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BRIKENA BALLI

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ALBANIAN MIGRANTS: EARNING A LIVING AND BUILDING A LIFE IN
GREECE

By

BRIKENA BALLI

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ABSTRACT

ALBANIAN MIGRANTS: EARNING A LIVING AND BUILDING A LIFE IN
GREECE

By

BRIKENA BALLI

The collapse of the communist system, along with the transition from a centrally-
planned to a market economy, triggered large-scale immigration from Albania to the
countries of Western Europe. During its four decades of communist rule (1945-1990), the
government of Albania imposed one of the strictest migration controls in the whole
former communist bloc, and perhaps in the world. Any attempt to leave the country
without prior authorization would be met with severe punishment, such as imprisonment
and forced labor from ten to twenty four years and, in some cases, even with capital
punishment. This state of no migration would come to an end in the 1990s, when the
authoritarian regime in Albania, as elsewhere in Eastern Europe, collapsed fostering a
large-scale flight of Albanians to Western countries, in particular Greece, where
Albanians are the by far the largest migrant group.

The establishment and development of migration from Albania present a unique
opportunity for scholars of migration for several reasons:

Migration from Albania is a new kind of migration: that from a country of the
former Eastern bloc to the capitalist countries of the West. There are few studies done in
this area. In addition, Albanian migration started out as forced migration and over time
was transformed into normal labor migration. Thus, migration from Albania will provide
us with the opportunity to examine the establishment and normalization of migrations

from former Eastern European countries to Western Europe, as well as the opportunity to examine the transformation process of forced migration to labor migrations.

In addition, due to the isolation from the outside world, Albania to a greater extent than any other societies of former communist bloc, was left behind its capitalist neighbors technologically. As a result of this, Albanians lacked the skills required in a modern capitalist society. The movement of a people from the least technologically developed country in Europe, and the most isolated country of the former communist bloc, to the industrialized capitalist democracies of the West creates challenges for immigrants as they try to adapt to their host societies. Thus, Albanian migration provides scholars with the opportunity to understand the human drama element in transition from a former communist society to a Western capitalist society, which comprises one of the most significant gaps in the European literature of migration.

In the light of these circumstances, the goals of this study will be framed on two levels, more specific and more general: On a more specific level, this study examines Albanian migrants' experiences as they build their lives in one of the countries of the West, namely Greece. These experiences will include motives for exit as well as experiences in the Greek labor market. On a more general level, this research examines the forces that underlie the process of perpetuation of migration and its transformation from forced migration to labor migration. The research is based on 64 in-depth (face-to face and telephone) interviews with Albanian migrants who live and work in Greece.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Study

The fall of the communist system, along with the transition from a centrally-planned to a market oriented economy has produced massive migration of people from Eastern to Western Europe. Nowhere has this been more evident than in Albania, a country which in a space of a little over one decade has gone from having no emigration to one in which 20% of its citizens live abroad. This makes Albania the world's most dramatic example of mass migration in recent times (King 2003: 119).

Migration from Albania, like the rest of Eastern Europe, is deeply embedded in the process of transformation from a command to a market economy. During four decades of communist rule (1945-1990), the government of Albania imposed one of the strictest migration control in the whole former communist bloc, and perhaps in the world. This state of no migration would come to an end in the 1990s, when the dictatorial regime in Albania, as elsewhere in Eastern Europe, collapsed fostering a large-scale flight of Albanians to Western countries. In the years to come, an unprecedented number of Albanians would leave the country and move to the industrialized countries of the West. The largest number of immigrants (443.550) would go to Greece, where Albanians are by far the largest migrant group (Immigrant Census GR 2001), and Italy, where at 401.915, Albanians constitute the second largest immigrant group (Caritas 2008).

The establishment and development of migration from Albania present a unique opportunity for scholars of migration for several reasons:

Migration from Albania is a new kind of migration: that from a country of the former Eastern bloc to the capitalist countries of the West. There are few (see for example Markowitz 1993; Gold 1995; Orleck 1999; Remmenick 2007 for research on Jews from the former Soviet countries) studies done in this area. In addition, Albanian migration started out as forced migration and over time was transformed into normal labor migration. Thus, migration from Albania will provide us with the opportunity to examine the establishment and normalization of migrations from former Eastern European countries to Western Europe as well as the opportunity to examine the transformation process of forced migration to labor migrations.

In addition, as previously mentioned, for forty years the communist government of Albania had adopted the strictest entry and exit controls, even by comparison to other communist bloc countries. Any attempt to leave the country without prior authorization, which was impossible to obtain for the overwhelming majority of Albanians, would result in imprisonment and forced labor from ten to twenty four years and, in some cases, even with capital punishment (Hein 1998: 224). The result of this would be generations of Albanians who have no experience with international migration. Moreover, due to the isolation from the outside world, Albania, to a greater extent than any other societies of former communist bloc, was left behind its capitalist neighbors technologically. As a result of this, Albanians lacked the skills required in a modern capitalist society. The movement of a people from the least technologically developed country in Europe, and the most isolated country of the former communist block, to the industrialized capitalist democracies of the West creates challenges for immigrants as they try to adapt to their host societies. Thus, Albanian migration provides scholars with the opportunity to

understand the human drama element in transition from a former communist society to a Western capitalist society, which comprises one of the most significant gaps in the European literature of migration.

In the light of these circumstances, the goals of this study will be framed on two levels: more specific and more general:

On a more specific level, this study examines Albanian migrants' experiences as they build their lives in one of the countries of the West, namely Greece. The question will be what happens when workers who lack the experience with a modern industrialized economy, and a history of migration, become migrant workers? These experiences will include motives for exit as well as experiences in the Greek labor market.

Analyses of motives of exit are critical to understanding migrants' experience, since the decision to migrate is one of the most important decisions one makes in one's life time (Gold 1997). Besides, analysis of migrants' motives provides us with an understanding of the nature of migration in general. Thus far, studies have attempted to explain migrants' motives through micro, meso as well as macro perspectives. Micro perspectives underscores individual's willingness to optimize wages as a motive for leaving (Harris and Todaro 1970; Sjaastad 1962; Todaro 1969; 1976). Meso perspectives highlight membership in a web of social networks that influences people's decision to move (Gold 2001). Macro approaches, on the other hand, underscore historical, structural, economic, political and social forces that shape people's motivations to move to another country (Petras 1981; Portes and Borocz 1989; Sassen, 1981, 1988). While these theoretical perspectives are significant in explaining migrants' motives, they are

still incapable of fully elucidating the case of Albanian migrants. I contend that a full understanding of Albanian migrants' motives to leave need to take into analysis the role of the Albanian communist state. Within this framework, I argue that the authoritarian government of Albania, through its decisions of limiting economic development and prohibiting immigration, created the very conditions for the current immigration climate. Its deterioration and its final collapse, however, unleashed large-scale migration waves from Albania to the countries of the West.

As noted earlier, the study of Albanians' adaptation in the Greek labor market is another goal of this dissertation. Existing theoretical models (i.e., assimilationist, human capital, economic restructuring, segmented labor market, ethnic entrepreneurship, informal economy) have established a rich literature one can draw upon to explain migrants' economic adaptation patterns. Yet, their significance is limited in that these models have largely developed in the context of settler societies (i.e., United States, Canada), countries with a long history of immigration, as well as societies of Northern Europe who received millions of guestworkers. Albanians, on the other hand, move to Greece, a country that was, for a long time, a country of emigration. More importantly, however, I argue that in order to fully understand Albanians' experiences in the labor market in Greece, we need to examine the economic environment of their socialist past. Indeed, Albanians, like their Eastern European counterparts (see Gold 1995) grew up in a system, in which having a job was a state guaranteed social right. The process of looking for a job, and the fear of losing a job, was virtually nonexistent. In Greece, however, for the first time in their lives, these immigrants will encounter a free market economic environment, in which job insecurity, and job instability, are a reality of daily life. These

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new realities present unique challenges to Albanian immigrants. These experiences will be examined along the lines of gender, ethnicity, and pre-migration social status background.

On a more general level, my research examines the forces that underlie the process of perpetuation of migration and its transformation from forced migration to labor migration. I set out to carry out this task, first, by looking at the social forces that sustain immigration and secondly, by investigating social forces that normalize migration.

The examination of the mechanisms that underlie the perpetuation and normalization of forced migration has been largely ignored in the scholarship of migration. The existing scholarly work, in particular those that focus on North American migration, and to a lesser extent research on European migration, have explored the perpetuation of labor migration streams only. These studies have indicated that social networks and cumulative causation of migration are two major social mechanisms responsible for the continuation and perpetuation of migration (Massey et al. 1987; 1993; 1994b; 1998). Albanian immigrants, given the condition of their exit (i.e., poverty, insecurity, the fear of descent into anarchy) were forced migrants. In addition, while Albanian state created the conditions of migration, successive Albanian governments, on both sides of political spectrum, were not involved in migration at all, yet immigration sustained itself and took on massive proportions. Drawing upon the work of Massey and his colleagues (Massey et al. 1987; 1993; 1994b; 1998), I argue that similar forces are responsible for the perpetuation and promotion of Albanian immigration.

The sudden arrival of a large number of Albanians turned Greece from a previously emigration country into a country of immigration. Its institutions, therefore, were largely unprepared to respond to these new realities. Given the nature (illegal crossing of the border, fraudulent visas and other documents, overstaying the visas) of immigrants' arrival to Greece, and an initial slow reaction on the part of Greek government to respond to these situation, for about a decade or so, hundreds and thousands of Albanian immigrants remained under the conditions of illegality. Eventually, however, Greece, decided to address the new and pressing situation of having such a large number of illegal aliens in its own borders. It did so by formulating and implementing a series of amnesty programs, in which a large number of immigrants obtained legal status. Thus, it should be said that while social infrastructure sustains and promote migration, it was the Greek government's immigration measures who transformed hundreds and thousands of Albanian immigrants from forced, illegal immigrants into legal, labor immigrants.

The focus of this study are migrants from Albania. Data for this research study were collected over the time of Summer 2006 until Summer 2007. For this research, two kinds of qualitative interviews were used: face to face and telephone interviews. The overwhelming majority of the latter data were collected using telephone interviews with migrants in various parts of Greece (Thessalonikis, Athens and Crete), which is a very useful instrument of data collection, given dispersed geographic locations of these immigrants.

In the light of the above mentioned review, the Main Research Questions for this Dissertation are:

What are the forces that establish the migration from Albania?

I answer this question by looking at the motivations of Albanians and providing a macro explanation for shaping the motivations

How is forced migration perpetuated and turned into labor migration?

I address this question by looking at the role of networks and cumulative causation of migration as well as the role of the receiving state's immigration policies.

What are the experiences of Albanians in the Greek labor market? How is it different from their past? How is the experience of men different from women?

This question in answered through various ways: by asking them about their work experience under communism and, secondly, asking about their work experience in the labor market in Greece (i.e. how did you find jobs, what was the most difficult experience they have encountered while trying to find jobs in Greece?).

Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation consists of seven chapters. Chapter one maps out the theoretical and empirical objectives that guide this study. Chapter two provides a review of the literature, while in chapter three I lay out the research methodology used in this research work. In chapter four, I provide a brief narration of daily life under the communist regime. In addition, the chapter provides an analyses of Albanian migrants' motivations for leaving the country as well as the ways and means of undertaking their journey to Greece. Chapter five examines social mechanisms that sustain and promote immigration

from Albania as well as the forces that underlie the transformation from forced, illegal migration to legal, labor migration. Chapter six concerns labor market experiences of Albanian migrants in Greece. It highlights how the past economic environment impacts their working experiences in Greece. Chapter seven draws on conclusions of this research work. It provides a summary of the findings of this dissertation. In addition it presents the contributions and limitations of the study.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review for this dissertation will look at the scholarly work on experiences of migrants, which, as stated in Chapter one, include motivations of exit and experiences in the labor market. In addition, the literature on the perpetuation and transformation of migration from forced migration to labor migration will examine the social forces that underlie this process. For each part of the literature, I will point to the gaps in the literature in order to outline the basis for addressing my research questions.

There will be several sections in this chapter: The first section presents a review of the existing literature on the analysis of migrants' motivation. The second highlights existing scholarship on the main social mechanisms of perpetuation and transformation of migration. This will be followed (third section) by an overview of the major approaches in the scholarship on the incorporation of immigrants in host societies' labor market. In the end of the chapter, I present the main research questions that this project is trying to address.

Motivations to Migrate: Understanding Albanian Migration
Refugees vs. Migrants

In general the academic literature and governments' policies in the West have looked at migration in terms of a dichotomy of social groups: "political" (refugees) and "economic" immigrants. In this view, political refugees are those who leave to settle for another country out of fear of persecution (Zucker and Zucker 1996: 3), and whose exit is involuntary, while economic migrants, move to other countries for "economic reasons"

(i.e., better job opportunities, better wages, improving one's life), and unlike refugees, they leave their country on their own volition. Various scholars, however, disagree with this kind of categorization. For Van Hear (1998: 42), for example, the "voluntary-involuntary" categories may be misleading, in particular if they are conceived as discrete (see Richmond 1994 too). Few migrants are wholly voluntary or involuntary. All migrations involve some kind of compulsion as well as some choices. Economic migrants make choices, but within certain constraints. Forced migrants also make choices within a narrower range of possibilities, but even in the most desperate of situations, people make some choice, since some decide to leave, while others stay behind.

In view of these problems, scholars (Faist 2000; Richmond 1994; Van Hear 1998) have suggested that we see it as a continuum rather than as dichotomous categories. Richmond (1994: 60) asserts that based on options available to migrants, they can be placed on a continuum, from "proactive" to "reactive". "Proactive" immigrants (i.e., retirees, transilients, returnees, reunited families and ordinary emigrants) have more choice, while "reactive" immigrants (i.e., refugees, stateless persons and forced laborers) have less or no choice, although, according to the author, there is no hard and fast line dividing the two categories, even though proactive immigrants have more options open to them. Van Hear (1998: 42) also conceives of migrants as lying on a continuum, with an axis ranging from "choice" or "more options" (voluntary) at one end to "little choice" or "few options" (involuntary) at the other end. The "more options" end comprises of tourists, students, professionals as well as business travelers, while the "few options" end includes refugees, displaced persons as a result of development and natural disasters. Thus, the main variable of distinguishing is choice/option. Faist (2000: 24) argues that we

should look at the forced-voluntary distinction as a graded scale based on the degrees of choice or freedom to potential emigrants, not as discrete categories.

Another group of scholars have underscored the difficulties of economic vs. political dichotomy, in that it is difficult to separate economic from political factors in migration (Castle 2003; Dowty 1987; Faist 2000; 2006; Kunz 1981; Menjivar 1993; Portes and Bach 1985; Richmond 1994; Zucker and Zucker 1996). Dowty (1987: 183) for example maintains that the so-called economic migrants often respond as much to political repression as to material deprivation, in other words they have 'mixed motivations' (Castle 2006: 9). Often individuals labeled *political refugees* have been found, on closer inspections, to have only economic reasons to migrate (Portes and Bach 1985: 74). Furthermore, as Zucker and Zucker (1996: 82) have pointed out, refugee flows are not a product of purely political forces only, since political instability itself creates economic insecurity. For instance, the refugee flows from Nicaragua, Salvador Guatemala, like those from Cuba and Haiti, were driven both by economic problems as well as political turmoil. Menjivar (1993: 351) most aptly summarizes these blurred boundaries between economic and political factors, when she writes, "if buses are burned, bridges are blown up and people cannot go to work or school, or if the political turmoil interferes with the means to earn a living, it becomes impossible to disentangle political from economic reasons for migrating."

Moreover, and most importantly, defining a group of immigrants as refugees is based not only on the fact that they fled persecution or war-ridden zones, but also on whether the receiving country recognizes them as deserving asylum and assistance (Menjivar 2000 referring to Zolberg et al. 1989: 6). For example, during the Cold War,

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the Western countries regarded people who escaped from the former communist countries as "defectors," a demonstration that Communist regimes lacked support (Zolberg 1989: 414). Offering asylum to the escapee was a powerful source of propaganda for the West, and the West could afford to welcome these "defectors", because only few were able to leave the countries (Castles and Miller 2003: 105). The fall of the communist regime triggered large-scale movement of people, and as Zolberg (1989: 414) would predict, it also lessened the propaganda value of 'defection', and hence led to the treatment of people desiring to leave as ordinary immigrants.

Following the above logic, then, it could be argued that immigration from Albania in its very original "bing bang" stage (Carletto et al., 2006), given the prevailing conditions of economic plight, political instability, social unrest, and even extreme circumstances of complete anarchy, and the fact that leaving the country was still considered a criminal activity on the part of the government in power, was a forced migration. Over time as Albania moved toward becoming more stable country, and with the establishment of democratic rule, emigration took on massive proportions and perpetuated itself in the form of labor migration. Exception here is the spring of 1997, when a set of informal investment schemes, formally known as "pyramid schemes," which had sprang up in 1993 collapsed and millions of Albanians lost their life savings[1]. The collapse of the pyramid schemes triggered wide protests, riots, even the looting of military arsenals, causing the break down of law and order, leading to complete anarchy. This situation sparked another wave of migration, reaching dramatic proportions within a

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[1] The World Bank and IMF estimate the value of Albanians' deposits lost in the pyramid schemes at $1.2 billion, the equivalent of half of Albanian's GDP for 1996 (Olsen 2000: 24).

short period of time[2], thus replaying the events that occurred in the early stages of migration (King 2003: 288). The intensity of this situation, then, would give Albanian migration a rather eclectic character. Barjaba and King (2005: 9-10) prefer the word "economic refugee" to highlight the inseparability of political from economic forces underlying Albanian migration, especially in the early 1991 and the spring of 1997.

Scholarship on Motivations and Labor Migration Studies

The analysis of emigrants' motives is crucial to understanding immigrants' experience since the decision to move to another country is "one of the most drastic social actions people may take during their lifetime" (Gold 1997: 410). In addition, analysis of migration will provide us with an understanding of the nature of immigration in general. According to Gold (2002), social scientists have attempted to explain migrants' motivation through three approaches: the micro or individual approach, the macro or structural approach (world system theory) and the (meso) network approach.

Micro approaches argue that people undertake migration in response to the differences in wages between the place of origin and destination. At the basis of people's motives to migrate lie individual's goal to optimize his/her own income (Harris and Todaro 1970; Sjaastad 1962; Todaro 1969; 1976). Thus, according to this perspective, people's rational economic calculations are deemed to be the major factors that propel people to emigrate.

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[2] Only in a matter of six days in the early spring of 1997, 10,600 Albanians crossed the Adriatic Sea to land in Italian ports (King 2003: 288). Between December 1996 and April 1997, alone, some 30,000 migrants landed in Italy and some 40,000 entered Greece, the majority of whom, however, were repatriated (Martin et al. 2002).

The macro sociological approaches, in particular the world system theory, the most influential macro perspective, underscores large historical structural forces that influence people's decision to move to another country. More specifically, scholars in this school of thought argue that contemporary immigration waves are a result of socioeconomic, political, and cultural transformations that accompany the penetration of capitalist markets into noncapitalist or precapitalist societies and the incorporation of these societies into the global world-economy. In the context of globalization, the penetration of markets and capital-intensive production technologies in noncapitalist societies lead to the disruption of existing economic, social and institutional arrangements. These changes, in turn, require many people to undertake their decisions to move from their places and communities of origin to various places of destinations (Massey 1988; Morawska 1990; Petras 1981; Portes and Walton 1981, Portes and Borocz 1989; Sassen, 1981; 1988). In this model, then, migrants' decisions are not seen as the cause of international migration, but rather a result of much more fundamental socio-economic and political changes (Stahl 1995: 212).

Closely related to this approach is Portes and Rumbaut's (1996: 12-13) argument that contemporary immigration is a direct result of the dominant influence attained by the culture of the advanced West. The diffusion of the Western culture of consumerism in every corner of the globe creates expectations and aspirations for a new life-style that would be impossible to fulfill in their countries of origin. The same process of global diffusion has also taught increasing number of people about economic opportunities available in the West, which would enable them to achieve their aspirations and

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expectations. As a result of this, most of the people turn to migration to fulfill the dreams for a new life-style.

The third approach focuses on social networks (to be discussed in details below). This perspective emphasizes the ties that connect people and institutions between places of origin and places of destination. Having ties to people who are migrants increases the likelihood that one will migrate himself/herself (Massey and Espinoza 1997). Gold (2001) for example showed how Israelis' membership in the web of ties to people who were immigrants in the United States influenced their motivation to leave Israel and move to the United States.

In summary, we could say that scholars have attempted to explain emigrant's motivation through three approaches: micro, macro and meso approaches. Micro approaches highlight individuals' desire to optimize their own income as a factor that propels people to undertake migration to other countries. Macro approaches, on the other hand, focuses on large historical, structural forces that shape people's motives to emigrate. The most influential of these, world system theory argues that contemporary immigration is a result of penetration of capitalist markets into non capitalist ones and the incorporation of these societies in the global economy. This process lead to disruption of existing economic, social and institutional arrangements, which in turn encourage people to move to other places. Some authors have argued that current immigration is a result of the dominant influence attained by the diffusion of the culture of consumerism of the capitalist West, which creates expectations among people that they cannot fulfill in their countries of origin. Therefore, they turn to migration to realize their dreams. Finally, social network perspective maintains that people's motives to migrate are largely shaped

by their membership in the web of social ties. One's ties to migrants increases the likelihood that he/she will migrate.

Scholarship on Motivations and Forced Migration

The subject of mass exodus has been the focus of study by scholars and non scholars alike of various disciplines, in particular political scientists. However, most of the studies focus on the experiences and difficulties people encounter after they have arrived in the host/asylum societies as well as efforts and challenges in assisting these people, thus neglecting the explanation of the causes of these mass exoduses (Davenport and Moore 2003: 29; Schmeidl 1997: 208). This is the case even with the discipline of sociology, where one cannot find a developed body of empirical work and theory for this particular area (Castles 2003: 14). The reason, in view of Schmeidl (1997: 285) may be the fact that refugee flows have been considered a political phenomena and as a result, their study have been largely neglected, or it may be that scholars believe that the relationship between violence and migration is "simplistic and much less complex than that between economic conditions and voluntary migration" (Davenport and Moore 2003: 29 referring to Massey et al., 1993).

While micro and macro perspectives have been advanced to try to understand forces that shape forced migrants' motives to flee the country, explanations in the macro tradition have been, by far the dominant approaches in this particular field of scholarship. Within micro approaches one can mention the work of Kunz (1973: 131-132), which is among the earliest attempts among researchers to try to understand refugee movement. Using "kinetic models," the author distinguished between anticipatory and acute refugee

movements. The anticipatory refugee is one who leaves his country of origin before the situation in his country deteriorates. He is alert to the situation, and arrives in the host country prepared. He knows the language and possesses some financial capital. By contrast, acute refugee movements are a result of great political changes. The refugees tend to flee either in mass or groups of individuals and their primary purpose is to reach safety in the host society. The emphasis for this kind of immigrants is on escape from the country of origin. The author also distinguishes between intermediate types of movement, which embodies characteristics of both acute and anticipatory movements, such as the examples among the Jewish refugees of the Second World War, when anticipatory movements which led them to nearby countries, turned into acute refugee situations as the receiving countries came under political or military pressure from Germany (Kunz 1973: 135). Kunz's work, while rendering a significant contribution to the efforts of explaining refugee behavior, places too much emphasis on individual behavior, overlooking structural causes (Schmeidl 1995: 54).

Scholars in the macro perspective tradition highlight structural forces that underlie people's motives to flee the country. A group of researchers (Schneidl 1996; 1997, 2001; Weiner 1996; Zolberg 1989) have maintained that intra-state conflicts are the most important causes that motivate people's exoduses from their countries. Zolberg, Suhrke and Aguayo (1989: 236-245) identified four types of conflicts that generate refugee flows. They include: explosion of ethnic hierarchies (i.e., social class coincides with ethnic membership); target of minorities (i.e., when the state attempts to achieve a national unity, and in the process forces minorities to assimilate into that unity); communal conflict (i.e., conflict between social groups that are regionally concentrated or

spatially dispersed); separatism (i.e., regionally concentrated groups demand independence from the center). These types of conflicts, often but not always[3], entail violence, therefore forcing masses of people to flee from violence. Weiner (1996) came to the conclusion that secessionist or autonomous struggles as well as attacks against ethnic minorities account for a large number of refugees. Schmeidl (200: 76) in her quantitative analysis of data from UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) and USCR (U.S. Committee for Refugees) found support for the argument that intra-state conflicts in general and ethnic conflicts more specifically, increase the likelihood of a refugee exodus.

Non ethnic conflicts[4], that is conflicts based upon "class, regional, or ideological differences, or an armed struggle for political power by the military or by political factions" (Weiner 1996: 10) can also force individuals to flee. Other forms of conflicts, such as social revolutions that took place in Asia, Africa and Latin America since the end of World War II, as well as coups, countercoups and rebellions, can also lead to forced movement of people (Zolberg et al., 1989).

Some researchers (Zolberg et al., 1989) have contended and empirical research (Schmeidl 2001; Schmeidl 1997) has demonstrated that foreign intervention is also important in the formation of refugee flows, not directly, but indirectly in the context of civil war. Foreign intervention ranging from economic to military assistance (i.e., arms trade; supply with weapons) has tended to prolong civil wars, which might have ended for lack of resources (Schneidl 2001: 77-78).

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[3] For example demands for secessionism can also be realized peacefully, as the case of Quebec-Canada indicates (Schmeidl 2001: 90).

[4] Schmeidl (2001: 75), however, contends that distinctions between "ethnic" and "non-ethnic" may not be as clear, since ethnic and civil conflicts often have their roots in the exclusion of groups from political processes or in the excessive inequalities among groups.

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More recently, Castle (2003; 2006) has suggested that forced migration must be understood in the context of economic globalization and North-South divide. Globalization as an unequal system of distribution of economic, social and political resources creates and exacerbates economic, political and social inequality, as well as human insecurity, the most significant expression of which is North-South divide. Inequalities create conflict, which in turn forces people to flee.

Another group of authors have found a relationship between state/government sponsored repression and refugee flows. Studies by Adodaca (1998); Gibney, Apodaca and McCann (1996); Hakovirta (1986); Moore and Shellman (2004); Schneidl (1996; 1997; 2001) have revealed that government/state sponsored human right violations were responsible for refugee flows. Similarly, research has found a relationship between state-initiated genocide/politicide[5] and refugee flights (Davenport and Moore 2003; More and Shellman 2004; Moore and Shellman 2006; Schmeidl 1996; Schmeidl 1997)[6].

Keely (1996: 1056) places the source of refugee production in the nation-state. In authors' view, a nation-state tends to produce forced migration for three main reasons: when the nation-state has many nations[7] within its territories; when the public disagrees

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[5] Genocide is extreme form of violence that target specific ethnic group. Politicide occurs in those cases when political orientation is the predominant reason for singling out parts of population (Schmeidl 2001: 80).

[6] Shmeidl (2001), however, has suggested that a greater differentiation of government repression would be useful to understand government actions and how it affects refugee flows. For this she distinguished between government repression in the former Communist block (she calls this institutional human rights violations), where people were denied political freedom and rights, political dissidents were targeted, but where physical safety of the majority of population was not threatened and on the other government repression in other parts of the world which often involved a great deal of physical violence, such as random killings, death squads and torture. Her data revealed that people are less likely to fly from authoritarian regimes, such as former Communist government, than from countries that have reached a high level of generalized violence.

[7] Keely (19961052-1057) maintains that the existence of many nations within the same state conflicts with the nation-state norm. In their efforts to build a nation-state, states resort to four patterned ways to deal with multinational realities: developing a supranational identity, forcibly assimilating minority groups into the

with the existing structure of state and its social institutions (especially economy) and tries to change them by way of revolution; when the state implodes due to lack of resources (i.e., Afghanistan, Somalia, Angola, Liberia and Rwanda). These three sources of refugee flows, according to the author are analytically distinct, but not mutually exclusive. Within a multinational state, for example, there can exist simultaneously conflict over nationality as well as over the type of state and social institutions. A revolution can devolve into chaos and the state implodes. These situations can create conflict, which most likely (though not always) will result in refugee movements.

In summary, we can say that scholars of forced migration have pointed to several determinants that cause people to flee their country. The most important of these factors include intra-state conflicts, in particular ethnic conflicts, although non-ethnic conflicts also led to refugee flows. Foreign interventions in civil wars are also important determinants of refugee movement. These interventions have tended to prolong civil wars which otherwise might have ended because of the lack of resources. Several authors have also found a relationship between the government-sponsored human-right violations, government-initiated genocidal violence and forced migration, as well as authoritarian government (i.e., Castro's regime). Keely (1996) has pointed to nation-state as the source of refugee production. According to the author, nation state generates refugee flows in three different ways: when they deal with the existence of multination within one territory and state, when people use revolutionary movements to change the existing order, and when state implodes because of lack of resources. All three tensions within the

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dominant national identity, ethnic cleansing, and confederation. While establishing a supranational identity and assimilating minorities into a dominant national mold are not inherently violent, each requires suppression of national identity, which may (though not always/necessarily) lead to violent conflict between suppressed minorities and dominant majority, a situation which is likely to generate refugee flows.

nation-state lead to conflict, which in turn unleashes massive exodus of people. In sum, it could be said that in the case of forced migrations, it is the conflict and the violence which results from this conflicts that forces people to flee the country and move somewhere else.

Motivation Literature and Albanian Migration

Analysis of migrants' motives has been largely overlooked in the scholarship of Albanian migration. When they are brought into discussion, most of researchers have limited themselves to simply enumerating them (exception being Mai 2001; Barjaba and King 2005). As a result, we learn that for Albanians, the most commonly cited motivations for leaving the country are economic motivations, fear of violence, insecurity and political instability (Arrehag, Sjöberg and Sjöblom 2006; Albanian Human Development Report 2000; King and Vullnetari 2003). These micro-level explanations, however, may, in Gold's (2002: 44) view, be subject to limitations in that migrants' personal accounts are post-migration reconstructions of reasons for exit and as such they may be "distorted by these person's current experience and context, selective memory or various kinds of social influence." Moreover, migrants may be unaware of larger historic, structural, economic and demographic developments that influence their motivations to move (Gold 2002: 45 referring to Mills 1940). Given these problems then, we need to incorporate other perspectives (macro as well as meso) in order to obtain a complete understanding of Albanian migrants' motives. More importantly, a full understanding of forces that shape Albanian migrants' motives, will, as stated in chapter one, be crucial to our understanding of Albanian immigration in general, in particular its

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beginnings after forty years of its cessation. In the following, I will lay out whether and how the existing approaches apply to the Albanian case.

World system theory, significant as it is in that it emphasizes historical structural forces that influence people's motivations to migrate, is incapable of explaining Albanian migration for the following reasons. First: large-scale immigration from Albania did not originate in the penetration of capitalist markets, or political interventions on the part of core countries. Second: world system theory, given its focus on economic determinants, is limited in its ability to explain migrations that are not economically determined, such as forced migration, family unification, pursuit of education, religious yearnings, political aspirations or romance (Gold 2001: 51).

In line with Portes and Rumbaut' (1996) argument, Mai (2001) has highlighted the influence of a Western culture of consumerism in shaping Albanian migrants' motives to leave. Under the communist regime, thousands of Albanians would secretly watch foreign television programs, in particular Italian ones, in spite of the government's ban on any foreign channels of information and communication and the awareness of the punishment that could be easily meted out to them, were they to be caught. The foreign television exposed Albanians to a "free and abundant" life in the West, which stood in sharp contrast to the daily poverty, long queues, rationing, erratic electricity, poor housing conditions and their human rights violation. This familiarity with the Western "TV version" of life style build up expectations and dreams among its viewers, which they knew would be unable to realize in their own country. Consequently, they embarked on a journey to the West to fulfill their dreams. It could be said, however, that although the influence of a Western culture of consumerism certainly played an important part in

shaping Albanian migrants' decision to leave, it is still an insufficient explanation, in that it cannot explain why immigrants did not leave in the 1970s and 1980s, but at the beginning of the 1990s.

