a range of reasons that we have
discussed in the previous chapters, such as lack of dissidence or of other organized
groups which had a relatively important role in the downfall of the regime in other
Eastern European countries but not in Albania.

The revolution of 1989, which had already involved all Eastern Europe, later started
to resonate in Albania too, although the nomenclature was trying to resist. The prime
minister of that period Alia\(^27\) through the usual propaganda in his public speeches
would say that the communism’s collapse in the Eastern Europe came as a result of
the elites deviation from Marxism – Leninism and not due to reasons related to the
system. Even in its last moments, since the Albanian society hadn’t reacted yet, there
was still an attempt to convince the society that what was happening in Eastern
Europe wouldn’t affect Albania. According to public speeches of the communist
leaders, socialism hadn’t still failed as a theory and practice, therefore they had to
insist to further continue the communist revolution (Biberaj, 1998, 33). Nevertheless,
despite the nomenclature’s attempts to protect the regime, many subsequent events
proved that this was impossible. Under the pressure of the revolution that had already
happened in other countries of the block and of the increasing inner social tension, the
communist nomenclature in the 9th plenum of the Albanian Labour Party (in spring
1990) started to undertake some reforms trying to escape collapse, such as the
decentralization of the economy, the creation of a system for rewards to the
employees, a sort of decentralization of the party in power and it allowed to practice
religion after 23 years of being forbidden by law. Despite the liberalization in July
1990 there were some civil demonstrations that reached their peak with the request for
asylum in the foreign countries’ embassies. In spite of the different ways this moment
was interpreted from the communist leadership, the act itself was a clear signal that it
was time for a radical change. It was a proper act of resistance because in Albania
“crossing the national border” was considered an illegal action to be extremely
punished. Another important development and even determinant during the
transformation is represented by the students protests which gradually involved other

\(^{27}\) Alia was the second communist leader of Albania who governed during the last years of the regime,
from 1985 to 1990. Alia continued to govern following the philosophy of the previous leader because
he didn’t undertake any reforms differently from what had happened in other countries of the
communist block. Such reforms were necessary because the country, except for other things, was
suffering a very bad economic situation during this period as a result of the disconnection of the
relationship with other countries of the block since 1978 and of an extreme isolation. Moreover the
economic crisis became a very important factor of the system’s degeneration because in 1990 the
national income decreased by 12% compared to the previous decade. (Biberaj, 1998, 27).
social groups. In front of such an increasing pressure the political bureau started to gradually retrieve from its position and as a result on 11 December 1990 it accepted the legalization of the political pluralism (Vickers, 2008, 333-338). Although this decision symbolically meant the end of the system it took a long time to have the first pluralist parliamentary elections and to start really the season of transformation through the application of institutional reforms. In the first pluralist elections held in March 1991 the Labour Party of Albania won most of the posts in the parliament indicating that the armour of the domination structure was still resistant. Nevertheless as a result of the massive workers strikes, the collapsed economy and many political protests (like the one in Shkodër), the communists started to back off. The end of more than five decades of communist dominance came only in the elections of March 1992 when the Labour Party of Albania collapsed (Vickers, 2008, 345-361). Although the historic interpretation of the facts is not my intention in this thesis, I focused a little bit on the reflection about some important moments of this period and more importantly I wanted to explore the nature of transformation. If we reflect on these data we realize that Albania may be a specific case for at least two reasons. First of all the fact that the communist regime in Albania was the last one to collapse in the Eastern Europe proves that it was at the same time one of the harshest dictatorial systems. Second this testifies that the society was not ready to react with a decisive power because it hadn’t been able to form social trends yet, with the right organization and power, to rebel against the system. Of course the logic here is reason-consequence, because the incompetence of the society is more an incapability that derives from the fear as a result of state’s violence exercised for a long time. But then, on the other hand, the total lack of inner criticism (for example lack of dissidence), even during the last years of the regime, made the communist leadership more frightening and untouchable. The length of the transformation process of the regime, the actors who participated in it and their role, the lack of a clear program, create the image of a gradual evolution or reform rather than a revolution. It looked more a tactical, gradual retreat from the power through a peaceful change of the system rather than the opposite way. This moment can be interpreted in many ways but it is essentially debatable whether this change came as the effect of external factors or of the internal ones. There was unquestionably an internal tension that with the passing of time included different social groups, but it was also a result of the domino effect whose centre was somewhere else in the other Eastern European
countries. Nevertheless I think that both external and internal factors had an impact. The economy was collapsing, there was a bigger pressure from outside and inside, the base of the whole system in general was so damaged that its collapse was inevitable. This was for sure understood by the nomenclature, which on purpose gradually left the power trying to avoid violence. In any case, except for the factors that influenced the actors who participated and the tools used, if we reflect on the impact created, it is for sure a revolution because it radically changed the system. Regardless of the well-organized actors, whether they had clear goals and strategies or not, the euphoria from the people during the protests and the victory is a symbolic moment, important to understand that this event in itself has the size of a revolution. We shouldn’t confuse people’s incapability to organize themselves, the intellectual’s role to draft a leading program or illuminating theories, the fear from the extreme totalitarianism incorporated in every person, with the will or desire to act. In other words it was a revolution on the premises (sensibility) and on effects (in what was achieved) despite the nature of the operation that was used. The citizens felt like they wanted to and were willing to look for a radical change, and regardless of their capacities and abilities to act this doesn’t make what happened more or less a revolution. Whatever name the researchers give it, in the eyes of the subjects who experienced it, this was a revolution and in my opinion it’s important to start from this premise to reach an objective conclusion, “not manipulated” through a solid concept of the revolution itself. Nevertheless it is important that we understand the social forces and their impact on the structure that starts to build. The civil reaction obtained the proper forms of a popular revolt through the students engagement who made up the social force, crucial in the process of transformation, to whom the intellectuals, the proletariat and a part of cooperativists joined later, even though in my opinion, (as I have mentioned earlier) in Albania we don’t have to do with organized groups, which somehow preceded the revolution and had a very important role during the revolution, if we compare it to Poland, Czech Republic or former Yugoslavia.

28 It is more than enough to consider the act of collapse of Enver Hoxha’s statue. Protesters’ excitement at the moment the statue fell down, accompanied by the “hatred” ritual, clearly reflects the subdued willingness of the society to change. I am calling it the hatred ritual because the images filmed in that time show that people are not satisfied with the statue’s collapse but they drag it in the Capital City’s streets where it was continuously hit from people who were present and could reach it. This act looks like an exorcism ritual where the human being seeks to escape from “devil” that has possessed him for a long time, so the statue is not simply the dictator but stands for the system itself.
That’s why I insist that in Albania there was a more spontaneous and chaotic movement and the agents who followed the process of transformation were shaped on these premises. So reasoning on Albanian situation I can’t avoid any logical relation “reason-consequence” between the social forces that leaded the revolution (which as we said were chaotic and spontaneous, without a clear identity) and the way the political and economic structure and the social transformation in general was projected later.

We can notice more the occasional favoring of certain individuals who “took advantage” of the chaos which accompanied the moment of transformation in Albania. This role was carried by many founders of the opposition political parties, especially the Democratic Party that was the main party that won the elections of March 1992 against the Labour Party of Albania (which later on changed its name to Socialist Party). Therefore the moment of revolution or transformation is not decisive for the modeling of the typology of the transformation agent.

In this case the reasoning of Elster, Offe, Preuss (1998) according to whom there was not a proper movement and a clear vision for the orientation of the transformation is very valuable. More than a social and political agent, which comes with a consolidated identity from the revolution, transformation should arise from the chaos that comes later, within a reestablishment process of every norm and social instance formal or social institutions.

In fact this is the difference between a political revolution and a systemic one: according to Bauman the agents of a systemic revolution find themselves in the situation that a new society and its actors still have to be constructed (Bauman 1994, 18).

The miscellaneous confusion that followed the regime’s collapse transformed “the new state” in a conceptual abstract category, very challenging for “cognitive abilities” of the normal person who at the same time has to calculate the basic existential needs.29 The foundation of the new system was based on the “logic of year 0” therefore everyone would discuss with lots of pleasure about the market economy and

29 De Waal notices that after everything inherited from the previous communist system was destroyed according to the neo liberal approach of shock therapy and not of a gradual transformation, the economy degenerated to a collapse, not producing anything locally. Especially in the first years after the collapse there was an extreme poverty (an indicator of this were people’s long queues to buy bread). Even in the following years there wasn’t any proper rehabilitation of the economy but the society was surviving based on three unstable sources: foreign aid, emigration and sanctions busting (de Waal, 2005, 7-8).
democracy as a way towards salvation, destroying everything that was built in the past (de Waal 2005, 8).

But the more people were trying to approach and generalize the new system the more it seemed a far-flung, utopian and also metaphysical reality. So the Albanian individual found himself floating from a transition to another in search of a new role and position within the new social structure, which was still only an outline. However, as we discussed above, although each new instance was being founded based on “year 0” principle, we didn’t have the tabula rasa situation because the canvas was clear to everyone- what they had to decide was the way on which they would move towards the prearranged finality. In this context we can say that the structure defines the role and the importance of the actors, even though with the passing of time we notice that these two categories are integrated under the hegemony of a homogenous discourse. More specifically, Albania just like any other post communist country needed its reformers who would help its development. Of course the elite, more specifically the political elite, was the social segment where suitable agents who would perform this operation, could be found. The problem of building a new system was simplified in whom and how would this person lead the operation of the social engineering to lead the country to democracy and the market economy. Yet this process was not an easy one because, as we have mentioned above, the elites as all the other social groups were being reformed, by adapting themselves to the new conditions or by being completely transformed. The only clear coordinate in this confused compass was the gravitational force of the politician as a reformer and moreover the role of the politics as the central domain from which the reconstruction of the society would derive. In other words this approach of development carries two important aspects: first of all the specific importance lays on the structure and not the actor by being imposed to the latter one.

Secondly, politics becomes the dominant domain that forms the identities, structures and the institutions. However if we refer to Laclau and Mouffe this valence of politics doesn’t count only in this case but politics in itself is the ontology of the social. In other words the political process is not a derivative of economic or cultural structure but it is the source.

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30 We can consider this a new form of transition, because even in the past regime, the dominating ideology was based on the communist manifest approach of transition from socialism towards communism.
According to this approach the Society is not an objective reality but gains its identity through a symbolic order and as a result of the political process (Laclau, Mouffe, 2001, 97 -98). I am not quite sure about the universal valence of politics, but I think in Albania this instance is considered to be the base of the system and not a superstructure. Is this defined through hegemonic discourse or is it incorporated in a structural or functional level?

4.3. Political elite as the main agent of change in Albania. Why?

Nevertheless, let’s first observe the main agents of post-communist “development” in Albania and how they did they get this “mandate”, in order to find out about the effects they had through their acts and discourses in the trajectory of Albanian transformation. It is clear that at this point, since we want to analyze somehow the reconfiguration of the social structure and social stratification, differently from what we did so far, we have to better observe the relationship between the political universe and the economic and cultural ones. This is necessary because the new social structure is based on a new economic system and not only in the political one. Let’s start by a short analysis of some of the studies on the post communism, which are related to this issue.

There are different perspectives on the way the philosophy and the leading structure of post-communist transformation were formed, but I am focusing only on some of them. One of these approaches, defined as neo-classical sociology, is articulated by Eyal and Szelenyi. They try to observe the historic trajectory of the transformation of the social structure in Central Europe by focusing on three phases: pre –communism, communism and post – communism.

Whereas at the theoretical level they combine the Bourdieu’s theory about forms of the capital and the Weberian distinction between ‘Rank’ and ‘Class’, focusing more on the inter – elite struggles. To make a long story short, their main argument is: “The social ‘space’ of post-communist capitalism is distinguishable from the stratification regimes which preceded it because it is a system in which cultural capital (education, skill, credentials) is more important than economic capital (property ownership) or social capital (social network ties) for attaining elite status, power, and privilege” (Eyal, Szelenyi, Townsley, 2001,18).
According to these authors the governing elite is made up of the intellectual dissidence and the socialist technocrats whereas their governing philosophy is based on a “managerial mentality”. This mentality is reflected as an everyday ritual that integrates the ideology and the reality, where the first is part of an approach produced from dissidents whereas the second derives from a monetarizing logic generated by technocrats. Although it seems difficult, these fractions can be combined - dissidents focusing on the moral and authenticity whereas for technocrats the solution is the functioning of the market. Both fractions making the power’s block perceive their role as ‘pastors’ and ‘civilizers’ (Ibid, 86). Expressing myself clearer, all this happens because the ones who benefited the most in the post transformation period are better-educated middle-aged men especially those who were part of the technocratic fraction of the old regime.

Whereas the ones who benefited the less are: 1) the poor people who have become poorer; 2) the not so poor who have become poor to; 3) older members of the communist era elite because they have lost their privileges and influence, especially the group which doesn’t possess proper educational credentials (Ibid, 35-36). So according to Eyal, Szelenyi and Townsley neither the political capital nor the economic one is important compared to the cultural capital.