Social networks could also shape people's motivations to migrate. We can differentiate between two types of social networks: internal (networks within Albania) and external (networks to people outside of Albania). Membership in each of these groups could encourage people to move abroad. During the authoritarian regime, those with ties to people (i.e., family, friends, neighbors) who were viewed as suspicious and/or were persecuted by the government, could themselves become targets of government's suspicion and persecution (i.e., demotion at work, denial of access to education, good employment and in extreme cases even imprisonment or internal exile) simply because of these ties. For example, entire families were sent to exile in remote villages just because a close family member or relative had fled the country (Minnesota Lawyers International Human Rights Committee 1990: 72-73). Distant relatives, acquaintances or at times even neighbors were not spared this experience either. In addition, having ties to someone in Greece, could also, in all its likelihood, be a cause for leaving the country. Research by Sintes (2003, found in Rapper 2005) illustrates this point. The author noted that the Vlachs (an ethnic minority group) in Lunxheri (Southern Albania) were the first to leave their village on a large scale. They managed to do this because they were able to draw upon their pre-existing ties with kin living in Greece, since all of them traced their origin to the same village (Kefalovrisso) in Greece. Thus, membership in these webs of internal as well as external ties could influence people's decision to leave their country and move somewhere else, yet it is an inadequate explanation since it cannot be applied to the

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majority of the people who leave the country. Moreover, like in the case of world system theory, it cannot account for the timing of leaving.

Literature on forced migration is not also incapable of explaining immigration from Albania, since Albanian migration did not originate in intra-state conflicts (ethnic or non-ethnic), foreign intervention in internal wars, nation-state formation, nor did it originate in interstate wars, or in state sponsored genocide. Even the violation of human rights on the part of the government in power cannot explain initiation of migration. The government of Albania was, indeed, one of the most repressive regimes in Eastern Europe, and exercised this kind of repression for about forty years. Yet immigration on a massive scale began in the 1990s and not earlier. In view of these circumstances, I argue that a state-based approach provides a full understanding of the forces that shaped Albanian migrants' motives to leave the country and Albanian migration in general.

Role of the State in Migration

Until recently, however, the scholarship of international migration has paid little attention to the role of the state in promoting or limiting migration. When the state is brought in the discussion at all, most of the studies focus on the immigrant-receiving countries of industrialized democracies (Fitzerald 2006; Massey et al., 1998; Massey 1999c; Østergaard-Nielsen 2003a; Zolberg 1999). Fewer studies focus on the sending societies (Fitzerald 2006; Hollifield 2006; Østergaard-Nielsen 2003a; Zolberg 1978; Zolberg 2007) "suggesting an implicit assumption that freedom to exit the country prevails worldwide" (Zolberg 1999: 71). Sending countries are usually viewed in the context of migration problems that they pose for receiving countries and are often

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portrayed as pawns rather than serious players in the issues of migration management, since the receiving countries are seen as the ultimate deciders in setting up migration rules and regulations (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003a: 3). The existing studies, however, point to the significance of the sending state policies in managing emigration flows (Cannistraro and Rosoli 1979; Colomer 2000; Dowty 1978; see also articles in Green and Weil 2007; Fitzerald 2006; Zolberg 1978; Zolberg: 2007). The erection of barriers to exit on the part of European states led to the prohibition of free movement of entire populations during seventeenth and eighteenth century mercantilist times (Zolberg 1978). Moreover, the state's relinquishing of these barriers in the laissez-faire 19th century led to the "Exit Revolution" (Zolberg 2007). Similarly, a century later, it was the draconian measures on the part of authoritarian governments of former communist countries[8] of that managed to "lock up" entire populations inside their borders (Dowty 1978). Conversely, the collapse of these very authoritarian governments unleashed a large-scale emigration from former communist societies. Even a liberal democratic society like that of Israel's, which cannot prohibit its members to leave, have undertaken various measures to counter emigration, given the threat of exit of its Jewish population (Gold 2007).

States have used various means in their efforts to prohibit exit of its citizens. Totalitarian regimes, like those of former East European block relied on repressive measures including building walls and "shoot-to kill" policing if its citizens attempted to leave (Dowty 1987; Green and Weil 2007; Zolberg 1999). Others have used propaganda campaigns against emigration, refusal to issue travel documents, material incentives to repatriate, impose high sums of money and a lot of time on the obligatory emigration

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[8]See Weiner (1995: 34) for a list of countries that restricted emigration during the Cold War era.

permit as well as moral and ideological pressures (i.e., condemning emigrants as immoral) (Fahrmeir 2007; Fitzerald 2006;Gold 2007).

Frequently states have promoted emigration as a way to address unemployment, receive foreign exchange, as well as diffuse people's anger over worsening of economic and political situations (Alcid 2004). Yet, while encouraging emigration, sending countries also have attempting to control the volume, composition, duration and direction of this emigration (Graeme and Stahl 2004; Fitzerald 2006).

Once emigrants have settled abroad, the sending states, as the literature on transationalism and migration tells us (Itzigsohn 2000; Landolt 2007; Levit and de la Dehesa 2003; see articles in Østergaard-Nielsen 2003b), through various economic, political, and social measures (see Levit and de la Dehesa 2003), have tried to reach across its territories to reincorporate immigrants and their descendants in their ancestral homelands, even when they are legal citizens of another state (Schiller and Fouron 2001: 19). In these endeavors, however, the state does not look at all members as one homogenous group of people. Landolt (2007: 15-17), for example, shows that the Salvadorian government, in spite of the rhetoric of inclusion that every Salvadoran emigrant belong to fifteenth diapsoric department and is a *hermano lejano* (distant brother)[9], in reality, it has built a "differentiated and hierarchical map" of its emigrant population. This is evidenced in the fact that while El Salvador's government is very active with the U.S. migrants and considers them as entrepreneurial, responsible remitters and as (a) politically sensible, the same cannot be said for its role among its emigrants in

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[9] Landolt (2007: 16) writes that the Fifteenth Diasporic and Hermano Lejano are two symbols around which El Salvador's government has tried to organize its emigrants. According to the former, every Salvadorean who lives outside the country can claim membership in the fifteenth department. The latter, on the other hand, is used to portray the Salvadoran migrants as industrious and committed members of the Salvadoran national family.

Canada. In the latter, the Salvadoran government is largely absent from its emigrants' life, since it considers them as political opposition force that does not want to collaborate with Salvadoran state, and not really entrepreneurial. Similarly, in the case of Haiti, the government of Aristide set up the "Tenth Department" to organize its emigrants abroad. However, as Itzigsohn (2000: 1135) argues, although the "Tenth Department" was set up to represent the whole Haitian emigrants, it was based on economically better off immigrants in the United States and Canada rather than labor immigrants in the Dominican Republic and other Caribbean locations.

Thus, the existing literature demonstrate that states have been significant players in managing immigration as well as refugee flows, whether in receiving[10] or sending societies. Significant as these studies are, however, in terms of highlighting importance of the role of state and its policies in emigration and immigration, these studies cannot still fully explain immigration from Albania, since in both sets of studies, the arguments are framed along the questions of how states "manage migration", the criteria (i.e., economic, ideological, ethnic) states use to let people in and let people out. Moreover, the scholarship on the role of the state in forced migration, is inadequate to explain our phenomenon under study, because in the case of Albania massive waves of migration in the early 1990s, was not, as mentioned earlier, a direct result of state-sponsored repression, nor was it a result of multinationality within nation-state, revolutionary movement, or state implosions.

Furthermore, the Albanian communist state did not simply "manage migration", but through its decisions created the very conditions for fostering migration. As Portes

[10] For immigration policies in the receiving countries see for example: Calavita (1994, 1998); Cornelius et al. (1994; 2004); Martin (1994); Meyers (2000) for a review of the theoretical literature on this topic.

and Bach (1985: 74) have argued, the decisions on the part of states have major consequences for the socioeconomic context in which individual decisions are made. These decisions may turn out to induce migration, directly or indirectly, as they constrain the economic opportunities available to its population (Portes and Bach 1985: 74). Indeed, in the course of forty years of the communist regime, the government of Albania pursued the path of economic self-reliance along side with a highly centralized economic and political system. This policy led to severe shortages of consumer goods, a deteriorating infrastructure, low agricultural and industrial production and a backward technological development. Moreover, it drastically reduced economic opportunities as well as the social mobility of people, and created an enormous gap in wealth between Albania and its neighbors (Biberaj 1990). The highly centralized economic and political system was simultaneously accompanied by a Soviet type control of people's movement according to which the entire population was "sealed up" inside the country. This situation came to an end when the very authoritarian government that had prohibited the exit of a whole population from the country, disintegrated and finally collapsed and triggered a massive outflow of Albanians to the Western countries. Thus between the early months of 1991 until October 1992, whether by boat to Italy, or by foot via mountains to Greece, amidst a situation of economic poverty[11] (i.e., economic impoverishment under communism, failure of neoliberal economic reforms), political instability (i.e., repression under communism, failure of the new fledgling democratic system), social unrest, insecurity and fear of outbreak of violence, about 300,000 Albanians had left their country and moved to Albania's wealthy capitalist neighbors.

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[11]During this time unemployment had reached 40 percent, wages were at about $20 per month, and inflation increased at a rate of 260 % per month (Piperno 2002).

In sum, we could say that the analysis of motivations in Albania migration has been largely ignored. When the researchers bring them to the discussion, with few exceptions, they limit themselves to simply enumerating micro-level explanations that influence migrants' motivations. While other approaches (macro-meso) provide a broader scope of understanding of Albanian migration, they are still not well equipped to providing a full explanation of this phenomenon. I argue that a state-based approach can provide a fuller explanation. This approach posits that the Albanian state, by pursuing a highly centralized economic and political system along with one of the strictest prohibition of people's exit, created the very conditions for large-scale migration.

Perpetuation of Migration and Its Transformation from Forced Migration to Labor

Migration

As stated earlier, Albanian migration in its very early stages started out as forced migration. While the Albanian state was the major force in creating the conditions of initiating migration, the state was no longer involved in migration, yet migration perpetuated and sustained itself. Following work by Massey (1988; 1990a); Massey et al. (1987), I argue that the major social mechanisms that perpetuate immigration consists of social networks and cumulative causation. In addition, while Albanian migration started out as a forced migration, over time it was transformed from forced migration to normal labor migration. In this dissertation, I contend that the major determinant underlying this process is the role of the Greek state and its policies.

Social Networks and Cumulative Causation of Migration

Social networks are of paramount importance in international migration. In fact, migration has been described as a network-driven process (Portes & Rumbaut 1996). Insertion of migrants into such networks explains differential proclivities to move and the enduring character of migrant flows (Portes and Borosz 1989: 612). Migrant networks consist of social ties that "bind migrants and non-migrants within a complex web of complementary social roles and interpersonal relationships," through the bonds of kinship, friendship, remote acquaintances and community based relations (Choldin 1973; Massey 1988; Massey and Espana 1987; Massey et al., 1987; Massey et al. 1994b). They become more important in international than domestic migration, because there are more obstacles to overcome, like exit and entry permits, as well as often the costs of illegal border crossing (Faist 2000).

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Scholars of migration, including those of Albanian migration, have recognized and documented the existence and importance of networks in assisting people in the process of migration (Boyd 1989; Choldin 1973; Drever and Hoffmeister 2008; Garcia 2005; Gold 2001; Gold 2005; Hatziprokopioyu 2003; Hugo 1981; King, Mai and Dalipaj 2003; Lomnitz 1977; MacDonald and Macdonald 1974; Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Tilly 1978). Networks provide information about places of destination, including places of return, on the basis of which potential migrants make decisions to move. As a result of this, costs (i.e. cost of transportation, earnings foregone while making the move, psychological costs of moving and adjusting to a foreign country) and risks (i.e. risk of being apprehended by the border authorities of the destination country) of international migration are reduced, making the benefits of border crossing available to a wide range of people in the country of origin, including persons who come from lower socio-economic background (Gold 2005). Since they lower costs and risks, the establishment and operation of social networks increase the likelihood of migration. Persons or families who possess ties to current or former international migrants increase the likelihood of migrating themselves (Massey and Espinoza 1997; Massey 1987; Massey et al. 1998; Massey et al. 1987).

Once in the place of destination, networks assist immigrants in the adaptation process. They offer shelter and assistance with finding housing (Gold 2001; Garcia 2005; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994). They also serve as channels of information about employment opportunities. In the initial stages of settlement in the host country, the newcomers are rather isolated from the mainstream society, in that more often than not immigrants lack the knowledge of host society, including the ability to speak the host society's language.

This hampers their ability to pursue formal channels of looking for a job, such as newspaper advertisement, for example. Social ties, therefore, provide new immigrants with information about job opportunities (Choldin 1973; Drever and Hoffmeister 2008; Hugo 1981; Massey et al. 1989;), whether in the mainstream labor market or in ethnic economies. In addition, they reduce the likelihood of being abused or not being paid by unfamiliar employers (Light and Gold 2000: 119). Once in the workplace, sponsors and friends help with training and even socialization to the new workplace (Chin 2005; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994; Margolis 1994). Moreover, social networks provide emotional and moral support (Menjivar 2000), as well as offer protection to newcomers from the hostile environment in the receiving country (Gold 2005). They also function as a link between the migrant community at destination and the non-migrant community at origin (Boyd 1989; Choldin 1973; Hugo 1981; Lomnitz 1977; MacDonald and Macdonald 1974; Massey 1989; Tilly 1978;). Furthermore, as mentioned above, social networks serve as the major social mechanism for the perpetuation of migration.

According to Massey (1990b); Massey et al. (1994a; 1994b), in its very beginning, given the high costs and risks, international migration is limited to a few "adventurous individuals" who come from the lower middle economic strata (see also Portes and Rumbaut 1996). Once an individual has migrated, s/he is no longer the same person. After gaining first-hand experience in an advanced industrialized economy, migrants acquire a taste for consumer goods. They develop a new standard for upward mobility that is extremely difficult to attain in his or her country. In addition, immigrants acquire knowledge of the country's language, employment practices, and cultural values. Immigrants then use this knowledge to migrate again with fewer risks and costs than

before. This is due to the fact that once someone has migrated, s/he is likely to migrate again.

Every immigrant is connected to a set of friends and relatives in the community of origin. Once he or she leaves, the costs and risks of international migration are reduced substantially for his friends and relatives. Given the nature of kinship and friendship structures, each new migrant creates a set of people with social ties to the destination area. Migrants are inevitably linked with other migrants through networks of reciprocal obligations based on shared understanding of kinship and friendship. The latter draw upon these obligations to gain access to foreign employment (Massey 1990a: 8; Massey et al. 1994b: 733; Massey, Goldring and Durand 1994a: 1498).

Once the number of network connections in the area of origin reaches a critical level, migration becomes self-perpetuating because it creates for itself the social structure to sustain it. Every new migrant reduces the costs and risks of subsequent migration for a set of friends and relatives, thus, inducing more people to migrate. This further expands the set of people with ties abroad, and in turn reduces costs for a new set of people to migrate and so on. Following the work of Gundar Myrdal, Massey called this process the cumulative causation of migration (Massey 1990a; 1990b; Massey et al. 1994a; Massey et al. 1994b).

In addition to changes in individual and social structure, migration brings about changes in the culture of the communities of origin, changes which in turn increase the likelihood of more migration. As Massey and his colleagues (Massey et al. 1994a; 1994b; Massey et al. 1998) have shown, through their ability to buy goods and property in their communities, migrants display an admired life styles that non migrants want to emulate,

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thus increasing the odds of initiating more people into migration stream. Moreover, over time, migration becomes deeply entrenched in the value system of the communities of origin, and becomes a rite of passage for young men and in many settings young women who contemplate entry into the labor force Massey et al. (1994a: 1500; Massey et al. 1994b: 738; Massey et al. 1998: 47). For example, in their survey study of students in the Mexican state of Zatecas, Kandel and Massey (2002) found that children who came from families who were involved in migration were more likely to aspire to work and live in United States. These aspirations caused them to look northward rather than in Mexico for opportunities, thus, lowering their chances that they will continue their education in Mexico, and increasing the chances that they would eventually migrate north.

The cumulative causation of migration cannot continue indefinitely. According to Massey (1990a: 8), if the process of migration continues for some period of time, then the communities reach a point of "network saturation," where almost all people in the community are tied to someone with migrant experience. At this level of development, the costs of migration stop falling with each new entrant, and the process of migration then loses its dynamism. Meanwhile, the rate of out-migration reaches a point where sending communities begin to experience labor shortages, and local wages start to rise. These developments reduce the pressures for additional migration. As a result migration rate decelerates until it finally falls off.

The cumulative causation of migration and network formation has been best documented in North America, particularly in the case of Mexican-US migration stream[12]

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[12] As Fussell and Massey (2004) noticed, most of the research that has examined the cumulative causation of migration has done so in the context of Mexican-U.S. migration, mainly migration from rural areas. The authors, however, did not find cumulative causation to operate in large urban areas. According to the authors, these differences between rural and urban areas do not question the theory of cumulative causation.

(Massey and Espana 1987; Massey and Espinoza 1997;Massey et al. 1994a; Massey et al. 1987; Massey et al. 1994b). In the European context, studies on this topic are much fewer in number (Massey et al. 1998: 132). Moreover, in general the studies (see for example Heering et al. 2004), including the studies of Mexican-U.S. that we have seen so far, have largely examined labor migration streams, while leaving out the examination of the process of transformation from refugee to labor migration. This study, then, will address this gap.

The State and Legalization of Foreign Workers

As stated earlier, in this dissertation I argue that the Greek state, through its legalization policies managed to transform a large number of immigrants from a position of forced illegal migrants to that of labor, legal migrants. Greece, however, is not unique as far as these policies are concerned. In fact, legalization programs are one of the ways receiving governments use to regulate large numbers of illegal immigrant in their countries. They employ these particular measures to provide illegal immigrants with the opportunity to acquire legal status.

One case in point, for example, would be that of France. In the post war period, the French government, like other countries of Western Europe (i.e., Germany, The Netherlands), in the face of its ever expanding economy, set up recruitment policies to

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Instead the process may be deterred by the greater size of the city, social complexity, and economic diversity of cities, which provide people with more complete markets for labor, insurance, capital, and credit, and which in turn lessen many of the most powerful motivations for international migration. Curran et al., (2005) however, found evidence of cumulative causation in the case of rural-urban migration in Thailand.

attract foreign workers to fill in during severe labor shortages[13]. Recruitment policies were organized by the state. The organization responsible for this task was the Office National d'Immigration (ONI), even though over time, French private employers began to recruit foreign workers directly in the sending country, eventually taking complete control over the recruitment process. The normal procedure was to hire workers first, then seek regularization (Hollifield 1992).

In 1973, as the energy crisis struck the world, France's response, like the rest of Europe (Geddes 2003; Van Amersfoord 1999), was to bring migration to a halt. The ending of migration, however, did not mean that migration stopped. Immigration continued in the form of family members as well as illegal workers (Hollifield 1992). Meanwhile, as a result of the halting of immigration and stringent measures to control it, the numbers of illegal immigrants grew large. In view of this situation, in 1981, the Mitterrand socialist government offered amnesty to foreign workers and their families living in an irregular situation who had lived in the country before January 1981, and who were able to present evidence of employment, preferably for at least one year[14]. The objective of this policy was to reduce the insecurity of foreigners residing in France, while at the same time maintaining a strict ban on new immigration" (Hollifield 1992:

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[13] France, like other former colonial powers experienced another kind of migration. These were immigrants from former colonial countries, who in the process of decolonization entered their respective former colonial countries such as that of Great Britain, France, the Netherlands. Colonial workers were citizens of the former colonial power and thus had the rights to enter the country. Once they were in the country, they were entitled to the same formal civil and political rights as other citizens. Most (though by no means all) intended to stay permanently (Castle and Miller 2003: 77).

[14] Besides legalization, governments of Northwest Europe implemented another measure, that of repatriation assistance, which took various forms in different countries (Hollifield 1992; Van Amersfoort 1999; Geddes 2003). In France, for example, the government gave financial assistance to induce return of migrants to their own countries of origin as well as retraining of workers. In addition, foreigners could participate in retraining programs set up in cooperation with the sending countries. The repatriation assistance however did not succeed. Only a relatively small number of people took up assistance, but they would have left anyway (Hollifield 1992).

93). In this program about 150,000 aliens applied and 130,000 were legalized (Castle and Miller 2003: 98).

Similarly, in the United States the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) provided a general amnesty program that allowed the legalization of undocumented immigrants who had arrived in the United States before January 1, 1982, and had been living there continuously ever since (Repak 1995: 134). In total, about three millions applied for the legal status (about 1.8 million illegal immigrants applied for legal status under the general legalization and about 1.3 million under the Special Agricultural, Worker (SAW) programme (Joppke 1999: 37-38).

In summary, we could state that while immigration from Albania was a result of failed state policies, once immigration started, however, the state no longer participated in the migration process. Yet, Albanian migration endured and over time took on massive proportions. The existing literature (Massey 1988; 1990a; Massey et al., 1987) maintains that migration's tendency to perpetuate itself relies on two major mechanisms, social networks and cumulative causation of migration. In addition, Albanian migration started out as forced, illegal migration and over time was transformed into legal, labor migration. It is my contention in this dissertation that the Greek government policies are largely responsible for this process. In doing so, the Greek government follows in the path of other governments of liberal democracies, who have been recipients of large number of (many illegal) immigrants and have used similar policies in their attempts to move foreign workers from position of illegality to that of legality.

Labor Market Incorporation of Immigrants

Scholars have provided various explanations to understand the processes of immigrants' adaptation in the country of reception. For a long time, the most predominant theoretical explanation of immigrants' adaptation was the assimilationist one. In this view, immigrants enter the host society at the bottom of the social stratification hierarchy and then slowly move up through its ranks. In order for immigrants to successfully complete this process, they have to "shed" the culture (i.e., values, traditions, language, etc) of their original country and "embrace" the culture of the host society (Gordon 1964; Warner and Srole 1945). This view, based on the history of turn-off-the century European immigrants, portrays immigrant adaptation as "uniform charted path" in which newcomers enter the bottom of labor market hierarchy and slowly move up (Portes and Stepick 1985).

Another explanation is the one provided by the human capital perspective, which focuses on how individual level variables, such as education, skills, experience in the previous jobs, language of the host society, etc, affect performance of immigrants in the host society's labor market. This approach argues that initially immigrants have lower earnings compared to those of the natives because of the lack of transferability of job-related skills, credentials, and language. Over time, however, as immigrants gain labor market experience, their earnings rise more rapidly and after 10-15 years their earnings equal and then exceed those of the native born (Chiswick 1987).

This perspective has been criticized, because it has "failed to explain why workers who are endowed with similar levels of human capital but differ in ascribed characteristics experience unequal labor market outcomes" (Raijman and Tienda 1999:

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241) or why, as Repak's study (1995; 1996) indicated, Central American men earned significantly higher wages than Central American women even though women had better education, better command of English language and had been longer in the United States. Moreover, unlike the early 20th century immigrants, virtually all of whom were poor, unskilled, and started off at the bottom of socio-economic system, as factory workers for example (Research Perspectives on Migration 1997), newer immigrants "display a bimodal pattern" in terms of social class, in that they are concentrated either at the upper stratum of educational and occupational attainment or at the lowest stratum (Farley 1996; Rumbaut 1991; 1997a; 1997b). These differential starting points, augur different modes of incorporation outcomes (Rumbaut 1997b).

While assimilationist and human capital models have underscored migrants' individual characteristics to explain economic adaptation, another body of scholarly research, most notably, the research done on post-1965 immigration, point to broader structural forces that account for this process. Several scholars in this tradition have looked at the economic restructuring and how it impacts the economic incorporation of immigrants. One of the earliest theoretical models that addresses structural forces, although not developed specifically to address economic restructuring (Mahler 1995: 8), is that of segmented labor market approach, whose major proponent is Michael Piore (1979). The author advances the argument like this: The labor market in advanced industrialized societies consists of two sectors of production, a "primary" sector and a "secondary" sector. The jobs in the "primary" sector are skilled, secure, well paid, with opportunities for mobility. By contrast, the jobs in the "secondary" sector tend to be unskilled (but not always low paying), insecure, often involving unpleasant working

conditions, with little or no social mobility whatsoever. They are usually preformed in an

unstructured work environment and involve an informal, highly personalistic relationship

with supervisor and subordinate. These jobs also carry inferior social status. In view of

the characteristics of the jobs, natives are unwilling to take these jobs. Immigrants, on the

other hand, are willing to fill these jobs for several reasons. For one, unlike natives,

immigrants see themselves as "temporary" and "target earners", and to them, work, like

migration itself is purely instrumental: income that can be taken home to his/her country

of origin. In addition, immigrants operate with a "dual frame of reference," in that

immigrants will judge jobs in the receiving countries by comparing them with job

conditions in their own country (Waldinger and Lichter 2003; Waters 1999). As far as

this comparison remains relevant, then, low status, low paid work in advanced capitalist

countries does not rate badly (Waldinger and Lichter 2003: 8). Furthermore, immigrants

see their social status not tied up to the status system in the receiving country, but to the

status system in their country of origin (Piore 1979; Waters 1999).

Sassen (1988; 1990) locates segmented labor markets in the context of economic

restructuring and globalization of economic activities. According to the author,

globalization of economic activities have given rise to "global cities" (e.g., Los Angeles,

New York) which serve as centers for the control and management of global production.

This, in turn, has led to a new bifurcated service economy, with highly skilled, highly

paid professional and technical jobs that native elites occupy, and low wage, low-skilled

service jobs where immigrants concentrate.

While these authors underscore the structure of host society's labor market as the

most important factor that impact economic adaptation of immigrants, another group of

scholars, however, argue that labor market is not the only factor that impact the economic location of immigrants. Instead, according to these scholars (Cohen, and Kogan 2007; Kogan 2003; 2007; Lewin-Epstein et al., 2003; Portes and Rumbaut 1996; 2001; 2006; Reitz 1998), it is an array of "institutional factors," such as labor market structure and regulations, immigration policies, welfare state, which are partly interdependent on, and partly autonomous from one another, and which might affect immigrant standing in the labor market in various important ways (Reitz 1998: 6).

For example, in his book *Warmth of Welcome*, Reitz (1998) examined entry-level earnings of the first cohort of immigrants who arrived in these countries after immigration reforms of the 1960s. The author found out that employment earnings of immigrants from similar backgrounds were substantially lower in the United States, compared to that of Australia and Canada. The reason for this, according to Reitz (1998:226) rests in the structure of American institutions. In the words of the author in the United States "The relatively laissez-faire immigration policy lowers immigrant skill levels; immigrants encounter a native-born population which has built up a massive store of educational credentials as competitive resources; immigrants' difficulties in establishing an economic foothold are compounded by unregulated labor markets, more extreme earnings inequality, and a comparatively weak and deteriorating social safety net. The extent of this compounding depends on the interrelations among the various components of the institutional system. Generally, each component of the U.S. institutional system produces compounding effects, which magnify inequality and lower immigrant entry-level status.

In a similar line of research, Cohen and Kogan (1997) found out that differences in institutional characteristics between the host societies of Israel and Germany explained the differential labor market outcomes for Jewish immigrants from former the Soviet Union (FSU) during the 1990s. The greater rigidity of the German labor market compared to Israeli's combined with more generous material assistance offered to these immigrants, allowed the FSU immigrants to be able to wait for jobs commensurable with their education. On the other hand, FSU immigrants in Israel were forced to take any jobs since their state benefits were less generous and of shorter period of time. Other studies (Kogan 2003; Kogan 2007; Lewin-Epstein 2003) have pointed to similar findings in terms of differences in institutional structures and their impact on immigrants' labor market outcomes.

An extensive research literature has documented the concentration of immigrants in ethnic entrepreneurship (Barret et al. 2003; Collins 2003; Gold 2000; Haberfellner 2003; Light 1972; Light and Bonacich 1988; Light and Pang 2003; Mung and Lacroix 2003; Rath and Kloosterman 2003). Immigrants' reasons for entrepreneurship have been shown to vary. Many immigrants use it as a way to overcome various obstacles that they may encounter in looking for a job, such as language barriers, discrimination in hiring, the fact that their educational credentials are not understood or recognized by the employers, or lack of sufficient access to relevant social networks for transmitting information on job vacancies (Kloosterman and Rath 2003; Light 1979; Light and Gold 2000: 200). Others use it as a way to overcome unemployment caused by globalization which has eliminated or marginalized manual and manufacturing jobs (Collins 2003). Still others use it to fulfill the hopes for higher incomes as well as "gain social

recognition via the achievement of a higher social status," (Wilpert 2003: 249 referring to Goldberg and Şen 1997) or out of desire to "be one's own boss" (Wilpert 2003).

If successful, immigrants can create jobs for others as well, which can help to benefits relatives, friends and other coethnics (Rath and Kloosterman 2003: 2). Coethnic economies have been found to be beneficial to immigrants. They provide immigrants with jobs, which they would not have been able to have in the general labor market (Light et al. 1994) and when in jobs, research has found that they receive higher returns on human capital variables than those immigrants who work in the secondary or even primary labor market (Portes and Bach 1985). Moreover, co-ethnic firms can be a "school for entrepreneurs" (Light et al. 1994: 72) in that through apprenticeship in these firms, immigrants acquire skills that they can use to establish their own business (Portes 1995: 28).

In the classical countries of immigration, immigrants have tended to be more entrepreneurial than members of dominant majorities (Wilpert 2003: 233). For example, aggregate data from the US decennial census reports show that on the whole the foreign-born have historically had a higher self-employment rate than the native born (a phenomenon which can be also true of post-1965). The 1980 and 1990 US census both show that this is also true of the post-1965 immigrants (Min and Bozorgmehr 2003). However, research conducted on this topic in other countries such as UK (Barret et al., 2003), the Netherlands (Rath and Kloosterman 2003), France (Mung and Lacroix 2003), Belgium (Pang 2003), Germany (Pecound 2003), South Africa (Pederdy and Rogerson 2003) demonstrate that immigrant entrepreneurship is on the rise (Rath and Kloosterman 2003).

A group of researchers have observed high rates of immigrants' insertion in informal economy (Baldwin-Edwards 1999; Castells and Portes 1989; King 2000; Portes 1995; Sassen-Koob 1989; Stepick 1989; Stepick 1998). Informal economies refer to those "income generating economic activities that are unregulated by legal codes in an environment where similar activities are regulated" and that unlike criminal activities, informal activities include goods and services that are legal, but whose production and marketing is unregulated (Castells and Portes 1989: 12). Most workers in the informal sector are self-employed (Light and Gold 2000: 40), yet a large numbers of immigrants work for others. This is particularly the case with immigrants in Southern European countries (i.e., Greece, Italy, Spain) (Iosifides and King 1999; Reyneri 1999; Veiga 1999) where the overwhelming majority of immigrants are incorporated in the informal economy, given the high rates of informal economy in these countries: 29 percent for Greece, 27 percent for Italy and 23 percent for Spain of the country's GDP (Baldwin-Edwards 1999: 5 citing *Corriere della Sera*). Immigrants in Southern European countries are mainly employed in several segments of Southern European labor market. These include agriculture, construction, small manufacturing firms and artisan workshop where work can be 'hidden' from official scrutiny, tourism and catering sectors, domestic service and street hawking (Baldwin-Edwards1999: 7-9; King 2000). Workers in this sector of economy performs jobs that are precarious, low-paid, with no prospect for mobility, often with no social security or other benefits, and lead to multiple exploitation and social exclusion (King 2000).

Gender and Labor Market Outcomes

Gender plays a crucial role in labor market incorporation of immigrants. Scholarship on immigration and labor market indicates that men and women display differences in terms of labor market outcomes in the host societies, with women being at more disadvantaged position vis-à-vis immigrant men. This is seen in various aspects, such as number of occupational concentration, wages, rates of return on human capital levels, and so on.