As a result those who possessed the cultural and political capital from the past and were able to convert it in accordance with the new social structure managed to get a position in the elite, in the new social hierarchy. According to this logic in this theory we don’t exclude a path – dependency approach because the social actors use the capital from the past by adapting it to the present challenges (ibid, 39). According to this perspective, although it looks strange, dissidents and technocrats as two fractions of intelligentsia have obtained the dimensions of a “cultural bourgeoisie” by civilizing their societies and by creating the market’s institutions. So their thesis of ‘managerial capitalism’ is an ideology that is cultivated from this new bourgeoisie and it is imposed to the rest of the population. As a result there doesn’t exist a proper capitalist class because diffuse property relations characterize the post-communist economies. Therefore, for the moment it is difficult to find groups of individuals who own a huge capital so that they can control the decision making process. As a result “Post-communist managers do not have to contend with a class of powerful capitalist proprietors; consequently, managerial power and decision-making are visible contributions to the prestige and ‘distinction’ of the new power block” (ibid, 151).
The form of the social structure in post-communist countries is analyzed from a different point of view by Elster, Offe and Preuss. What this scholar’s are concerned about is what is the actors typology in post communism and whether the conflict between them has a favorable or an unfavorable role in the consolidation of the institutions.

Differently from the group of authors that we discussed above, this group points out that in post – communist CEE countries there are no social actors that represent any class or economic interests, even if they exist they are not well organized. Similarly it is unclear who is going to govern the country in the future, towards the installation and consolidation of the new institutions, since the whole social structure and the transformation agents have not been inherited from the revolution.

In these countries we can find only to types of cleavages like: “(1) those of a political-ideological kind that divide the population into those who have been loyal or acquiescent under the old regime, including its elites and activists, and those who identify themselves as its (more or less recent) opponents or victims, and (2) those cleavages of an identity-based kind that divide the population into members of the titular nation and religious, linguistic, and ethnic majorities of various kinds” (Elster, Offe, Preuss, 1998, 249).

According to this group of authors, the political polarization which depends on the past political group or the ethno-cultural conflict, plays a more important role in the reorganization of the social structure in post-communist countries, than the political polarization based on the economy. The nature of the conflict in post-communist countries of CEE makes the consolidation of the institutions more difficult compared to such social organizations that are based on the economic conflict. However as we will see later, in the Albanian analysis I am more interested in the political conflict and its effect in the social structure.

Let’s try to shed some light on the Albanian case and see how these theoretical elements that we discussed will help us.
4.4. Political class in Albania, an instrument to convey homogeneity and hegemonism

In my opinion, the political elite after the collapse of the communist regime managed to transform itself into a ruling class facing a society that could not establish, in any of its segments, a dialectic relationship with this class. I refer in this case to a social group that inherits the power because the composition of this class does not rely only on the nomenclature (although some individuals among them come from this group) but the members of the intelligentsia and technocrats, in general. It is clear, therefore, that in this aspect I rely on the thesis of Eyal, Szelenyi and Townsley according to which the cultural capital becomes the dominating form of capital in the post-communist society (Eyal et al, 33). All the same, the composition and model of the Albanian political elite differs from the ones described by the above-mentioned authors, as it is not composed of dissidents and not necessarily technocrats that come from the old bureaucratic communist apparatus. According to the perspective of these authors, these two groups not only govern, but also form a dominating ideology (managerial mentality) which is absorbed by the rest of the society. When analyzing the social structure remodeling in Albania, in the event of a new ideology, it is not created by the local agents whatsoever, although they do play an important role for its cultivation. Therefore, I totally agree with the view of this group of authors about the triumph of the cultural capital, but the situation appears different in the case of Albania with regard to the actors that possess this capital. More precisely, there may be a number of social categories that possess the cultural capital, but not all of them manage to convert it into power.

Dissidence had no substantial contribution in toppling the communist regime in Albania, as there was not such a movement as the one that was established, especially in central Europe. Consequently, this actor has no role to play in the new system either (about the absence of dissidence in Albania see, Dervishi, 143 -152). Moreover, I do not think that the high-ranking technocrats or managers from the old communist administration play a role, because most of them were merely bureaucrats with limited knowledge and poor practices in an isolated country, whose expertise could

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31I mean a simple definition of the intellectual as an educated individual who has some specialized knowledge that serve to compete against others in the new social structure, conform to the rules of the new system.
not constitute a significant capital to build the new system. While some technocrats may have become part of this elite, they earned this “mandate” not for their knowledge inherited from the old system, but thanks to possessing cultural capital in general. The most important component among those that are absent in structuring the new elite is the governing philosophy, because, as we will see later, it becomes a determinant factor for the very reason that it is not a product of the local elite, but the latter is a product of it.

Given these circumstances, the first question is how did this elite come into being and what is its relation with other social groups? The second question, and the most important one, is why and how did it manage to obtain these privileges in terms of power as an important factor in transforming Albania; the third question is, what are the effects on the post-communist Albanian society and on the trajectory of Albania’s transformation, in general?

To answer these questions, we will refer first to a brief historic analysis.

4.4.1 Formation of the new elite and especially political elite

In the first part of this brief overview, we will try to discover the social forces that participated in the anticommunist “revolution” in Albania, for as much as it may be called a revolution. The truth of the matter is that we may not find a consolidated group, because, as we argued above, the popular revolt is an outcome of sporadic organizations, without any identity or clear strategy, which were formed and destroyed forthwith. Hence, it is clear that the actors may not find their role, or any other transformation programme for formalizing the new system, in individual members or groups that participated in activities to overthrow the communist system.

To understand the contribution of the Albanian intelligentsia (it is in our interest to understand especially their position) to changing the political system, we may recall their public stance when many Albanians entered foreign embassies in Tirana and sought political asylum (a very meaningful political action which was read by many as a clear signal for the de-legitimisation of the system) in July 1990. In the interviews with foreign correspondents (at this time, there were many foreign media present in Albania) none of the Albanian intellectuals supported the asylum seekers and none of them articulated a critical position against the ruling communist government. The
most notable case is the one of Ismail Kadare (a globally-recognized writer), who, beyond the expectations of many local and international actors, did not assume a critical position, even in these moments when the regime was not as strong as it used to be. “Many Albanians and some Western observers had hoped that Kadare, who had criticized past regime abuses, could do for Albania what Vaclav Havel and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn had done for Czechoslovakia and URSS, respectively. But Kadare was badly tainted by his close association with the regime and lacked the moral rectitude of a Havel or Solzhenitsyn, both of whom had paid a heavy personal price for publicly denouncing the horrors of the Communist rule in their native lands” (Biberaj, 1998, 51). According to Biberaj, only after the embassy events do the first public critics against the regime emerge, notably, an article by Sali Berisha32 in one of the newspapers of the democratic front and Ismail Kadare’s defection to France, where he sought political asylum (Biberaj, 1998, 57). In fact, the first signals of the intelligentsia’s reaction appeared by late 1989 (See Vickers, 2008, 333), but they were isolated voices, in private circles of writers, sporadic and never spoken in public. It is significant to see that the intellectuals began to be more publicly visible when the system was on the verge of its collapse after the students’ protests and Albanian citizens seeking asylum in the western countries. This proves that there had been no movement or underground network of intellectuals who would articulate, at group level, a critical approach to the system, which at the moment of the “big overthrow” could be converted to a leading cause for the entire society. Most importantly, this testifies that from the embryo of the new system, the intellectuals did not articulate their position through an act of resistance, but through an act of opportunism – being at the right place at the right time. Thus the time when the intellectuals emerge in public may not be neglected; it is rather an essential indicator that helps us to understand the typology of the intellectuals at the foundation of the political/ruling class in Albania. There is no specific philosophy or ideal that will later transform into a governing ideology, as in the case of the dissidence, referred to by Eyal, Szelenyi and Townsley. On the contrary, I am speaking about individuals that possesses cultural capital more than others that takes advantage of the political and structural

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32Sali Berisha has been the chairman of the Democratic Party of Albania for about 23 years. He has also served as the first President of Albania. Although a controversial political actor due to his way of governing, in the years of the change of power (after the nomenclature had suffered from many events such as the students protest or the massive emigration), he emerges as one of the most active intellectuals.
chaos and profited from the need of the confused society for guidance. In other words, it is a momentum that favors the intellectuals because it favors the cognitive capacities of the individual to interpret brand new concepts and practices.33

Let us now see in more details the process of political changes in Albania by exploring the creation of new political parties following the installation of the pluri-party system, in order to understand the role of the intelligentsia in this process, its background and their projection as a dominating class. It is also important to focus briefly on some of the key developments following 22 March 1992, when the nomenclature lost de facto its power and, for the first time after five decades, Albania would be governed by a different political entity and different legal principles.

On 12 December 1990, the formation of the Democratic Party of Albania (DPA) was announced, as the first legal opposition party in Albania, which one has been since the antebellum period (Vickers, 2008, 338) to date the largest right-wing party. The DPA was formed by some of the leaders (without political experience) of the student protests and a group of intellectuals. While students’ protest had been a determinant factor for toppling the regime, only six students were members of the DP’s Steering Committee, with the rest of the Committee membership being intellectuals from various fields. The party was led by the economist Gramoz Pashko and the cardiologist Sali Berisha (Biberaj, 1998, 67). Later, other political parties followed suit in opposition and in December 1990, for the first time, an important civil society organization was established, the Forum for the protection of fundamental rights and liberties. One common thing about the parties and the aforementioned organisation is that their membership, and especially their leadership, was formed by intellectuals, who either directly or indirectly were related to the leadership cupola of the communist regime. Some of them had been members of the Albanian Party of Labour (APL), while others had been professionals in various fields, with a rich career but enjoyed privileges from the nomenclature (Biberaj, 1998, 66-71). Another significant fact is that the opposition parties, in general, in their early days, did not rely on any ideology or crystallized programme. The lack of programme may be justified by the lack of political knowledge and experience. The lack of an ideology or counter-

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33 We have discussed in earlier chapters that the Albanian society was totally isolated. Albanians were not allowed to emigrate, neither were foreign media to report from Albania. Many books, whether scholarly or literary, that conflicted the ideology of the nomenclature were banned. Nonetheless, the intelligentsias were more privileged, given their less limited access to alternative sources of information.
ideology that aims to radically transform the country (expressed even in general principles) manifests the opposite – a consensual approach of this group of intellectuals that were gradually taking hold of the entire public space, hence becoming a dominating social force in Albania. A key moment that reflects this approach is the early days of the Democratic Party of Albania (DPA) – when, although latent, clashes between two groups, the students and the intellectuals, were evident. Many activist students claimed that the intellectuals stole the revolution from them. Some other students, particularly Hajdari (one of the most outstanding activists of the student protests), articulated the need for a radical change, whereas intellectuals did not advocate anticommunist policies or any other revolutionary strategy (Biberaj, 1998, 67). An analysis of this moment reinforces the above-mentioned argument – the intellectuals did not have a clear role, they were not guided by certain ideals or theories, but were merely taking advantage of the historic momentum and their cultural capital to gain power. A comparison of the students position as more idealist vis-a-vis that of the intellectuals as more pragmatic serves as a ‘testing instrument’ to understand the relation of the latter with the old system and their approach to the new system. It is not by coincidence that all students, (except for Hajdari) depart with the party structures once the internal battle for power begins.

If we look at the social base at the foundation of the DPA, we notice that when it started to form a clearer identity, it began to serve as an umbrella for a wide range of social groupings, such as APL who had not been active, successors of the National Front and Legality political parties as well as former political prisoners (Biberaj, 1998, 69). With time, the political position of DPA’s leadership became more radical (above all as an electoral instrument), but that happened after the nomenclature began to withdraw from its position, following the decline of the popular support, economic downturn and multilateral pressures. On the other hand, the APL was striving to survive. In this context, in December 1990, at the national conference of the APL, some reforms were taken such as: remove the monument of Stalin from Tirana centre (a significant symbolic act), allow and acknowledge a pluralist political system, protect human rights (although until 1991 political prisoners were still in prisons), freedom of religion and commitment to undertake gradual reforms towards the market economy. Furthermore, a significant step was the tendency for gradually parting away from the ideology and practices of the old regime through publicly acknowledging some mistakes committed during that regime. However, due to the Stalinist ideology
that had governed in the country for 50 years and many other reasons, as listed above, the fall of the nomenclature from power was inevitable in spite of the reforms that were being undertaken. In the first pluralist elections, though, the APL won more seats in the Assembly than the DPA; that was a Pyrrhic victory as Biberaj rightfully underlines (Biberaj, 1998, 95). Voter turnout was about 97% and the APL got 169 seats, against 75 seats of the DPA and five seats of the OMONIA (representing the Greek minority in Albania). APL’s leader Alia failed to be elected in Tirana and did not get a seat in the Assembly. The APL got most of its votes from the so-called rural voters. The result of these elections owes to a number of causes: 1) The land reform proposed by the DPA had scared the farmers away, 2) DPA lacked the assets and infrastructure for a rich electoral campaign throughout the country, 3) most voting villagers (noted also in other Balkan countries) were less inclined to radical changes compared to the urban voters (better educated) which were more thirsty for rapid and fundamental reforms (Vickers, 2008, 348-349). During this period many protests were organized and made APL’s governance impossible. Subsequently the party structure and government composition changed. Alia resigned from all leadership posts and the Assembly voted Fatos Nano (one of the most prominent figures of the Socialist Party and its chairman until 2005) as the new head of the new government composed entirely of APL members, with the promise to undertake a series of reforms, including privatization and establishment of the market economy. On the other hand, the economy was totally paralyzed due to high unemployment rates, 70% of the workforce, and massive strikes. The only way out to this situation was the creation of a national stability government, which included 12 non-communist ministers. At the 10th congress of the APL, a series of radical changes were approved to the structure and ideology of the party, and its name was changed from APL to the Albanian Socialist Party (ASP). Another important reform inside the party was the dismissal of nine members of the politburo from party structures and the downgrading of some others from the nomenclature. The new programme positioned this political subject as a progressive party, oriented towards establishment of democracy, social justice and market economy. From that moment on, a new trajectory of the ideology of the ASP takes effect, projected as a public endeavor to detach from its origins, the APL.

That was at least the public stance of the new socialist leadership since the electoral campaign of end-1991. On the other hand, the DPA had been articulating ever since,
the connections of the socialists with the former nomenclature as the main argument against them. In fact, this becomes one of the determinant factors of the main two parties and, overall, the distinction between the right and left wings, amplified through their political discourse. For 23 years, both sides have been using the direct or indirect distance to the former nomenclature as one of the measuring instruments for their modernising – progressist and European approach. Based on this polarizing conflict of the political sphere, generated by the political discourse over the past is structured also by the electorate. The party structuring (as was the case with the civil society, we addressed in chapter two) did not arise from the interest and worldview of certain social groups, but from the intellectual elite. The latter, calculate rationally and process the content of the political discourse and structure based on their vision and then “lure” the electorate that stands closer to this political architecture. In this context, the intentional political discourse emphasizes the relation to the past as an essential criterion to recruit various social groups and transform them into one’s electorate. In fact, this is not an exclusive development in Albania. Elster, Offe and Preuss underline that one of the main causes of social conflict in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe was the political-ideological kind that divide the population into those who have been loyal and those who have been opponents or victims under the old regime (Elster, Offe, Preuss, 1998, 249). While it is arguable whether the identity of these parties, in the case of Albania, relies on any ideology conform to the typology and social grouping that it claims to represent, or it is merely an artifice established deliberately through the rhetoric, imposing itself on the groups. More specifically, the DPA and the entire right wing of the political spectrum in Albania claims that their support is based on the former politically persecuted persons, former owners that is that community of people that had been in a difficult position or subdued to the social hierarchy of the communist regime. On the other hand, the APL and the left wing claim to rely on former army officers, rural population (primarily in the southern areas), that is that community of people who had had a more favorable position in the former regime. In both cases, the question arises whether indeed they represent the interests and world view of their electorate. The answer is found in the low interest of trust and confidence in political parties (see Figure 10). It is not my intention to make an analysis of the electorate, as it would take a thorough and exhaustive analysis in an empiric research for the last 23 years to identify also the changes that may have happened. However, a quick analysis of the
origin of the party creation helps better understand that from the beginnings, the electorate is more an output than an input, with regard to the political elite. My focus is not, thus, to analyze the electorate or political party structures and their eventual changes, over the years, but to identify the origin of the creation of the political class in Albania and the prevalence of the intellectuals as an important agent in the transformation of Albania.

A historic element that we took into consideration earlier was that particularly the socialist party (one of the two major parties) is created by intellectuals who either had a political career as part of the APL or an indirect relation to the communist leadership. Given that it is a party created on the basis of the former APL, it is labeled as a political entity with strong ties to the old nomenclature; however, it is evident that most political parties in Albania are created by intellectuals, who in one form or another, had served the communist regime. In my view, the relation to the old regime is not significant (but it is instrumentalised by the political elite) for two main reasons: First, because for as long as there was no proper dissident movement in Albania, in a way or another, all intellectuals served the communist regime. I think that the distance of certain political actors to the communist power structures is irrelevant, as this does not determine the approach and quality of the governance by the political class in Albania. If we had a dissident movement, similar to the one Eyal, Szelenyi and Townsley find in Central Europe, the relation to the past would have been relevant, because in this case we have a group of intellectuals who found their political activity on a proper ideological and political view that arises first from its position versus the communist regime. On the contrary, in the case of Albania, it seems that the case acquires this dimension artificially and is imposed by the political discourse of the political class and not by the fact that the past in itself is important for the intellectual that becomes part of this class or a determining factor for the country’s perspective.

Second, in my view, the position of the political class may not be explained by the culturalist perspective as a path - dependency, according to which the actual positions of the politicians may be explained as derivate of the past. By employing this approach, we may find many features of the behavior of the political authority, which may be interpreted as a reproduction of the political culture of the past regime: authoritarianism or centralization of power. On the other hand, we may not use this measuring rod to pass a judgment on the political actor, because it operates according
to a rational approach and is therefore in a position to rise above the inherited political culture. The political actors may use the culture of the society (in this case a culture of non-participation as discussed on previous chapters) to govern in an autocratic way and accumulate more power, but this does not render it an extension of the political culture. By political actor I mean the politician by profession, according to the concept of Weber, who claims that the professional politician is the one who lives for politics and by politics. The actions of the professional politician are driven by the will for power, especially when incorporated in party structures, because the latter, according to Weber, are always structures that strive for dominion (Weber, 2006, 21). Even if the possibility exists that the profile of the Albanian politician depends on features inherited from the past, I do not think this is a determinant factor. The political class does not earn the ruling power by using political machinations it has acquired in the past and that applies them unconsciously in the present (only in cases when it applies them consciously) but by other auxiliary means that are produced in the present. Intellectuals that feed the political class inherit from the past what we discussed earlier – cultural capital. Even in the cases when they had inherited political capital from the past regime owing to their position in political structures of the time, it was difficult for this capital to be converted automatically in political capital in the post-communist era if the required cultural capital were absent (Eyal, Szelenyi, Townsley, 2001, 36). "Rather than experiencing progress, or evolution societies and social actors use old ideas, behaviors, and social logics to adapt to new conditions" (Eyal, Szelenyi, Townsley, 2001, 39). In this process of transformation for the actor, the most important aspect is the capacity to adapt and the type of capital one possesses.

Cultural capital is necessary, but in the case of Albania, the volume of capital matters more than its quality or type. In other words, more than the typology of education or intellect, having more cultural capacity than someone else constitutes a competitive advantage, in a system that is being built from scratches. In this context, in Albania more than the intelligentsia par excellence it is about having some basic knowledge necessary to interpret and mostly implement the necessary reforms for economic and political transformation.

I made this brief historic analysis not to identify the level and type of relations of the new political actors to the old system. For the reasons I presented above, this is not a
determinant factor. I sought to identify the typology of the underlying intellectual of the ruling class and the way he builds its structure of the power and the party. To have a broader picture, a more thorough analysis is necessary for the party developments, and the dynamics of eventual changes (if changes have happened) to their structure, function, internal composition, ideology, relations with the electorate and the latter’s to the party, electoral systems, etc. However, the focus of my thesis is not to analyze the parties but the agent or agents modernizing Albania, with the intellectual elite playing a key role, especially that part of it that is converted into the political elite. The main reason I focused on the party was that intellectuals are converted into a powerful social group by it and not by involvement in other undertakings. Undoubtedly the members of the intellectual elite have projected their capacities in other spheres of life, such as business enterprises, academia, and civil society, but none of such groupings has as much power as the political class in Albania. I do not refer here to structures of domination that may be found everywhere according to a Foucaultian concept, but to the epicenter of power. From a Weberian point of view, dealing with politics means in itself aiming for power or as a means to serve other goals (idealist or selfish) or as power for the sake of power, to enjoy the sense of prestige it provides (Weber, 2006). In this sense, saying that the political domain implies power sounds like tautology, but in a normal situation of a modern state it is assumed that the power of the political class is balanced by other classes or social groups; in the case of Albania, however, I do not think that it is the case. More specifically, in the following we will try to identify the indicators of the power of this class and factors that vested it with such powers, not on the structure and function of the party in itself but on the: 1) relation with other social groupings; 2) political discourse, 3) nature of legitimacy.

4.5. Source of the political class’s power and its materialization

I would like first to clarify that I am not endeavoring to explain the history of post-communist developments in Albania by employing an elitist approach to glorify its role. On the contrary, the elites in this case, not only fail to create the history, but are actually a product of it. The nature of the country’s transformation based on a
teleological approach is one of the reasons why the political class is transformed into a ruling class. Albania’s transformation is channeled as a process for "fabricating" new institutions, hence the most adequate "labour force" to perform this operation is found in the new political class.

According to Elster, Offe, and Preuss, the post-Communist political universe consists of three poles:

1) "The western - oriented modernizers that base their claim to leadership on a consequentialist reading of the institutional setup of the OECD world. They conclude that representative democracy and market economy yield prosperity, and as prosperity is evidently the highest, at any rate the most urgent priority, all "we" need to do is imitate and transplant Western patterns - above all in order to motivate the provision of urgently needed Western assistance and cooperation" (Elster, Offe, Preuss, 1998, 15).

2) "Traditionalist" political forces suggest that the institutional models already present before the Communist regime was installed should be recreated. These forces try to find the cultural, political, and economic models that can be taken from tradition and be adapted to the current circumstances (ibid, 15-16)

3) "The ex-communist reformers, experience a remarkable surge in political strength in CEE countries and opt for economic marketization and privatization (if with a variety of reservations) while maintaining and preserving at least some of the accomplishments of state socialism and the notions of social justice through social and employment security provided by it" (ibid, 16).

It is only the first political trend that is consolidated and dominates in Albania. Although certain sporadic voices articulating the two other trends may also be noticed, they have no weight whatsoever in the Albanian political scene or its development trajectory and they may therefore not be considered as significant alternatives. Otherwise, if we found in Albania what this group of authors reveals (referring to the countries they studied), there would at least exist a genuine debate among the political class, regardless of whether these two other trends have any value as development alternatives. It is exactly the contrary, in my opinion, that one could notice in Albania since the very beginning of its democracy as every trend is
neutralized through a homogenizing vision channeled as complementary to three main tasks:

First, the reorganization of the economic structure through privatization, marketization and stabilization;

Second, the installation of institutions, law, and a generally democratic model of governance;

Third, and most important, the need for taking concrete steps towards complying with the criteria for international organizations membership, and especially for EU integration.

The entire transformation process was actually based on the logic of establishing a system from genesis – delete the past and build a future from scratch. Besides, since the country’s transformation policies were from the very beginning based on a neo-liberal approach, de Waal (2005) says ironically that such a development perspective would make any shock therapist happy. A series of radical political and economic reforms were initiated under the tutelage of international bodies, which often had serious consequences for the population, especially in the economic aspect (de Waal, 2005, 8). The victory of DPA in the March 1992 elections was followed by Western financial aid and admission to organizations such as the IMF, the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (de Waal, 2005, 7).

All the transformation reforms, both economic and political, were first of all projected in a radical change of the legislation. In fact, even in this aspect, it took Albania quite a long time to achieve its intended changes, as the new Constitution currently in force (although with several amendments) was for the first time approved in 1998.

The reform process aiming generally at democratization and installation of a market economy may be labeled as Europeanization, as since the application for EU membership, the entire process has been going through the filters of this body.

What is often ironically noted by many people in Albania is precisely the capability of the political authority to draft laws (which is rather a technical process consisting of copying laws of European countries, and not a matter of real jurisprudence), but not to
enforce them. Thus, one of the respondents involved in one of the above-mentioned interviews noted that "our laws are very good, European laws, but the problem is that they are never implemented". Such discrepancy proves, above all, the mechanic, and often artificial nature of this "transplant" of laws without both the elite and the society in general being actually prepared for certain changes. This is also what Elster, Offe, and Preuss note. According to them, the amount of legal obligations to be met by the political elite of the Central European countries is so large that not only the political agency of these countries, which is weak and fragmented, but any political authority would find it had to successfully cope with. Many of the changes to be made go beyond the implementing capacity of the political elite, as they are rooted in the "habits of the heart" and "frames of mind" (Elster, Offe, Preuss, 1998, 18).