For example, Wright and Ellis (2000) found out that among Los Angeles' six largest immigrant groups (Mexicans, Salvadoreans, Filipinos, Guatemalans, South Koreans and Chinese), immigrant men occupied a greater number of occupational niches than did women. Similarly, Hagan's (2004) analysis of US census data revealed that while a large number of women were concentrated primarily in domestic services, men were concentrated in a more diverse number of occupations. Knocke (1999) noticed similar trends in Sweden.

As a result of this, women receive lower wages and experience less mobility than men (Foner 1986; Foner 2005; Knocke 1999; Repak 1994; 1995). In her study of Central American immigrants in the United States, Repak (1994; 1995) noticed that men earned higher wages and were more mobile than women, regardless of the fact that women had higher human capital levels. Foner (1986; 2005)'s research reveals similar patterns for Jamaicans in New York and London. Knocke (1999), in her analysis of data from Sweden, revealed that immigrant women who had come to Sweden as part of labor recruitment efforts in the sixties, and were recruited to perform low-status, and physically

hazardous jobs, were still doing the same jobs three decades later. Moreover, very few women were given any chance to attend training courses and to advance to better jobs.

Some scholars have also noted the impact of economic restructuring that began in 1970s on women. A shift from manufacturing to service economy has meant that these women have moved from occupations in manufacturing, to those in the service sector. Economic restructuring, however, has hit immigrant women the hardest, given the fact that a great number of immigrant women worked in manufacturing labor intensive industries such as garments and electronics (Morokvasic 2000: 103). And, while native women have been able to enter the white collar jobs, immigrant women have moved into the lowest rung of the service jobs (Morokvasic 2000; Phizaklea 1983b).

Various studies have also highlighted the gendered nature of co-ethnic economy (Anthias 1983; Gilbertson 1995; Zhou 1992). In her research of Greek-Cypriot ethnic economy, Anthia (1983) found out that women were the backbone of the clothing industry, by serving as a source of cheap labor. And whereas both males and females were exploited by their coethnic employers, males had more opportunities for social advancement (i.e., starting their own business), compared to women. Similarly, Zhou (1992) found out that although Chinese immigrant women provided the major part of the Chinatown's economy, they still received very low wages. Moreover, men experienced a higher return on their human capital variables, something that cannot be said for women. Gilbertson (1995)'s findings showed that enclave employment provided Dominican and Colombian women with very low wages, minimal fringe benefits, and few opportunities for social mobility.

Gender is also a crucial dimension of entrepreneurship and self-employment. For one, the motivation to start a business is different for women than for men. While men and women may share similar problems in the host society that push them toward self-employment, such as discrimination and racism in the mainstream labor market, lack of recognition of education, lack of the knowledge of the receiving society's language, research (Anthia and Mehta 2003)[15] found out that for women, unlike men, life crises such as abusive relationships, ill health, and not being permitted to return to work after childbirth by former employers, were important factors that drove them toward self-employment. Furthermore, women who are married and have children, consider self-employment as a flexible work option which would allow them to take care of their childcare responsibilities, since women still carry their household duties themselves (Hillman 1999). In addition, escaping the conditions of a domestic servant has been found important motivation to start a business of their own (Morokvasic 1991). Finally, women have been found to be much more motivated by symbolic factors (a sense of empowerment) than the men, who are largely motivated by financial profits (Anthia and Mehta 2003).

An increasing body of scholarship has demonstrated that domestic work is the most common occupation among immigrant women[16] in the labor market in the receiving

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[15] These research findings in this paper are part of the projects called "Self-employment activities of women and minorities: their success or failure in relations to social citizenship policies (SEM)." This was a European Community funded project conducted in six European countries (Sweden, UK, Denmark, Greece, Italy, Germany). For more results of this projects see a collection of articles published in *International Review of Sociology* (13): 1

[16] Literature has offered examples where men also has worked as domestics. We should point out here research by Margolis (1994) among Brazilian immigrants in New York, where she found out that Brazilian men too did domestic work. However, as the author shows us, even in those cases when both women and men are employed in domestic service, the division of labor in these jobs is along traditional lines: the woman cleans, does the laundry, cooks and cares for children, while the man is a butler, gardener, and/or chauffer.

countries (Andersen 2003; Ayse 2007; Constable 2003; Degiuli 2007; Escriva 2000; Eihrenreich and Hochschild 2003; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2000; Lutz 2007; see articles in Momsen 1999). Domestic service is characterized by low-status, low wages, and in a few exceptional cases, no benefits are involved. Women in this service, in particular, live-in domestics, work long and unpredictable hours, performing a multitude of jobs such as cleaning, taking care of children, the elderly and so on. The multiple jobs women have to perform means "the extension of the subordinate role of women as unpaid family workers to paid family workers" (Anthias 2000: 27). In addition to performing practical tasks, domestic works, especially in the case of children and the elderly, involves a lot of emotional labor, in that women have to give part of themselves, their emotions (Degiuli 2007; Lutz 2007). Furthermore, domestic women workers, in particular live-in ones are subject to various kinds of physical and psychological abuses[17] and especially young, unmarried women who are easy prey of those who might take advantage of their sexuality (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1997).

In sum, scholars have formulated various perspectives in attempts to explain labor market outcomes among immigrants. The assimilationist and human capital theoretical models have attributed economic adaptation to individual's characteristics such as education, knowledge of language, length of time in the country and so on. However, these individualistic approaches have failed to explain why immigrants with similar human capital characteristics receive lower rates of returns in the labor market. Moreover, unlike the early 20th century migrants who were poor, unskilled and began at

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[17]For example, Anderson (2003), citing figures from Kalayaan (a British support organization) reported that between 1996-1997, 84 percent of domestics reported psychological abuse, 34 percent physical abuse, and 10 percent sexual abuse. Additionally, 54 percent were locked in, 55 percent did not have their own beds, and 38 percent were not fed regularly (Anderson 2003: 108).

the bottom of job hierarchy, new immigrants display a bifurcated modal in terms of social class, a situation, which bodes different modes of labor market outcomes. Scholars who have focused in the post-1965 immigrants have looked at the structure of labor market to explain immigrants' location in the labor market. They have argued that internalization of production and finance have led to a proliferation of a bifurcated economic activities with high paying jobs that native elites occupy and low skilled service jobs that immigrants occupy. Others have contended that the labor market is not the only factor to impact immigrants' economic incorporation in host societies' labor market. Instead, they have suggested that it is the interaction of "institutional factors" such as labor market structure, host society's immigration policies, welfare states greatly impact immigrants' economic adaptation. A considerable amount of research has looked at entrepreneurship as another mode of labor market incorporation, with immigrants, in particular those in the traditional countries of immigration, having a higher rates of self-employment compared to natives. Moreover, immigrants are highly represented in informal economies, which is the case for most of the immigrants in the countries of Southern Europe.

Gender is a crucial factor in migration. Research has indicated that men and women display differences in labor market outcomes, with women being in a more disadvantaged position compared to men. This is evident in a number of factors such as occupational concentrations, wages, mobility in the work place, rates of return on human capital and so on. This situation, then, will impact women's labor market experiences different from that of men.

Albanian Immigrants: Labor Market Experiences

According to Baldwin-Edward (2004a) official data on the situation of immigrants in the Greek labor markets is non existent, nor there is any plan on the part of the Greek Ministry of Labor to collect such data, or to commission any research. The processed 2001 Greek Census Data, however, found in Baldwin-Edwards (2004a; 2004b) provide some information regarding employment of Albanians. According to these data, most of Albanian males work in construction (42%), followed by agriculture (23%), industry and tourism at 12% each. In contrast, 52% of women declared the category 'other', mainly, presumably, housekeeping while 19% worked in tourism, 15% in agriculture and 9% in industry. These are jobs that Greeks refuse to do, especially construction, heavy industry and agriculture (Baldwin-Edwards 2004b: 55).

Various research studies have confirmed this trend (Hatziprokopiou 2003; Iosifides and King 1998; Lazaridis and Romaniszyn 1998; Lazaridis and Psimmenos 2000;). Lazaridis and Psimmenos (2000) for example, show in their study that in rural areas, Albanians (mainly males) work as seasonal workers during the peak of economic activity, such as picking fruits and vegetables. They are hired on a daily basis and receive some of their payments in forms of meals and lodgings (old barracks, barns and dilapidated cottages). On the other hand, in urban areas such as Athens or Thessalonica, Albanians (mainly males) are primarily employed in construction (Hatziprokopiou 2003; Iosifides 1997) where they work in house-building or repair as well as in other much larger and mainly public works projects (Iosifides, 1997; Iosifides and King 1999). In addition, Albanians work in tourist areas, in restaurants and hotels (Lazaridis and Psimmenos 2000).

Domestic service is another sector where Albanians are concentrated. The overwhelming majority of Albanians in this occupation are females. Like males in construction, Albanian females are mostly employed as domestics in big cities such as Athens and Thessalonica, where, according to Lazaridis and Psimmenos (2000: 181), demand for such a job is high due to rising levels of female employment, changes in family structure, and the lack of adequate childcare provision. The job consists of multiple tasks such as cleaning, cooking, baby-sitting, and caring for the elderly.[18]

The jobs Albanians perform in Greece are low status, low paid, unstable, insecure, and often under very precarious conditions, and are mostly located in Greek owned small firms in the informal economy (Iosifides 1997). Research has found that Albanians have the greatest instability, highest employment insecurity, and the greatest degree of job precariousness, even compared to other immigrant groups (i.e., Egyptians, Filippines) (Iosifides and King 1998). They are perceived to be the group most easily to be exploited by the Greek employers. To take but one example, the domestic service. Compared to Filippinas, Albanian women are paid less, have no social security or entitlement to paid holidays, are required to do the most menial and degrading tasks, and are more likely to be exposed to physical and psychological abuse by their employers (Lazaridis and Psimmenos 2000: 181).

Albanians, more so than other immigrant groups in Greece, face widespread racism and discrimination, which according to King and Vullnetari (2003) are attributed to factors such as their large numbers, lack of other prominent migrant nationalities; rather antagonistic historical relations between the two countries, during and since the

[18] Albanian females are also recruited to work in sex industry, as "entertainers" or "models" and then forced into prostitution by "unscrupulous" agents or their friends (Lasaridis and Psimmenos 2000). This research, however, does not deal with these types of employment

Ottoman empire, as well as the presence among immigrants of large numbers of ethnic-Greek minorities who are treated better than the "real" Albanians (King and Vullnetari 2003: 38-39). Stereotypes of Albanians as "dangerous" and "criminal" are very prevalent among Greek society. Greek mass media have played a major part in creating these stereotypes (see Droukas 1998 for more on this issue). Furthermore, their legal status[19] of six-month and one-year permits, or no legal permit at all, as well as cases when Greek police tear up valid permits in order to humiliate Albanians (Baldwin-Edwards 2004b: 61) adds to their already difficult situation, in that it makes it much easier for Greek employers to exploit them.

Even so, Albanian immigrants have found various ways to mitigate the effects of this hostile environment. One of the ways is that of baptism of their children. This is particularly the case with those Albanian families who are Muslims[20]. In these cases, the Greek employers, friends, neighbors willingly acts as godmother/godfather of the immigrant's child who is born in Greece (Hatziprokopiou 2003; Lazaridis and Romaniszyn 1998). Another is the change of names from Muslim names to Greek orthodox ones. Albanians feel that these strategies will help them and their children in their socioeconomic adaptation in Greek society (Hatziprokopiou 2003).

Significant as this scholarship is in terms of highlighting labor market outcomes of immigrants, there are still gaps in the literature:

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[19] For more on Greek State immigration policy see Baldwin-Edwards (2004b); Baldwin-Edwards and Fakiolas (1999); Fakiolas (2003).

[20] In terms of religious composition, Albania consists of three major religions: Muslims, Christian Orthodox and Catholics. It should be noted, however, that during the communist regime, religion was banned, and Albania was officially declared as an atheist country. After the fall of communism, people were allowed to practice freely their religion. The country is secular and no political party is related to any particular religion. For more on the issue of religion in Albania, see Hall (1994: 42-49).

First: Most of the literature on migrants' adaptation in host societies is conducted in societies which are considered traditional countries of immigration, such as United States, Canada, Australia, Israel, countries with a long history of immigration, such as Great Britain, or those Northern European countries which received immigrants as part of "guest worker" system, or as part of citizens of former colonies. Albanians, on the other hand, move to Greece, a country that is very different from these others in many respects.

To begin with, Greece, unlike traditional countries of immigration, or those with a long history of immigration, was for a long time a country of emigration. In the period between 1945-1973, nearly a million Greeks emigrated to the Western European countries such as West Germany, as well as North America, Canada and Australia (Fakiolas 2000). As such its institutions were not prepared to respond to the new situation of immigration.

In addition, Greece is a Southern European country, and, as Baldwin-Edwards (1999:2) has maintained, migrations to Northern Europe display different characteristics from those of Southern Europe: In the first case, migrants were generally legal (except France), and were recruited by employment recruited state agencies and were incorporated into the formal economy. Bilateral treaties which existed between two countries gave them legal protection, as well as equality with nationals or specific legal base. By contrast, migrants to Southern Europe are generally illegal (entry/residence/and/or work), are recruited by private illegal "brokers", and they are also highly absorbed in the informal economy. Moreover, there are bi/multi-lateral treaty for expulsion arrangements, and often immigrants have no social and few legal rights (Baldwin-Edwards 1999: 2).

Moreover, the migration of Albanians to Greece is a movement of people from one Balkan country to another. The intra-Balkan migration is different from other patterns of migration, because the highly contested borders[21] in the region "induce feelings of nationalism" (Baldwin-Edwards 2004b: 51 citing Alkan 2002: 59) among the inhabitants of the region. Thus while on one hand, Albanians fit in Greece culturally because of their similar history and culture, on the other hand their historical and cultural proximity means that they cannot be accepted as Albanians (Baldwin-Edwards 2004b: 62).

Furthermore, as Triandafyllidou and Veikou (2002) indicate, in Greece there is the idea of "hierarchy of Greekness", where different immigrants and refugee groups are organized in concentric circles around the ethnonational core. Those immigrant groups closest to the ethnonational core are granted far more access and privileges than the ones farthest from the core. This hierarchy of Greekness is clearly reflected in the Greek immigration policy, whereby special provisions based on co-ethnicity has privileged certain groups over others. Pontic Greeks, who are members of Greek diaspora "returning" from the former Soviet Union and the group closest to ethnonational core, are given full citizenship status and benefits that aim to facilitate their integration in the Greek society. Greek Albanians[22], the group next to Pontic Greeks to have Greek

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[21] Baldwin-Edwards points to several important historic events that highlight this phenomenon: These include the refusal of the Greeks of Northern Epirus (an area of Albania corresponding to southern-most districts of Korçë and Gjirokastër) to become part of newly-formed Albania, who in turn formed a provisional autonomous government; the failure of the Greek delegation at the Paris Conference of 1919 to achieve annexation of the territory to Greece, which Greece had claimed for a long time (Baldwin-Edwards 2004: 51, summarizing Pentzopoulos 2002: 28; Veremis 1995: 16017; Koliopoulos and Veremis 2002: 331).

[22] For Greeks, Greek Albanians are Albanian citizens, mainly from southern Albania, of Greek ethnic origin and Christian Orthodox religion (Trindafyllidou and Veikou 2003: 19). There is a lot of discrepancy regarding the exact numbers of ethnic-Greek Albanians, as various sources quoted in Droukas (1998: 362) reveal: the Albanian government census of 1989 puts the number of ethnic Greeks at 58,758. Leaders of the

nationality are not given full citizenship. Both of these groups, given their ethnic and cultural ties with "real" Greeks, are not considered as a "threat" to the Greek cultural homogeneity and their integration is thought to be much easier and less costly for the host society. The last group in the hierarchy are the Muslim Albanians, whose "other" ethnic origin and religion present a threat to the cultural homogeneity of Greek society (Triandafyllidou and Mariangela 2002). As such they have become targets of widespread racism and discrimination. Orthodox Albanians, while considered "better than Muslims", are subject to the same racism and discrimination directed against other Albanians, since although they share a religion with the hosts, they are still thought of as immigrants who come from a backward country, not on a par with the standards of living of modern European society (Rapper 2005: 191).

Second: Existing studies on economic adaptation of Albanians in Greece are important in that they provide an overall picture as to where Albanians are concentrated in Greece's economy. Yet, they are limited in their ability to fully explain experiences of Albanians in the labor market, in that focus only on economic adaptation of Albanians in the host society. However, as Gold (1995) argues for Russian Jewish migrants, in order to fully understand employment experiences of Albanian migrants, we need to examine the economic environment of communist Albania, under which the present immigrants

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ethnic Greek community place this number at 260,000, whereas other sources argue that there are about 400,000 ethnic Greeks living in Albania. According to CIA World Fact Book 1994, ethnic Greeks amount to 100,000, whereas the Greek Helsinki Committee places this number at 150,000. These discrepancies in numbers, according to Hall (1994), partly arises from the Greek practice of counting all Albanians with Orthodox leanings as Greek, thereby imposing a cultural imperialism over Albanian (as well as Serbian) Orthodox Church adherents within the country (Hall 1994: 190-191). It is true, many Orthodox are ethnic Albanians belonging to the Autocephalous Albanian Orthodox Church (Droukas 1998: 362 referring to Human Right Watch/Helsinki 1995). It is also important to note what King and Vullnetari (2003: 40) have pointed out, that the divide between ethnic Greeks and ethnic-Albanian Albanians has become blurred (through marriage, name change, false documents, tactical religious conversion etc.) so that it is very difficult for Greek government to determine the "true" Greek.

worked and lived.[23] In Albania, like elsewhere in former communist societies official unemployment was non-existent. Employment in former communist countries was deemed to be a state-guaranteed social right (Drobnić 1997: 72). In fact, full employment was one of the fundamental concepts and objectives of state socialism, and an important factor of regime's legitimation (Drobnić 1997: 72, referring to Ferge 1992). People, however, did not have a job choice, since the government fully controlled peoples' employment process. Upon completion of education, one was assigned a job, which he/she had to take and could potentially work in it for the rest of his/her working life.

By moving to capitalist Greece, Albanians face a situation that is quite foreign to them: looking and applying for jobs as well as going through interviews. In sum, then, they lack skills required in modern industrialized society. In addition, even when they find jobs, they have to constantly worry about keeping these jobs, since a free market society does not provide a lifetime "guaranteed job". All of these have to be done in a language and environment, which is very unfamiliar to immigrants, and very often a hostile environment. Moreover, as previously mentioned, given four decades of government's ban on emigration, Albanians who grew up under communist regime lacked a history of migration. As a result of these circumstances then, Albanians will face great challenges in the labor market.

Third: Most of the literature so far has focused on migrant women who experience regular paid employment for the first time in their life. Albanian women, on the other hand, come from a country, where, like elsewhere in former communist countries of Eastern Europe paid employment was a norm (Einhorn 1993: 113). Equal

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[23] I am indebted to ideas in this part to the work of Gold (1995)

access to education and employment of women was central to the socialist state's social project. In fact, women's employment was a state's protected social right. In view of this commitment, educational as well as employment opportunities improved significantly for Albanian women during socialist regime. For example, toward the end of 1970s women constituted 46 percent of the nation's total labor force (Hall 1994: 84). This proportion is higher than that of Greece, which by the 1990s, women represented 35-36% of the total working population in the country.[24] In addition, the government had established subsidized day-care centers, kindergartens and other social benefits to facilitate women-mother's work (Prifti 1978). By moving to Greece, Albanian women, like men will no longer have the opportunity of the "guaranteed jobs". Moreover, Albanian women, in particular mothers with small children, will also lose the social benefits that they had under socialist society, since being non-EU citizens, as well as being often illegal, they cannot qualify for the limited Greek childcare facilities (Lazaridis and Psimmenos. 2000: 181). These factors then make for a unique environment, which will greatly impact the experiences of Albanians in Greece.

In sum, we would argue that the existing scholarly research on experiences of immigrants in the labor market has provided a great contribution to the understanding of economic adaptation of immigrants in host society's labor markets. In spite of this, however, this literature has several limitations: Research has mostly focused on immigrants in traditional countries of migration, countries with a long history of immigration, or to Northern European countries, which received immigrants as part of

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[24] We should be careful as not to "romanticize" the achievements of Albanian women. It should be emphasized, that despite state socialism's commitment to gender equality in the work place, and despite the fact that women managed to enter several traditionally male-dominated occupations, professions (i.e., medicine, law) and sectors of economy, there was a marked and continuing occupational segregation of a kind not dissimilar from that obtaining in Western Europe (Einhorn 1993: 121).

"guest worker" system or as part of citizens of former colonies. Meanwhile, little research is done in countries, which for a long time were themselves countries of emigration and which have, in the last decade or so been transformed to countries of immigration. The literature, in particular European literature has largely ignored experiences of migrants from former communist countries, whose lack of exposure and skills of modern capitalist society will affect their orientation and adjustment in the capitalist West in various unique ways. Finally, literature on gender and migration has focused mostly on women who for the first time have access to paid income, or regular paid employment. For Albanian women, on the other hand, like women in other former socialist societies, employment was a state guaranteed social right. Moreover women, in particular women with small children had access to all social benefits provided by the socialist state, which upon moving to Greece, because of their non-EU citizen status as well as often their illegal status will lose these benefits. The existing literature, then, is incapable of explaining these experiences. As a result of this, it is the task of this project to address these existing limitations in the literature of migrants and labor market experiences.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Methodology

The data to be used for this dissertation were collected over the period of August 2006 until August 2007. This research employs the extended case method put forth by Burawoy (1991) and has been successfully employed by other researchers in the field of sociology (see readings in Burawoy 1991). The importance and the depth of this method lies in the ability to identify "abnormal" or "anomalous" cases that have not been fully accounted for by the exact theories and "allow original extensions and reformulations of pre-existing theoretical understandings" (Kates 2006: 182). This method, thus, enables researchers to use field work to test, challenge and reconstruct existing theories, given the "exceptionalism" and "uniqueness" of the social situations to be analyzed and explained (Burrawoy 1991). In view of the unique features of Albanian migration, I believe that the extended case study is an excellent methodological tool to utilize in this research.

The research instrument used in this ethnographic study is that of the interview, that "favored digging tool" of sociologists (Benney and Hughes 1956: 137), which is a flexible way of asking people directly about what is going on and has the potential of providing rich and highly illuminating material (Robson 1993: 229). More specifically, this research study uses the open-ended/in-depth interview, in which the interviewer gives little or no direction to the interviewee and there is no pre-specified sets or order of questions (Robson 1993: 159). Unlike structured interview, open-ended interviews provide a greater depth of the social phenomenon under study, given its qualitative

nature, without "imposing any a priori categorization that may limit the field of inquiry" (Fontana and Frey 1994: 365-366). Moreover, unlike large-scale surveys based on probability samples, qualitative interviews provides the researcher with an opportunity to understand in depth, to capture the richness of the social phenomenon that is the object of inquiry. Qualitative interviews have been extensively used by many researchers in their work on immigrants, including undocumented immigrants (Chavez 1998; Chin 2005; Delgado 1993; Gold 1995; Gold 2002; Hatziprokopiou 2003; Hondagneo-Sotelo 1994; Kishinevsky 2004; Massey et al., 1987; Orleck 1999; Remmenick 2007; Waters 1999).

Two kinds of interviews were used, face-to-face and telephone interviews. Telephone interviews, according to Berg (2001; 2007), although it may lack the face-to-face interaction, is a very effective way of collecting data under certain situations, such as dispersed geographic locations. This is the case with immigrants from Southern Albania, who live and work in various parts of Greece.

This research study consists of several level of sociological analysis: micro, meso as well as macro. While in-depth interviews enable us to approach the micro as well as meso levels of analysis, I draw upon of various historical materials, journalistic accounts, existing socio-economic and political studies to provide the macro-based level of analysis. This holistic approach, which has been used in earlier studies (Gold 2002; Massey et al., 1987; Orleck 1999; Remmenick 2007) will, I believe, provide a comprehensive view of the life and daily experiences of Albanian migrants in Greece.

The data were collected by two researchers, the research collaborator and myself. The research collaborator is Albanian. She was born, raised in the town of Korça and worked throughout all her life in the Korça region. She is currently retired. During her

career, she worked in education, as a teacher and as a principal of a high school in the town of Korça. She was also active in various aspect of public life. Being a native of Korça, as well as her work as an educator has provided her with an extensive familiarity with the socioeconomic, cultural milieu of the town as well as most of the region. It has also provided her with a wide web of social networks, which facilitated the outreach of the subjects in this study. The research collaborator had previously collaborated with the author of this dissertation in another project, therefore she was familiar with research process.

I am a native of Albania as well. This is the second project I have been involved with Albanian immigrants. I conducted the first research project[25] with Albanian immigrants from Korça[26] who lived and worked (mainly) in Greece during the summer of 1999[27]. I interviewed about 120 immigrants. In addition, I carried out interviews with officials of the local bodies. This experience provided me with initial insights into the life of immigrants in Greece, their daily struggles, difficulties they encounter, their efforts to adjust to life in Greece. It also provided me with a wealth of preparatory material which was extremely useful when I conducted the field work for this dissertation.

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[25] The title of the project was: "International migration from Eastern Europe. An initial assessment of the consequences of the gradual disintegration of the authoritarian systems in Central Eastern Europe and the impact of this disintegration for the labor mobility, integration and economic development." The project was funded by Michigan State University "All University Research Initiation Grant." The principal investigator for this project was Dr. Brendan Mullan.

[26] Korça is the major town of the Korça district. The town had a long history of migration prior to communist take over. In the immediate post-communist area, the town has experienced significant migration flows as the population has moved to Tirana (the capital of Albania) and abroad in search of better economic opportunities. Given the close proximity with Greece, the district and town has become the "jumping off" place for thousands of Albanians from Korça or surrounding areas who have migrated to Greece (Atchison 1993).

The research collaborator conducted 12 interviews during August and September of 2006 in the city of Korça. The author of this dissertation, on the other hand, conducted telephone interviews with 52 people, in the time between December 2006 until July 2007. The majority of the interviews were conducted with immigrants who live in Athens, given that a large number of Albanian migrants, live and work in Athens. The rest of the interviews were conducted in Thessalonica and Crete. One interview was conducted in the United States via telephone. The subject was of significant interest to the study, since he left Albania in the very early stages of migration. After spending a significant amount of time in Greece, he moved to the United States where he has been working and living ever since.

The sampling is that of snowball sampling, which is sometimes the best strategy to locate people with the required attributes for the study. In view of Berg (2001; 2007), the main strategy of snowballing is to first identify people with relevant characteristics and to interview them. Then, the interviewer can ask them to provide names of other people who possess the same attributes (Berg 2001: 33).

In the case when the research collaborator conducted interviews, she proceeded in the following way: she first got in touch with people who had connections or knew immigrants in Greece. She then gave a detailed description of the study and asked them if they could get her in touch with immigrants who, at that time, were visiting Korça. Once the first subjects were identified and agreed to be interviewed, the researcher asked them if they knew of other immigrants who would like to be interviewed for the study, which they did. Before the interview began, the interviewer showed them the letter of consent which was translated in Albanian.

A similar procedure was followed in the case of telephone interviews. Recruitment of interviewees was done through the use of the social networks as well as through snowball sample referrals. Initially the research collaborator and myself contacted people we knew in Korça and asked them if they knew people who were immigrants in Greece. We explained to them the reasons I wanted to get in touch with Albanian immigrants in Greece and if they could possibly help me to do so. When everything was arranged, I called the subject (the telephone number was given to me by the informer) at their home, explained in detail who I was, the reason I was calling and provided a detailed description of the study. I also read to them on the phone the letter of consent. After they agreed to be interviewed, I went ahead with the interview.

The research assistant was able to interview immigrants who hail from the Korça region. In the process of interviewing, however, I decided to include people from other parts of Albania, in particular Southern Albania, given that the largest number of Albanians in Greece come from the south. The purpose was to obtain a more representative picture of Albanian migrants in Greece. This was made possible by the diverse background of subjects/informants who were willing to be interviewed.

The first informant I contacted was an immigrant who comes from Korça. He is an active member of "Korça" organization, but is also actively involved in Albanian life in Greece. This position has enabled him to establish "strong and weak" networks ties with immigrants hailing not only from Korça, but other parts of Albania as well. As a result of his embededness in this web of multiple networks, I was able to include in my sample participants from various towns and villages of Albania (mainly south). Upon completion of the interview, as mentioned earlier, I would also request the interviewee if

s/he could assist me in locating other participants. In such cases, the "new informers" would activate their "weak" and "strong" ties to recruit other participants. For example, on a few occasions, the "new recruiters" would refer me to their siblings and relatives (strong ties). In other cases, they would refer me to people they had met and forged ties on various occasions. They came either from their communities of origin, or elsewhere in Albania (interregional ties). For example, one of the interviewers gave me the telephone number of another immigrant, whom she had met while at a Greek language learning course (weak ties). In some occasions, after having being interviewed, people were so enthusiastic about the project that they suggested that I interview either their spouses, siblings, close friends (strong ties). Due to aid of these multifarious networks, I was able to obtain a sample of participants hailing from diverse geographic locations.

In doing telephone interviews, I had to overcome the difficulties that lies in the nature of telephone interview, the lack of face-to-face interaction, which is important in establishing rapport of trust between the interviewee and the interviewer. This becomes more serious in the case of Albanians, who, for a long time, given the socio-political realities under which they lived, many people were afraid of the political repercussions of giving out detailed information to outsiders. This is not to be taken lightly, given that after forty years of a despotic regime, wherein torture and exile were frequently meted out on the most capricious of pretenses, Albanians became naturally fearful of political reprisals. In this process, my informers were an invaluable help in establishing much of the trust needed in an interview like this. Without their assistance this research project would have been impossible.

In addition, my status as a doctoral student in an American university, proved to be highly useful during the interview process. Americans, for the most part, are viewed with a combination of respect and admiration. Furthermore, any individual attending an American university is granted a high level of respect and status among Albanians. In many instances, it seemed that respondents felt very pleased and honored that a doctoral student from an American university was talking to them, hence a reason to trust a faceless voice.

Finally, my status as community's "insider" was another advantage in my work[28]. I am Albanian, I speak Albanian fluently (it being my mother tongue), therefore I have a deep insight into Albanian culture, life and events. Often during the interviews people would discuss with me events that had occurred in Albania, aspects of daily life and culture of Albania. That further eased the process of the telephone interviews and encouraged people to be more open to express their stories.

The interviews ran anywhere from forty minutes to about two hours. In some cases, the interview was carried out in several sessions, since they had to attend to daily chores, such as taking kids to sports activities, shopping, preparing food, or visiting their friends and relatives. At the end of the interview, I asked the subjects if they knew of other immigrants who like them, would be willing to be interviewed. In fact, at the end of the interview, some of the subjects developed an interest in the subject that they immediately suggested that I talked to their cousin or friend. Only three people, who had originally agreed to be interviewed, refused to do so when I called them.

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[28] Like me, various other researchers have conducted research work with their own communities (Abusharaf 2002; Bernstein 2006; Kishinevsky 2004; Remmenick 2007).

The total sample for this research project consists of 64 subjects. There is an equal number of men and women in the sample, thirty-two each. Of the participants in the study, two respondents had left in 1989, three respondents had left Albania and moved to Greece in 1990, twenty four had left in 1991, fourteen had come in 1992, four had come in 1994, three had come in each year 1995 and 1996, five had come in 1997, three had come in each year, 1998 and 1999, and only one had come in 2000.

As far as educational level is concerned, eight participants had eight years of school, thirty-three had twelve years of education, one had only thirteen (had not finished high school) years of education, one had finished one year of university while another one had finished only two years of university, three immigrants possessed high school as well as several years of vocational training/education, ten people had university degrees, and seven had post graduate (one to three years) educational degrees. Twelve of the participants were from the rural areas, while the rest came from urban areas. Only three people were single, two of them women, and the rest were married. Their age ranged from 25 to 60 years old.

The interview questions obtained information on 1. Socio-Demographic Characteristics: 2.Motivations; 3.Social Networks; 4.Experience of Albanians in the Labor Market (See Appendix C). All interviews were conducted in Albanian and were later translated into English. All but three interviews were tape recorded. In the case of three interviewees, who did not their interview to be recorded on the tape, detailed notes were taken down.

Analysis of Data

For this research, data were analyzed through qualitative mechanisms. First, all the interviews were written down in details, a process yielding a rather voluminous data set. As a result, data reduction and simplification were necessary so that I could easily access and understand the data, along with being able to educe various themes and patterns (Berg 2001: 35). Memo writing in the margins of transcripts, for example, helped in the initial process of examining data base (Creswell 1998). In addition, I also used code, which is another widely used data reduction and transformation technique. Codes consists are labels that are "attached to 'chunks' of various size--words, phrases, sentences, or whole paragraphs," (Miles and Huberman 1994: 56-57) of the transcribed interviews. They helped me to pull out the information and organize it into various categories, whereby I was able to elicit certain themes (subthemes) and patterns that are used for this dissertation.

Particular attention was paid to the protection of participants' identity. To preserve the anonymity of the respondents I gave a pseudonym and a number to each interview. In such a way, their real identities are not known. All names of respondents are kept anonymous. Table 1 (see below) provides a list of all participants (with pseudonyms) in the study.

Table 1 <u>List of All Participants in the Study</u>

Name	Age	Sex	Education	Pre-migration occupation	Year left	Current occupation
Endrita	59	F	high school	supervisor	1989	domestic worker
Veton	50	M	high school	Technician	1989	artisan in a store
Ilirjan	51	M	eight year	agricultural worker	1990	agricultural worker and sale
Edona	54	F	high school	lab assistant, tailor	1990	domestic worker
Joni	40	M	eight years	agricultural worker	1990	construction
Klarenti	36	M	high school	did not work	1991	construction
Bardhyl	60	M	high school plus two years of mechanical training	mechanic	1991	construction
Itena	44	F	high school	agricultural worker	1991	assistant nurse
Rezarta	46	F	high school	lab assistant, tailor	1991	agricultural worker, domestic worker
Ndricim	46	M	high school	mechanic	1991	technician
Gerti	35	M	one year of college	did not work	1991	seasonal agricultural work, restaurant, construction
Briana	42	F	high school	small factory that made clothes	1991	cleaner in a factory, supervisor in a factory
Genci	53	M	eight years	agricultural worker	1991	construction
Samir	43	M	high school	Mechanic	1991	manual laborer in a factory
Edlira	45	F	high school	Mechanic	1991	domestic worker
Indriti	52	M	high school	supervisor	1991	agricultural laborer, cleaning factory, self employed
Arjeta	50	F	post graduate degree	in education	1991	domestic worker, dishwasher, babysitter, self-employed professional

Table 1 continued

Ylli	51	M	post graduate degree	formerly skilled professional	1991	skilled professional
Petrit	51	M	post graduate degree	formerly skilled professional	1991	agricultural laborer, construction
Piro	40	M	high school	Mechanic	1991	construction
Kreshnik	57	M	high school	Supervisor	1991	agricultural laborer, salesman, loading and unloading lorries, construction
Ardita	33	F	eleven years of school	did not work, because she left the country	1991	domestic worker
Etina	46	F	high school	factory worker	1991	domestic service, takes care of elderly
Blerina	46	F	high school	tailor in a clothing factory	1991	tailor
Fisniku	58	M	high school	Mechanic	1991	self-employed
Blerimi	35	M	high school	Mechanic	1991	construction
Rezarti	40	M	eight years	factory worker	1991	construction and as a carpenter
Erindi	59	M	post graduate degree	taught in higher education	1991	agricultural laborer, gas station, take care of a building
Lulezim	60	M	university degree	Teacher	1992	construction, gardener
Tomi	41	M	high school	service industry	1992	construction, gas station
Fatbardha	49	F	university graduate	highly skilled profession	1992	non government organization
Blerta	38	F	university degree	did not work	1992	works in a restaurant
Flori	41	M	eight years	agricultural worker	1992	construction
Afërdita	37	F	high school	factory worker	1992	domestic worker

Table 1 continued

Suela	43	F	high school and two years of vocational school	assistant economist	1992	domestic worker
Jonida	40	F	university degree	did not work	1992	domestic worker
Genti	36	M	high school	agricultural work	1992	Loading, unloading lorries in a business firm
Kastrioti	60	M	post graduate degree	highly skilled profession	1992	small enterprise factory supervisory
Ardiana	52	F	high school	teacher	1992	stays at home to recover from illness
Afërdita	37	F	university degree	did not work	1992	house cleaner, high status occupation
Erioni	56	M	high school	mechanic	1992	construction
Fatjona	42	F	high school	worked in state farm	1992	worked in a store, domestic worker
Merlinda	42	F	high school	worked in a factory	1994	domestic worker
Kreshnik	40	M	high school plus two years university	mechanic	1994	parking place
Bukuroshe	38	F	high school	mechanic	1994	domestic worker
Jetmir	52	M	post graduate degree	highly skilled profession	1994	construction
Elioni	60	M	university degree	teacher	1995	restaurant, construction, gardener
Zaimir	59	M	post graduate degree	highly skilled occupation	1995	gardener

Table 1 continued

Florenca	50	F	high school and four year of vocational school	tailor	1995	tailor
Albana	30	F	high school	Tailor	1996	domestic worker
Arjan	42	F	high school	mechanic	1996	construction
Marsela	42	F	high school	factory worker	1996	domestic worker
Drita	34	F	university degree	did not work	1997	stay at home and raise kids
Rozafa	33	F	high school	worked in a warehouse	1997	domestic worker
Gëzim	52	M	high school	factory supervisor	1997	construction
Shkelqim	32	M	university degree	high status job	1997	high status job
Jeton	30	M	eight year	did not work	1997	mechanic in a car repair shop
Bora	35	F	high school	teacher	1998	domestic worker
Klodiana	42	F	high school	factory worker	1998	domestic worker
Gjinovefa	52	F	eight years	agricultural worker	1998	domestic worker
Valbona	41	F	high school	service industry	1999	works in a restaurant
Andi	60	M	university degree	highly skilled profession	1999	daily manual laborer, highly skilled profession
Anxhela	46	F	university degree	highly skilled profession	1999	babysitter, works in a hotel
Adelina	25	F	eight years	Tailor	2000	prepares food in a take-away food stand

CHAPTER 4
MOTIVATIONS AND MEANS OF LEAVING THE COUNTRY:

UNDERSTANDING ALBANIAN MIGRATION

The focus of this chapter is Albanian motives to leave their country. First, I describe people's everyday life under communist regime. Then I proceed to provide an analysis of people's motives of migrating to Greece. In the end, I give an account of migrants' ways and means of making the trip to Greece.

Daily Life under the Communist Regime

Albanian immigrants' experiences in Greece will be largely shaped by life in their country of origin. Albanians grew up under the most isolated society in the former communist bloc, known as the "North Korea" of Europe. Individual freedoms, such as freedom to express oneself, freedom to assemble, freedom of press, freedom to practice religion, and as it has already been mentioned, freedom to leave the country[29], were severely repressed. The communist party and the state controlled every aspect of life in Albania, including people's most private sphere, the family. Children, spouses, relatives, close friends, neighbors were used as informers by the *Sigurim,* the secret police, reaching into every living room (Vickers and Pettifer 1997: 12).

Everyday life was characterized by a shortage of goods and various amenities, as seen in the familiar long queues of Eastern European societies. One had to get up at two o'clock in the morning and line up in queue for some of the basic food (i.e., meat, cheese, milk), with the ordeal to continue later in the day, with people (most often women)

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[29] Internal migration was kept at a minimum as well.

scanning the (often empty) stores for a kilo of vegetables, or a package of beans. In addition, running water and electricity, became very erratic, a common occurrence in the eighties. When asked what were the things that impressed them most when they arrived in Greece, the overwhelming majority of immigrants cited: the multiplicity of stores, the supermarkets and the multitude and large variety of consumer goods (i.e., food, clothes), the lack of ration, lights, well lit roads. Ardita, for example, who left in 1991 and stayed in a Greek refugee camp for its first month, told me that she was very surprised to see in the camp that the staff would bring them different kind of soaps, since in Albania, she said "we had only one soap for everything. Those that cost 15 leks." Similarly, Endrita, who went to Greece in 1989 as a tourist to visit her cousin, expressed her shock at what she saw for the first time: "When I went to Greece, it was during Christmas time. And I opened my eyes and was looking everywhere. I could see lights, everywhere lights, wide boulevards, full of lights. I told to myself, "What a miracle". I was so shocked. And then the food at my cousin's. It's not that I lived bad in Albania. But this, I had never seen anything like this. I saw coca cola for the first time. I had never seen coca cola in my life, except on the TV. All those oranges, ice creams, various kinds of cheese. I said to myself "Wow, how they live!" I was really shocked. I could not speak. I was tongue tied. I knew the language well, but I could not speak. My cousin would talk to me, but I would not respond at all. I started to mix up words, because I was so shocked."

Housing was in short supply, too. Often two generations, or several families, had to share a one, two, or three room apartment. For example, Rezarta, who came to Greece in 1991, described the housing situation of her family in Albania: "I suffered so much before I came to Greece. When I married, there were fourteen of us in two rooms and a

kitchen[30]. All of us were living there until we left. Three brothers lived in one apartment. All of them were married and had families. ... We slept in the same room with my mother-in-law. She would sleep in the couch in our room... It was really bad. What can I say? I stayed at that apartment for six years. It was very bad. If I had stayed longer, I would have died. I couldn't handle it any longer."

Not only were the daily life necessities in short supply, but access to them depended largely on one's standing in the power structure of the communist party and bureaucracy. While communists claimed to have eliminated a system based on class inequalities, inequalities based on wealth were replaced with inequalities based on power. One's standing in the hierarchy of communist party structure and bureaucracy meant access to privileges. The top party leadership (politbureau and their families) enjoyed access to special benefits, such as cars, houses (including vacation houses), trips abroad[31], much better quality food, Western consumer goods (i.e., blue jeans, colored TVs) available in their "special store". Other party and government officials would also have access to consumer goods (i.e., colored TV, washing machines, refrigerators, bigger apartments), which were beyond the means and reach of ordinary people. As one immigrant said: "The first thing that impressed me when I went to Folorina was the multitude of stores, the abundance of goods. In Albania, if we wanted to have a television set, the first party secretary would get it. We the simple people could not get it."

As mentioned in the previous chapter, in Albania, like elsewhere in Eastern Europe, official unemployment was nonexistent. Everybody of working age had a guaranteed job,

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[30] Often in apartments in Albania, the kitchen would be a room which would serve multiple purposes such as a place to cook, living/reception room.

[31] Cars, houses as well as trips abroad (organized for various reasons, including health reasons) were all paid by the state.

assigned by the government, and for which ordinary people had no say. In addition, most often than not, people would be in the same job until retirement. Fear of losing one's job was nonexistent. Employers were also entitled to benefits such as free health care[32], paid vacations, paid maternity leave, vacation centers for workers and so on. Moreover, Albania's social security system extended literally from "womb to tomb" covering disability, old age pensions, and burial expenses (Jacques 1995: 539-540).

Wages were set by the government (Jacques 1995). There was little differential between highest and lowest wages: the ratio being 1:2 so that in the mid-1980s a "factory director would take home approximately 900 leks a month, and assembly worker 750 and a roadsweeper 600" (Vickers and Pettifer 1997: 12). There were no material incentives for people to work. People were paid, whether they worked or not. The joke was: "We pretend to work, and the government pretends to pay us". As a result, absenteeism from work became common. One immigrant recounted (with a sense of nostalgia) his experiences with his work in Albania: "Whether I worked or not, I got paid. I was friend with my supervisor. I used to tell my supervisor "I am leaving; I am not coming to work. I have some business to attend" And I would go and have a good time with my friends. My work was such that I did not have to fulfill any norms. So at about 10 o'clock, I would leave work. My friends used to tell me: do you work or not? Well, I am good friend with my supervisor, I used to tell them. So I had fun. I used to go to the café. Here in Greece, there is no going to café. You have to work".

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[32]Albania, like other countries in Eastern Europe had universal health care, whereby everybody was covered.

There were few if any of the violent crimes[33] that occurred in the West[34]. One could walk free in the street even during the middle of the night, without the fear of being robbed or murdered. Several immigrants, in particular women and parents with young children who live in Athens, alluded to this safety. Said Etina, who lives in Athens, "There was one good thing in that system, you would come back from work late in the night, for example I was working in a factory, and nobody would dare to touch you. While here in Greece, there are many people that do drugs, there are people that drive by with a motorcycle and steal your bag. You understand me. You are afraid to be alone in the street when you come back from your work at night. Things have happened here. There is not much fear, but you still are afraid to be alone. It is not like it was in Albanian before, you could walk in the night and nobody would dare to say anything to you."

Motives and Means of Leaving

Images of Greece before leaving

To begin with, all immigrants, with the exception of one, stated that they had never thought of leaving the country before 1990. In their view, it would have been unimaginable to leave the country, given the consequences their families would suffer. Suela, for example who used to spend summers with her relatives in a village nearby Greek borders, said that it never occurred to her to ever cross the border, "not even once. It was unimaginable." So deeply entrenched was the fear of emigrating in people's lives that even those immigrants who went to Greece in 1989 as tourists decided not to stay,

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[33] Other kinds of crimes existed such as the theft of "socialist property" (i.e., head of a factory would use the factory's van/car to take his/her family to vacation), various forms of bribery and so on.

[34] After the fall of communist regime, Albania, like the rest of Eastern European countries is beset by crimes all too familiar to Western societies, including murder, drug and human trafficking, kidnapping of children.

because they were afraid of what would happen to their families in Albania. Endrita, for example, went to visit her cousin in Greece, leaving her husband and three children behind. After a month she came back to Albania, even though her cousin begged her to stay and bring her family later. She did so, because as she put it: "I was afraid, because it was just the beginning. You know how it was. We had never been outside the country. Who knew what would happen to my family. They could have been sent to some village in exile." The one immigrant, who said that he had thought of leaving before 1990, did not do so because he was married and had a family. He said that if he had not been married, he would have left.

Before moving to Greece, most of the immigrants thought of Greece as a country that was much more affluent than Albania, that its people enjoyed a much higher standard of living and, as some put it, Greece would give Albanians many, many things. For immigrants who left in the early stages of migration, these images were largely shaped by what people had seen on the foreign television channels. For example, Joni, who left in 1990, said, "more or less, I watched Greek TV, and I could see life there. And this pushed me to leave. Also, I had heard other people talking about it. Listen, more or less, it's not that people did not talk at all about life abroad. They did talk in small groups, especially the last years of communism, people began to talk more openly about things."

Immigrants who left at a later time spoke of relatives and friends who had been in Greece and who had regaled them with stories about life there. Fatjona, who left in 1992 to join her brother, said: "All immigrants who had been in Greece, as well as my brother who would come back from Greece to visit us, said that life there is better than in Albania. They told me that in Greece there are jobs, you will earn much more, it is better

than Albania." Similarly, Genti, who left for Greece in 1992, stated: "I had heard and seen people who had gone abroad. They told me, as soon as you cross Albania, excuse me for saying this, but even a bathroom in the West is much better than living in Albania."

Motives of Leaving

For this study, immigrants were asked why they left Albania and moved to Greece. Most of the immigrants stated economic reasons (unemployment, poverty, deteriorating economic situation in Albania, and a desire to give their family a better life). Another group pointed to family based reasons (reuniting with their spouses, relatives). Others alluded to fear of instability, while some others referred to a desire or curiosity to see the Western world. A few stated that they had left for tourist as well as health reasons.

For example, Vjollca who left with her husband, said that they had to leave because both she and her husband had "lost the jobs. My husband would sell things in the market, but that earned him very little. We could not live on that." Similarly, Erindi, who worked in higher education, describes his reason for leaving in 1991: "I left for economic reasons. I could not afford life any longer. My daughter was studying at the University of Tirana. My entire wage went to pay for her expenses. It was that moment, when the increase in prices was higher than the level of wages. So it was simply economic reasons."

Gerti, who interrupted his university studies to go to Greece, pointed to economic reasons as well as to the fact that he saw that everybody was leaving: "I thought about

economic problems. I did not have any economic support. And at that time, everybody had a psychology of leaving, meaning to see things, to find something better."

Other immigrants, in addition to economic reasons, stated that they wanted to come to Greece to see the Western world. This is the case with Klarenti and Ndriçimi, who left in 1990 and 1991, and were single at the time they left Albania.

Klarenti: I left for economic reasons. That's understandable. To come and work and make some money, because in Albania we were nothing, zero. But also, to see the world. To see the women of the world, how they dress up, how much cream they put on their face, what kind of make up they put on their face, like we had watched on the TV."

In a similar way, Ndriçimi explained: "I left for economic reasons. Also, to see what was going on in the free world. I had watched on the Greek and Yugoslavian TV how life was in the free world, and I could see that we were very poor, especially when it came to food."

A group of immigrants cited family-based reasons for coming to Greece. Among these, some immigrants, mainly women, said that they had come to reunite with their husbands and their fiancées who were immigrants in Greece. Others explained that they had come to join their parents, and siblings, while two others said that they had come to join their children. Some immigrants, more particularly, those who belonged to the Greek and Vllach[35] minority stated that they left for Greece to visit their relatives living there.

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[35]Vllachs (also known as Aromanians) are one of Albania's minority ethnic group. They speak a dialect akin to Romanians (Winnifrith 2002:22). The Vllachs (this part is based on the work of Schwandner-Sievers 1999) belong to Orthodox religion, which automatically places them (along with those Albanians who regard themselves as Orthodox) into the "Greek minority." During the communist time, Vllachs were not viewed as a separate ethnic minority group, and were officially considered as highly assimilated. With the collapse of communist system, an Aromanian ethnic movement emerged in Albania. The movement is split into two groups: a pro-Romanian group and a pro-Greek faction, with members switching from one to the other, depending on opportunities (i.e., scholarship to study in Romanian and Greek schools, visas for Greece) that "allegiance" to the group offer to them. Many thousands of Vllachs live compactly in northern

It is important to note, however, that although the communist regime prohibited any form of emigration, as well as communication between Albanians and their relatives abroad, some form of communication, minimum as it was, was maintained, mostly via occasional letters (highly censured by the government). Once the communist regime collapsed, these ties were revived.

Endrita, for example, whose mother belonged to the Greek minority told her story: "My mother's brother was in Greece. He had left Albania and went to Greece before World War II. My mother kept in touch with him through letters. She wrote Greek very well, like the Greeks... Every six, eight or one year, I do not remember very well, she would send and get a letter from her brothers. Maybe the letters were checked by the government, I do not know, but we got the letters from him and my mother would write back. She kept in touch with her brothers through letters until about 1968, when I applied to become a member of the communist party. At that time, my mother stopped sending letters. I put a pressure on her. I even destroyed all the letters they had sent us.

Interviewer: Why?

Endrita: Because I wanted to become a member of the communist party. And at that time if you had somebody abroad, it was not good. I kept the pictures he had sent us, pictures of his wife and children. After that she did not send letters any longer. But her brother who lived in Tirana, he kept correspondence via letters. In 1986, my cousin's son came to Albania as a tourist. He went to Tirana hotel and had the old address of my

Greece (as well as Macedonia (FYROM) and southern Albania; traces of Vlach-Aromanians and pockets of Aromanian population are to be found in Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia and Romania). Many of the pro-Greek Aromanian families practiced a nomadic pastoralism well into the communist period, when mobility was hindered by the impermeable political borders between Albania and Greece. During communist times, however, Vllachs, like members of Greek minority were prevented from communicating with their relatives over the border (Winnifrith 2002).

uncle. He asked the people there if they could find my uncle. The people found the address of my uncle and called him at home and asked him: there are some Greek tourists here, would you agree to meet these people? My uncle said "Yes, of course I would meet them. They are my people." Then they called me and asked me if I wanted to come and meet them. My mother was dead at that time. So I went and met them. I met them and I invited him to come to my house next time he would come to Albania again. I sent him a letter of guarantee, so he came to my house next time. He had a good time with me and my family. Then, he invited me to come and visit Greece. I got a Greek tourist visa. So I left. It was 1989. "

Some immigrants alluded to health issues as their reason for migrating, while one said that he had come to pursue a training course in his field but given the deteriorating situation in Albania, decided to stay, later bringing his family with him.

Another reason for emigration to Greece was conflict in the family. This is the case with Blerim, who left in 1991. Blerimi "I had an argument with my father for political issues. So I left with my friends. I did not have any economic problems "

Interviewer: "What political issues?

Blerimi: "They (he means his parents) did not want me to leave Albania. I had tried to leave during the time when the embassies opened. So they knew I wanted to leave. They had different political opinions at that time. They did not have the same ideas they have today. At that time, leaving the country was considered high treason. To leave the country, to betray the country was very difficult."

A group of immigrants cited fear of political insecurity and instability for their families as the main reason for coming. This is particularly the case with migrants who

had left in 1997, although a few who left in the 1990 and 1991 alluded to this reason as well. Said Gëzim: "Mostly I came because of what happened in 1997. I could not bear to see my children holding guns in his hands. I felt terrible about their life."

These explanations, however, are micro as well as meso-based (networks) explanations for reasons of exit. As mentioned above, the problem with micro-based explanations is that they are post-migration reconstruction for reasons to migrate, therefore they may be highly influenced by immigrants' personal experience as well as social environment he/she lives in. In addition, immigrants may be unaware of larger structural, historical, economic, political and social developments that shape immigrants' motivations to leave. Social networks, on the other hand, as our examples reveal, while significant in shaping motivations to leave the country, cannot account for the majority of migrants' motives. More importantly, it could be said that both micro as well as macro explanations cannot account for the timing of leaving. Concerning immigrants who left in 1997, while political instability provided the background that shaped immigrants' motivation to leave, by this time, migration from Albania was a well established trend. In view of these considerations, I believe that a full explanation of forces that shape Albanian migrants' motives must take into consideration the role of the state.

Role of the Authoritarian Albanian State in Controlling Migration

In the first chapter, I argued that the authoritarian government of Albania, through simultaneously limiting the economic development of the country and prohibiting immigration, created the current environment of migration. Moreover, the fall of the authoritarian state unleashed large-scale migration waves. In this section, I will lay out a

detailed analysis of these policies and their implications for migration from Albania. First, however, I will present a brief summary of pre-communist Albanian migration, since I think this will provide us with a better understanding of the importance of the role of the state in Albanian migration.

Immigration Prior to the Communist Rule

Prior to communist take over, emigration motivated by economic, social, and political (i.e., foreign invasions, wars, dire economic conditions, political instability) reasons was part of Albanian society. Historically speaking, the first massive wave of migration of Albanians occurred between 15th and 18th century, where thousands of Albanians fled the country as a result of Ottoman occupation, and moved to Italy (Piperno 2002: 1)[36] and Greece. This migration has been described as 'a religiously motivated emigration, since the Turkish occupation forced the Islamization of the Christian Albanian population' (Derhemi 2003: 1017 In King and Vullnetari 2003: 21).

During the Ottoman Empire, various types of migration occurred. These included the recruitment (often forcible) into Ottoman infantry and cavalry of young men; the recruitment of Albanians into the elite guard, the Janisseries, whose main residence was the High Porte in Constantinople; exiles and students who studied in France and Romania, as well as Albanian Christians and the Vlachs from southeastern Albania, who were forced to flee the country to escape the repressive military campaign of the Ottoman Turks (Barjaba and King 2005: 7).

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[36] By 1886 there were recorded 181,738 Italo-Albanians, while the Italian census of 1907 revealed that numbers had increased to 208,410 (Hall 1994: 50).

Throughout the 19th and the first half of 20th century migration continued, with Albanians moving as far as North Africa, the United States[37], South America and Australia (UNDP 2000), in addition to those who moved to Romania, Bulgaria, Egypt and Turkey proper (Hall 1994: 50), as well as Greece.[38] Migration reached its high levels in the 20th century. Between 1923 up to 1944, for example, approximately 150,000 people had left the country (about 13 percent of the population), with the overwhelming majority of immigrants originating in the areas in the south of Albania, particularly the coastal region and some of the main cities such as Gjirokastra, Korca, Kolonja, Skrapari, Vlora, Durrës, Përmet and Pogrades (UNDP 2000: 35). Thus, international migration from Albania, in particular from southern regions of the country, was a well-established phenomenon prior to the communist take over. In fact, as Barjabas and King (2005: 24) put it, the 1944-1990 hiatus can be seen as "an artificial interlude within the long term historical framework of the migration of the Albanian people."[39] The advent of the communists to power marked a radical departure with the past.

The Communist Period and Migration

When the communists seized power at the end of the World Word II, Albania was the least developed country in Europe. Eighty eight percent of its population was engaged in agriculture, using the most primitive technology; industrial bases comprised mostly of minor light industry; it had the highest birth rates and infant mortality rates in

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[37] For immigration to United States before the communist era, see Duka, (2001); Nagi (1989).

[38] As far as late 19th century, Albanians would travel by foot via Greek mountains for seasonal work in textile and agricultural business in Greece (Psimmenos and Kassimati, 2004 In Baldwin-Edwards 2004: 5).

[39] The idea of the link, the "continuities" between Albania's pre-communist migrations and post Cold War migrations were first brought to my attention by Berry Nicholson in a discussion on the H-Network on Migration History (2005).

Europe; illiteracy rates were at about 80 percent (among women the figure was well above 90 percent) and Albania was the only country in Europe without a university of its own (Prifti 1978; Glenny 1993). The communist government led by Enver Hoxha (the head of the Communist Party of Albania) realized that the best and the shortest way to move the country from a backward agrarian country to a modern agrarian-industrial, and eventually to a modern industrial-agrarian one was by following a Stalinist-based path of industrialization and collectivization (Prifti 1978; Biberaj 1990; Jacques 1995).

To this end, the communists, as early as 1944, began to nationalize all industry, banks, the transportation system, trade and mineral resources, bodies of water, pastures and forests (Prifti 1978: 53), confiscate all foreign property, and revoke all of foreign concessions (Hall 1994: 107). In this process, no compensation was given to the former owners of the property. By 1947, "capitalist industrial production" had been almost eliminated and no private enterprise was now permitted (Hall 1994: 107). Agriculture went through similar radical changes. The Law on Agrarian Reform of 1945, expropriated the land formerly owned by private institutions, banks, religious bodies, "foreigners" and other large landowners and was given to the landless peasants, on the principle that "the land belongs to the tiller" (Hall 1994: 119; Prifti 1978: 66). Similarly, no compensation was given to former owners of the land. Soon afterwards, however, the communists went on to bring under collective control the means of agricultural production (Hall 1994: 120). In view of the Party leaders, collectivization of agriculture was the only way to build socialism in the villages (Prifti 1978: 66). In line with the Stalinist program of development, heavy industry was given priority over other sectors of the economy, including agriculture. The country adopted the pattern of five-year plans, wherein all

economic activity of the country was directed under centralized state planning. The highly centralized economic system went hand-in-hand with a highly centralized political system. Under Hoxha's undisputed rule the communist party became the "sole leading political force of the state and society." (The Constitution of People's Republic of Albania 1976: 3) All institutions, including governmental, social, cultural and military, were under absolute control of the Party, and the Party was under absolute control of Enver Hoxha.

In their efforts to realize the modernization and industrialization of the country in a short time, Albania had to rely on bigger and economically more powerful foreign powers. In the early years, Yugoslavia provided assistance needed to finance the reconstruction of the country. As part of this assistance, a series of economic agreements were concluded between the two countries. As a result of these treaties, and other agreements that followed, Albania became totally dependent upon Yugoslavia and plans were underway for Albania's "union" with Yugoslavia[40] (Biberaj 1990: 20). In June 1948, however, Yugoslavia was finally expelled from the Cominform and Albania was the first country of the communist block to attack Yugoslavia. A month later, all agreements with Yugoslavia were annulled and all the Yugoslavian experts and advisers in Albania were ordered to leave the country. As a result of this sudden split, the Albanian government was forced to reduce its investment plans for 1949 by 20 percent. Moreover, the purges that followed the split between these two countries (about 6,000 of people, representing about 8 percent of the party's membership were expelled from the party) did

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[40] Yugoslavia intended to set up a Balkan Federation comprising Yugoslavia, Albania, Bulgaria and Greece, a plan which did not go well with Stalin who opposed this plan and was furious at such a show of independent foreign policy-making by his client states, and more importantly by their lack of consultation with him (Vicker 1999).

much to dislocate the Albanian economy and shake the morale of its work force (Hall 1994: 108).

Hoxha then turned to Stalin for help.[41] The Soviet Union's assistance to Albania was crucial to Albania's modernization efforts. In September 1948, right after the split with Yugoslavia, Albania and Moscow signed their first economic agreement, with the Soviets canceling a large indebtedness (Jacques 1995: 468). The USSR bought the exports of Albania at doubled prices, and imports from the Soviet Union were delivered at half price. In addition, the USSR renewed all the credits previously given by the Yugoslavs. After the establishment of CMEA in February 1949 the other Eastern European countries also began to assist Albania (Griffith 1963: 21). In total, the Soviet aid given to Albania amounted to $600 million (Lendvai 1969: 194). As a result of this aid, impressive results were achieved in virtually all aspect of Albanian life,[42] and by 1960 the communist government of Albania had declared that the "construction of economic basis of socialism" was completed (Hall 1994: 109).

The situation, however, changed dramatically after Stalin's death, particularly after Nikita Krushchev's speech in the Twentieth Congress of Soviet Communist Party,

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[41] The Albania-Soviet alliance was a positive event for Albania, in that the Soviet Union was geographically distant enough as not to present a threat for Albania's physical absorption, and the Soviet Union was in a better position than Yugoslavia to provide the technical and material assistance the country needed to rebuild its economy (Pano 1968: 87; Prifti 1978: 78). On the other hand, Albania's strategic position provided Soviet Union with a direct outlet to the Mediterranean, an opportunity which the Soviet government seized upon immediately, establishing a Soviet naval base and submarine facility off Vlorë (South Albania) (Hall 1994: 39).

[42] According to Griffith (1963: 28-29), labor force rose rapidly in size and technical know-how, crude oil production tripled, iron and nickel ore extraction grew rapidly; production in the light and food industries also improved; consumption standards, particularly of industrial materials, improved rapidly, by 1955, illiteracy was eliminated among adults under forty; during 1950- 1959 the number of physicians increased from 129 to 378 and medical institutions from 67 to 125; university of Tirana (Albania was the only country in Europe without a university) was established in 1957 and many Albanian students went to the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries to study; a system of pensions for old age and disability was established in 1953 and was made mandatory in 1959.

where he denounced Stalin's methods of terror. Hoxha was never going to accept an attack on Stalin and a de-Stalinization campaign, since as Biberaj (1990: 22) aptly put it: "An implementation of de-Stalinization campaign in Albania where Hoxha and his closest collaborators... had developed an extensive personality cult and instituted a reign of terror, threatened the very foundations of the regime." Moreover, Nikita Khrushchev's rapprochement with Yugoslavia after Stalin's death, and the pressure on Tirana leadership to rehabilitate the pro-Yugoslav faction was perceived by the Tirana ruling elite as a serious threat to the country's independence (Vickers 1999: 181). In addition, Krushchev's pressure on Albania to grow horticulture instead of focusing on industrialization clashed with Albanian leadership who were obsessed with the vision of an Albania with a heavy industry (Prifti 1978: 79). In spite of Moscow's attempt to persuade Albanian elite to change its policies, Tirana did not bow to the pressure. Eventually, Moscow broke diplomatic relations with Tirana in 1961, withdrawing its aid from Albania and recalling its advisers and specialists. The relations between Albania and other Eastern European countries were significantly reduced as well. As in the case of the split with Yugoslavia, a series of bloody purges of the pro-Soviet elements followed.