Albania’s path of transformation or the so-called path to modernization is quite ironic, as the revolution was on one hand systemic and gradual (even slow compared with other countries), while reforms on the other hand were often radical, immediate or so much delayed that they became inapplicable. Through the often well-adopted laws or policies, reforms at times delayed, lack of will on the part of the institutions to implement them, corruption among officials of all levels, the result is an institutional chaos, and, what is worse, a deepening of the already dysfunctional relationship between the state and the society. Since the first years of the new system, people who got disappointed with the way the state functioned started to distance themselves and tried to solve their problems in an individual and informal manner. Under such circumstances, the existence of the social actor in the new system started to be led by the “no state, no law” principle (de Waal, 2005, 9). Although the legislation and many sectors were actually “modernized”, their impact was and is still relative for as long as this expression continues to motivate the actions of many people. The political class accommodates itself to laissez - faire, while the society to unlawfulness and impunity. Regardless of the nature, pace, and impact of these reforms, which do not need to be addressed in details in this article, it is clear that the process is above all a political one, and it is therefore the task of the political class to manage it. This is generally one of the main causes of factorization of political classes and elites. An elitist/technocratic philosophy of leadership is usually established under such circumstances based on some managerial model of governance – reduced to the process of reform administration. It is elitist, as with development being perceived as
a top-down approach to transformation, the elite, and especially the political class, acquires automatically power. It is also technocratic, not because technocrats acquire any power, but because the role of professional politicians is reduced rather to technocracy than to a political process generating internal development ideas and alternatives. From this view, what we see in the Albanian case is not so much a governance ideology, but a governance model with not so many ideas or principles generated by local political stakeholders, and this is what we will address further under the political discourse. The ideology that Eyal, Szelenyi, and Townsley identify in the Central European countries is not present in the Albanian case. According to this group of authors, the ideology dominating the post-Communist Central Europe was a combination of the monetarist ideology of the fraction of technocrats and the civil society ideology articulated by the fraction of dissidents. The arguments explored above make us understand that such an ideology is impossible in Albania, because Albania lacks the type of material that would enable the modeling of a domestic doctrine of governance in the first place – it lacks both dissident intellectuals and technocrats from the past regime. A common component, however, is the specific weight that knowledge, and consequently those possessing it, have. Such component, though, does not acquire its importance in Albania as a skill that guarantees prestige to its owner as a result of the owner being appreciated by the society, but rather as a component that stands on the edge of the need as a result of the ruling mentality. As emphasized several times, as long as we face the challenge of "modernization" of the country, we need a group to carry out this social operation, and the group selected to run the process is the political class. The problem is not about the lack of a governing ideology similar to the above-mentioned model, but about the lack of a domestic clear model and strategy of transformation. The local stakeholders (intellectuals) in Albania do not manage to create their own governance doctrine that would integrate instructions coming from abroad (packages of reforms, laws, and policies) into an endogen philosophy of development. Instead, they simply accommodate to the role of reform administrators producing thus a transformation or change model that reduces to a "managerial mentality" - just manage the reforms recommended by the EU and the governing role is, in their opinion, fulfilled. The managerial mentality turns the political process into a routine converting it into bureaucracy instead of a social environment where ideas can be generated and different social groups confront each-
other. In this sense, the entire process of transformation is bureaucratized, bureaucratizing thus even the social actors participating in this process.

4.5. Strengthen of the teleological and homogenous paradigm of transformation

The “managerial mentality” makes the political process a routine by converting it into a bureaucratic process of applying reforms and laws and not in a public space of generating new ideas and clashing of new alternatives. In this sense the whole process of transformation is bureaucratized by bureaucratizing the actors who take part in this process as well. Nevertheless it is a bureaucratization process that is not assisted by any bureaucratic, functional mechanism (the later has not been built yet) or by any rationalization process of other domains of the society.

In this way of thinking, by using Weber’s concept of rationalization I would say that rationalization is imported - “packed” from outside and it is put upon a social structure, which is not ready to absorb it. Rationalization is not gradual (although, of course, the reforms are gradual) and in contradiction to a social reality where many social environments have started to disrobe themselves from the communist rationalism and aren’t prepared to “welcome” the capitalist and democratic rationalism yet.

This doesn’t mean the individual in Albania hasn’t been introduced to the rational structures or the modern political authority before, because as I mentioned earlier communism was a form of modern state especially in the bureaucratic aspect. Similarly the Albanian society faced political structures of modern profile before communism.

On the other hand after too many years of isolation as a result of communist regime the actor had lost the reflexes of thinking and acting in freedom. Considering the difficult economic situation and the institutions’ corruption, which continues to follow Albania’s transformation, the individual was more adapted to the “there is no state, there is no law” approach.

On one hand the new political and economic order is continuously blown artificially and formally by the new laws and reforms in economy and in politics and the
individual on the other hand is more and more de-rationalized looking for a solution at the informal level.

The state’s affairs are in the hands of the political class while the individual finds a solution to his problems privately according to a silent bilateral agreement – the individual can illegally benefit while the political class has to manage and fulfill the duties the European Union has assigned. This way the political class gets more and more power (this is the second factor that affects the reinforcement of the political class) while the other social actors are more distant from the state by not participating directly in building the new system. Of course the problem here is not Europeanism (democratization, modernization) in itself but the way it has proceeded by leaving different social groups out of the transformation process and by politically “empting” them. In this case, although they seem to exclude themselves, in reality they are excluded. To sum up: facing a transformation seen as a very technical process, a managerial model of transforming institutions, a political corrupted class and economy in crises, the citizen at an individual level as well as at group level (exclude here the political class), feels weak and useless, therefore he projects his existence out of this rational structure which is being built.

This way an ambiguous situation is created, while in principle democratization and a modern social structure appeal to the citizens’ participation, the opposite occurs because it’s impossible for the social actor to participate and he isn’t willing to do it, although he has the historical chance to build a new system. One of the solutions could be a different form of participation through the civil society but, as we discussed in the second chapter, for many reasons this doesn’t work, and the formal organizations of the civil society are as bureaucratic as the state itself.

Although temporarily the actor is accommodated at the informal, he doesn’t prefer to live out of the political organism, but it’s of course an imposed choice, otherwise he wouldn’t hope that the solution of the problems would come through the integration in the European Union.

Therefore he continuously appeals to the need for a functional state but he doesn’t find the solution within the country, he finds it at the integration in EU instead. But

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34All the studies carried out about the opinion of the Albanian society on the European Union, highlight the vocation of the Albanian society pro integration in EU. It is considered a trustworthy institution and most of the time as the solution of the problems. In the surveys conducted after the economic crises most of Albanians consider the membership in EU as the only chance to improve the standards of life, to increase the employment, to enforce laws, to fight poverty and corruption and for
in contradiction the social agent who should perform this “rescue” operation is the political class, the one that in the eyes of the other part of the society doesn’t guarantee the existence of a functional state.

This way the political class continues to centralize the power since the one that seems to be the problem, the political class itself, at the same time becomes the solution.

More specifically Albania’s integration that passes through the EU integration (and is applied from the local actors through the managerial model) obtains the forms of a homogenous paradigm and a uni-linear transformation.

This constitutes the essence of political discourse in Albania, which precisely for this reason acquires the form of a hegemonic discourse if we can use the language of Laclau and Mouffe (Laclau, Mouffe, 7). According to Laclau and Mouffe, “Politics as a practice of creation, reproduction and transformation of social relations cannot be located at a determinate level of the social” (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001,153).

Although I do not see politics as an establishing act of the social, in the Albanian case because of the positions that the political class has gained as an important agent of change, the politics automatically extracts this valence. Also to be considered, because the construction of a new order, especially for the way it is perceived in Albania (where many social actors cannot have a role because they still do not have a clear identity) we have to do first of all with a political operation). Then an appropriate explanatory lense in this case becomes the political discourse but not as an approach that must be assessed by deterministic terms by excluding other approaches that may help the analysis. I say this bearing in mind that above all the EU integration is cultivated as a "panacea” through the political discourse of the political class for 23 years (see Kajsiu, 2012, 32-35). As I was arguing above, this is deliberately instrumentalized by the political class as a way to maintain the status of "the necessary" since it would be exactly what would lead this process. Whether the political class has come or not to bridge Albania with the EU (in this way it is exposed to the judgment of the population), in the level of discourse we’ve been careful to be as consistent with the vocation of the society, which is led from the 90-s by the slogan “We want Albania like all Europe”.

the Albanian democracy to be stronger in general. (See Figure. 13 at Annex 1, EUNACAL 2010, Gallup Balkan Monitor, ISN 2013)
It would be a futile attempt to seek the origin of this discourse but it is evident that it is cultivated by the political class and the great majority of opinion-makers in Albania (excluding some isolated voices as Kajsiu and Sulstarova). As a result, we have on one hand the desperate population seeking refuge in the EU integration and on the other hand the political class that through political discourse has converted this paradigm in a cultural hegemony.

So in a Gramscian sense this lecture evolves in an instrument of cultural domination exercised by the ruling class. This has paralyzed the political debate among the political actors and the generation of alternative models for the transformation of Albania. And what’s more not only it has converted the debate among political actors to a one-dimensional debate by causing the democracy itself distress (Kajsiu, 2010), but it has also excluded other social groups.

One of the reasons for not having organized social groups in the field of civil society is because they fail to articulate a public cause outside hegemony, or else in one way or another there would be more participation. Intellectuals who are also involved in other domains outside the political class are not critical for the reason that they fail to create any development paradigm to challenge hegemony. Anti-hegemony in this case wouldn’t be an anti-modernization or anti-Europeanization, but would be reflected in more participation of different actors in the process of transformation by intervening in certain aspects according to their spheres of action and not by seeing development as holistic. In this way, transformation even at the institutional level wouldn’t overlap the society, considering it as a homogeneous mass, but it would be consistent with the microcosm of certain social groups. In these circumstances the social groups themselves would be exempt from being a homogeneous category and the journey towards Europe would be through building a "modern" where the centre (the guidelines and policies of the EU) and the periphery (the interests and vision of various social groups) are integrated. To be more specific we are taking as an example the reform of higher education in Albania. The reform in higher education since the signing of the accession to the Bologna process in 2003 is incorporated homogeneously as the implementation of this process. Despite the fact that the process itself was new and was even being tested in the most developed European countries, the Albanian state convinced about the success of this process began to transform the entire system without passing through the filters of a public debate. The actors directly interested in this process like professors and students didn’t actively
participate in it by undergoing the fact that all of Europe was doing the same and by leaving to the bureaucracy and the political class the transformation of this institution. Although Albania had inherited a very backward educational system, and needed some basic reforms, it was moved to the application of some standards which stood far away from the opportunities and capacities of the existing system and the actors who would directly suffer from these reforms.

The result of such a process, in which the peripheral actor is unconditionally subject to the centre (and not because of the power of the centre itself but as a result of a rooted perception in the culture that he has for the centre) is the lack of coherence of the system itself and the missing efficiency of the reform. This takes the form of a social experiment where in the end the actor is the damaged one. To cut it short, concrete consequences of this process are that not only there are no significant improvements in the quality of higher education in Albania but also it is transformed into a continuous experiment. Indicator of this unstable situation, is the change of the law for higher education in 2007 and 2010 (see Law on Higher Education) and planning to be changed again, although without ever putting into question the system itself - the Bologna process. Thus the structure and the actor are part of the hegemony reproducing the status quo.

So what is western and European is meant to be good by earning the power of a state’s symbol regardless of the social environment where the political process is under way (the case of higher education is significant). Here I am not intimating for colonialism, neo-colonialism or things like this but I am talking about the impossibility of constituting a plural modernity where the actor participates. What we discussed so far is the external dimension of hegemony produced through political discourse, but it also has an internal dimension. In fact these are two parts of the same category interconnected with each other. Since on one hand the internal debate on fundamental issues of transformation of the country is numb from homogeneous approach and managerial model nothing is left on public discourse level except for not essential debates. I mean the debate that we treated above, which is held on the political background of political actors. This is more a constrained debate rather than a real political discourse through which the political class tries to confess its existence. But the problem is that in this case an important tissue for the mentality of society is affected, and the political class manages to routinize it through political
discourse, as a result the political class reinforces so much that it gets the form of hegemony.

It constitutes an important element for society unlike many members of the political class because even if the latter is mainly composed of intellectuals who are directly or indirectly connected with the old system, this does not apply to all social groups. For some social groups such as former political persecuted, former - owners from the right political spectrum and war veterans (and their families) or people who enjoyed privileges in the former regime from the left political spectrum, past continues to be important.

The political class on this sensibility that stems from past articulates a part of the political discourse by emphasizing more the past differences and by polarizing society. Moreover this discourse gets the form of hegemony because through it they attempt to align the electorate. As a synthesis the two dimensions although different in source and effects - because one of them implies the homogenization of the society while the other implies its fractionation -, they are both part of a hegemonic speech that controls the society by reducing public debate in the absence of debate or in a useless debate.