Hoxha's disobedience to Moscow, however, seriously disrupted Albania's economic planning, given that the planning for the third five-year plan (1961-1965) had relied heavily upon the delivery of Soviet and East European industrial equipment and spare parts and the majority of Albania's commercial and agricultural imports and exports were geared to Eastern-bloc countries. As a result, the government was forced to adopt a policy of strict austerity (Vickers 1999: 187; 191).

Albania then turned to China for help, whose leadership shared a common ideological position towards the Soviets on the issues such as the nature of imperialism, revisionism as a threat to the communist movement, peaceful coexistence between the socialist and capitalist camps, a peaceful transition from capitalism to socialism, de-Stalinization campaign.[43] Thus, Maoist China provided assistance to Albania, which was crucial to the continuation of economic development. However the Chinese assistance could not match that of the Soviet Union (Prifti 1978: 81). China's credits, for example, amounted to only one-fifth of the previous Soviet credits (Vickers 1999: 190-191).

In the early 1970s, however, China changed the course of its foreign policy, apparent in the visit of Richard M. Nixon to Beijing. The Albanian elite did not welcome this move, since Hoxha feared that a rapprochement with United States would expose Albania to the outside world, which in turn would encourage forces at home to demand economic, political and social changes (Biberaj 1990: 27). This ideological alienation led to a decline in Chinese aid, with industrial projects grinding to a halt as the desperately needed materials and machinery were not delivered (Vickers 1999: 202). Yet, Tirana refused to follow China's new policy. In turn, China terminated its aid in 1978. Following the split with China, Albania "went it alone." The country adopted the principle of "self-reliance," involving maximum utilization of internal resources, including manpower, and implementation of a strict saving regime, (Vickers 1999: 202) a principle which was even enshrined in the 1976 constitution of Albania.[44] From this point on, then, "Albania was

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[43] For more details on this topic see Biberaj (1986: 42-43).

[44] According to Article 28 of People's Socialist Republic of Albania: The granting of concessions to, and the creation of, foreign economic and financial companies and other institutions or ones formed jointly with bourgeois and revisionist capitalist monopolies and states, as well as obtaining credits from them, are prohibited in the People's Socialist Republic of Albania (Kushtetuta e Republikes Popullore Socialiste të Shqiperisë: 1975: 14).

reduced to a degree of self-imposed ideological and political isolation for which there is hardly any modern parallel" (Vickers 1999: 203).

The project of "ultra-rapid" modernization as well as self-imposed isolationism went hand in hand with a Soviet type of control of people's movement according to which the entire population was "sealed up" inside the country.[45] The Albanian government's decision to impose a complete ban on immigration was determined by two major concerns: economic and ideological.[46] Under the conditions of a state-directed command economy in which the country rejects market mechanisms, the state must exercise greater direct control over the factors of production, including population" (Zolberg 1978: 271). Population becomes an invaluable resource, "wealth". Intensive mobilization of the labor force, as a way for securing contributions toward the production of public goods is indispensable, and cannot be successfully realized if "people vote with their feet" (Zolberg 1981: 23).

Economic concerns notwithstanding, however, it was the ideological concerns that the regime was mostly concerned with. The Stalinist government of Tirana considered Albania, particularly after the break up with Soviet Union and China, the only country with a "real Marxist-Leninist" ideology. Like Soviet Russia, "the first modern state to control international movement systematically," (Dowty 1987: 63) Albania saw itself "surrounded by enemies," engaged in an ongoing, "uncompromising" ideological battle with capitalist and revisionist countries. Were the Albanians, like Soviet citizens, to choose to live in another country, in particular capitalist ones, that act would have meant

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[45] See Dowdy, 1987, for an analysis of control of population movement in Soviet Russia

[46] I am indebted to the work of Dowdy (1978) and Zolberg (1978; 1981) for the ideas in analyzing the economic and ideological reasons underlying Albanian state's policies in managing migration in Albania

an "indictment of the entire political and economic system," the loss of ideological battle, which would undermine the very legitimacy of the prevailing faith in the system (Dowty 1987: 207, 73).

Draconian laws were passed as part of the efforts to implement this policy of no emigration. None of the Albanian constitutions explicitly recognized the right to leave. Albania's Penal Code of 1958 (Article 64) considered flight from the country and refusal to return as betrayal of Fatherland punishable with imprisonment of no less than 10 years, or by death (Gazeta Zyrtare 1958). Article 47 of a later Penal Code (1982), which was in power until its official abolishment in 1990 was similar in this respect.[47]

To enforce this legislation, the Albanian government resorted to harsh administrative measures, such as coercive means (terror and violence) as well as propaganda. As early as 1946, the government used staged show trials, and passed death sentences to people who were accused of attempting to flee the country.[48] The 1984 report by Amnesty International, maintained that "prison sentences imposed during the 1950s and 1960s under Article 64, on people convicted of attempting to flee the country have varied between 12 and 25 years and similarly high sentences were reportedly being imposed in the 1970s" (Amnesty International 1984: 16).

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[47] Article 64 of Penal Code 1958 states: "... escape outside the state, refusal to return to Albania of the official Albanian person who is outside the state" is considered a treason toward the Fatherland and will be punished with imprisonment of no less than 10 years or by death and with confiscation of the property." Article 47 of Albanian Penal Code (1982: 423) states: "Escape outside the state, as well as refusal to return to the Fatherland by a person who has been sent to serve or has been permitted temporarily to go outside the state are grounds for treason, punishable by imprisonment of not less than ten years, or by death."

[48] In fact, measures such as death penalty for those suspected of fleeing the country were applied in the very early years of the regime take over. For example, the article in the newspaper Korça Demokratike (June 15, 1996), wrote the story of a high ranking officer in the Albanian army who was caught in the border with Greece. The authorities accused him of attempting to flee the country in order to go and see his wife and his two daughters in Italy. (His wife was Italian. She and their two daughters had to leave Albania in 1945 at the orders of the government). He was found "guilty" (he denied everything during his trial) in one of the typical government's "show trials" and was executed on September 11, 1946.

Moreover, in those cases when individuals managed to flee the country, their property was confiscated.[49] Their families and relatives would suffer serious consequences as well. One such consequence would be internal exile. For example, entire families were sent to exile in remote villages simply because a member of the family or a relative fled the country. Other consequences included denial to higher education, or even high school education, discrimination in employment such as being assigned to the most difficult jobs, as a result of being related to the escapees (Minnesota Lawyers International Human Rights Committee 1990: 72-73).

Albanian borders were highly secured, too. According to Zickel and Iwaskiw (1994) Troops of Frontier Guards were assigned the official mission to protect state borders and to prevent criminals, smugglers, or infiltrators from crossing them. In the process they were charged with the task of preventing Albanians from leaving the country illegally. In fact, it has been argued that their task was preventing Albanians from crossing the country illegally (Skendi 1956; Logoreci 1977).

Part of the communist regime's strict control of emigration was the highly fortification of the borders along Greece and Yugoslavia as well. For example, in an interview given to Minnesota Lawyers International Human Rights Committee, a former border guard who had eventually escaped to Greece described the border situation as follows:

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[49]In addition, confiscation of property for those who had fled the country was a common measure implemented by the government to punish the perpetrators of the "crimes against the Fatherland". For example, the newspaper *Gazeta Zyrtare* (March 4, 1946) published a series of decisions issued by the Executive Committee of Prefecture of Libohova (South of Albania) upon which the property of several individuals and families was confiscated as a result of their flight abroad.

"An electrically-wired metal fence stands 600 meters to one kilometer from the actual border. Anyone touching the fence not only risks electrocution, but also sets off alarm bells and lights which alert guards stationed at approximately one-kilometer intervals along the fence. Two meters of soil on either side of the fence are cleared in order to check for footprints of escapees and infiltrators. The area between the fence and the actual border is seeded with booby traps such as coils of wire, noise makers consisting of thin pieces of metal strips on top of two wooden slats with stones in a tin container which rattle if stepped on, and flares that are triggered by contact, thus illuminating would-be escapees during the night" (Minnesota Lawyers International Human Rights Committee 1990: 69 In O'Donnell 1999: 137).

The strict no-exit policy was complemented by a similar type of entry-policy. The number of foreigners visiting the country was kept at a small scale and most often, they were followed everywhere by the members of secret police, called "Sigurimi". Citizens of Albania were not allowed to have any contact with foreigners.[50]

In addition, the government used a propaganda system as well. The party and the government had exclusive ownership, as well as imposed strict control, over all media of information and communication. There was no other independent or opposition media. The mass media served the ideological and political objectives of the ruling party. It extolled the virtues of Albania's socialist paradise, and compared it to the misery and wretchedness of everyday life for people in capitalist countries (Olsen 2000: 37). Like in

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[50]Logoreci (1977: 192-193) recounted the experiences of a German and Swedish reporter while visiting Albania. Harry Hamm, a West German reporter who went there in 1961 noted that security police was present wherever people gathered in large numbers and made any attempts to prevent people from having any contacts with the foreigners. Björn Hallström a Swedish reporter who had visited Albania on both occasions in 1959 and 1966, (according to Hallström, the presence of "sigurimi" was much more in evidence during his latter visit) said that he was made to feel like a leper when people ran away from him as he sat on a bench in a public park.

other countries of the former communist bloc, in order to avoid the fact that domestic information activity was discredited by hard facts from abroad (Šik, 1981: 109), foreign newspapers, magazines were largely banned or strictly censured and the limited number of foreign movies or programs aired on the TV was severely curtailed as well. The main Albanian TV channel would broadcast only those movies or programs that had" sound socialist" content and were stripped of any influence of "decadent" "Western" "bourgeoisie" ideology and culture. Watching foreign television broadcasts and listening to foreign radio channels was punishable with up to seven years in prison [51] (Mai 2001: 100)[52].

In April 1985 Hoxha died, and with him the end of his four decades of rule. During Hoxha's rule, Albania attained great achievements compared to its pre-WWII years, the most remarkable of which is education. According to Glenny (1993: 149-150), illiteracy was virtually wiped out in the country. An extensive system of general education was established as well as a moderately impressive free health system; infant mortality had been significantly reduced; life expectancy among males had reached over seventy years. In addition, Albania had created an economic basis from heavy industry (mainly steel production) to light consumer goods (largely textiles).

Yet the "dark side" of the system eclipsed all these achievements. Through coercion and terror, Hoxha had built one of the most brutal regimes in the former communist world. A whole population was "sealed" inside the country's borders,

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[51] The families of the individuals would suffer as well. Their entire family would be sent away in exile (Vickers 1999: 190).

[52] In spite of these severe limitations on access to foreign information, which lasted until Hoxha's death in 1985, thousands of Albanians would watch Italian and Greek TV. To many Albanians, foreign TV channels, in particular the Italian ones, were a "window" to the Western world (For more on this and how TV shaped the images of what "real life" is in the Western world see Mai 2001).

permitting no contacts whatsoever with the outside world. The extreme isolationist policies and the highly centralized management system had led to many economic and social ills: pervasive shortages of basic consumer goods, rapidly deteriorating infrastructure, crumbling buildings, lack of modern technology, crippling shortages of spare parts, a disheartened and apathetic population, malnourished and poorly clad workers, peasants using primitive agricultural equipments and low industrial and agricultural productivity (Biberaj 1990; 1998; Hall 1994; Vickers and Pettifer 1997). Moreover, the gap in the living standard between citizens of the "the only real socialist country in the world" and those of its prosperous capitalist neighbors could not have been more striking.

Ramiz Alia, who took over after Hoxha's death, faced with this critical situation, slowly began to introduce some minor measures in order to remedy this grave situation. From 1985 until 1989, he tinkered with changes in the highly centralized economic system, relaxed the tight grip of the PLA in the cultural sector, and gradually expanded Albania's relations with other countries (Biberaj 1998: 28). In particular these reforms were quite noticeable in the field of foreign policy, where Alia began to establish relations with many countries abroad, Western and nonwestern alike.[53] Further, two general Amnesties, one in January 1986 and the other in November 1989, released many long-

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[53] For example, in January 1985, the border between Greece and Albania at Kakavia, (south of Albania) opened for the first time since 1940, where "Two thousands long-lost relatives from both sides of the mountainous border embraced and wept with joy upon meeting for the first time in 45 years." (Jacques 1995: 629) As a result of this, the number of tourists traveling between two countries increased. For example, 535 Albanians traveled to Greece in 1986 compared to 87 two years earlier and more than 6,000 Greeks visited Albania in 1987 compared with 1,265 in 1985 (Minnesota Lawyers International Human Rights Committee 1990: 22).

term prisoners.[54] Media became freer to an extent that Hoxha would have barely recognized (Brown 1991: 241). These measures led to the creation of a more liberal atmosphere in the country, and set off a process of erosion of the isolationist atmosphere that had suffocated the country under the previous regime. Indeed, various foreigners who visited Albania after Hoxha's death reported a relaxed atmosphere, with many Albanians willing to engage in a wide-range of topics (Biberaj, 1990: 45).

Yet, most of the Albanians were dissatisfied with the scope of these measures. They thought they were very limited and did not address the country's problems in a fundamental way. There was no debate about the future of the system or an admission that the political and economic institutions of the country were malfunctioning (Biberaj 1990: 49). In particular, in view of Biberaj (1998: 29-30), Alia did not reject the policy of self-reliance, which meant that the prohibition of acceptance of foreign aid and investments had a disastrous effect on the economic performance. The economy continued to be plagued by overcentralization, persistent interference from the center, a tremendous waste of resources, distorted prices, inefficient enterprises, widespread corruption, and pervasive shortages of basic goods. Moreover, the absence of private property, "lack of material incentives, and poor working conditions had destroyed morale, which was reflected most dramatically by a drastic decline in labor productivity and widespread absenteeism," massive thefts and misappropriation of state property.

More importantly, in the view of many Albanians, Alia's measures did not tackle what was seen by most people, especially the younger generation, "the fundamental oppression: their inability to travel or work abroad, or to own a passport" (Vickers and

[54] An observer of Albanian affairs, in an interview given to Minnesota stated that there did not seem to have been any political detentions under Alia, and that the number of political detainees was probably declining (Minnesota Lawyers International Human Rights Committee 1990: 61).

Pettifer 1997: 25). In the borders, the troops were still shooting those people who were attempting to leave the country.[55] These "reforms from above," however, stimulated peoples' popular appetite for more fundamental changes (Vickers and Pettiffer 1997: 25), which in turn mounted the pressure on the government for more liberalization and eventual democratization of the country. Meanwhile, events in Eastern Europe, which led to the collapse of authoritarian regimes and the establishment of multi-party democratic system, while instilling fear in the Albanian leadership, further raised people's hopes that similar changes could be possible even in the "last bastion of Stalinism" in Europe.

In May 1990, right before a visit of the United Nations secretary general, Javer Péerez de Cuéllar,[56] the People's Assembly of Albania approved a series of wide-ranging measures, including among others the decision on the right to own a passport and to travel abroad (Vickers and Pettifer 1997: 26). These new measures, however, "stopped short of" allowing major changes similar to the ones in other countries of Eastern Europe, such as such the abolishment of the leading role of the communist party in the society and the establishment of a multi-party political democracy (Jacques 1995: 652).

Moreover, the implementation of these measures was very slow. In particular, government's failure to give the Albanians the much dreamt passports was a

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[55] Between 1989 and 1990, at least eighty people were killed by border guards. The bodies of some of these victims were paraded through villages and cities in order to terrorize and discourage others from attempting to flee the country (*Gazeta Shqiptare*, January 7, 1994 In Biberaj 1999: 76)

An article in *The Independent* (December 31, 1990), reported that according to Ionnina police more than 650 people had crossed the heavily-guarded border on December 30, 1990. They had walked in groups of 20 to 30 for up to 12 hours through mountain forests and deep snow. At the border, they dugged tunnels under the barbed wire fences then crossed a free-fire zone half a mile wide which includes a river. According to one of the leaders of one of these groups, who had served 14 years of forced labor in the copper mines for political offences under the communist regime, 'Even after wading or swimming through the freezing water and you're on the other side in Greece, the guards keep firing if they see you,' he said. 'Everyone wants to leave. President Ramiz Alia is not trying to reform Albania."

[56] Javer Péerez de Cuéllar was charged by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights to investigate alleged human rights violations in Albania (Jacques 1995: 650).

disappointment to many, especially to the young people who became angry at "what they saw as the government's broken promises" (Vickers and Pettifer 1997: 26). Eventually, people lost confidence in the government to fulfill their promises. Aware of the "ferment that had produced revolutions in other parts of Eastern Europe," (Brown 1991: 242) and "the growing inefficiency of the internal security apparatus" (Vickers and Pettifer, 1997: 26) in an unprecedented event, on July 2, 1990, after an anti-government demonstration was violently dispersed, a group of hundreds of Albanians stormed several of the buildings of foreign embassies[57] (Italy, France, Greece, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary and Turkey). These numbers soon reached thousands (about 5,000). The scenes at the Western embassies in Tirana were a reminder of the scenes in Hungary and Czechoslovakia in 1989, when thousands of East Germans had entered Western compounds in these countries (Hall 1994).

In the beginning, the government used coercive means, including firearms to prevent people from entering the embassy compounds. In the following days, though, the police were merely looking rather than using force to stop them, an indication of a change in the government's response to the crisis (Hope et al., 1990). The foreign embassies granted political asylum to the people in the embassies, given the fact that Albania was still a communist country. Upon intense pressure from abroad, including the intervention

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[57] It should be noted that, prior to these events, various Albanians had successfully managed to enter the buildings of foreign embassies (see Jacques 1995: 656 for examples) in Tirana, where they had asked for political asylum, including in 1985 a family of six which had entered Italian embassy, an event which was quite shocking and embarrassing to the Albanian government. Albanian government demanded "the unconditional surrender" of the asylum seekers, but Italian embassy refused to accept Tirana government's demands and "insisted that they be allowed to leave the country." This incident received worldwide attention. Eventually, after five years, in May 1990, days after Javier Perez de Cuellar's May visit, "in an effort to create a favorable international image," Albanian government allowed the family to travel to Italy (Biberaj 1998: 50). These events and others like these, would have been unimaginable under Hoxha.

by the then U.N. Secretary General Perez De Cuellar, the Albanian authorities decided to issue passports to the asylum seekers and resettle them in their respective countries (Hein 1998: 221). With this act, Albanians were taking the first symbolic step towards asserting their long-denied right to emigrate (King 2003: 287).

This incident caught the communist government by surprise, which used harsh rhetoric to characterize the people who stormed the foreign embassies, calling them "hooligans and misguided individuals who were manipulated by foreign forces interested in the overthrow of Albanian communist regime." In doing so, the government of Tirana wanted "to counter any perception that the refugees' anticommunist attitudes were shared" by all ordinary people (Biberaj 1998: 53). Fearing a further radicalization of the situation, then, the government at the Central Committee plenum of the communist party on 6 July, undertook further economic and political measures. As parts of these measures, the government "legalized small-scale private activity in the service sector." This measure was modeled after Hungary's economic reforms of 1960s and the 1970s, and was a radical departure with the past. The plenum also dismissed several hard-line senior communist officials (Biberaj 1998: 52).

Additionally, several weeks later, on July 31, according to Vickers and Pettifer (1997: 29-34) the government also announced a revision of the penal code, making a key concession to popular pressure for travel rights. Fleeing Albania would no longer be considered treason, just illegal border trespassing. Alia also continued to further broaden relations with the outside world, including paying a visit to the United States, Hoxha's "arch enemy", where Alia addressed the UN General Assembly and met with Albanian émigrés in New York and Boston. Another important reform was a draft law for new

elections to the People's Assembly. This measure would allow organizations such as trade unions and military veterans' associations to put forward their own candidates, and introduced the principle of voting by secret ballots. Yet, the communist party would not allow the formation of opposition parties and the establishment of a multi–party system.

Meanwhile, the country's economic situation, material and living conditions continued to deteriorate. Hunger, food, and power shortages became common, while unrest, disorder and protests were spreading everywhere in the country. Public buildings, including the buildings of the communist party, which were in the view of many as symbols of communism were increasingly becoming targets of attacks (Vickers and Pettifer 1997: 34).

The measures undertaken by the government did not have a deep impact on ordinary people, who, according to Biberaj (1998: 63), thought that these measures were aimed at placating the regime's criticism from abroad, rather than democratizing the economic and political life of the country. Soon, however, it became clear that the government would not be able to appease the people and "stem the growth of the dissent." With the economy in shambles, the inability of the Communist party to handle the situation, and the "dwindling legitimacy of existing political institutions," reform-minded intellectuals, students and workers pushed for a radical change of the political system.

In December 12, 1990, widespread students protests and demonstrations led to the formation of the first opposition party (the Democratic Party). For the first time the Communist Party and the government had finally recognized the existence of another political party that would soon challenge forty years of its own absolute rule. This momentous event, which would have been inconceivable under Enver Hoxha regime,

meant that "the last Communist regime in Europe had lost its political monopoly." (Biberaj 1998: 65)

In spite of this major victory, however, popular protests continued, with people being increasingly eager for more radical changes. In some cities people were expressing their discontent and impatience, often with the looting of government food shops, stoning of official buildings, setting fire to police cars and other act of vandalism, with local police failing to stop rioting (Jacques 1995: 668). Amidst this desperate situation, the government passed two decrees "legitimizing the right to strike after secret ballot, and putting forward safeguards for historic monuments," the latter being necessary because people were increasingly focusing their attacks particularly on the symbols associated with Hoxha (Vickers and Pettifer 1997: 45).[58]

In February 20, 1991, several thousands of people gathered at the center of Tirana and toppled down the giant statue of Enver Hoxha in the Scanderbeg square. The security forces fired blanks in an attempt to disperse the demonstrators, but many police fratemized openly with the protestors. In a matter of hours, other Hoxha's statuses of Hoxha toppled down in other cities (Vickers and Pettifer 1997: 48). In that same day, Albania's prime minister gave in to the students' demands that the name Enver Hoxha be removed from their university, and the university be renamed simply the University of Tirana (Jacques 1995: 669). These events and others similar to these, where ordinary people openly and bravely challenged forty years of dictatorship, showed that the government was not able to stop the stream of the revolutionary changes that was rapidly

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[58] The government also initiated a program of de-Stalinization, which among others included "removal of all statues and the renaming of all streets, institutions and even a city bearing his name." (Jacques 1995: 668)

building up. Politically, February events "affirmed the bankruptcy" of the communist system (Vickers and Pettifer 1997: 50).

Amidst the continuing unrest and insecurity, and aware of the rapidly deteriorating coercive power of one-party state, many people wanted to leave the country. In early February, an attempt by people to flee failed. Some tens of thousands of Albanians, having heard rumors[59] that ferry boats would take them to Italy, clashed with the police in the port of Durrës city (Biberaj 1998: 88), who wanted to prevent people from leaving. Police fired shots in the air. This enraged the crowds, which took to the streets, smashing windows, raiding book stores, burning Enver Hoxha books (Jacques 1995: 669 citing Tampa Tribune 10 February 1991, 14).

In early March, however, right before Albania's first democratic elections, in which the communist party won, thousands of Albanians seized all ships and vessels at the ports of Durrës and Vlora and sailed across the Adriatic to Italy. With thousands of people at the harbor, the security forces gave up trying to exercise control, and allowed people to take ships and sail to Italy (*New York Times* March 7, 1991). Several months later, in August of the same year, following the June 1991 collapse of the communist led government, at a time of rapidly deteriorating economic circumstances and increasing food shortages in Albania, an additional 20,000 Albanians, crowded onto boats, were allowed to land in the Bari port of Italy, but most of them were eventually repatriated

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[59] In the absence of any media information on emigration, rumors and "watching" what the government was doing was the main source of information for the people at that time. For example, one of the interviewee, who had left in 1991, when asked if he were afraid when he left, he answered: "At that time, there were other people who had left, and no measures were taken against them. I was always watching for things. Because all the members of my family, my mother, father, sister, brother were members of the communist party. This shows that we were so adjusted to the system. So I had seen that it was not like before. Many people had left, but their families were not touched. It was not like before, so that their families would be taken and sent to exile."

(King 2003: 288; Hall 1994: 189). Thus, in the period extending from March to August 1991, a total of over 40,000 Albanians arrived in Italians shores.

In reality the flight to Italy of Albanian "boat people" was not the whole story: there was an equally large-scale, but much less well-documented migration to Greece (King and Mai 2002: 164), given much of the movement to Greece was illegal, via the mountains, and therefore very difficult to estimate (King 2003).

In the years to come, given the "border control mechanism of the one-party state had collapsed, and Albania's physical isolation had ended" (Vickers and Petifer 1997: 40) an unprecedented number of Albanians would leave the country and move to the West, in particular its two neighbors, Greece and Italy. In a matter of a decade or so, from a country with virtually no international migration, successive migrant waves brought the number of Albanians abroad at 1 million (about 20 percent of the population).

Ways and Means of Coming to Greece

Immigrants reported using various ways of leaving Albania and going to Greece. Those who belonged to Greek or Vllach ethnic minority, or whose spouse was of Greek or Vllach ethnic minority mentioned that they had obtained Greek visas at the Greek consulates or the Greek embassy in Albania, reflecting the "hierarchy of Greekness" (see above) in Greek immigration policy, which privileges certain groups (i.e., Orthodox religion) over others. A few immigrants said that they had managed to get their visas through their friends who were members of Albanian political parties and had access to bureaucratic officials in charge of granting visas in Greek consulates. Most of the

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interviewees, however, stated that after failing to obtain visas, or knowing they would never be able to get one, had to resort to other ways of migrating, including bribing custom officers, purchasing their visas, obtaining false visas, or using passports of people who were already in Greece. Florenca, for example, said that she had come with the passport of her sister-in-law who was already in Greece. One immigrant, who had left in 1991, stated that he used some gold coins his parents had given him for the trip and bribed the Greek custom officers, who after receiving the coins, were happy to let him enter Greece.

The rest of the immigrants said that they had travelled on foot illegally, usually in small groups with other people. Among this group of immigrants, some said that they had used "professional guides" (referred by some as "mafia") whom the immigrants had paid substantial amount of money (about 50,000 dhrachma, an equivalent of $250 dollars), which they had borrowed from family, relatives and friends and had later been paid back with money they had earned by working in Greece. Others said that their friends and relatives, who had previously been to Greece and knew the whereabouts, helped them with their journey. In a few cases, immigrants themselves, or a member of the group they were travelling with, had served as the guide, given they knew the area since they had done their military service during the communist times. Immigrants who travelled on foot, in particular immigrants, who left in 1990 and 1991, a time when Albanian soldiers were still shooting at the borders, described the trip as very dangerous. Joni who left in 1990, described his trip:

"We crossed the border. There were four of us. We decided to go. So we said let's go. These were the last days. After a week, the electric wires at the border all came down.

When we neared the border, we found some people from the village. We could even hear some shootings. It was really scary. I think it was March 13 or 15, something like that.

Interviewer: Where did you meet the villagers?

Joni: About 5 kilometers away from the border. It was night. We crossed a bridge. Some of the villagers were night watchers. They lived in that village. They knew that the law to shoot at the border was no longer in use. But we were still scared of being shot at. Nothing else. You understand? So we crossed the border. It was very difficult, because the wires were still there. So we digged a hole under the wires. One of the guys who was with us had done his military service in that area, so he knew the area well. He suggested that the best way to leave was to dig a hole in the ground under the wires. There were four or five of us. Two of us were digging the hole, the rest were on guard. It was a moonless night. Two went to the wires, one was digging, the other was holding the wires up. We digged the hole, deep enough so that we could crawl under the wires. That's how we crossed the border. After walking for about a quarter of an hour, we crossed the border and stepped onto Greek land.

While immigrants who left in the 1990 and early 1991 pointed to the fear they had of the Albanian border guards, those who left after 1991, when illegality of migration was transferred from Albania to Greece (King, Mai and Dalipaj 1998: 165), talked of the fear of Greek border guards and the police. Flori, who first came to Greece in 1992 and like other immigrants had taken multiple trips to Greece, told his story of how Greek police treated him when he entered the country in 1996, the year of "skoopa"[60]: "The years 1995 and 1996 were terrible. I was going toward Greece. They caught me once I was inside

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[60] "Scoopa" or "broom" operations were operations undertaken by the Greek police, whereby illegal immigrants were "swept up" by the police, imprisoned for a period of time and then deported (Hatziprokopiou 2003: 1038).

Greece. The military caught me. They had a campaign, I do not remember well. They caught us. They kicked me many times. They kicked me in the chest. Like karate. For other Albanians that I saw, it was terrible. What can I say. I cannot say it to you, things that man cannot imagine. Tortures. I saw people in stretchers. They took them out in stretchers. People were fainting. They would throw bucket of water to them. Then they took us to the camp of Kostur. They kept us there for about two days, then they released us. It was like a big hall. I do not know what that was for. I do know what they served for. They kept us lying on the floor. There were about three hundred people there. All of them. When the military team would catch people, they would send them there. Then they took us to the custom. In military trucks. There were soldiers with rifles. It was terrible. When I think of it now, it was terrible."

Immigrants who came in 1997, the time Albania was engulfed in anarchy, also described their journey as a harrowing experience. Said Rozafa "At first we went to Tirana and bought a false visa. Then we left from Durres to go to Pater. We took the ferry. I came with my sister. The trip was really a hell. Six hours. We were terrified. We came wearing black clothes so that the gangs would not stop us. It was very difficult. I had long hair and did not wear make up. We were so scared to leave.

Interviewer: Why were you wearing black clothes?

Rozafa: Because only women with black clothes were not stopped by the gangs. They did not stop you if you had to go to a funeral. We would tell them, we have a death in the family, we are going there. If they saw that you were wearing makeup, they would take off all your clothes. It was a terrible time."

Another immigrant who also came during that time said that they were stopped by Mafia and were taken all the money. He said, however, they felt lucky that they were not beaten or even murdered.

In sum, when asked what motivated immigrants to migrate to Greece, respondents pointed to economic reasons (i.e., unemployment, poverty, overcrowded housing conditions, a desire to give their family a better life), family-based reasons, conflict in the family, political instability, professional reasons, a desire to see the Western world. These micro as well as meso explanations, however, for the reasons explained above, do not fully explain what motivates people to leave. Therefore, a fuller explanation of people's motives to emigrate and Albanian migration in general is fully understood by taking into account the role of the Albanian communist state.

Prior to communist ascent to power, migration from Albania, most notably from certain regions of the Southern of Albania, was a well-established trend. Upon coming to power, the government of Albania pursued the path of economic self-reliance along side a highly centralized economic and political system. These policies limited the country's economic and technological development, reduced economic opportunities for the majority of people and created an enormous gap between Albania and its prosperous capitalist neighbors. In addition, the government of Albania, driven by ideological and economic concerns, managed, through adoption of one of the strictest exit policies in Eastern Europe, to virtually bring emigration to a halt. The fall of the very authoritarian government triggered large scale emigration. Immigrants reported various means of migrating. Those of Greek and Vlach ancestry were given advantages because of their ethnicity and were able to obtain visas at the Greek consulates or embassy. Some had

received their visas through their friends, who were members of the Albanian political parties and had access to bureaucratic officials in charge of granting visas in Greek consulates; and others used different methods, such as bribing custom officials, purchasing their visas, obtaining false visas, or using forged passports. Finally, other immigrants said that they had taken the trip illegally, crossing the borders and overcoming many difficulties and dangers.

CHAPTER 5
TRANSFORMATION OF ALBANIAN IMMIGRANTS FROM FORCED, ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS TO LEGAL, LABOR IMMIGRANTS

This chapter consists of two sections. The first section will examine the social forces that perpetuated migration from Albania to Greece after its initiation. The second section will present an analysis of Greek government's policies in transforming hundreds and thousands of forced, undocumented immigrants into legal labor migrants. In addition, it will highlight major factors that shaped these particular policies.