The discourse of the political leadership amplified by media\textsuperscript{35}, which are also politically positioned either left or right, conserves the hegemonic nature of a public debate, mainly oriented in these two binaries. This situation has turned into a status quo that is consistently reproduced because there is no social group that can produce a counter - hegemony. But social change in Albania led by a single centre of power through a development approach oriented from top – down, as we have discussed so far, can be reinforced by the public discourse but cannot derive only from it. I am saying this since someone normally might ask what happens in the meantime with other classes (if any), or in general with other social groups which anyway in a normal situation would try to protect their interests.

A class which can potentially compete against the political class in shaping the structure and the new social hierarchy in Albania according to its interests could certainly be the capitalists class (the owners and businessmen), but in reality this class

\textsuperscript{35}In the report of "Reporters without Borders" of 2013 (see, en.rsf.org) Albania is ranked 102 out of 179 countries in the world in terms of media freedom. Also if we refer to the perception of Albanian citizens on media it reveals that media is not very reliable (see Figure 19, E22, at Annex 1). To understand how media stays in the same channels with the political class discourse in Albania see the study conducted by the Soros Foundation (Soros 2012 www.soros.al).
is not very consolidated so as to win the positions of a powerful class, although no one can say what will happen in the future. In this assertion I refer again to the analysis of Eyal, Szelenyi and Townsley (despite the fact that their work was written too early) who suggest that we’d better analyse the role of other agents in the process of change and not the capitalists’ role that don’t have a clear position yet (Eyal, Szelenyi, Townsley, 2001.39-40). In fact it is difficult to empirically notice the relationship between what may be considered as the young capitalists group and the political class because it is often invisible. It is difficult to understand through figures the level in which the business area is able to influence the decision-making or the political class in general, and which of them has more power. The only source of data about this topic can be the media and again the political discourse. If we refer to the political class discourse, we notice that one of the most articulated charges during these years by the opposition political parties toward those who are in power/government, is exactly favouring businesses which are assumed to be directly linked with certain political exponents.

This is materialized in some elements such as favouritism in bids; favouritism through taxes or through customs violations. So in general we discuss about favouring their clients through abuse of power of the party/parties that are in power. While certain businesses materialize closeness with a certain force through financing political campaigns, public articulation of their beliefs, the vocation of some of them to run for parliamentary members/ representatives for a certain political force etc. If we take such a situation for granted, this proves even more the supremacy of the political class over that group we can call the capitalist because if the latter would act as a class they would systematically intervene in order to influence in formulating the policies and certain laws and not privately through direct connections to provide a temporary benefit. Although at this point I do not pretend to reach any conclusion considering the difficulty that this relationship bears, I support the argument that in Albania the young entrepreneurs or businessmen haven’t had enough time to gain a consolidate position so that they get transformed into a dominant class in the society. They are not even designed in the position of a genuine interest group in order to create a dialectical relationship with the political class. But although it is difficult to detect the invisible strands of the relationship between these two groups (though they are a very important indicator) I focused mostly in public debate observation through printed and visual media to find any significant indication of confrontation of the business
domain with the political class. The result is that I have not managed to find any significant moment of a dialectical relationship between these two social groups and where the result can be the systematic impact of decision making, although specific and isolated cases of such impact cannot be excluded. So in other words if we assume for example that any recommended policy by the EU, by international organizations like the IMF or the World Bank, would be rejected by the local business, with certainty this wouldn’t influence the decision of the political class. By this reasoning I am not excluding the importance of economic capital in the positioning of a particular social group within the social hierarchy in Albanian capitalism, but I emphasize that we cannot consider it as determining in the role and influence of various social actors in the transformation model and governance in Albania. If we reasoned under the logic of Marx, we must note that even the post-communist development of Albania, is designed as a base-superstructure rapport, where the base is obviously the economy but it does not generate the same class relationship, as long as there is no genuine capitalist yet and even less the proletariat. If in Albania exists a relationship between the dominant group and the rest of society, then on one side lies the political class while on the other hand the society, although it’s impossible to have a dialectical relationship between the two. The failure of a dialectical relationship is due to a homogenous and hegemonic political discourse and the result of the lack of a clear identity and interests of other social groups. In the second chapter we noticed how the civil society was too weak to create a public space for the participation of different social groups. For example trade unions which could have been an important social actor are almost non-existent in Albania for several reasons like: a) poverty, high rates of unemployment (see INSTAT, 2013 "quarterly survey of the labour force") and little offers of work make it difficult to mobilize this social group in an interest group or even less in a class, b) trade union structures themselves are not trusted by society, that’s why the participation in these organizations is quite low (see Figure 16 at Annex 1). In the second chapter, we also tried to analyse how for some reasons the citizen is politically alienated and as a result tends to find a solution to his problems at the private and non-public level.

If we consider the prestige or status as an criteria to evaluate the new social structure we notice that the it is not an determining factor in the modelling of any influential actor in the process of changing the country. This applies to those social groups that enjoyed a special social status in the past but haven’t inherited it as a result of cultural
differences as well as to the new ones that could potentially be factorized through prestige. It is clear that the groups which enjoyed prestige in the previous system cannot enjoy the same capital anymore due to the radical change of the system. For example teachers were a social group respected by the society in the past (although I am not able to say what might have been their influence in the macro), because as a result of communist ideology formal education was an important link of propaganda. But as a result of cultural and economic differences this group does not enjoy the same prestige and therefore does not act as a major player in the political landscape. The situation is similar, for other reasons though, for the new social groups that potentially in my opinion could have had a special social status and could have been an important actor in the process of transformation. These groups are mainly either too fragmented or have not managed to shape a clearer identity as a result of the social chaos and such a dynamic change that makes the society even more fluid, as we have explained in previous chapters.

If we consider from this point of view the former political persecuted people that in Albania have been numerous\(^\text{36}\), in normal conditions they would have enjoyed a special prestige and on this premise would have converted into a significant and influential social actor in the process of transformation of the country. Indeed for many reasons that we can’t discuss in detail, now even this group fails to earn that status and it is hard to say that it has managed to function and to sometimes mobilize at the group level. But on the other hand, since the political class consists primarily of the elite, perhaps the only social class that could create a dialectical relationship with it could be the intellectual elite factions, which operate outside the political class. This group could revitalize public space through a critical discourse and even through civic engagement in a specific situation. But even this group at both levels of discourse and act fails to articulate the public causes which "challenge" the power of the political class for several reasons: a) it fails to get out of the hegemony of discourse b) it lacks organization, c) they seek to preserve their privileges, d) it cannot

\(^{36}\text{It is difficult to determine the exact number of political prisoners, although there is a specific law (Law No. 7748) for their status and also a law for their compensation (Law No. 9831). The fact that their compensation problem has not been solved for many years is one of the indicators of the uselessness of this social group. Anyway referring to those whose right for compensation has been recognized it results that their number is around 11,700, although 23 thousand people have required that their status be recognized. (see www.fin.al).}
have the form of a consolidated group because they are as fluid as the other groups, with continuous changes. However I do not pretend to reveal all the new social structure in Albania but I am trying to highlight which group or class has managed to transform into a powerful agent in the new social structure. The whole reasoning so far is more a research in the macro rather than in micro and in this operation there are some social actors and factors, which may invisibly have an impact on the process of social and political change in Albania, factors that can unquestionably be neglected. But the goal in this thesis is not to reveal the structure of authority that we can find in different social environments in micro but try to understand what happens in the interaction between social actors in the macro.

This approach is obviously intentional because in order to understand the trajectory of change of Albania through the analysis of the state – society relationship, I am interested in the participation of social actors into the public sphere and not in what happens behind the scenes. Despite the focus on the macro- structural level, my reasoning starts from the actor in order to understand his action within the new social, political and economic environment, but observed in relation to development in macro - so how strong is it, individually or in group, to affect the structure.

Or to understand if the opposite happens because a structure, which dominates the actor, is created and consolidated - Integration in the European Union as a system of ideas and action that dominates the actor. The conclusion is that in the political - social Albanian universe I do not find either individuals or social groups that appear to dominate the structure except the political class that obtains the status of an important agent in the process of transformation of the country benefiting from the strength of the gravity of the structure. Nevertheless it should be emphasized that even though the society and the state the private and the public, the common and the personal are categories that in this reality are in a dual relationship, this does not happen outside the actor but it is developed in him throughout the act. The actor is now interested in creating an existence outside the state (or a rational structure) because over time it becomes a conscious choice according to a silent agreement which we articulated above – the individual benefits (he is awarded by the weak and not functional state) through informality while the political class continues to accumulate power. At this point micro and macro integrate with each other because in this way the system is allowed to function consciously and although the actor stands
in a dual relationship with it. In fact he feeds the existence of such a system every day.

It is through repeated practice that people express themselves as actors and consciousness and structure are exactly what is produced. (Giddens, 1984, 25 -26). Given that many social actors, for all the reasons discussed so far, distance themselves from the public, all this space is dominated by the political class through the party, as a structure that constantly requires to accumulate power. Yet as we asserted above, if we refer to Weber the party is a structure that seeks power. But a political class, that in the absence of other active social groups, monopolizes power, determines the path of development making it one dimensional and only led by a central government, normally has exceeded its radius of action. From another point of view anyone can fairly say that facing the different development alternatives and representations of certain groups could be accomplished through political parties and an electoral functioning system at central and local levels.

But I do not only judge this as insufficient but also as impossible in the case of Albania. In my reasoning the political class is the only well organized and functional social group (operational in accordance with its objectives) in Albania and in relation to other social groups that lack such organization it is the one that decides when and how to meet the interests of certain social groups and not the opposite. Therefore the political class has in its hands the state and the way it is administered is not defined by different social groups from below - above but by a certain network of individuals, interests, and goals led by the political class. In this sense you’re either within this network and can enjoy certain privileges or you're out of it and need to succeed in other ways. But even at this point the reasoning may seem speculative since the political class logically cannot act as a single power block. So just as it can happen with the business they can compete in the market of different parties and different political alternatives and society converted into a simple electorate (or, if use the analogy, a client) has the opportunity to vote or not to vote. But although this instrument in itself is insufficient even assuming that it carries this force, in the Albanian case its power is relative because: a) Citizens have no trust in the political class (see Figure 15 at Annex 1, b) all electoral processes in Albania have had problems with the manipulation in different forms (See reports of the OSCE on monitoring parliamentary elections in all periods when parliamentary elections are held), c) apart from manipulating the election there is a direct manipulation of the
electorate through the promise for jobs, favoring business, offering cash, etc., (on this issue, see the newspaper “Tema” Lubonja 2 January 2014; Krasniqi 2009). For all these reasons Albanian citizens are aware that their vote has no more weight to change the situation, and they generally vote for some reasons that substantially compromise the value of the voting itself like: a) to fulfill the duty as a citizen b) for militancy - in support of polarizing discourse imposed by the political class on the basis of origin c) to choose the lesser evil because most of the time the ruling party has governed so badly that it should definitely be removed from power even though other political forces don’t promise any better governance performance. Then in such a social and political reality the political class continues to accumulate power and maximize profits for the party and networks run by it through corruption (see corruption perception index 2013 cpi.transparency.org) and various forms of abuse with power. While the fragmented society and an electorate stripped of its power simply adapts by reinforcing more and more the dominant structure. The result of this entire situation is that the political class completely occupies the public space by impacting not only indirectly but also directly the lives of the individuals in the micro and the macro. Unable to organize at the in-group level and to create a dialectical relationship with the political class, the individual alone is scared of the power of this class and finds conformism or indifference as a solution. Conformism is materialized in some ways but all converge on the individual's attempt to be close to the networks created by certain members of the political class. That’s why, all the respondents of the study we treated in the third chapter believe that direct relationship with certain members of the political class are a useful mechanism to ensure any job, for favoring business or to obtain other benefits. Also, as we know, indifference does not change anything in the political role of the society, but it strengthens even more the power of the political class.

However the so far reasoning does not mean the political classes are the "devils" and the rest of society the "angels", but in interaction between themselves they are the social actors that based on the approach of the model of transformation create and constantly reinforce this domination structure. So this domination structure doesn’t lie outside the actor but through practice in everyday life it is incorporated and rooted in the culture. This is the main reason why all the actors are accommodated in the existing system although in a contradictory way it is claimed by all to be a transitional state. While the system has begun to take shape, internally the illusion that keeps alive
the social groups without power who do not actively participate in the construction of
the new system, is that this is simply a transition towards the European Union. On the
other hand, as we mentioned above, this illusion is constantly energized through the
discourse of the political class, which has oriented all the transformation of Albania as
a transition towards the EU. As synthesis it is clear that the state and society are
currently involved in a dysfunctional relationship because their points of contact are
very rare. The citizen participates but passively by legitimizing the political authority
in silence while the latter by occupying all the public space can’t do anything else but
reproduce itself. It consistently produces and reproduces the same structure of
domination and the same uni-linear and homogeneous approach of the transformation
in Albania. Then the trajectory of change of Albania should be understood as a
product of international actors and domestic political class through a homogeneous
modernization approach where the other social actors are left out. As a result there
can be no Albanian modernity in the political sphere that integrates the global with the
local, but only a transitory state towards a modernity whose physiognomy will be
revealed in the future.
CHAPTER V: Albanian pathway to modernity

5.1. What kind of modernity in Albania!

As I tried to explain from the beginning when I talk about an Albanian modernity I do not pretend and it’s not my goal to reveal the Albanian authenticity in an era of globalization but to understand whether the transformation is simply a programmed modernization or the local actors are an active part of the process of change. In fact, from my point of view, what is happening is that modernity interpreted by local actors as modernization dismantles the modernity because it is not marked as an aperture towards the plural but as a closure to homogenization. Although there may not exist any absolute criteria in the definition of modernity (not coincidentally in the theoretical level there is a wide debate on this issue) when it is filtered through the paradigm of modernization it takes just an absolutist character. It is interpreted as if there exists one modernity and not a few modernities and the measuring unit for the modernity itself is the western one. On these premises are defined the criteria that must be fulfilled to achieve the prescribed target as: installation of necessary institutions in the economic and political sphere followed by a gradual change of culture in accordance with western societies that are characterized as individualistic, democratic, capitalist, scientific, secular, and stabilized. This paradigm in fact is based on the theory of modernization which “may be seen as a generalizing and abstracting effort to transform an historically specific categorical scheme into a scientific theory of development applicable to any culture around the entire world” (Alexander, 1994, 171). But even if we assume that this theoretical approach is the right one when treated as an absolutist doctrine it acquires the form of an ideology, which except for other things produces a boomerang effect. Because if we pretend that modernity is characterized by individuals with a prominent individuality (not necessarily a creative personality) and by participating social groups, in the Albanian case these do not exist because inter alia in front of the paradigm of modernization they remain without a role. If in a normal situation, these developments go hand in hand, in the Albanian case and probably in most of the post – communist countries in general the structure precedes the actor, so from genesis the structure dominates on the actor.
Therefore I emphasize that modernity conceived in this way disables the modernity per se because instead of creating conceptual categories and heterogeneous action we consolidate the homogeneous, instead of the plural the uniformity prevails, instead of social conflict (conflict in terms of colliding different social groups) the consensus dominates. In these circumstances, it is difficult for the citizen to be born because he is facing a unique system, which alienates him again by distancing him from the public as it had happened in the communist regime.

It should be noted (as we brought to evidence in Chapter 4) that post-communist societies don’t derive from a traditional culture but were first faced with some characteristics of a modern culture societies though we will later see the model of this modernity. Therefore, modernization with a view to acquire the Western modernity cannot be interpreted as a shift from traditional society to the modern one but mostly as a leap from a closed, commanded society towards an open and self-determinative society. This is exactly what I am afraid has not happened and it’s difficult to happen even in prospect because as we have analyzed in the previous chapters the modernization paradigm reproduces a programmed society which paralyzes the activation of different social actors. In other words this does not mean that the individual is not free today at least compared to yesterday, but in the political level in relation to the new order which is being built we cannot neglect the fact that the individual is participating as little as he used to. Unquestionably we cannot draw parallels between the previous regime and what is happening today, but as long as the system and society are developed as two alien worlds then modernity understood as modernization keeps the individual away from the modernity. Then, in figurative terms the actor is transformed into an eternal spectator because he never writes the script, that’s why he is destined to always be subject to the power of the drama author. In other words the Albanian society as usual takes the form of a non-historical society because it is history the one that determines the society and not the vice versa. (Ferraj, 2011, 13). Although modernity itself if we refer to the classics of sociology is simultaneously freedom and constraint because in historical terms it is established on freedom but it is simultaneously accompanied by development of rational structures that relegate the individual in a human being without a subject.
5.2. Modernization in Albania, a society leitmotiv of the last century

Among different researchers it is widely discussed whether the communist regime or as may otherwise be called the real - socialism (in the sense of Soviet style Socialism or Communism) was modern or not, and if yes what kind of modernity represents. Particularly in a Weberian sense communism is described as modernity although in most nightmarish form (Ray, 1997, 545). Bauman says, “Communism was thoroughly modern in its passionate conviction that a good society can only be a carefully designed, rationally managed and thoroughly industrialized society…. Communism was modernity in its most determined mood and most decisive posture; modernity streamlined, purified of the last shred of the chaotic, the irrational, the spontaneous, the unpredictable” (Bauman, 1992, 166 - 167). Plenty of other authors (Kumar, 1995, Ost 1990, Eisenstadt, 1992) highlight that in a way the communism crisis itself followed by the collapse of the system constitutes a crisis of the modernity itself, in this way considering the type of the communist system in general as the epitome of modernity. Eisenstadt for example claims that communist societies were generally guided by a modernization project characterized by a continuous effort to assimilate the ideological and institutional elements of modernity of other countries which were better developed in this direction, although in the end they adopted the Jacobin elements of modernity (Eisenstadt, 1992). But being inconsistent with this thesis, other researchers see communism as a failed modernity or as a faked-up copy (Feher, Heller and Markus 1984, Janos 1991, 1994 and Sztompka Kopstein 1993). As we have also referred to in the first chapter Sztompka asserts that despite efforts to build a modern state and society the result was not an authentic modernity but a "fake modernity". According to him this modernity typology was the result of a paradoxical situation because on one hand there was a "forced creation of tangible modernity which was accompanied by Intangible cultural tissue, indispensable for authentic operation of modernity for the benefit of the people, for their own full enjoyment of modernity” (Sztompka, 1993, 88).

However, to make a long story short in this reasoning we can say that although the outcome may be an unsatisfactory modernity, false or partial one, there can hardly exist any better argued approaches to deny the fact that the communist project was a modernization project and that in itself it carries some features of modernity, although
they are often contradictory, unstable, non-historical and lack an internal development coherence. If we judge the Albanian case the previous system can be seen clearly as a process of transformation from a pre-modern society, towards a modern society. If we consider industrialization, urbanization and secularism as determining factors in the structuring of a modern society, then in Albania more than ever before these developments occur in the period of communism. Nevertheless, even at that time many of these changes were artificial and were commanded by the modernizing logic that derived from the alleged Marxist – Leninist ideology. Since the first years of installation of the communist regime, the nomenclature had developed specific policies according to the model of five-year development plans, for the conversion of the country into an agricultural - industrial one (see Institute of Marxism - Leninism, 1981, 268-290). The country and the society came under a process of structural transformation in economy, politics and culture led by the nomenclature, by producing a series of changes, which converged in the constitution of a modern society of communist type. Here I am talking about a modern society compared to the society and the level of development of Albania before installing the communist regime which was mainly a rural and traditional society with an undeveloped industry, in which there was no electricity, there was lack of infrastructure and education and about 82.25 % of the population in 1945 was illiterate, a society in which even the poor infrastructure and modern structures that had been built before were destroyed during world War II. Although since the declaration of independence in 1912 there was some development in general, compared to many other countries of the continent, Albania had remained the poorest and the most isolated country (Fischer, 1999, 33). Other practices that manifested significant modernist spirit of the communist regime in particular in the political level (this applies to all countries in the bloc) were promulgation of Elections and a modern constitution although both of The new order was conceived as a deconstruction of the previous order which was considered backward and unfair with the intention of gradually installing the power of the proletariat in Albania, although the latter almost did not exist in the absence of industrialization and urbanization of the country. In this socio-economic context since the modernization itself according to the Stalinist version lacked some important prerequisites to develop there was an extraordinary effort (initially with the help of former Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union and later from China) to change the economic model through the development of the industry. Consequently in 1960 the industry
could produce about 59.2% of gross domestic product although the labour force was more concentrated in agriculture than in industry (Fuga, 2004, 56). Also in a cultural and ideological context, the entire apparatus of communist propaganda was engaged in by different forms for the emancipation of society through formal education and social up to the deepest villages in Albania in an attempt to build "the new man". Modernization efforts in the cultural field, culminated with the removal of religious beliefs and the emancipation of women, the latter considered an important force in the construction of socialism (Vickers, 2008, 302). It’s not the case and opportunity to step into the historical details but said in a synthetic way it is clear that the communist system in Albania was designed as a process of modernization of the political, economic and cultural structure. The result was the application of some aspects of modernity but the approach and instruments that were used not only didn’t give the expected outcome but also provoked adverse effects hard to recover in the economic political and social dimension.

Besides the numerous problems it had, itself and the consequences that produced the Soviet-type system, the fundamental problem is the way it was conceived and the instruments that were used in the process of social change. As we know the transformation occurred through a repressive perspective, extreme isolation, an ideology enforced through the state’s violence, undercover security, propagandistic education and extremely censored, bureaucratisation and militarization of the population. Consequently the real socialism modernized by simultaneously de-modernizing the society because the more the state machinery surged the more the individual was de-individualized and de-rationalized. An artificial modernity was produced and therefore on unstable foundations for two reasons: 1) The society had no creative role in building the communist rule (excluding the first years of the change of the regime) although through state violence it was included in this process; 2) Because although the difference in some domains such as industrialization, urbanization, bureaucracy, progress in technology and education, reflects features of modernity, in some other domains were cultivated some aspects of traditional models pre – modern as paternalism in politics, barter economy, nepotism, ascriptive and particularistic principles of status (Sztompka, 1993, 88). In these circumstances we cannot say that the crisis of communism in Albania is a crisis of modernity itself but a
crisis of the model of communist or socialist modernity or the scientific socialism\textsuperscript{37} and instruments that were used to implement it. Hence, many of the modern elements that the social structure had absorbed were cleaned off as if they had never existed, because being unstable and not rooted in culture the society put them as a foreign body as soon as it faced a new political and cultural system that started to be built after the fall of the regime (Fuga, 2004). In general the period of communism in Albania is read as an unfair barrier to the long-standing vocation of Albanian elites and people in general to go westward as it is considered in this light the period of five centuries of Ottoman occupation. According to a social perception if its natural journey wouldn’t have been stopped by these historical obstacles, Albania would have been since a long time in "its natural family” the European – Western family. Not only that but for a long time it is sought deeper into the history of the Albanian people to discover its western roots, which before the Ottoman conquest was part of the Western European cultural cosmos. As a significant historical fact of the disclosure of western orientation of Albanian society is regarded the resistance of our national hero Scanderbeg who is rated as a Knight defender of Christianity and the West, because in the war with the Ottoman invaders didn’t protect only Albania but came to prevent the latter from penetrating the western Europe. This is at least the discourse articulated by the Albanian elite since the Renaissance and up to contemporary intellectuals and politicians.

Orientalism in particular is portrayed as the "evil" as a disease that must be fought while the West as the “good” and the "promised land" to be achieved at any cost. Sulstarova that broadly addresses this issue highlights that dichotomous east - west has been the essence of political, social and cultural discourse since renaissance until now. By focusing on the Renaissance, on the political thought of 30-s, on the Albanian political elite since the declaration of independence until today, Sulstarova emphasizes that the development trajectory of Albania has been consistently embedded within a debate on east or west where east meant pre - modern Society, while the west meant modern society and the latter has usually triumphed (Sulstarova, 2006, 116).

\textsuperscript{37} Although in this text we have not used the term scientific socialism or even real socialism if we refer to the terminology used at the time even by dictator Hoxha himself, Albania was the country in which the scientific socialism was being applied point by point according to Marxist -Leninist principles, even when many other countries of communist bloc couldn’t face the revisionist impact (Sulstarova, 2006, 116).
Especially after 90-s as well as we have discussed in previous chapters the return to the European family is articulated as the leitmotif of the transformation of the country. The worst crime of Communist regime according to one of the most important intellectual voices of Albania, Kadare was the fallout of Albania from Western Europe: "If he (here he implies the dictator) had rapidly returned to Europe, his case could probably be revised. Other crimes that he committed are nothing compared to this." (Quote from Sulstarova, 2006, 179). In general the modernization is seen as West while backwardness is attributed to communism and East. The Modernization/ Europeanization paradigm as we have expressed in previous chapters which gains more power than ever in the first moments of the collapse of the regime under the slogan that embodies the will of the society: "We want Albania like all Europe" has nothing wrong in itself. Maybe the trajectory of change is finally guided to the right path or at least to the desired flow from the Albanian society itself. But my concern in this context (if we accept the existence of this dichotomy) as I have expressed before is exactly the structure of thinking through the opposites which exclude one - another. So it seems as if the local actors translate the Albanian modernization project by being clearer for eliminating opposite than being bright for the program of change towards realizing the new order. In other words the modernization approach gains more power from the willingness of local actors to stamp the structured order in the past rather than as a result of an objective reading of the target modernity upon which the future is established. In this sense so great is the hatred for the past and the desire to capture the "Western train" that any critical perspective is eliminated on the road through which this transformation is passing. Thus, the discussion on modernization in Albania didn’t arise today, but the whole modern Albanian history is the story of modernization. This has constantly been articulated by social actors of Albanian periphery and especially by elites more as an attempt to reach the centre than as an attempt to discover its path of development. As a result not only in thought level but also in action level although in a constrained manner and in an asymmetric relation with the time, every project for social change in Albania is guided by the philosophy of adaptation by reducing the local actor in a Darwinian being (Ferraj, 2011 19). So that in the genesis of constructing a new order in Albania, we are confronted with the instrumentalization of thinking and acting itself according to the principle - that internally we should not do anything except to
strictly imitate the dominant model of the developed centers of the globe. So in these circumstances Mimesis becomes modus vivendi for the local actor.