Social Networks and Perpetuation of Migration

As mentioned earlier in this dissertation, the communist state of Albania through its policies of limited economic opportunities and prohibiting migration, created conditions for initiation of Albanian migration. Its final collapse triggered massive migration waves. The Albanian state, however, was no longer involved in migration, yet immigration persisted and over time took on massive proportions. Existing studies have shown that one of the most important mechanisms for the persistence of migration is to be found in the complex web of social networks (Hagan 1994; 1998 ; Massey et al. 1987; Massey et al. 1990; Massey et al. 1994a; 1994b; Massey et al. 1998).

Indeed, as noted in chapter two, in its initial stages, migration is undertaken by "adventurous individuals" who chart unknown paths. Over time immigrants acquire knowledge of a receiving country's language, employment, and cultural practices. Every immigrant is connected to a set of relatives and friends in his community of origin. Once the first immigrants leave, the costs of migration are reduced significantly for his/her family, relatives and friends, therefore making migration easier and more manageable.

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Each new immigrant, given the nature of kinship and friendship structures, creates a set of people with social ties to the destination areas.

Hagan (1998), for example, in her study of a Maya migrant community in Houston, Texas, noticed that the migrant community traced its origin to Juan, the first "pioneer" immigrant from San Pedro, Guatemala, who took his trip to Houston in search of wage work. Over time, as he found a job and settled in Houston he managed to bring over his kin and friends, and eventually, his wife and children. By the early 1980s, many households in San Pedro had relatives living in Huston, and by mid 1980s, social networks extended beyond San Pedro to include more neighborhood communities (Hagan 1998: 59). Repak (1995), too, found that entire families and communities from Salvador had come to Washington D.C. following the trail of the initial pioneers. Massey et al., (1987)'s study revealed similar patterns for Mexicans in the United States. Hatziprokopioyu (2003), too, in his interviews with a group of Albanian migrants observed the extensive use of social networks among Albanian migrants in the city of Thessaloniki, Greece. According to the author, apart from the first wave of Albanians who immigrated to Greece in 1990 and 1991, the rest seemed to have followed paths already opened by some pioneers. Like Mexicans in *Return to Aztlan* (Massey et al., 1987), the first Albanians came back to their communities of origin and initiated others into migration course. As one of the immigrants in the study stated: "The basic reason is that, before I came to Greece, some other guys had come. They said that Greece is fantastic... Relatives, people from my village, friends.. And I said to myself 'Why don't I go to try my luck there?" Hatziprokopioyu (2003: 1049).

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These general social network patterns are clearly revealed among participants of my sample. Those few "adventurous" immigrants had taken their trip without knowing anyone in Greece. Once they had settled, they asked their family, relatives, and friends to join them. Bardhyl, for example, who was married and had two children, left for Greece with a group of friends. He and his friends crossed the border with the assistance of "professional guides," whom they had paid (see also chapter four). He found a job in agriculture in a Greek village close to the Albanian border. After some time, while he gained some command of the Greek language and became familiar with Greek ways of life, he decided to take his family with him to Greece. "I came to Greece with a group of friends. We did not know anybody in Greece. We did not speak a word of Greek either. We paid a guy, somebody that knew the road who took us to Greece. He was doing these things. We arrived in a village... I worked for three months in agriculture, different jobs...I went back. I missed my children so much. I had tears in my eyes any time I thought of them. I had spoken only one time on the phone from the house of my afendiko (Greek word for boss). I did not have a telephone at home. I had to talk to my family at my neighbor's house. The beginning was so hard. I do not even want to think about it. It gives me the creep. When I think of it now... I did not speak any Greek at all. The only word I knew was dhulja (Greek word for work). In the beginning we slept in an abandoned house. For two weeks. Then the afendiko gave us a shed. After agriculture, a friend of mine and myself went to Thessaloniki, to find a better job. My friend knew somebody in Thessaloniki. I had heard from other Albanians that in Thessaloniki you can find jobs...There I found a job in construction, in building. We slept with my friend's friends. I stayed with them for three months and with the money I made, I had enough to

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find one apogjio (Greek word for the basement of the building). Once I found the apartment, I decided to take my family. I had enough money to pay for them to come. I went back to Albania. I paid a taxi person. He was going to take care of the visa for my wife and my children. And he took us from Korça to the border. We waited there for a while at the customs. And we were lucky we went through the customs. The same taxi took us to Thessaloniki. My wife was excited, but also she did not like the house, because it was a basement and no windows.

Interviewer: How did your wife find the job?

Bardhyl: My afendikoi helped me. He had a friend. His friend wanted somebody to clean the house. So my wife began to clean. She works as a cleaner, in the houses.

Interviewer: Did you help anybody else to come to Greece?

Bardhyl: Yes, yes. My two brothers and my wife's sister. Immigrants help each other. All Albanians do that.

Interviwer: How did they come?

Bardhyl: My brothers, they bought a visa, like all Albanians. They came and stayed with us for six months.

Interviewer: Did they have families?

Bardhyl: Yes.

Interviewer: Did they bring their families with them?

Bardhyl: oh, yes, yes. After they found an apartment, they brought their families too. Wives and children."

Similarly, Joni, whom we introduced earlier, who like Bardhyl came to Greece without knowing anybody, recalled how, after one year of working in Greece, he

managed to bring his younger brother, a university student (through obtaining a false visa) to Greece. Several years later, his parents joined both their children in Greece. He mentioned that his brother also had helped two of his university friends (they all had interrupted their university studies) to come to Greece.

Research studies (Drever and Hoffmeister 2008; Garcia 2005; Gold 2001; Hagan 1998; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994; Margolis 1994; Menjívar 2000;), including those on Albanian migrants (Hatziprokopioyu 2003; Labrianidis et al. 2001 In Hatziprokopioyu 2003; Labrianidis et al. 2001) reveal patterns of assistance immigrants offer to their coethnics during the process of immigration. For example Margolis (1994) noted that most Brazilians who come to New York find shelter among friends and relatives. Their compatriots also help them finding jobs. Hagan (1998) described how Juan's (the pioneer) wife managed to secure a job as a household cleaner and carer of young children. She, then, later, helped other women from her own village in Guatemala to obtain a job in the same occupation, who, in turn, helped others to make the entry in this particular job niche. Repak (1995) observed similar patterns among Salvadorans in Washington D.C. Drever and Hoffmeister (2008) through their analysis of German Socio-Economic Panel data, noticed that social networks were crucial to immigrants in their labor market integration. In fact, according to the authors, in a labor market such as Germany, where even the most basic jobs require formal qualifications, which the immigrants lack, social networks serve as a functional equivalent to the formal degrees and trainings.

Along similar lines, many immigrants in my study related how their relatives and friends, who had been in Greece for some time, assisted them in all the stages of their

migration process to Greece. They provided them with financial and social resources such as paying for the trip (including paying for obtaining fraudulent documents), offering shelter and assistance with finding housing, access to information about jobs, and information about Greek society in general. Once the newly arrived immigrants became familiar with Greek language and environment in general, they, in turn encouraged and helped their kin and friends to take their journey to Greece.

Said Jonida: "In the beginning my husband and I came to his brother's. His brother had come here earlier. He had been in Greece for about one year. We stayed with him for some time, some months. I think about five months... His brother took my husband to work with him at the afendikoi ... My sister-in-law found a job for me. Taking care of an old lady...We found a house. Then we moved out.

Interviewer: What about you? Did you help anybody else?

Jonida: Yes, yes. I helped my brother. He was unemployed in Albania. So I told him to come to Greece.... He bought a visa and came here... He stayed with us for about eight or nine months, I do not remember well...Then he found an apartment, close to us, because he was planning to bring our parents.."

Interviewer: Did they come?

Jonida: Yes, they did come. It was a good thing, because I became pregnant and when I gave birth to my daughter, they helped me raise her."

Another immigrant said that her brother had helped her come to Greece. She told me that it was her brother who had paid for the visa and the trip, and provided her with information about Greek life in general. "My brother left first. He worked in Greece for about one year. Then he came back to Albania to visit us. On his trip back to Greece, he

took me with him. He arranged everything. He paid for a false visa. ...I had no idea. I do not know how these things are done... We left together. I stayed with my brother for about three years... I wanted to come to Greece before, but if I did not have my brother, I would have never come... Where would I go? I did not know anybody in Greece. I did not know the language. Where would I go? I remember when I came first, I was lost. All the cars, and wide streets, lights, everything... My brother showed me everything, how to take the buses, where to go to shop.... I did not work immediately. I stayed with my brother. I was afraid to find a job, because I did not speak the language. Then, my brother talked to his boss. His boss' friend wanted somebody to clean the house. So I started to clean the houses... Now, I know everything."

Several of the immigrants mentioned that their children helped them to come to Greece. Said Zaimir: "My sons were here. They had left at the very beginning... I was left without a job. So I had to leave... I paid the driver, contraband, clandestine, who took me from Korca to Athens... My wife had left earlier than I did... We stayed with our sons, like all immigrants. Stay together, work together...One of my sons found me the job. I work as a gardener now."

A few others mentioned that their friends from their school, town or village in Albania had assisted them. Such is the story of Suela, who left with a friend of hers: " I left with a friend of mine. She was a friend from the place where I used to work in Korça. She had a friend of hers in Greece... We went to her friend first. We stayed some time with her and her husband... My friend had talked to her on the phone before we left. And she had agreed to help us. And she waited for us, because where else would we go? Where else would we stay?... She waited for us at the bus station. She was with her

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husband... They spoke the language, because they had been in Greece for some time... She found us a job, with some Greek women, there in the neighborhood. So we started working, cleaning the houses. Then my friend and I found a house. We began to live together... My friend got married. So I had to find my own apartment. So, I told my brother to come. He was unemployed in Albania... So he came with his family and stayed with me. We stayed together for about three years... Then we brought our parents... They now live with my brother... We live in the same apartment flat. I live on the third floor; my brother and my parents live on the fourth floor."

The stories of these immigrants are fairly typical of all the participants in my study. The first immigrants arrive and after settling in Greece, they ask families, relatives and friends from their country of origin to join them. Once the latter settle in Greece, gain knowledge of the Greek society, they reach out to their own friends, relatives and eventually whole communities are involved in migration. As one immigrant stated: "You know what, my whole family is in Greece. I do not have anybody left in Albania, except for the walls of the house." Another one who lives in Thessaloniki commented: "There are so many people from Korça here, that it looks like you are in Korça," referring to the large number of immigrants from the town of Korca, a town close to Greece (about 30 miles away from the Greek border). He then continued "If you walk in the street, you surely will see a face that you know. Or if you are in a bus, you will definitely see someone from Korça." Over time, therefore, these networks serve to perpetuate and sustain migration.

As noted in chapter two, in addition to changes in individual and social structure, migration brings about changes in the culture of the communities of origin, changes

which in turn increase the likelihood of more migration. Through their ability to buy consumer goods, migrants display admired life styles that non migrants want to emulate, thus increasing the probability that more people will join the migration stream (Massey et al. 1994a: 1500; Massey et al. 1994b: 738; Massey et al. 1998: 47). The following story illustrates this point:

"My friend from Korça helped... We grew up together in the same apartment. He had left for Greece more than a year ago... After being in Greece for more than a year, he came back one day and I saw him buying electronic stuff for his house.... When I saw this, I also wanted to go and work in Greece. I felt bad about myself. I talked to my friend and I told him I wanted to go to Greece. He told me he would help me. So we set up a date, the date we were leaving. So my friend, three of his friends and myself left for Greece. We took a taxi up to the border. From there, we waited until dark and crossed the border. My friend knew the road. After walking all night, we arrived in a small village in Greece. I do not remember the name. There we took a cab. The cab dropped us in the train station in Amindjo, a small village in Greece. From there we took the train to Thessaloniki. There I went to my friend's apartment. The other guys went to their relatives in Thessaloniki. I stayed with my friend for almost two months."

Moreover, as some of the stories above reveal, in addition to networks, a set of migrant-supporting institutions tend to develop which perpetuate immigration (Massey et al. 1993; Massey et al. 1998). For-profit organizations and private entrepreneurs provide a variety of services to immigrants in exchange for a fee in the underground market: smuggling across borders; clandestine transport to international destinations; counterfeit documents, visas and so on (Massey et al. 1998: 44). Many of the participants in my

study, who were not able to obtain a visa through official channels, resorted to unofficial channels such as: obtaining fraudulent visas, passports, or paying "the mafia" to help them cross the borders illegally (see also examples in chapter four).

In summary, we would say that Albanian migration was a product of policies pursued by the communist state of Albania, which in turn created an environment that fostered large-scale migration waves. Yet, the Albanian state was not involved in migration whatsoever, leaving Albanians to fend for themselves during the whole process of migration. Once immigration started, social networks as well as migrant-supported institutions helped to sustain and perpetuate immigration flows.

Greece's Migration Policies In Transforming Forced Immigrants to Legal Immigrants

The aim of this section concerns the analysis of legalization policies undertaken by the Greek government which enabled hundreds and thousands of Albanian migrants to move from the conditions of illegality to legality. As noted earlier, however, Greece is not unique in pursuing such policies. Legalization programs are one of the ways immigrant receiving governments use to regulate illegal immigrants in their countries. What is unique in the present case is the character of Albanian migrants to Greece, by far the largest immigrant group in Greece. Immigration flows of Albanians to Greece was not organized and mediated by the state. In fact, as we have repeatedly stressed, the Albanian government, for a long time, was not involved at all in immigration. Moreover, as we have already established in chapter two, given the context of exit (i.e., economic plight, political instability, social unrest), Albanian migrants were forced migrants.

Furthermore, as noted earlier in the paper, Greece, like other countries of Southern Europe was for a long time a country of emigration. As a result of this, the country largely lacked any institutional mechanism or administrative experience to deal with immigration (Freeman 1995).

The initial response of the Greek government to the new situation of influx of hundreds and thousands of (mostly) illegal migration was the enactment of a new aliens' law (L. 1975/91) which was ratified by the Parliament in 1991 and which came into effect in 1992 (Papantoniou-Frangouli and Leventi 2000: 950). The law which determined all matters that had to do with the entry, work and residence of immigrants in Greece (Hatziprokopiou 2003: 1036), established police rules for the control of immigrants flows (Glystos 2005: 821) and made no provision for legalization of foreign workers already in Greece. In addition, the government used repressive measures whereby police expelled[61], without legal process, immigrants who did not possess the appropriate legal papers to stay in Greece (Baldwin-Edwards 2004a: 4). By the mid-1990s, however, despite the large number of expulsions, it was becoming clear that a very large number of undocumented foreigners were going to stay in Greece (Baldwin-Edwards 2004a: 4). In fact the number of illegal immigrants had reached 800,000, whereby Albanians constituted by far the largest (57.5 percent) immigrant group (Tsimbos 2008). Faced with this situation, the Greek government began to prepare the first legalization program.

In July 1996, the Parliament passed law 2434/1996. Article 16 of the law provided for legalization of aliens which would proceed in two stages: In the first stage,

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[61] By 1995, there were over 1 million expulsions (Baldwin-Edwards 2004a: 4).

aliens would register with Greek authorities and acquire temporary resident permits (called the "white card" and given for a period of six months). In the second, they would receive limited duration residency permits (Papantoniou-Frangouli and Leventi 2000: 951). Further, immigrants had to prove that they had been in Greece before November 23, 1997 (Fakiolas 2003: 547). The legalization process began in January 1, 1998. By May 31 1998, 372,000 applied for the "white cards". All my informants who had been working and living in the country illegally had applied for the white cards during this time.

The white card was a prerequisite for a "green card" application, which included a temporary residence and work permit for a period of one to three years (mostly one year) (Glystos 2005: 826) and can be renewed. One of the requirements for the green card application was that applicants were required to present a document proving they had earned an income corresponding to at least half that earned by an unqualified worker for 40 days, although requirements varied according to the sector of employment (Papantoniou-Frangouli and Leventi 2000: 953). The deadline for green card application was extended several times (from 7/98 to finally 4/99) because of unrealistic demands made both on the immigrants, and the state (Baldwin-Edwards 2004: 4). For example, applicants were required to provide a series of documents which included: attestations by the Ministry of justice that they did not have criminal records; attestations by local police stations that they were not on the list of persona non grata maintained by the Criminal Investigation Police; certificates from a public hospital that they were not suffering from any contagious disease as well as passports or certificates concerning their family situations which proved their identity. In addition, each applicant was required to provide

information about his or her address, family situation, educational level, length of stay in Greece and employment situation (Papantoniou-Frangouli and Leventi 2000: 952). Out of 200,000 applicants, by February 2000, only 107,000 cards had been granted, and most of them only for only one year's duration (Baldwin-Edwards 2004: 4). The onerous bureaucratic procedures contributed to this low rate of processing.

The green card grants equal civil rights and the same rights as Greeks in the labor market (it excludes tenured positions in the public sector), but it does not grant voting rights (Fakiolas 2003). It can be renewed one or more times, but they are not easily renewed. In order to renew the green card, one must have earned an income corresponding to that of a typical unqualified worker for half of the period between application for green card renewal and the date of receipt of the green card. Any card holder who can prove that he or she has already lived in Greece for at least five years, and who can provide evidence of self-support can apply for a five year residency permit. Also, under Greek law, family members of aliens who have lived for five uninterrupted years in Greece become eligible for family reunion (Papantoniou-Frangouli and Leventi 2000: 953).

The green card does not, however, lead to naturalization and acquisition of citizenship. The reason for this is that Greece citizenship is based on *jui sanguinis* law. Even long-term immigrants rarely acquire citizenship and marriage to a Greek citizen does not guarantee one's chances of obtaining Greek citizenship or work permit. A foreigner may apply for naturalization after a period of 10 years of legal residence, although, there is often an additional wait of several years before authorities evaluate the

application. From 1985 to 1995, 16,842 naturalizations were granted, of which 12,737 were to persons of Greek descent (Fakiolas 1999: 195).

Many of the participants in my study voiced their complaints about the lack of the prospects of acquiring Greek citizenship, even after working and living in Greece for a long time. Ylli, who has been working in Greece for about 15 years and has managed to obtain a job somewhat similar to the one he had in Albania said: "I have been working and living in Greece for 15 years. I have only a residency card that we renew every three years. Even though I have been here for so many years, they do not give us citizenship, because the laws in Greece are different. The Greek government does not have any laws to give citizenship. We pay social security, taxes and we have cars with a Greek license and Greek driving license. We have everything like the Greeks, except for citizenship." Immigrants also complained about the bureaucratic inefficiencies of the local officials, as well as the high cost of renewing their green card, which posed a burden on their already meager financial resources.

Klarenti: "I have a green card. I renew it once every two years. Every year we pay 150 evro. So if you want to get a two year green card, you pay 300 evro. I pay 150 evro and my wife pays 150 evro, 300 evro. And the green card came two weeks ago. But it had expired. It had expired since one year. After a year, they sent me the card. So why did I pay? For nothing. The Greeks do these things. You pay, but you do not get a card. You get the card, when it expires."

Some immigrants who, given the instability of their jobs, are not able to work in jobs that provide enough social security stamps required for the renewal of the green card, are compelled to buy them. Blerta: "We have social security. But for my husband, it

depends on his work. For example, if he does not work in the construction in one house, they do not put him social security. When he works a lot, they give him social security. We are obliged to buy them. We pay out of our pockets. We go to an engineer and buy social security there, so that we can get the green card. It is expensive. It costs us a fortune, but what can we do."

By March 2001, however, in spite of the first legalization, hundreds of thousands of immigrants were still undocumented in Greece. This was a result of several factors: failure to apply for legalization, renew the temporary permit, or additional immigrants who had arrived in Greece since after the first legislation. Moreover, the 1991 exclusionary immigration law remained the framework regulating immigration policy (Lino 2003: 314). In view of these circumstances, the Greek government called for another legislation program. The new law 2910/2001 replaced the 1991 law.

Legalization was open to all undocumented migrants who could prove that they had been living in Greece since at least June 2, 2000. This included migrants who registered with the Organization for the Employment of Human Resources (OAED) in 1998 during the first legalization process, but who did not obtain a Green Card, as well as those who held a residence permit that had expired. If there was no stamp of entry on the passport proving the applicant entered Greece before June 2, 2000, one should submit other documents (i.e., electricity, water, telephone bill). Those applicants who lived in a village or town of less than 20,000 residents, could request a document from the local council verifying length of stay. Those who did not possess any form of official proof indicating they have been in Greece since June 2, 2000, had one more option: They could buy one year's worth of social insurance stamps (*ensima*) to cover the required period

(*Athens News*, June 1, 2003). The law, however, restricted access of undocumented immigrants to public services (i.e., local authorities, hospitals, clinics) (Fakiolas 2003: 542), a provision that drew heavy criticism from immigration activists, labor unions, and the ombudsman's office, although education became the right of all children, regardless of their parents' legal status (Lino 2003: 314). In spite of these problems, however, a large number of immigrants managed to change their status from that of illegality to that of legal migrants.

Why did Greece adopt one of the most liberal legalization policies in Europe?

Scholars have stressed various factors that shape immigration policies in the countries of liberal democracies. Some authors (Sassen 1998; Soysal 1994) argue that international human rights regimes are vital factors in hampering a state's capacity to control immigration, guaranteeing human rights regardless of one's citizenship. Others (Cornelius et al. 1994; 2004) contend that various agreements and resolutions undertaken by international bodies, such as the United Nations, International Labor Organizations, and the EU, significantly influence receiving countries' immigration policies. Still others suggest that sending states are capable of influencing immigration policies of receiving countries (Rosenblaum 2004).

While this scholarship emphasizes international factors, another group of scholars (Hollifield 1992; 2006; Joppke 1999), have highlighted internal factors, most importantly the role of the laws and courts, in having significantly influencing liberal democratic governments' immigration policies. Germany presents a good case to illustrate this point.

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In the post war period, the German government, like that of France (see above), instituted recruitment programs, known as "guestarbaiter" to fill in job vacancies created by economic boom. As a result, millions of workers came to Germany. They were seen as temporary workers who would go back to their own countries after a few years (Castle and Miller 2003: 77). With the 1973 economic crisis, the German government stopped recruitment and expected the guest workers to go home, something which did not happen. Instead, immigrants were joined by their families and decided to settle in Germany permanently. German authorities tried to prevent family immigration through various ways[62], such as refusing work permits to family members, or grant them only after a specified period of residence (Hollifield 1992). The government's attempts to prevent immigrant workers and their families from settling in Germany, however, were unsuccessful.

The reason for this, according to Joppke (1999: 69), rests with the activist courts, which defended and expanded the rights of foreigners. They did so on the basis of two principles of the German constitution: first, the subordination of state power to the rights of individuals; and secondly, granting the most fundamental of these rights without respect to nationality. In doing so the courts helped transform the precarious guestworker status into a secure permanent-resident status, which equals that of citizens, forcing the government into adopting an expansive immigration policy, undermining government's intent on pursuing a zero-immigration policy (Joppke 1999: 103). This is in sharp contrast to Great Britain, where the government has successfully managed to pursue

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[62]As noted above, the German government too, instituted repatriation programs in the hope that immigrants would return to their countries of origin (see Hollifield 1992: 82-83). The repatriation attempts did not succeed, however. While there were foreigners who took up financial bonuses, like in the case of France, most of those who took up the bonuses, would have left any way (Martin 2004).

perhaps, one of the most restrictive immigration policies in Europe. The reason for this lies in the absence of the institutional constraints on restrictionist governments (Hansen 2000: 27). In Britain there has been little blockading of the political branches of government by recalcitrant courts. Sovereignty is firmly and unequivocally invested in Parliament, which knows no constitutional limits to its law-making powers." (Joppke 1999: 103)

Gary Freedman (1995) is another author who has underscored domestic factors in shaping immigration policies. The author locates forces that influence governments' decisions towards immigrants in what he calls "client politics." According to this argument, various social groups (i.e., private employers, ethnic advocacy groups, civil and human rights organizations) prevent states to adopt and enforce restrictionist immigration policies.

These approaches, however, are not capable of explaining Greece's decisions to undertake one of the most liberal legalizations in Europe. For one, while international human regimes do exist, in view of Joppke (1998: 268), "the international human rights regime is not so strong as to make states fear and tremble. In addition, according to Linos (2003: 318), policies that are thought to be influenced by international organizations, are usually restrictive in nature. Besides, in the case of Greece, the evidence of EU pressure on any immigration-related issues is very scarce. Furthermore, judicial systems cannot explain liberal legalization programs, because, the power of courts in Greece is very small, and in fact the judiciary is directly influenced by the executive (Linos 2003: 323). Moreover, the "client politics" model is suited to settler societies, such as Australia, Canada, and the United States. The lobbies in the Greek case

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are much weaker and there are no established ethnic or immigrant lobby (Lino 2003: 318).

Finally, regarding the issue of the influence of the sending states on receiving societies, it should be said that the existing literature on this topic, does indeed point to the state's involvement in migration. The state, for example has been active in negotiating bilateral labor programs with receiving states, such as "guestworker" programs in post World War Europe, or Bracero Program in the United States (Calavita 1994 ; Castles and Miller 2003). Moreover, as the literature on transnationalism tells us, once emigrants have settled abroad, the sending states have tried to reach out across its territories to their immigrants abroad (Guarnizo 1998; Itzigsohn 2000; Landolt 2007; Levit and de la Dehesa 2003; see articles in Østergaard-Nielsen 2003; Smith and Bakker 2008). The involvement takes various forms that range from allowing immigrants to adopt dual citizenship or nationality (like in the Mexican case), providing immigrants with the right to vote during sending countries' election, use of state's consulates abroad to help immigrants with various issues (i.e., providing legal and other services), setting up programs aimed at strengthening the migrant's economic (i.e., programs to channel remittances into income and employment-generating activities as well as productive investment) and cultural ties (i.e., the Dominican state for example set up cultural centers in United States in those cities where a large number of Dominicans immigrants reside) as well as intervening on behalf of immigrants to protect their rights[63] (Fitzerald 2006;

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[63] In 2002, for example, president Vincente Fox of Mexico took a stance in favor of Suárez Medina, a Mexican immigrant prisoner awaiting execution in Texas for killing an undercover police. The president did so on Mexico's opposition to death penalty. The efforts, however were unsuccessful, as Suárez Medina was eventually executed. In response to this act, Fox cancelled a planned visit to Texas that included meeting with president Bush as well as other trips to the US later that year (Martínez-Saldaña 2003: 55).

Guarnizo 1998; Itzigsohn 2000; Levitt 2001; Martínez-Daldaña-Jesús 2003; Østergaard-Nielsen 2003; Smith and Bakker 2008). States are keen to reach out to their immigrants abroad because the current mode of incorporation in the world economy leaves these countries dependent on migrants' remittances. In addition, migration constitutes a sociopolitical safety valve, mobilizes political support from abroad and provides advocates of government agendas vis-à-vis the receiving societies (Itzigsohn 2000; Guarnizo 1998; Portes 1999).

It is important to note, however, that the sending countries' capabilities to influence receiving countries' immigration policies varies, with some countries being in a more powerful position than others. The Mexican government, for example, is more likely to be successful in this process than other less influential states because Mexico sends such large numbers and plays such a significant role in U.S. economic and political affairs. Countries that send fewer migrants and that are less important economically and politically have much less bargaining power (Levitt 2001: 207-208).

In the case of Albania, however, it should be stated that the state has been largely absent from the life of its own immigrants abroad. It was not until 2005 that the Albanian government finally managed to adopt a national strategy of migration (Barjaba 2008; National Strategy of Migration 2006). Instead, Albanian emigrants were left to fend for themselves as they tried to build a life in Greece. All immigrants in my sample expressed a sense of frustration at the lack of support from their own government, as well as mistrust toward the government.

Said Kreshniku: "We do not have a state. The Albanian state has given us nothing... I mean, the Albanian state has not helped immigrants. Never. We do not have

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a state. Bulgarian government, Russian government complains about the treatment of their citizens. Albanian state never."

Similarly Jonida complained: "Our government does nothing for us. It does not protect our rights. I have never seen our government to intervene to protect our rights. I have never heard them talk about our rights."

In addition, immigrants were of the opinion that not only did the Albanian government not protect its own citizens' rights in Greece, but that the perception among immigrants was that the government exploits them.

Said Marcela: "Our government does nothing. On the contrary. When we go to the embassy, just for a little thing, just to get a seal, a small paper, they take us 30 evro. So I work one whole day for what, for nothing. And who. My embassy. But what can you do. We need those papers."

Likewise, Ylli stated: "Albanian state is zero. You do not feel the hand of Albanian state in Greece. Albanian state does not protect our rights. An Albanian citizen that is killed in Greece is not protected by Albanian state. Nobody protects you here. ... Not only this, but the Albanian government wants to benefits from us, the immigrants. Why do I say this? Because, look at this. The Albanian embassy is in Greece. It is part of Albanian state. If we want to get a certificate at the embassy, you need to pay 20 evro. I need four certificates. I pay 80 evro. So the embassy steals from me. It does not help me... For example, I need a passport for my son now. It is quite a marathon to get it. I need to get it at the Albanian embassy. I need a guarantee. But I do not have time. I am an immigrant. I need to work. I cannot waste away my time."

Furthermore, the Albanian government's influence on the Greek government's immigrant policy decisions has been very limited because of unequal power relation, with the former being in a much weaker position vis-a-vis the latter. While Albanian government has complained about allegations that Greek police discriminate against Albanians, as well as offering apologies for the behavior of some Albanians, its demands have been seriously limited by the fact that Albanians enter Greece illegally. In addition, the Albanian government's influence on Greek immigration policy was further weakened by Greece's claims that the Greek minority in Albania was being mistreated[64] (Linos 2003: 320).

Linos (2003: 326-327) attributes the decision of the Greek government to pursue legalization of immigrants, in spite of hostility of the general public towards immigrants[65], and in the absence of other domestic and international pressures to three main factors: First, economic benefits of migration, which the government deemed to be significant enough to ignore the Greek public opinion (see also Fakiolas 1999). Second, the government was able to distance itself from public opinion because the Greek

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[64] One of the incidents that point to the mistreatment of Greek minorities in Albania occurred in April 1994. In that year, amidst tense relations between the government of the two countries, ethnic Greece paramilitaries, allegedly based on Greek soil, attacked a small military post near Gjirokastër, (a town nearby Greece), killing two Albanian soldiers. In the same month, five of Omonia's leaders (Democratic Union of the Greek Minority) were arrested and tried for complicity in the attack, while Greece vetoed a loan to Albania by the European Union of 35 million ECU in protest. Meanwhile, the government of Tirana began to move landless Muslim peasants from the north of the country into empty Greek land and Greek villages in the extreme south of Albania, a move that the Greek minority saw as the beginning of 'ethnic cleansing" in the area. A purge of ethnic Greeks in the professions in Albanian continued in 1994, in particularly in the areas of law and military. The trial of Omonia leaders opened in September in which the defendants were charged with treason and spying charges and convicted. The trial was popular with Albanians, it caused outrage in Greece, with the international observers regarding it as deeply flawed in its procedure. Greece responded to the trial verdict by expelling hundreds and thousands (about 115,000 between August-November) of Albanian migrants (mostly illegal, although legal immigrants were deported too) (Vickers and Pettifer 1997: 198-199; Greek Helsinki Monitor 1994).

[65] According to 1997 Eurobarometer, 72 % of Greeks (the highest among the countries in EU) "tended to agree" with the statement that "All illegal immigrants should be sent back to their country of origin without exception." (Linos 2003: 321 citing Melich 1999)

political system has many elements of a cartel party system. These features strengthened the ties of the ruling party to the state, lowered the risk of third-party emergence, and thus weakened the link between policy and public opinion. Finally, immigration was an issue on which this distancing was possible because it does not fit neatly on the right-left political spectrum. Thus, the conservatives were not interested in politicizing the immigration, because they were did not want to alienate economic liberals with a restrictionist stance, and estrange social conservatives with a pro-immigrant position. As the main parties did not politicize the immigration issue, and third parties had little chance of rising to power, voters opposed to immigration were left with no voice for their opposition (Linos 2003: 326-327).