5.3. Searching for a different modernity

As we were reasoning above the communist’s regime collapse cannot be interpreted as a social revolt against pre-modern or traditional regime but as a reaction to the type of modernity it produced. It can mostly be seen as a protest against modernity blocking or distortion effected by totalitarian regimes. So as a synthesis expressed in the words of Eisenstadt “While these regimes block and in many ways distorted modernity and development, in some of their basic, symbolic, and institutional aspects they were very modern societies” (Eisenstadt, 1992, 31).

Thus the targeted Western and European modernity arises as a request to obtain some elements of modernity that were missing or were deliberately excluded by communist dictatorship (although even few sectors that had a partial development, in the previous chapters we have mentioned that they had been destroyed with the idea of beginning from scratch). Among these the most important one is the liberation of the social actor from the iron cage of the communist type by creating conditions to participate in the construction of the world that surrounds him, but for all the reasons that we have discussed so far this does not happen. Obviously you cannot compare today’s freedom of the individual with the dictatorial regime but the way in which the transformation process is conceived, as a result of a political class that has occupied the public space, as a result of lack of identity and accommodation of other social groups within a culture of apathy this freedom is hard to materialize in the political dimension. It is true that a totalitarian device that controls every cell of society doesn’t exist nowadays as it happened with the previous regime but a mechanical program of social change appeals only the ability of the actor to adapt and not the ability to exploit new opportunities or to become active. Obviously not so much time has passed since the regime collapsed thus inhibitory elements inherited from the past are still present, (though in my opinion they don’t have the weight that the culturalist approach of path dependency attributes to them) except for the mentality and the culture cultivated over the years of transformation. In the previous chapters I tried to analyze many of the factors that affect the creation of a culture of non-participation
but the most important is to emphasize that in any case the final result is that the non-participation of different social actors makes the constitution of an Albanian modernity impossible. In this thesis it is widely discussed (with no claim to be exhaustive) in relation to the difficulties that exist to reach Western European modernity while simultaneously confirming that the path that is chosen by local actors for the modernization of Albanian is wrong because no development model can be consistent and coherent if the centre superposes the periphery. This does not mean that the wheels of development can or should be reinvented by the Albanian suburban society, but on one hand the social actors would be more active if the development model wouldn’t be simply managerial and bureaucratic and on the other hand their activism would save the modernity itself because it would create a different social Albanian cosmos. In these circumstances, no one can say what the characteristics of Albanian modernity might have been unless restricted in a functionalist analysis and understand what is preventing Albania's path towards the European modernity. However this may be temporary and no one can say what might happen in the future. But currently the most "striking" form of Albanian society engagement is through aimless resistance towards the model of development as a consequence of a culture, which needs time to change in order to adapt to new the conditions. The meeting of centre with the periphery surely in perspective will create a sequence where the components of two cultures are integrated but this does not reject what we have discussed so far because this is not a deliberate plan of the local actors. Hence, perhaps in the future an Albanian modernity can be produced but this is due to the inability to eliminate the internal cultural components and not a result of the willingness of social actors.

5.4. Modernization or postmodernization!

Although since the title of this thesis we used the term modernity this is mostly as a result of the discussion on modernization, for the discussion on modernity in itself is very complex. In particular, the reasoning becomes more complex given that modernization means reaching the west but on the other hand it is questionable whether the West itself is in a modern phase of development or a post-modern one. In the theoretical level it is widely debated by the contemporary theorists whether the
contemporary western society continues to be modern, as it was perceived at the time
of Durkheim and Weber, is it a different modernity or it has passed in a post-modern
development phase. In this sense the reasoning on the Albanian modernization
becomes more complicated because as long as the transformation is an attempt to
grasp the centre - the West, then we should understand if the western modernity or
post-modernity is being grasped. Many contemporary theoreticians consider the
contemporary world as modern. (Giddens 1990) through his concept of Juggernaut
describes the current society characterized by a high or late radical modernity.
Modernity in the form of a Juggernauti is extremely dynamic, it is an escaping world
with a high increase of the rhythm, of the scope and with a greater depth of change
compared to the previous systems (Giddens 1990, 139). Beck says that “Just as
modernization dissolved the structure of feudal society in the nineteenth century and
produced the industrial society, modernization today is dissolving industrial society
and another modernity is coming into being (Beck, 1992,10). In the textbook Risk
Society, toward a new modernity (from which this quotation is taken) Beck defends
the idea that we remain in the modern era although in a new form which he calls
reflective society. Beck argues that as a consequence of a process of individuation that
has happened in the West agents are free of structural conditionality and therefore are
better able to create not only themselves but also the society in which they live
(Ritzer, Goodman, 2008, 571). Post-modernity on the other hand, and in particular
the diversity of post-modernist theories which inter alia are multi-disciplinary
(Baudrillard, Deleuze, Guattari, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe) make it more
difficult to determine the exact term postmodern. The most convenient method that
can be followed to clarify the concept is through the distinction of the terms post
modernism, postmodernism and postmodern social theory. Postmodernism is defined
in the historical level as subsequent or a continuation of modern era; postmodernism
refers to cultural products that vary from modern cultural products; while postmodern
social theory is related to the way of thinking, which is different from modern social
theory. "In this way the term postmodern includes a new historical era, new cultural
products and a new kind of theorizing about the social world" (Ritzer, Goodman,
2012, 621).

From this overview it is clear how complicated and complex the discussion on
modernity and post-modernity is and how it becomes even more challenging if we
pose the question of what does mean modernization nowadays for a country like
Albania. If west is modern, then it is aimed to achieve modernity, if it is post-modern then it is aimed to achieve post-modernity. Obviously there could not exist any plan or strategy that determines the phases, in that manner that modernity is achieved first and after follows the western post-modernity. As we emphasized continuously the only thing that exists is the wish and will to be west likely in the spheres of economy, politics and culture. Thus the argument flounders at the question: To which west?. In reality the determining element is placed since its premise because if transformation is conceptualized as modernization, then what is aimed is modernity and not post-modernity, but both dimensions can be part of the social and political universe of Albanian society nowadays. It is understood that such an analysis in this thesis would be impossible and very challenging because in front of a chaotic society that changes continuously the discovery of modern a post-modern elements in micro would be a “mission impossible”. In fact, various scholars have attempted to analyze the post-communism in this prism. For example Ray poses the question whether are there good grounds for regarding post-modernity and post-communism as part of a common process? Ray elaborates on this that “It should be noted that this could be true only in so far as postmodernism is understood as a trend or process that renders some social arrangements, in this case centralized and autarkic systems, less viable than other, more decentralized and globally integrated ones” (Ray, 1997, 544). The principles on which postmodernism is established stand in such a high level of abstraction that renders difficult empirical research, and this is valid also on the difficulties posed by such a research in post-communist countries. Ray considers as a more convincing argument the trend and modernity attempts of post-communist countries rather than the development of any certain form of postmodernism (Ray, 1997, 547).

Post-communist societies are facing problems mostly with modernity, problems that before have been latent, such as: a) the tension between personal and the overall interests; b) confronting between different forms of legitimacy and various aspects of modern political processes.

In addition, Holmes argues that actually post-communist countries recreate conditions of early modernity such as imperfect democracies and markets with high levels of conflict (Holmes, 1993). Otherwise postmodernism thesis argues that in post-communist countries are happening such changes that can lead to the creation of a new relationship between western capitalism and the societies of these countries,
mainly as due to the globalization and some other developments such as decentralization, privatization, new social movements (see Crook et.al). Anyhow, to not be prolonged more, according to Ray “expectations that the post-communist world will converge with a postmodernized world of stylish consumption cultures and globalized lifestyles are premature” (Ray, 1997, 556). In some aspects post-communist societies manifest modernity problems, anyhow this happens in different circumstances and consequently the modernization process not only cannot be repeated but it would be naïve to be continued to think in this manner.

For many scholars transformation in post-communist countries is nothing more than an institutional arrangement that aims solution of some problems systematically. Often articulated goals in function to problems solution suggest more a reproduction of modernity rather than overcoming to post-modernity through system’s change in some aspects as following: a) reconstitution of boarders between private and public; b) differentiation between economy, civil society and state, associated with c) legal amendments in line with western legislation. “The post-Soviet systems might then be viewed as on the road to elsewhere, the contours of which are not yet complete, but will involve state led accumulation with only limited global integration” (Ray, 1997, 556).

I think that in Albania for as long as will continue to dominate the unilinear approach of development, reduced in imitation of West arguing that this is the right road to be followed towards Europe, Albanian society absurdly could be at the same time modern and postmodern. The intransigence of the entire Albanian society to join the West through EU integration, leaded in chirp and in practice by the elites, can produce fragmentally pieces of European modernity and post-modernity (for as long as one or both dimensions are present in the European culture currently), but not necessary a West-European development. The last, would be impossible for at least three main reasons: a) as long as the Albanian society perceives merger with Western Europe as an identical reproduction or conversion in western culture by erasing in this manner its own identity, although this is impossible; b) as long as every programme of change and development in macro is interpreted as transplanting of European social structures without any internal debate or critic and without any real evaluation of Albanian society potential nowadays; c) as long as the internationals will continue to suggest change modules that originate from a modernist perspective which is
homogenous and a historical, by flattening this way the cultural characteristics and the specificities of the Albanian society historical formation.

**5.5. The critical approach: escaping from a homogenizing modernization**

Until now, as long as the process of social change is only an imitation process, the actor's occasional social circumstances determine its distance to the West. “Westernization” of Albanian society depends from the social actor's communication or access to the western world and its possibilities to reproduce it internally. In an individual level the actor tries to get as closer as possible to the “western dream” through emigration, tourism and information technology (virtual). While at the structural level, through installation of the trade economy and democracy measured by its progress in the process of EU integration. But of course in a cultural context, beside that the development vector is oriented towards European Union, namely western culture (in the previous chapters I’m referred to empirical data that confirm the vocation of Albanian society’s majority) the society is heterogeneous and attempting continuously to know and define itself.

In daily life in various domains and layers it appears simultaneously as traditional, modern and postmodern. The valence achieved by each of these categories in the lifestyle of an individual depends from structural barriers such as the social status, intellectual formation, class, residence; although as due to a social frenetic mobility (discussed in previous chapters) all these conditions may be temporary and variable. Thus, this depends from the fact that someone lives in the village or in the city, in a deep countryside or near urban areas, religious belief, economic situation, education level, as it depends also from the continuous change of the positions of the social actor.

But above all, the rapport of Albanian society with the West should be evaluated as an issue of opportunities- what is possible or impossible to be imitated, although as we clarified above the world that is being imitated is very plural. There might exist different forms of West imitation or “cloning” in an individual level, in the model of the everyday life of the social actor, but this as we noticed until now is impossible at
the structural level. Until now we have seen that in macro particularly in the political plane it is impossible to reproduce West although apparently exists a systemic attempt from the domestic political class and the international one to achieve this objective. While in micro (despite the structural barriers) can be found individuals or social groups inside the social formations in Albania which are western oriented in their thinking way and their lifestyle, being in this way as much modern or postmodern (if this exists) as the westerns are. If for example cinematography, music, visual arts, artistic literature, contemporary philosophy or other spheres are postmodern in a passive level, even certain categories of Albanian society consume postmodernism although couldn’t be able internally to understand this condition. In this sense, for individuals or certain groups, aimed modernism could had been achieved inside private frames, but on my opinion this is reflected more as a mental or physical escape (by leaving Albania) from the Albanian reality, than as willingness to build modernity or post-modernity internally.

Thus the everyday life could produce a diverse development, and this is stretched out a superficial and artificial level because the social actor in the periphery only imitates; it is projected in the role of a passive consummator of that that will get produced by the centre and not an actor that administers and adapts the surrounding world. However in relation to everyday life, normally the society is heterogeneous, dynamic, fluid and unpredictable. This condition at least actually, for as long as the culture is continuously changing creates an internal tension and saves society from uniformity. In these circumstances are articulated the premises of a plural social reality, which although in its premise has prescribed its finality, in reality is transformed in an open arena of encounters between social actors, which means an unpredictable future. So, I cannot tell certainly which western cultural elements are being absorbed in micro, but simply I can perceive the existence of a social structure that is fluid and carries in its body a variety of modern, postmodern and traditional fragments that are almost impossible to be discovered empirically.

So, if everything in micro is under construction consequently there could be collision, conflict and plurality; in macro the modernization programme which from its nature is unilinear produces consequently uniformity and consensus. In this regards, telos is
really clear and is materialized in a detailed and concrete plan of policies and laws driven by the political class with a view to reaching western modernity, by strangling the participation of other social groups (a phenomenon widely discussed in chapter four).

It is at the political level that the society is transformed into a homogenous and solid mass. This happens because of: a) Articulation of a transformation program (for which we have argued widely) which produces a unilinear development in macro by "strangling" the creation and engagement of different social groups; b) Targeted political modernity (democracy, good governance) is not achieved, and this disappoints citizens who leave the public sphere; c) Civil society does not function as a result of internal bureaucratization and lack of horizontal and vertical citizens’ trust; d) Homogeneous discourse of elites which derives from the modernization paradigm blurs critical thinking.

For these reasons we are abridge articulating and others treated in previous chapters, deepens the distance between society and the state because the individual continues to experience the new system as an authority that does not belong. Given that the social actor does not take part in the construction of commonality then what is produced is only uniformity and therefore there is no way to create an Albanian modernity in relation to the system in general. In this way the aimed modernity itself is compromised because, as we have noted above, in post-communist Albania we have not to do with a shift from pre-modernity to modernity but with a transition to modernity where most importantly the actor is presumed to have an important role in relation to state, unlike what happened in the previous regime. So, if expected a modernity that would regenerate the public sphere, by transforming it into a "healthy" clash arena, in fact happens the opposite because there is missing the debate and collision of different social groups. The unilineare and homogenizing paradigm of change reinforces the culture of passivity and does not leave any space for the social actor to change the attitude and to articulate any endogenous development vision where global and local can be integrated. As noted earlier, this is a process led mostly by the elites that exploit the European integration vocation of the society to reinforce their power and dominative structure in general. In particular, the transformation operation (also as underlined in Chapter 4) is guided by the political class. But even if we do not worry for the structure of domination; for the lack of the individual’s
participation; if we do not consider important the center - periphery relationship; the state-society relationship; or even if they do not deem as important what we named the "Albanian modernity", and to be completely instrumentalist, again this development paradigm developed by the local elites has not produced long-awaited changes. Albania remains one of the most corrupted countries, the poorest and most backward in Europe compared event to other Western Balkan jurisdictions. Then it is understandable that the critical reflection on the transformation paradigm itself that I tried to bring in this thesis is not any academic fetish but a necessary rationale. If the question is what is wrong with Albania, the answer is usually articulated as an attempt to understand what has not worked in certain aspects of governance or decision-making and not to analyze in a critical position the development philosophy itself. The tendency is to search for problems within the lack of functioning of certain institutions and not to the relationship between social forces, from which probably derives the new social order. The new order constructed in Albania is the result of a social consensus that does not generate change but just constantly reproduces the status quo. The ordinary citizen is occupied for existence while the intellectual obeys for many reasons to this model of change for which we have discussed so far, which ironically does not generate any change. There may not be a solution for everything, but I think that one of the necessary solutions is the creation of a social environment where different social and political groups collide among themselves and in this way the public sphere is released from the occupation of the political class (simply as the most powerful class currently).

So in other words the solution (in terms of a country changing as a result of the willingness of its citizens) is conflict and not the consensus, the critical approach rather than the functionalist approach. If in Albania will not be shaped several power centers, development will continue to be one-dimensional by constantly reproducing itself and no change at all. In particular, the entity appealed in this case is the intellectual because as we have seen before the transformation process is guided by the elites and relies on a managerial and bureaucratic program. But for this to happen it’s not enough to be a specialized intellectual proficient in his area of expertise, but rather a political being which supports human activity on the critique when it is necessary to criticize.
Thus expressed differently I would say that we need the intellectual that would rely on critical approach and not that functionalist one. I do not believe that in a country like Albania we need to discuss in public discourse only in technical terms (although there are few debates) if reforms that will lead us towards the EU are implemented; and if not what is not functioning. Instead we need to reflect on more fundamental questions like \textit{is this the right way of development}, whether \textit{these are the right policies} or whether \textit{this is a proper leadership}. The critical school would say that the intellectual or certain disciplines like sociology simply explain what is going on in society by accepting the status quo and do not attempt to overcome the existing social structure. According to this theoretical stream, in particular sociologists fail to articulate complete and accurate meanings about the political changes that may create a fair and humane society (Ritzer, Goodman, 2008, 284). Understandably the study objective of many of the authors of this school is far from what I have undertaken to treat in this thesis, but I’m borrowing from this theory the need for critical standings beyond passive observation of the social and political reality. In this context, if we refer to Markyze (2006), the factors that affect the formation of a one-dimensional society are not exactly the ones for which we have discussed in this thesis but anyway essentially the problem is the same because even in the Albanian case we deal with a society that has become one dimensional in the political plane.

Albanian society has not yet a clear identity and perhaps in this respect is not very similar to the modern society which is criticized by many of the authors of the critical school, and therefore this intervention may seem artificial. But basically the main concern articulated by this school is the technocratic thinking that stems from the formal rationality according to which the objective serves to domination forces and does not release people from domination (Ibid, 285). This is also the argument that I’m borrowing from the critical school because even in the Albanian case it is exactly the technocratic and bureaucratic thought, materialized at the modernization approach that is not allowing the public spheres to be released by homogenization and hegemony. For the reasons discussed above, it is necessary to be created conditions for more participation and various development alternatives stemming from the interests of different social groups and crash between them. But for this to happen the dominance structure should be challenged through the articulation of thought and critical attitudes of intellectuals.
In fact, as we have seen, the opposite happens because intellectuals are not only conformed to the current power structure and the development program but constantly they feed it through inaction and also through action also being put in the function of the interests of the political class, not of other social groups. Despite their social function, as leaders of civil society organizations, academics, writers, artists or whatever other position, intellectuals rarely question the political class and the paradigm of the Albanian transformation. We discussed in the previous chapters how the Albanian society did not inherit any form of organized dissidence which could serve as a positive experience that could inspire critical thinking today. Currently Albanian intellectuals are either silent or small-minded critics who establish their position by relying on the private narrow interests or those of a particular party or a clan. Even if the critic exists, it is not conceived by any idealistic vision aiming to solve certain problems in the function of less powerful social groups. Generally lacks not only the critical intellectual and independent thinking but also the independent specialist because even the last depends on which party is part (Dervishi, 2013, 169).

So in general in Albania lacks critical thinking, or in the best case it is articulated through isolated voices which fail to be amplified so as to gain a political dimension that can resonate throughout the society. Consequently, although a critical approach is necessary to enliven the public debate, to relieve the actor from passivity, to generate alternative models of change in Albania, this is difficult for the moment to happen because agents that could lead this process are missing. That the individual in Albania to "be friendly" with his state and to overthrow the existing dysfunctional relationship should be released from isolation to the private sphere and should win a political dimension. The last is clear that can happen only if the dominant mentality and abusive power of the political class are smashed (for which we discussed extensively in Chapter Four), through the articulation of a critical approach which can turn trust to the participation and give to different actors their lost role. Concluding the argument, should be noted that "water" can begin to move only if social consensus is replaced by facing, otherwise we are risking to "drowning in stagnant waters."
CONCLUSIONS

This thesis comes as an attempt to understand the post-communist transformation in Albania through the actors that participate in this process by mostly focusing on the state–society relationship. Mainly the whole trajectory of transformation in post-communist countries is predetermined through an essentialist approach which determines the finality of this journey of post-communist societies - Western modernity. On this premise are established many researches on the social sciences which have post-communism as an object of study. So a homogeneous approach dominates that examines developments in post-communist countries by comparing them with the Western modernity, or more specifically in the Albanian case through the distance of the country with the EU. But as I have explained from the beginning of this thesis this is not an approach that is articulated only by scholars but it is transformed into a development paradigm that guides and forms the new social structure in Albania and the role of each actor within it. Although this is the main hypothesis of this thesis it doesn’t determine the analysis because I start off from the premise that different social actors can be potentially important agents of change and may produce an endogenous development trajectory if they participate in this process. Just by focusing on this logic we don’t start our research from the macro-structure which helps understand the activity of the actor, but the vice versa. I try to monitor how much and how different social actors are present in the construction of a new social, political and economic order through participation in the public. In this line of reasoning the main question is whether an Albanian "modernity" can be produced or any authority and actor is unconditionally subject to the homogeneous and teleological paradigm of change. Obviously I cannot be so naive to look for the authenticity in the outskirts of the world, in this epoch of globalization (moreover considering the post-communism) but this does not mean not to observe if one of the main features of modernity itself is fulfilled - which means a strong individual who has access and is able to participate in the world that surrounds him. I cannot put absolute criteria of the definition of the modern (or even post-modern) but the logic in this case is very simple if the society participates in the process of building a new political, economic order - then it is the society which is building the world that
surrounds it, which can be western, European, oriental, a combination of all, or none of these because this is not important. Otherwise the story is being imposed again by not being able to produce anything internally. Obviously the individual participates indirectly but he projects his existence away from the space in which the world that surrounds is politically constructed. The actor due to his occidental and internal vocation and his virtual and real intense contact with the West absorbs what is possible from this world but not the political dimension. The conclusion is what we've extensively dealt: Civil society for many reasons doesn't function, the individual is alienated politically, as a result the political class is transformed into a significant agent of change. The latter does not win this stature because of the qualities that carries in itself but as a result of the role that the history attributes to it. So although I start from the idea of finding a transformation model in order to integrate the global with the locale, or in other words the universal with the particular, where the individual creates the world that surrounds, this is impossible, at least in the case of Albania. The thesis of modernization through integration in the EU conceived as a mechanical process of reforms is absorbed by the whole society by blurring in this way every critical position and the possibility of citizen’s activization. It is understood that lack of participation is due to many causes but we can consider the managerial model of development and hegemonic political discourse as the main cause. Since the individual doesn’t participate, this reinforces the structure of domination, the development paradigm from above - down and distances even more the society from the state. The individual fulfills his interests privately whereas the state’s administration is left to the political class therefore the democracy is applied de jure but not de facto. As long as the new system is fabricated by an exogenous conceptual category which shapes the society itself, the "hostility" of the private with the public will continue – the state formally armoured in accordance with EU recommendations implemented by the political class (as we have emphasized this is used by the political class to reinforce power) while the individual that reinforces the private through informal activities. As we have widely discussed the problem is not the orientation of the vector of change towards the EU but the way this is perceived by the local actors as well as the international ones. Unless the one-dimensional approach is deconstructed through shaping of a public space with several power centers which face each other, it’s hard for the relationship state - society to be functional. But for this to happen the individual should engage in a social group or class level in order to begin
to use the public as his own space and not as an alien entity. Under these conditions, the reasoning is incorporated in a closed circle because the participation is the solution while this is impossible for many reasons. In this line of reasoning naturally this question arises. Should we wait for the time foreseen by Dahrendorf or do we need to accelerate the process, otherwise temporary models of (non) development will be routinized and gain the size of a sustainable system. If there is any way to revive the public spaces in Albania this may be first and foremost a result of the intellectual elite engagement through the articulation of a critical approach. I say this not because I believe in the role of elites in general but because it is the one that is appealed in this case, since the transformation process is conceived first and foremost as a process led by elites. First of all we need to create a critical public stance in order to gradually obtain a culture of consensus cultivated for a long time, which constantly reproduces the status - quo and limits the public debate in a functionalist perspective.
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ANNEX 1: Additional figures

Figure 12: Trust in fellow citizens.

Figure 13: Level of trust in institutions.
Figure 14 Level of social trust in Europe from 0-10 (0- no trust; 10-full trust).

Figure 15: Level of trust in institutions and political system (urban vs rural; 0-no trust; 10-full trust).
Member of trade unions or similar organizations

- No
- Yes, previously
- Yes, currently

84%
13%
3%

Figure 16: Membership in trade unions or similar organizations.

Level of satisfaction with the national government (0- Not satisfied; 10 Very satisfied)

Figure 17: Level of satisfaction with the national government.
Figure 18: Level of interest in politics.
Does or does not apply to Albania (0 - It does not apply at all; 10 - It does apply very much)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E20</td>
<td>In country opposition parties are free to criticise the government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E21</td>
<td>In country the media are free to criticise the government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E18</td>
<td>In country voters discuss politics with people they know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E22</td>
<td>In country the media provide citizens with reliable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E19</td>
<td>In country different political parties offer clear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E23</td>
<td>In country the rights of minority groups are protected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E30</td>
<td>In country politicians take into account the views of...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E28</td>
<td>In country the government explains its decisions to voters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E24</td>
<td>In country citizens have the final say on political issues by...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E26</td>
<td>In country governing parties are punished in elections...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E17</td>
<td>In country national elections are free and fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E29</td>
<td>In country the government takes measures to reduce...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E25</td>
<td>In country the courts treat everyone the same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E27</td>
<td>In country the government protects all citizens against...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 19: Democratization and decision making (does or does not apply to Albania).*