In summary, we would say that immigration from Albania is a result of communist government's policies of limiting economic opportunities and prohibiting immigration. The fall of the same state unleashed large migration waves. The Albanian state, however, was not involved in immigration, yet immigration persisted. The major reason for perpetuation of migration can be found in migrants' social networks in the process of migration. Pioneer immigrants undertook their journey to Greece. As soon as they settled, found a job, got acquainted with the new environment, they asked their families, relatives and friends to join them to Greece. The latter, in turn, given the structure of network ties, drew others into the process. Soon, whole families and communities are involved in immigration. In addition to networks, migrant-supported institutions tend to develop to sustain migration. As the stories in my study revealed, immigrants, faced with the blocked official channels of obtaining visas, turned to "private

entrepreneurs" to secure these services (i.e., obtaining fraudulent visas, passports, or smuggling them through the borders).

The large influx of Albanians to Greece caught the Greek government largely unprepared to respond to the new situation. The reason for this rests with the fact that Greece, like other countries in Southern Europe, had, for a long time, deemed itself as a country of emigration and therefore lacked any institutional mechanisms to deal with immigration. The initial response of Greek government was a 1991 law, which determined all matters that had to do with the entry, work, and residence of immigrants in Greece, established police rules for the control of immigrants flows and made no provision for legalization of a large number of foreign workers already in Greece. In addition, the government expelled many immigrants without legal process. In spite of this kind of repressive policies, by the mid-1990s, however, it was becoming clear that a large number of undocumented foreigners (about 800,000) were going to stay in Greece. Faced with this situation, the Greek government launched two legalization programs, in 1998 and 2001 respectively, providing a large number of Albanians with legal status. In doing so, to a certain degree, Greece followed in the footsteps of Northern European countries, which legalized thousands of post World War II "guest workers" after realizing that the "guests" were not going to return to their countries of origin.

There are, however, differences between Greece and the countries of Northern Europe. For one, migration of post WWII workers to Northern Europe was a state organized migration and migrant workers were labor migrant workers. Conversely, immigration from Albania was initiated and perpetuated by Albanians themselves, with no state involvement. Moreover, given the situation of exit, they were forced migrants.

The receiving country's government, however, through a series of legalization programs, intervened to transform Albanians from forced, illegal migrants into legal labor migrants. Yet, the short term (one to three years) green card status, and the *jui sanguinis* basis of Greek citizenship, leaves immigrants in a position of future insecurity, while allowing the Greek population to fool itself that Albanians are temporary "guest workers," who will soon return to their own country (Baldwin-Edward 2004a: 11). However, as with "guestworkers" in Europe, many of them will settle in Greece for good. In fact, one immigrant best summarized this intention, so widespread among many of participants in my sample: "In spite of problems, racism, discrimination we have, Greece is still better than in Albania... Even if I want to go back, my children do not want to go back. The future of my children is in Greece. They have a much better life here."

Thus, after forty years of being "sealed off" in their country by their own government, Albanians were forced to leave when the very state failed and collapsed. They took the journey to the much dreamed Greece, a country they had never seen, except on the Greek TV programs and commercials. They settled in Greece, overcoming the initial shock, fears, insecurity and, along the way, many of the other hurdles immigrants face in their host societies. In this difficult and complex process, aware that their government has largely ignored them, Albanians have had to rely on their own social networks and be at the mercy of the Greek state and its policies.

CHAPTER 6
EARNING A LIVING: EXPERIENCES IN THE GREEK LABOR MARKET

In this section, findings with respect to labor market adaptation are discussed. More specifically, this chapter focuses on the richness and ethnomethodology of migrants' experiences as they confront the capitalist economies. Immigrants' personal stories will shed light on the multifarious and dynamic process of transition from the labor environment of the socialist Albania to the labor milieu of capitalist Greece. At first, however, I will provide a brief summary of the areas of employment concentration of the study. This, I believe, will give a better framework in which to understand the labor market experiences of Albanian migrant men and women in Greece.

Employment Concentration

With very few exceptions, all immigrants interviewed for this research project worked in low-skill, low-wage, low-prestige jobs. The overwhelming majority of the men were employed in construction. The rest worked in small factories, car repair services, gas stations, parking places, cleaning and building maintenance, transportation, agriculture, hospitals, stores, as gardeners, while only a few were self-employed. Most of the women worked in domestic service (housecleaning, cooking, child-care provider, taking care of the elderly). The others worked in small factories (i.e., clothing firm), restaurants/taverna, hotel, hospitals and take-away places. Many said that they had also worked in agriculture as seasonal laborers when they first came to Greece. Of all the people with university and advanced degrees, only three had been able to obtain a job commensurable with their educational level and training.

The clustering of Albanians in specific occupational spheres is largely a reflection of the Greek labor market. According to Fakiolas (2000: 60): "The demand for unskilled and low-skill labor in Greece is high for two main reasons. First, a large part of the output of the economy is still produced in small family firms and households which apply labor-intensive production methods, use low-and middle-level technology and utilize mostly indigenous resources. Employment in such units accounts for nearly half the total employment in the private sector and consists primarily of unskilled labor and middle-level skills acquired outside the formal school system. Secondly, the high incomes earned by capital owners, managers, business personnel, and the well trained people employed in high technology sectors generate a demand for hotel, catering, entertainment, domestic and other services, largely based on unskilled and low-skill labor." The natives reject these jobs for various reasons.

As Hatziprokopiou (2003: 1042) explains, low fertility rates and an aging population has led to a significant decrease in the growth rate of the total labor force. Increased living standards and widespread participation in academic/professional education have created high employment aspirations, enabling young people a later entry into the labor market. Families support the young until the time they find a job commensurate with their skills. While young Greeks perform low-status informal jobs, they do so only on a part-time basis or only temporarily. As a result of this, jobs are open to immigrants.

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Immigrants' New Experiences

As mentioned earlier, immigrants from Albania, like members of other former socialist societies, lived under a system where a job was assigned to them by the government upon completion of their education. Moreover, the job was guaranteed, and more often than not a person would work in the same job until retirement. The process of job searching, fear of losing a job, while experiences common to the citizens of Western world, are foreign to Albanians. It is no surprise that the overwhelming majority of immigrants said that trying to find a job, constantly being on the lookout for a job and the fear of remaining unemployed have been some of the most difficult realities immigrants have faced in their receiving society. Immigrants often used the word "stressful" to describe this new experience.

Fatbardha: "Here the stress is too much. I can't tell you how much it is. In Albania, I never thought of it. I knew I would finish the university, and my job would be waiting for me. I would put my mind to rest. You had a job, and you would retire in that. You did not have the stresses that you have now. You were secure there. You were not left without a job. Here, there is a lot of unemployment. There the job was guaranteed. Even at this time, after living for such a long time in Greece, I am always anxious of losing my job. You need to be on the lookout for work; one is constantly changing jobs. You will not be in the same job all the time. You are always anxious, nervous. Today you have work, tomorrow you may not. Today the boss hires you, tomorrow he fires you. You can't compare it with the past."

Similarly, Ylli asserted, "The stress here is great. The anxiety people have every day has ruined them psychologically. These things did not happen before. The work was

secure. You worked a set amount of hours. You finished work, and you did not have to worry about looking for another job. After work, you would take an evening walk in the boulevard. You returned home at about ten in the evening, watched a little bit of TV, and then went to bed. Life was simple and without stress. Here, every day you have the anxiety of losing your job. Every day you have the stress of being fired from your work. This was one of the most difficult things I had to get used to."

Valbona, who works as a waitress in a bar, recalled her feelings when she had lost her job for the first time and was trying to find another job: "That was very difficult. You do not have anything to live on. It's not that I did not have some money. I had worked for years, and I had some savings. But, it was not that I did not find work only for several months. I kept asking myself: is this going to last for months, maybe a year? Am I going to go several years without a job? This has been one of the most difficult things to get used to"

Piro remembered the first time he was fired from his job in Greece: "The loss of my job was something very difficult I got used to. I remember the first time I was fired. I had just worked in the job for a month, and they fired me. It was very difficult. It was shocking. I was not used to this. In the past regime, you had a job and you would never lose it. While here, it was so different."

A number of researchers that focus on adaptation of immigrants from the countries of the former communist bloc to the life in the West, have noticed similar experiences. Gold (1995), in his research work with Russian Jewish immigrants in the United States, showed how the entire process of a job search, for example, reading newspaper advertisement for jobs, writing resumes, typing application letters, being

interviewed for the job, and following a dress code for the interview were entirely new concepts for the immigrants. Likewise, in Bernstein's study (2006), immigrants from former Soviet Union who live and work in Germany expressed their frustration in trying to cope with the new realities of the Western society. As one immigrant said"... Our Soviet remnants are everything. For example, a concrete remnant—now I must change my job. There, in Odessa, the capitalist situation was unthinkable—you never had to change your job; everyone went to the same work his whole life. Here I need to make a mental effort in order to understand that I am fired from the research project after seven years of work not because people do not like me or because I am not suitable, but because now is exactly the time when a permanent position in my department is no longer possible economically. It is difficult for me not to take it personally and to understand that economic circumstances also decide this" (Bernstein 2006: 10).

Sure enough, some of the participants in my study looked back nostalgically to the lost days of job security. Endrita, who used to be a supervisor and now works in domestic service said: "I am nostalgic about the past system. Why not? I did not have much, but everything was secure. I had my job, and I would go and sleep at home, without any worries. I knew that I would not lose my job. The next day the job would be waiting for me. Now, my husband and myself are never employed at the same time. Either he is employed, or I am employed. Before, when I was sick, and I needed to stay home, the state would pay for it. I was not afraid that I would lose my job. Now I am experiencing what I had heard about in Albania, the capitalist crises. They used to talk to us about deep capitalist crises. The truth is that we are experiencing then now. Let me tell you something else. I did not have a doctor for a year, because I was between jobs. I did

not have medical coverage because I did not have *ensima* (social security). Because if

you do not have *ensima* (social security), you cannot get a doctor. That whole year, I was

without insurance. I was always saying to myself: I hope I do not get sick. Thank God I

never got sick that year. Otherwise, I would have had to have gone to a private doctor.

And you needed to pay 50 evro[66] just to see a doctor. Nowadays, I think it is 80 evro. I

started another job. But I needed to have 53 days of work in *ensima*, so that I could take a

doctor, and I would renew the book of "medical insurance." I started my job in

November, but my employer, a real liar, did not register me for *ensima* for about three

months. So it looks as if I had started work in February. I got sick. So I had to go to the

doctor. I told him, 'I am sick'. He asked me for my medical insurance book. I gave it to

him, even though it had expired. I pretended I did not know it had expired. He told me,

'This has expired'. I told him, 'I do not know. I thought this book never expires.' He said

'no.'

Finally, he refused to see me. He told me to go to a *idhjotiko* (private doctor). I

told him, 'why should I go to the private doctor, when you are my doctor?' He said, 'I

can't see you because it is out of rules.' If I would have gone to the private doctor, that

would have cost me 80 evro. I need to work three days for that. I remember, in the past,

it was for free. You would go to the doctor, and the doctor would see you instantly."

Other immigrants also asserted that being without health insurance was very difficult

during the time they were working and living illegally in Greece. Some mentioned that

when they or their children became sick, they had to pay for medical services out of their

pocket. One immigrant, who is actively involved in the Albanian community, said that in

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[66] 1 Euro is equal to $1.5

the very early stages of immigration, when the number of Albanians was not so large, medical centers had offered free medical treatment to them. As their numbers grew, however, the provision of these benefits dwindled dramatically. One said that when she did not have health insurance, she had to go to the emergency room which was provided free of charge. She had only paid a small amount for a few tests. She also knew of other Albanians who had used these services. All but two of the participants at the time of interview, had access to health care, either through their work or through their spouses' work.

Several immigrants reported that one of the new experiences they had to get used to in Greece was learning to work under new workplace rules and regulations, in particular a rigid work schedule and supervision. Florenca: "The job here is much more difficult than in the communist times. Under the Hoxha regime, we worked with norms. We fulfilled the daily norm at about 12 Noon. That norm, according to my opinion, was a lie. While here, it has been so hard. You must work until the end of the shift, at exactly the same hour. If you go twice in the bathroom, the boss looks at you as if asking why did you go the bathroom twice. You want to waste your time? It was so difficult to get used to this at the beginning. It was so hard psychologically. But we got used to it. We had to."

Kishinevsky (2004: 58-59; 142) too, in her study of Russian Jews who had come to United States in the early 1990s, found similar reaction on the part of immigrants when confronted with the new workplace environment. As one of the immigrants put it: "In America, I work the same hours—from 9 to 5, but work here is more demanding... The separation of work from personal life is much clearer. We used to know each other very

intimately, all 20 of us. We knew each other's families, parents, children, closest friends, but here it is not so...Work is more intense here; ...I would also say that there is much more responsibility in your work. This intensity is not only physical; you feel it mentally at times. Sometimes when I come home I not only lack strength to 'do something, but I don't feel like moving a finger or saying a word.

While recognizing these difficulties and challenges, a group of immigrants stated that they liked their work in Greece, because Greece as a capitalist country, offers opportunities for people to move ahead. Fatbardha, whom we introduced above, and is one of the very few who has managed to work in her profession, contended that, "You could not say that because you did not have stress, you would miss out on this life that we have here. Yes, we had spiritual peace. No question about it. Now we have only stresses. But I like it here. It is difficult, but I like it. Because you can see how capable you truly are. While in Albania you did not know your abilities. Everybody was equal. No, I like this. Really, it is difficult, but those who are good, move ahead. I like this system. For me, this system is good."

Along similar lines, Gëzim, who used to be a supervisor in a factory in Albania, and now works as a manual laborer in construction, said: "I like it here, because you move ahead, because people try to work harder. While under socialism, it was different. Let me give you an example. I was working as a supervisor in my job. If I wanted to fire somebody, my boss would tell me, "Keep these workers at the job, because I say so." I used to tell him, 'But they do not work.' He would respond, "Where everybody eats, they can eat too". So, these were people that did not like to work, and thus did not. Our society was such that everybody would eat. So, the parasites would work on the back of

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others. They did not work and would live at the expense of others. In Greece, there is a big difference. As we say in Albania, he who works live a better life, he who does not work lives like a dog."

Interviewer: What about the fact that your job now is not as good as the one you had before?

Gëzim: Yes. It is true. But if you look at the wages, I make much more now than before."

Blerina, who worked as a tailor under communism and now cleans offices in a building, said "In the past, I worked in my profession. I worked and did not worry about things. Like everybody else. I worked eight hours and would go home and put my mind to rest. Now, I do any kind of work. Whatever job I find, whenever I find it, I will do it. I am pleased with the economic side. I have some money left, live a better life and have more stuff. If you compare this with the past, however, I liked that time only for the peace of mind. That was a good thing. But the money is much better here."

Several immigrants also saw as positive the fact that one has the opportunity to work in multiple jobs, something which was not possible (at least legally) under the previous system. Florenca: " In the past there were good things. We had spiritual peace, for example. But you could not work more. You could not work a second job. While here, you can work a second job. This is very good. So everybody is trying so hard, people are working, trying so hard. Their children live a better life."

"I used to teach students and I ended up washing cars that professors use":
Experiences of high status professionals

The highly educated immigrants are the ones who have had the most difficult time adjusting to Greece. The largest part of the difficulties for this particular group of immigrants has to do with the loss of their professional and social status. During the communist regime, the university educated and skilled professionals (doctors, university professors, engineers, journalists, teachers, engineers, economists, military officers) comprised the intelligentsia, the pinnacle of country's professional hierarchy, the "pride of socialism," to use Tony Judt's (2005) words. Like the rest of the people in the labor force, they would stay in the same occupation for their entire work career and their position at the zenith of occupational hierarchy was rather well secured, a position which would grant them high status and prestige as well as various privileges, not available to members of the other two strata: the working class and the peasantry.

Immigration drastically changed this situation. Upon arrival to Greece, this group of immigrants soon realized that their university education, and their skills, were of little or no value at all. As noted earlier, only a handful of the total of seventeen highly educated immigrants in my sample have been able to achieve an occupational status somewhat similar to the one they had in Albania. The majority, however, perform low-status, low-wage jobs such as: taking care of gardens, working (mostly menial jobs,) in the factory, working in construction (mainly men), domestic service (mostly women). Thus, in addition to coping with job insecurity, an experience they share with the rest of their fellow Albanians, this group of people has suffered a rather substantial occupational

decline, and with it they have lost the high status and prestige that the occupational position accorded them under the previous system. As one immigrant among this group stated: "In emigration, the people that were worst hit are the professionals, because they cannot find themselves. While a worker, a peasant, with low educational level, he can easily find a job. He can take care of the garden, work in construction, earn a lot of money. The intellectual cannot work like that. He cannot find work in his profession, so he feels terrible."

Arjeta, after recognizing the inability of the previous system to provide opportunities to those professionals with vast knowledge to move ahead, alluded to the decline of status: "In the beginning, when we could not find work, we looked for any kind of job. So a person who has a university degree and lots of knowledge ends up doing the most menial job, cleaning houses, working as a simple worker, the same job as somebody who had only eight years of education...We had established a personality, we had accumulated certain knowledge, we had a certain social circle. All of these were lost in the capitalist world, because we were immigrants, and because all our knowledge was left unused. Meanwhile, here we could not obtain contemporary information, because in order to cope with difficulties of life, we needed to do the most menial jobs because we needed to earn a living. Earning a living was not done based on using our knowledge, but based on our physical labor."

These quotations reveal the awareness these immigrants have of their situation in the host society. Their previous skills and education became suddenly worthless, in particular in its initial stages in the new market system. Moreover, resettlement has also served as a leveler to the lowest point on the professional totem pole (Mahler 1995: 70).

Both ex-intellectuals/cadres and simple workers and peasants share similar position in the professional and social hierarchy: that of physical laborers.

Several of the immigrants in this group described their feelings when faced with the new reality of sharp decline in professional and social status. Andi said: "The first moments, you are completely shocked. You judge things: 'what is this?' I have finished university, and now what do I do? In this country, having a university degree does not mean that you get a job." Ardiana, who used to be a teacher, and has worked as a child care provider and housecleaner in Greece, stated: "In the beginning, it was humiliating. You were a teacher, and now you clean houses. Even now I dream of the job I had. " Another immigrant who had also been a teacher in a small town in Albania described her feelings when for the first time she started working as a cleaner in a hotel: "In my hometown I was a teacher. I was very well respected. Teachers at that time were well respected. That is, the communist was ranked first, then the teacher. In Greece I ended up as a cleaner. Imagine my tears when I got the broom and the bucket and started cleaning. Imagine my tears. I was crying." Similarly, for Zaimir, who used to have a high-status job in Albania and is currently employed as a gardener, the beginning "was extremely difficult. I felt something was choking me by the throat." Erindi, on the other hand, who used to teach in higher education and now has a job taking care of a building, asserted: "The most difficult thing for me in Greece has been the loss of personality. Coming to Greece, job insecurity, and not knowing the language has forced me and other cadres to beg for a job that was left by the Greeks. For example, one of the jobs I did was washing cars. Think about it, from someone who taught and prepared pupils and students, I ended up washing the cars that professors were using."

Another former professional recounted his first work day in Greece which was to carry bundles of newspapers from one place to another. That day, according to the immigrant, was also the first day he had ever worked as a manual laborer. "That was the first day in my life that I did strenuous physical labor. When I went home that day after my work, my whole body was aching. All my muscles. The next day I did not go to work. I was exhausted. I went back to work after four or five days."

All the immigrants in this group affirmed that for them these new realities have had a profound negative "moral," "spiritual," and "psychological" effect, and for some like Erindi, this situation has caused him physical sickness. Not surprisingly, he said: "I am nostalgic about that security of the past. Not only me, but all university graduates and the cadres that are here.

Interviewer: Even though you were paid so little and you had no freedom?

Endriti: You could not say that you were paid little. We cannot say that. This is because the cost of living was more or less in equilibrium with the wages. Nowadays, especially after Greece has joined the European Union, and has adopted the Euro, the cost of living is surpassing the basic wage of a simple worker. We are experiencing the capitalist crises. For us immigrants, more than any other group, experience of these crises has affected us so much. In the past, it was true that we did not have freedom of speech and thought, but life in general was more secure. By this, I mean we had secure work, vacation, health and education. But most importantly, we had a peaceful family life."

It should be noted, however, that many immigrants, including former professionals, told me that when they came at the beginning, their intention was to stay temporarily, for six months to a year. They only wanted to stay long enough to earn some

money and then return. However, as it is often the case with many immigrants, as Arjeta put it: "The days rolled on, and here we are after so many years."

Albanian former professionals are not unique in their experiences of downward mobility. A number of researchers have documented this process for other immigrant groups (Abusharaf 2002; Foner 1986; Mahler 1995; Margolis 1994; Markowitz 1993; Orleck 2001; Prieto 1986; Remennick 2007; Sabogal 2005; Stafford 1984; Tress 1996; Vinokurov et al. 2000).

Sabogal (2005), for example, found similar experiences for Peruvian professionals who moved to South Florida beginning in the mid 1990s. In spite of their middle class status in their country of origin, given their lack of legal status and lack of knowledge of English, they were forced to take low status, low paying jobs such as house painters, custodians, waiters, valets or other manual labor in the service industry. Similarly, Sudanese former professionals in Abusharaf's (2002) study told stories of "rude awakening" after they arrived to United States and realized that their long years of education and training in Sudan were insignificant in the US context. Margolis (1994) observed the disjunction between middle and upper middle class background and their employment status among Brazilian immigrants in New York City. Many Brazilian immigrants, formerly members of the middle class (as well as a few from upper middle class) who had obtained a college degree and worked in white collar jobs in their own country found themselves working as parking lot attendants, street venders, cab drivers, private chauffer, shoe shiners, construction workers, gardeners, domestic servants. A majority of middle-class Brazilian women who worked as domestic servants in New York had maids employed in their homes in Brazil. Research by other scholars reveal

similar experiences for highly educated Central Americans, i.e., Jamaicans, Cubans, and Haitians living in the United States (Foner 1986; Mahler 1995; Prieto 1986; Stafford 1984), as well as immigrants from former communist societies (Markowitz 1993; Orleck 2001; Remenick 2007; Tress 1996; Vinokurov et al. 2000), including research on Albanian migrants (Lazaridis and Koumandraki 2007; Hatziprokopioyou 2003).

Like participants in my study, many of these studies showed that the loss in professional status had resulted in many emotional problems for immigrants, such as, but not limited to, resentment, bitterness and regret and sadness for the jobs they previously held. As one of the ex-Soviet professionals in Remennick's (2007) said: "My papers say, 'N.N., Professor of Chemical Technology." 'Ha! Big Deal! It's *there* that I was a professor, and *here* I am dog shit!" (Remennick 2007: 333). In a similar manner, one of the immigrants in Margolis' study (1994) said that he 'felt like a dog' and another one described the experiences as 'downgrading,' 'humiliating' and 'distressing'. Margolis (1994), Vinokurov et al. (2000) also found that those Russian Jews who had undergone a downward mobility in their professions were much less satisfied with life in the US, and had a considerable higher degree of alienation, than their counterparts who had been able to work in a similar professions they held previously held in the Soviet Union.

"For me Greece is a paradise": Experiences of immigrants from rural areas

Immigrants who hailed from rural areas were much more pleased with the employment situation as well as life in general, in Greece. This is to be understood in view of the situation of inhabitants in the rural areas under the communist regime. Under the communist regime, in spite of communists' intentions and policies (see Hall 1994 for

some policies) at reducing rural-urban inequalities, economic and living conditions in the rural areas were much harsher than in the towns and cities. In addition, people from rural areas were subjected to deeply ingrained prejudices and stereotypes of the urban inhabitants, whereby the "civilized" town and city people looked down upon their "uncouth, dirty, and ignorant" compatriots.[67] Upon coming to Greece, this situation changes, since in the receiving country, as one immigrant who came from a village in Albania put it, "We are all alvanos[68] now."

Ilirjan and Gjinovefa, who used to work as manual laborers in agriculture, best captured this reality. Ilirjan: "We, the peasants, suffered a lot. In the village, we did not have any bread to eat. The village produced the grain, and the urban dwellers would eat it. We in the villages would eat corn bread. In the villages you had nothing to eat. In a six months period, we were given only a kilo of milk. It was a very difficult life... There was a big difference between us in the villages and the people in the city. I remember my mother; she would go to work barefooted. They did not have a car, like I have now. For the people from the city, it is difficult here, because they left the factories and now work in agriculture. For me, it is much easier. I still work in agriculture, but the conditions here are much better. There is no comparison. The difference is like night and day. I have everything here. For me, Greece is a paradise"

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[67] Markowitz (1993) noted the existence of similar perceived hierarchies in the accounts of Russian Jews who had moved to Brighton Beach, New York. Geographical location (as well as occupation) was an important criterion upon which immigrants assessed and ranked each other. The highest prestige was accorded to those who hailed from urban areas (mainly in Russia: Moscow, Leningrad) given that the living conditions (i.e., housing, availability of consumer goods, and cultural amenities) in urban areas were much better than those in towns and villages. Moreover, urban areas were equated with progress and modernization.

[68] Alvanos is a derogatory word Greeks use to refer to Albanian immigrants.

Similarly, Gjinovefa, who like Ilirjan used to work in the field and now cleans houses openly expressed her satisfaction with the new environment: "In Greece, I am a hundred times better off than I was in Albania. In the village, we worked from morning till night for nothing. I worked in agriculture. My job was very difficult. Do not even ask me about it. I do not want to think about that. Even now, when I think about it, it gives me the creeps. We worked in the snow and tilled the land. We ate only corn bread and marmalade and we still worked and what did we earn? Nothing. I do not want to think again about it. Now, I clean houses. I still work hard, but I earn much more money."

Interviewer: How is your job now?

Gjinovefa: A hundred times better. They pay us well. I get 40 Euro per day. They treat us very well. It is like night and day. For us from the villages, because for those from the city from Albania, it was different. Life in the village was very, very poor. There was no electricity. Not only that, but when we went to the city, they called us "the peasant came with *opinga* (type of a shoe used derogatorily for people who lived in rural areas). That was it. They insulted us, and now they ask: 'Why do the Greeks call us alvanos?' Here I have everything, all the stuff needed to clean the house. Very good. I work. I do not have a problem. Because in the village I worked very, very hard. For me life in Greece is a paradise. I have everything here, all the conditions."

The stories of Ilirjan and Gjenovefa point to the expanded opportunities for immigrants who come from rural areas. Examples of these cases are also found, for instance, among Mexicans in United States (Chaves 1998; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994; Martinez 1994). Many rural Mexican migrants, including those who worked in the relatively steady employment of U.S. owned maquildaora, aware that conditions and

opportunities are far better on the U.S. side than Mexican side, found ways to enter the U.S. labor market (Martinez 1994: 146). Such was the case of Héctor in Chaves's study (1998), who, left landless, with no regular work, and under the economic demands of his family, immigrated to the United States, where he found work as simple laborer in an avocado farm, eventually taking over the responsibility of the manager. Another immigrant, in the same study, also related the story of better economic opportunities he had found in United States as a bricklayer, opportunities, which according to him, would not be found in Mexico. Despite the fact that both these immigrants were undocumented, and received earnings which were low when compared to those of U.S. citizens, they were rather pleased and proud of the position they had managed to achieve and stated a preference for life in the United States to that of Mexico. Likewise, in Hondagneo-Sotelo's study (1994) one of the women immigrant remarked that while life in United States had been pretty hard, she did not "regret coming to this country because it's been easier than if we had stayed there [in Mexico]" (Hondagneo-Sotelo 1994: 100).

Finding Jobs

The practice of looking for jobs assumed different forms. Those (mainly male) immigrants who came in the early stages of immigration with no support from friends or relatives, pursued the strategy of informal labor congregations[69]: the practice of looking for work in an open-air informal markets such as street corners, parking lots, or designated public spaces (Valenzuela 2003: 308).

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[69] Valenzuela (2003: 308) also talks about formal daily labor which consists of the practice of looking for work mainly through formal temp agencies. None of my respondents, however, had looked for a job through employment agencies.

Various research studies (Chavez 1998; Valenzuela 2003; 2001) have found informal daily labor to be an important employment avenue for Latino immigrants in California. Immigrants in this sector of the economy perform an array of jobs found in the construction sector (painting, carpentry, plumbing, roofing, electrical, masonry), as well as gardening, nursery work, and trench digging (Chavez 1998; Valenzuela 2001; Valenzuela 2003), and as my informants told me, jobs in agricultural sector. Most of the day laborers are male, although occasionally, as Chavez (1998) indicates, the women also participate in this market. They are usually recent immigrants, unauthorized to work in the country, young (though not always) and strong, and usually have low levels of education and poor command of the language of their host society (Chavez 1998; Valenzuela 2003). Some of the workers engage in daily labor because of reasons of entrepreneurial survival and/or believe that the wage market is not enough for them to survive. Others, however, prefer this job because of certain advantages such as freedoms, flexibility, a modicum of living standards, and the ability to negotiate a wage or contractual price for their work (Valenzuela 2001: 347). My respondents, however, asserted that their daily work was out of the need to survive, the only option they could find when they arrived in Greece, given their lack of proficiency in the Greek language, their unfamiliarity with the country itself, lack of their social networks and, most importantly work permits. The following stories of immigrants in my sample, illustrate this important strategy.

Ndriçimi, left in 1991. He left with a group of friends, none of whom had ever been in Greece before, and only one of the members in the group spoke any Greek. After they crossed the border illegally, they entered a Greek village, where they ran into some

of the locals, who told them to go to Amindjo, where a camp was set up for refugees. When they arrived in the camp, there were already about 200 Albanians. At the camp Ndriçim had to go through certain procedures involving fingerprinting and filling out some paper work. While he was in the camp waiting for his paperwork to be processed so he could obtain the permit to leave the camp, he heard other Albanians who had been in the camp for some time talking about work. "They said that if you go to the center of the village, Greek employers will come and pick you up and give you employment." In the evening, he still could come back to the camp and eat and sleep at no charge. Two weeks later, after his paper work was processed and he was free to go outside of campus, him and his friends jumped at the opportunity of venturing to the center of the village in the hope of finding work. While he was in the center of the village, still under the shock of the abundance of Greek shops and the cleanness of the streets, one Greek approached him and asked him if he wanted to come and work for him. Happy to find a job, he got into the employer's car and went to work. Since he was staying at the camp, the employer had to go to the local police station and had to sign papers indicating that he was employing Ndriçim. He worked in that job for about three months, mainly hoeing grapes and unloading trucks. He had never worked in agriculture before. After he finished working for this employer, he went to work for another Greek, whom he had met while he was working in the first job. At the end of the season, given that there was no more work, he and another Albanian immigrant moved on to other parts of Greece in search for other jobs. Eventually, he ended up working in a restaurant, cleaning and later cooking.

Kreshnik, who also came on his own, described his experiences like this: "When I came to Greece the first time, I did not understand what was going on. I went to a hotel and slept there the first night. The next day, I took my suitcase and went outside of the hotel. A Greek came to me and asked: 'Are you Albanian?' 'Yes,' I said. 'Come with me and I will give you a job,' he told me. I was confused. I could not understand what was going on. We had never seen the world before. He told me to wait there. I was confused, so I left to go somewhere else, and consequently I lost the job. Then I went to a place where all Albanians would go and wait for jobs. A Greek guy came to me and said, 'I will give you a job. I have work for three months.' So I left with him. I worked there for three months. I worked in agriculture. After I finished my work there, another Greek asked me to work for him. And then another. Then I decided to go back to Thesselaniki. I did not like it there. In Thesselanik, I would go to the train station, where all Albanians would go and we would wait for Greeks to come and give them jobs. When we found jobs, we would work; when we did not find jobs, we would not work. Finally, after so many different jobs, I managed to find a good job. I started working on some boats that would come from America. I worked there for five years. That job ended, and I was unemployed. Then I started working in construction. I learned a trade, to paste walls. Since then, I have always had jobs."

In some other cases, immigrants looked for work in the villages they first arrived. Such is the story of Blerim, who took his trip to Greece with a group of friends, none of whom spoke Greek. After walking for many hours, they finally arrived at a Greek village. "It was by accidence that we went to that village. That's where the road took us. They received us really well. We met a family in the village, and they gave us food to eat.

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I asked them if I could take a shower since we had travelled for hours. They let me take a bath in their house. We slept outside. The next day we went to work, in the field to till the land. I had never worked in agriculture before.

Interviewer: How did you learn to work in agriculture?

Blerim: What could I do? I needed to eat. I needed to work so that I could eat. My mother and father were not there.

Interviewer: How did you find the job?

Blerim: Two people from the village approached us as soon as they saw us. Given that so many young people have left the remote villages and only the old have remained, they liked it. Also they had seen other Albanians who had been there before us. Because we do not get paid like a Greek person does, much less. So we did any job they could give us."

The stories of Blerim, Ndriçim, and Kreshnik are stories of those immigrants who came to Greece with no social connections, and therefore, they had to pave their own way in the Greek labor market. Many of the participants in my study, however, asserted that they found jobs through social networks. Family members, relatives, kin, and friends assisted new comers with job findings, in particular in the very beginning. These findings corroborate findings of previous research studies on Albanians' labor market adaptation in Greece (Hatziprokopiou 2003; Lazaridis, 2000; Labrianidis et al. 2001 In Hatziprokopioyu 2003) as well as findings for other immigrant groups (Hagan 1998; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994; Margolis 1994; Menjívar 2000). Only a few of immigrants said that they had found the jobs through newspapers, but only after they had been in Greece

for a period of time and in the meantime, they had acquired some command of the Greek language and environment in general.

Legal Status, Discrimination, Exploitation, and the Impact on Immigrants

The majority of the immigrants interviewed for this project were working and living in Greece on a two year work and residence permit, which they had to renew every two years, a procedure which, according to immigrants were rather costly, not to mention the bureaucratic delays on the part of Greek officials in charge of this process. The rest, those belonging to Greek and Vlach minorities, were under the status of *homogenia*, and were given a ten year visas. Only two of the immigrants had received Greek citizenship. Many immigrants, however, who had either crossed the border illegally or were visa overstayers, had, until the 1998 legalization programs, worked and lived illegally in Greece.

According to Portes (1978), undocumented immigrants are the most vulnerable of workers, and the most easily abused, because their juridical situation, their legal relationship with the host society's state deprives them of their basic civil rights (Portes 1978: 474). First and foremost, undocumented workers are vulnerable to being caught and deported. The available literature, including earlier research on Albanian migrants in Greece, (Chavez 1998; Hatziprokopiou 2003; Martinez 1994; Massey et al., 1987; Repak 1995; Zlolniski 2006) has documented the apprehension and deportation of undocumented workers. Repak (1995), for example, was told stories of how, after the passage of Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986, INS agents had apprehended Central American immigrants while they were working at their job sites

(mainly construction) and deported them after it was found out that they did not have legal work permits. Chaves (1998) also noticed how frequent patrols by INS or Border Petrol agents disrupted Green Valley's Latino immigrants' search for work. As soon as government authorities would arrive in the places where immigrants clustered in the hope of being recruited for daily jobs, undocumented immigrants would run. Moreover, fear of government authorities forced farm workers to confine their lives within the places where they lived, aware that they could be caught by the police if they would venture outside the imposed "safe" zone. Zlolniski (2006) related similar cases in his book. Hatziprokopiou (2003) too found examples of Albanians who were caught and sent back to Albania by the Greek police authorities. The same authors also found out that in most of the instances, immigrants who were deported would come back again, and in some cases, to the great surprise of their employers, even within the same day of deportation.

Immigrants in my sample recalled the anxiety they experienced during the time they were working and living illegally in Greece: "It was very difficult when we did not have papers," said Zaimiri. "I feared the police, the operation the Scoop, everything. Job insecurity. The inability to find work. Fear of being caught by the police, because I did not have papers." Several of the (male) immigrants in my study were caught and were sent back to Albania. Ndriçim was one of them. He was caught by the police while he was working as a manual laborer in a small factory that produced oil. He and a group of other Albanian immigrants had found a place, an abandoned windmill away from the village where the small factory was located. In this way, they would keep an eye on the police. "If the police came, then we would run away in the hills, so that they could not catch us." After two months of working in the factory (in 1992), operation "the Scoop"

began (the first among several operations organized by the Greek government). To his bad luck, one of the days during the operation, while he was at work, the village police arrived, about five of them. They blocked all entries of the factory. "Since they knew where I was working, they came there."

Interviewer: "How did they know where you were?"

Ndriçim: "It's possible that they had seen me when I would go to work in the morning. I had to walk through the village. So, they probably had seen me there. They also could have seen me when I would go to the village store to buy groceries. I do not know well."

The police took him to the police station and put him in a small room with fifty other Albanians. They kept them there all night, without any food or water. The next day, they took them to buses and dropped them in Kakavije, at the custom with Gjirokastra. While in the bus, he met another Albanian, and together they made plans to return as soon as they arrived in Albania. Shortly after the Greek police dropped them off at the Albanian side of the border, he and his two other acquaintances took the journey back to Greece. After walking for many hours, he made it back safely to his workplace, to the surprise of his boss. Later he was deported for the second time, and he still made the journey back to Greece. This time, fearing the local police knew his whereabouts, he decided to go somewhere else.

In addition to apprehension and deportation, undocumented immigrants are vulnerable to discrimination and exploitation on the parts of the employers. The political status of immigrants, and the legal relationship it entails with the state account for their objective position of weakness vis-à-vis their employers (Portes 1978: 474). In view of

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these circumstances, undocumented immigrants, more often than not, occupy positions at the bottom of the occupational hierarchy, mostly in the sector of informal economy, performing jobs that are low status, low paid, with no prospect for mobility, often under hazardous working conditions and with no social security benefits, unemployment insurance or other worker's benefit (Delgado 1993; Grasmuck and Pessar 1991; Lopez et al. 1996; Stepick 1998).

Researchers have documented instances of abuse and exploitation of undocumented immigrant workers on the part of the employers (Chavez 1998; Delgado 1993; Mahler 1995; Repak 1995; Samora 1971). For example, Samora (1971) in an earlier study of experiences of Mexican undocumented immigrants in the United States found out instances when employers would either pay workers much less than what workers deserved or would not pay them at all. In some other cases, employers would even turn undocumented immigrants to the Border Patrol. Cases of wage and other form of abuses were also found by Repak (1995) and Mahler (1995). Delgado (1993) also found that while bread-and-butter issues as well as excessive demands to increase production were important concerns for undocumented workers in their drive to form union in the factory they worked, their principal grievance was that of abusive treatment by the supervisors (Delgado 1993: 29).

Many of the interviewees recalled that they worked in (often casual and temporary) low-paid, unskilled, manual jobs, jobs overwhelmingly located in the informal sector of the economy, such as agriculture, construction, tourism and the service industry, and did not receive any social security benefits. In fact, for them, as one immigrant put it, these were "lost" years. After the regularization of 1998, they managed

to obtain better and more secure jobs, at least jobs that have partial or full benefits, although as their employment concentration reveals, these jobs are still low-skilled, low-status, low-prestige jobs. Moreover, as we will see below, almost half of my sample (mainly women) still work in jobs (mainly domestic) that do not provide any benefits at all.

The overwhelming majority of Albanian immigrants talked about the discrimination and exploitation they have faced in the Greek labor market. This was particularly the case with Albanian Muslims. In the "ethnonational" hierarchy of the Greek society (see above Triandafyllidou and Veikou 2002), Muslim Albanians occupy the lowest-ranking position, because they are "non Orthodox Christians". Their religion creates a psychological distance with Orthodox Greeks, since the Orthodox religion has historically been a strong element of Greek ethnic identity, it is viewed as a sustainer of Greek ethnicity (Lazaridis 2000: 64). As a result, Albanian Muslims pose a "real danger" and "threat" to the very core of Greek identity, hence a reason these immigrants are rejected.

The story of Gëzim illustrates this point. Gëzim: "When I would look for a job, they would ask me 'What is your religion?' We used to say, 'We are Orthodox.' Despite the fact that I was actually a Muslim. Otherwise, they would not give us a job."
As a result, Albanian immigrants, as the already existing literature reveals, employ various strategies to circumvent this situation, such as changing their real names to Greek names, asking their employers to baptize them or their own children (Hatziprokopiou 2003; Lazaridis 1999; Lazaridis and Romaniszyn 1998), strategies which was mentioned to me by several of my respondents.

Said Gëzim: "At the beginning, when we used to go to work, they used to ask us: 'You are from Vorioepiri, and orthodox?' We used to say, 'Yes, we are Vorioepiriots from Korça. We are from Vorioepiri.' In the workplace, they did not call me by my name, but by a Greek name. They gave me a Greek name. 'We cannot call you by your name,' they told me. "So we are going to call you with this other name". A few other immigrants also told me that they had asked their employer to baptize their children. Discrimination is not confined to Albanian Muslims only. Immigrants of Greek, Vllach, origin as well as Albanian Orthodox, also stated that they too had faced discrimination, because, as stated earlier, they too had come from Albania, their "backward" neighboring country. Florenca, who is Orthodox, said "I work at a tailor shop. My boss is very nice. But I see that often, she tries to hide the fact that I am an Albanian. She does not want to tell them that I am Albanian. She thinks it will be bad for her business, that the customers won't come again to the shop because I am Albanian. Sometimes, when the customers learn that I am Albanian, they ask her "Couldn't you have found somebody besides an Albanian?"

Similarly, Edona who is of Greek ethnicity described her experiences while she was working as domestic worker: "At the beginning they were terrible to me. She would yell and scream at me, insult me. You Albanians do not know anything; you do not know how to cook. What can I say? She would cook for her baby and would keep the meal for three days. The meal then did not taste well. I told her, you cook for yourself, while I will cook for the baby. Later I started cooking for the whole family."

Immigrants also talked of their experiences of exploitation in Greece. Many of the immigrants reported that one of the areas they have really felt exploited was wages. They

said that they were paid much less than the Greeks, because they were Albanians. One immigrant stated: "Rather than being paid ten thousand dhrahmas, I was paid two thousand. Still I accepted. I had no choice. For Albanians, even two thousand dhrahmas, was a large amount." Then he continued jocularly: "At those moments I thought about what I had learned in the lessons of political economy at school in Albania regarding the surplus value theory and the exploitation of workers by the capitalists. And I asked myself, "See how the capitalist exploits me?"

Another immigrant said "At the beginning we worked in fear. Because we were in a foreign country. I worked so hard, so I could show the employer that I really work hard. Because there were so many Albanians in that village. The afendikoi (Greek for the boss), we looked him in the eye. We saw if he would fall, we would reach and hold him, so that he would not fall. It's not that I have done it. Others have. But they did it... At the end of the day, the afendikoji would ask me to come and wash his car. What business did I have to wash his car. I was exhausted. I had worked from morning till the evening. Then, afendikoi would come and ask me: "Let's go and wash my car, because I will go to Theselaniki tomorrow." Now it is different. If he would tell me now, I would say, go to hell, go and wash it yourself. While at that time, it was the beginning. We did not know anything. I used to wash the car. What could I do? I had no choice. I had to do it."

Legal immigrants and the knowledge of Greek language, while important in adjustment, did not spare immigrants from exploitation. Unfamiliarity with work environment, rules and regulations governing this environment, unfamiliarity with Greek ways of life, was also an important factor that affected people's life.

Jonida, a member of the Greek minority told the story: "When I was working in the beginning in a small shop that made clothes, the building I was working in had many places where you could hide. So they used to tell me: "When we tell you go and hide in the bathroom."

Interviewer: "Why?"

Jonida: "Because I was without *ensima*. I understood this later. People from the government would come and inspect the place. They would ask 'Who is she? Where are her *ensima*?' I found another job, where I would iron. There were about six of us. We worked under very difficult conditions, from 7:30 in the morning till 6 o'clock in the evening. He used to tell me, "If we see any unfamiliar person, we will tell you, and then you are to go and hide in the bathroom." And they used to look outside of the window. At that time, I used to be very surprised. I used to ask myself, 'What is this?' Even here I was without *ensima*. Three years, I was without ensima. When I found another job, the new employer put *ensima* for my job. There I realized what they had done, and I said to myself: "That's why they used to tell me to go to hide in the bathroom. So I lost three years of *ensima*."

Interviewer: Did you have legal papers at that time in Greece?

Jonida: "Yes, of course, I was legal in the country. Once I had come to Greece, I had gone to the office for Greek minorities. They gave me a card that I am Vorioepiri. What kind of Vorioepirioti? They would exploit you to the bone."

Gender and Labor Market Experiences

As seen from the aforementioned examples, both men and women shared many similar experiences while trying to earn a living in Greece. As will be seen below, however, interviews also revealed differences between immigrant men and women, once again highlighting what researchers repeatedly have stated: the importance of gender in shaping immigrants' experience (Foner 2005; Hondagneo-Sotelo 1994; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2003; Pessar 1999).

To begin with, labor market insertion was different for men and women. As previously mentioned, unlike men, most of whom worked in construction, the overwhelming majority of women in the sample were hired to work in domestic service, performing tasks such as house cleaning, cooking, child-care and taking care of the elderly. Of the rest of the women, one was working in the restaurant/taverna, one as a privately employed nurse (in Greek: an *apokalistiki*), one as a tailor in a small family run firm, and another one as a supervisor in the factory. Only two were working as professionals. Both were self-employed: one was working full time, while the other one was working part time. Three other women were not working at the time of the interview. One, who had worked in a factory, had just lost her job. Another one had quit her job at a store, because she became ill and was in the process of recovery. One was staying at home to raise her kids. It should be noted, however, that even women who were not currently working in domestic service, had (with one exception) done so for most of their employment career in Greece. The employment concentration of immigrants in my sample are consistent with results derived from surveys/census analysis on Albanians immigrant performance in Greek labor market as well as various qualitative field studies

carried out with Albanian immigrants in Greece (Baldwin-Edwards 2004b; Hatziprokopiou 2003; Iosifides and King 1998; Lazaridis and Romaniszyn 1998; Lazaridis, and Psimmenos 2000).

The concentration of women in these particular occupations, in particular the domestic service, has placed women in a more disadvantageous position than immigrant men in several respects. To begin with, as Repak (1995) has argued the very nature of the jobs domestic workers perform carriers a stigma as "degrading" work, since it involves cleaning other people's bathrooms and kitchens and picking up after employers' families (Repak 1995: 102). Such work, is among others, low status, poorly remunerated, involves long and indefinite hours, absence of formal contract, and with the exception of few cases, (as my sample clearly indicates) absence of benefits such as health insurance, paid vacation, sick leave (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1997: 109; Repak 1995: 102).

Indeed, several women who were working or had previously worked as domestic in Greece, complained of the length and unpredictability of their work hours, as well as the unpredictability of job demands. For example, women who were working as cleaners mentioned that they had to work long hours at the time before and right after the holidays (i.e., Christmas, Easter), often cleaning two houses in one day. In another case one woman said that in addition to taking care of the children, a job for which she was initially hired, she then started to do other jobs such as cooking for the whole family, and occasionally cleaning; in other words performing multi-tasks an experience found among women of other immigrant groups (Cheever 2003). The performance of a multiplicity of such domestic tasks is nothing more but an extension of women's tasks they perform at

home. As one immigrant told me: "Here I do every day, what I used to do in Albania every Sunday: clean the entire house, all of it."

The issue that immigrant women were highly concerned, however, was that of social security benefits. As noted previously, under the communist regime, work was secured and fear of losing the job was non existent. Moreover, people enjoyed various fringe benefits such as universal free health care, under which everybody was covered, paid vacation time, consultation clinics, vacation centers for workers and their families (Jacques 1995: 539). In addition, Albania's social security system extending literally from "womb to tomb," covered disability, old age pensions, and burial expenses (Jacques 1995: 530- 540).

In my sample, however, a total of five women received work related benefits, such as health insurance, sick leave days, vacation time, and pension upon retirement. Of these five, only two of those who were working in domestic service, received such benefits. Instead, married women asserted that they relied for these benefits through their husband's work. In addition, their residence permit depended on their husband's, since he was the one who had social insurance through his work, which is one of the main criteria to live and work in Greece.

Klodiana: "Under Enver regime, I had a job. Yes, Yes. Work was secured. I worked 10 years. I made carpets. The work was very, very hard. The wage was very, very low. In Greece, in the beginning, I took care of an old lady for three years. Then the lady died, so I left. I had to find a job cleaning the houses. So I began to clean the houses. Even now I clean the houses.

Interviewer: "How do you compare your past job with the present job?

Klodiana: "Compared with my past job, this job is much easier. Only that I do not have social security benefits. Back then, I had a pension. When I would get old, I would retire. While now, I do not have a pension, I am not secured. They do not give you *ensima* in this job. Jobs with social security are in the tailor shops. But I do not know how to do that job. So I clean houses... I am secured through my husband's work. He has *ensima*. He has a green card, and I depend on my husband. I do not get a pension. Only my husband gets a pension."

Women also complained that their husbands' pension will not be enough when they retire. One immigrant said: "The pension that the Greeks give you is very little, even for the Greek themselves. I worry a lot, because my husband's pension will not be enough for him, let alone for me. It is very expensive to live and pay the rent; you cannot live on that pension."

Several women also mentioned the fact that while social security benefits through their husbands' work covered visits to doctors and medicines, it did not provide women with days off in case they became sick. Fatjona said: "They do not pay me if I stay at home. The doctor cannot give me days off. All medicines are free, because I am insured through my husband. But if I get sick and I cannot work, they do not pay me."

In addition to a lack of social security benefits, instances of which were found by other scholars of Albanian migration (Lazaridis and Koumandraki 2007), fear of losing the job, including jobs that provided no benefits, was also a grave concern for women. For example, Etina, who is single, expressed a high degree of anxiety, given she had no other means of support, and her employer did not provide any social security benefits: "What was positive for me in the past was job security. The hospitals also were free. You

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did not have the anxiety: 'Now I do not have money, and I cannot go to the hospital. I can't pay the doctor. In Albania, you would go to the doctor, and you paid nothing. There was security before… I work without *IKA* (social security), and I am obliged to pay in Albania some money, so that I can get a pension. But, also you do not have the energy to work. I am by myself, for example, and always worry about how I am going to pay the rent. In the past, you could get a letter from the doctor saying that were sick and you had to stay at home. If you were sick or not, if you knew somebody, you could get a letter from the doctor, and nobody would say you anything. Here, if you do not work, you do not eat. Nobody helps you. For example, I work for an older lady, and I always ask myself, 'What if she dies. Will I be able to find another job quickly.' I am anxious about that, because I say to myself, 'Who is going to pay for the water and electricity and telephone? Who will pay for these things?' If something happens to me, I will be in the middle of four roads. They can easily fire you. I am really anxious. What if I do not have energy to work any longer? Because age plays its role. Before, you had your job and it was there. Here, if you do not know somebody to find you a job, you are stuck… In Albania, the work was much harder. I worked in a factory. I could do it. Now, I can also do the job. But I am more scared, because I say, 'What if the old woman does not want me tomorrow. What am I going to do?' The problem is that I do not want to expect things from a husband. Why should I put up with a husband?…Only few women work with *IKA*. They do not give you social security. You need to work only in one house, so they can put you social security'. Now, all these years passed, and we are left with nothing."

For those few who had access to social security through their work, the fear of losing the job loomed large, since the loss of a job meant the loss of various benefits.

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Blerta said, "I work in a restaurant. My husband works in construction. I have social security. My husband's social security depends on his work. When he works a lot he has social security. Sometimes we have to buy ourselves the social security (stamps).

Interviewer: What about a pension?

Blerta: What pension? I need to work 18 more years to get a pension. Do I have the security in this country that I will have a job? I do not have any security in my country, let alone in Greece. Today they keep you in work, tomorrow they fire you. They do not care. They do not hire you, especially when they hear you are Albanian. In the past, I remember. My parents worked, my brother worked. You were not left without a job. Now, who knows?"

One of the major issues immigrant women are faced in immigration is that of childcare. Various researchers (Foner 1986; Foner 2005; Hochschild 2003; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1997; Hondagneu-Sotelo and Ernestine Avila 1997; Mahler 1995) including earlier research on Albanian immigrants (Lazaridis 2000) have observed these concerns in their studies as well as strategies women employed to cope with these particular situations: immigrant women often left their children behind under the care of their mothers, grandmothers, neighbors, children's fathers, other female relatives, sometimes with paid caregivers, or in the worst case scenario in the orphanage. In a few cases, both husband and wife would work opposite shift. In other instances, as research by Lazaridis (2000) shows, parents are compelled to take the children out of school to look after younger siblings.

Child care was a major concern for Albanian women with children as well. It should be worth reiterating, however, what we have mentioned earlier. Unlike women in

many parts of the world, working women hailing from former communist countries enjoyed an array of benefits, such as paid maternity leave for women, free health care, low-cost government provided-daycare and kindergarten. These benefits, while inadequate and of lower quality by Western standards, greatly facilitated mother-worker role of women, assuming that women were both expected to work and be solely responsible for the domestic realm, since Albanian men, like Russian men are famous for not assisting with household tasks, regardless of their wives' occupational commitment (Gold 1995).[70] In addition, like elsewhere, (see for example Foner 1986; Zhou 2000) family members, in particular grandparents, often took care of grandchildren when mothers were working. In some cases too, family's relatives assisted in child caring. In Greece, however, child-care responsibilities pose serious problem because of several factors. To begin with, for a considerable amount of time, many women and their families were working and living without papers. As such, they were not eligible for state subsidized child-care.

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[70] The communists, as part of socialist state's project of emancipation of women, put a lot of efforts to provide women with equal access to education and employment opportunities as those of men. While the status in the educational and occupational sphere improved significantly for Albanian women during socialist regime, the same achievements could not be said about family sphere, even though the most extreme traditions that had historically characterized Albanian family were also challenged and partially changed, yet the patriarchal mentality was never undermined (Mai 2001b: 268-269). As elsewhere in Eastern Europe, "any development of women's roles took place within a vacuum, by dint of communist party diktat and largely without any commensurate comprehensive change in social attitudes." (Hall 1994: 88) Women had to work as hard as men at work, only to go home and start the "second shift" of cooking, washing, cleaning the house, taking care of kids. Surveys conducted with 450 Tirana residents in 1986 showed that "80 per cent of female workers spent more than two hours a day on housework compared to only 20 per cent of male workers. During no-working days 63 percent of female workers spent more than three hours on housework (with 30 per cent spending more than five hours), compared to 14 per cent of male workers. Moreover, when it came to the division of responsibilities for the care of children, whereas 47 per cent of women in the sample spent between 1.5 and three hours a day looking after children, only 15 per cent of men devoted this amount of time to child care. This figure ranged from 12 per cent for manual workers to 19 per cent for high-status professionals (Tarifa and Barjaba 1986; 1990 In Hall 1994: 86).

One woman recounted her difficulties of taking care of her newly born child during the time she and her husband were working and living illegally in Greece. "I gave birth to my son, and I had to leave him at home after forty days. I left him with my husband and my older son. I worked all night, and during the day I would take care of my son. My husband would take care of my son during the night. When there was nobody at home, then my older son would take care of his younger brother. A child would take care of a child. Because we did not have papers. If you do not have emigration papers, they could not take the child to day care, or kindergarten. They would not take it. It was very difficult. I can't even describe it."

Moreover, even in those cases when women possessed legal resident papers, but were working in domestic service under the conditions of informal employment, which meant lack of social security benefits, they were not eligible for state subsidized day-care centers. Such is the case of Afërdita, who was not able take her newly born child to day care, even though she was residing legally in Greece, because she was working "off the books" as a house cleaner: "I could not take my child to day care. According to Greek law, if a mother is employed, she needs to show a document that verifies that she is employed somewhere. I was not employed legally. I was doing "black" (illegal) work, because I was cleaning houses. When you clean the houses, you are not registered legally, because I did not have an employer. I was not employed in a job legally, so I could not get a letter from social security. I worked daily, wherever I could find work... It was too expensive to take my child to a private day care. In addition, the work schedule was inconvenient. I was on the road, from job- to- job all day. I could not manage to pick up the daughter from the day care. ... So I sent my daughter back to

Albania to stay with my mother. Many people have done this. This is very, very difficult."

Not all women I interviewed, however, had the good fortune of having relatives taking care of their children. As a result, they pursued other alternatives, such as taking children to private day-care, though these instances were quite rare. Drita, however, who came to Greece with her husband upon finishing her university studies, decided to stay at home and raise her Greek born children, while her husband works in two jobs. She lamented the fact that she had come to Greece, considering it to be a big loss for her professional career and life in general. "Under Enver, I would be better. Because I would finish the university, and I would find a job. Now, I have ten years in Greece, and what do I do besides raise kids? I have turned into a housewife. There at least, I would work. Do you understand me? All those years of school are gone for me. I emigrated for what? There I would have been better; not only would be better, but surely I would be much better."

The experiences of Drita, the university graduate turned stay-home mom, are found among other immigrants of similar position. For example, Ho (2006) interviewed women from Hong Kong and China, who, like Albanian women, have a strong history of high level of participation in paid work. Upon moving to Australia, the challenges of settling in a new society as well as lack of domestic support they had at home, pushed these women to devote all their energies to facilitating family's settlement in the new country by completely withdrawing from the labor market, or limiting themselves to part-time work. Gold (2002) too found similar patterns for Israeli immigrant women in the United States.

The experiences of Albanian immigrant women can be fully understood in the context of the Greek economic and social institutions. Hondagneu-Sotelo (2003) has argued that gender is critical to the constitution of social institutions, not just family and household, but other institutions as well, labor market being one.[71] Following this argument, we would state, as others have remarked as well (Lazaridis 1996; Lazaridis and Romaniszyn 1998), that the Greek labor market, is highly gendered too, where men are clustered into "men's job", while women have been funneled into "women's job," the most common of which is that of domestic worker. Particular types of societies create particularly gendered labor markets (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2003: 8). In Greece, an ageing population; changing family structure; rising participation of women in the labor force; longer periods spent by females in full-time education; incapability of welfare state to provide adequate care for the children (i.e., limited number of kindergarten), the elderly and the sick as well as for people with special needs; continuous enlargement of housing space; the still rather limited participation of males in housework and the prestige considerations in many middle-class households to have a foreign domestic maid, creates a demand for domestic service jobs (Fakiolas 2000: 60; Lazaridis 2000: 50).

The insertion of immigrant women in these jobs, has affected women on several level: In addition to "degrading" nature of the job, low remuneration, lack of contract and unpredictable and long hours, immigrant women have lost access to various social security benefits, benefits which were taken for granted under the communist regime. Married women have secured these benefits through their husband's work, including the right to residence, although none of them have the right to a pension upon retirement.

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[71] Repak (1995), for example, found out that informal recruitment of Central Americans to serve as domestic workers and child-care providers for Washington D.C.'s government, diplomatic and professional employers, was a highly gendered process, whereby only women were hired to fill in these positions.

This situation will most likely increase the dependence of women on men. As one woman immigrant who had worked as domestics all her migrant life in Greece and did not have retirement benefit, told me: "If tomorrow my husband divorces me, I do not know what I am going to do." These findings, therefore contradict the existing findings that women (in particular women who obtain access to paid employment for the first time in their life), gain from migration, while men lose. Instead, however, the findings show that women have experienced a loss, which will, in all likelihood, increase the dependence of women upon men, and therefore their subordinate status.[72]

In sum: A summary of occupational concentration of participants in this study reveal the following picture: The majority of men work in construction, while the rest work in small factories, various services, transportation, agriculture, taking care of people's gardens, or are self-employed mainly in building cleaning. The overwhelming majority of women, on the other hand, are employed in domestic service (housecleaning, cooking, child-care provider, taking care of the elderly). The rest work in small factories (i.e., clothing firm), restaurants/taverna, hotel, hospitals. Many, however, said that they had also worked in agriculture as seasonal laborers when they first came to Greece. Of all the people with university and advanced degrees, only three had been able to obtain a job commensurate with their educational level and training, while another one was self-employed and was working part time.

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[72] Literature on gender and immigration has also talked about another negative experience that women domestic workers, in particular live-in (young, unmarried) ones have faced: the vulnerability to sexual harassment by their employers (Hondegnao-Sotelo 1997). None of the women in my sample, however, reported instances of sexual harassment. While most of women worked as domestics, none of them was working or had ever worked as a live-in domestic worker, a position which is much more likely to expose women to sexual pursuit by their employer. Married women reported that they had followed their husbands in migration, while single women had joined their brothers and had stayed with them for a period of time, until they found a job and their own housing accommodations. This, then, may explain the lack of instances of sexual harassment for migrant women in this sample.

Immigrants contended that trying to find a job, fear of losing the job, of constantly being on the look out for a job, had been one of the most stressful and difficult experiences they had to get used to in Greece, including getting used to rigid rules and regulations of the work environment. In view of these circumstances, then, some even recalled nostalgically the job security and the benefits it came with it (i.e., work related benefits) of the past communist regime. Others, however, while recognizing these difficulties, expressed satisfaction with work in Greece, because Greece as a capitalist country provides opportunities for people to move ahead.

The people who had the most difficult time getting adjusted to the new labor market realities in Greece were the former professionals and university educated people. With few exceptions, all immigrants in this group worked in low status, low paid jobs. Thus, in addition to losing job security, this group of immigrants had undergone significant downward mobility, and as such they had lost the status their occupation accorded to them in the previous system. The new situation had resulted in many emotional problems for immigrants.

By contrast, immigrants who came from rural areas in Albania expressed high satisfaction with their work and life in general in Greece. This is to be understood in the context of the peasants' lives under the previous regime. Under the communist government, economic, working, and living conditions in the rural areas, in particular for those who worked as manual laborers in the field, were much harsher than in urban areas. Upon coming to Greece, this situation changes. Cleaning houses, working in construction, or even agricultural work, hard as these jobs may be, in view of these

immigrants, they are still better that in Albania, at least because of the much higher incomes they provide, as well as because of facilities in the workplace.

Immigrants reported various ways of finding their jobs. Those who came to Greece with no social networks, had to pave their own way in the job market. Several of these immigrants, given lack of ties, unfamiliarity with Greek environment, lack of authorization to work in the country, pursued the avenue of informal labor congregation, where they would gather in certain public centers and would wait for employers to come and give them a job. Eventually, they had moved to more stable jobs. Most of the immigrants, however, reported finding their jobs through social networks. Family, relatives, and friends assisted them in their job finding process.

All immigrants talked about the discrimination and exploitation they had faced in Greece. Legal status was closely related to these experiences. Until 1998, the year when the first regularization was undertaken by the Greek government, many of the immigrants had worked and lived illegally in Greece. As such they had performed jobs that were overwhelmingly concentrated in informal sector of the economy, that provided no social security benefits. Moreover, they were usually paid much less than Greeks were paid, given their status of illegality, although this was not confined to the undocumented immigrants only. Several of the immigrants also reported that they were caught and sent back to Albania, while they were in Greece as undocumented immigrants, only to return again, sometimes even within the same day. Albanian Muslims, in particular, told of cases of discrimination and exploitation, although Albanians of Greek, Vllach origin, as well as Orthodox Albanians were not spared either, because after all they too come from Albania, the poorest country in Europe.

Over time, however, immigrants has become more familiar with Greece and the Greek ways of life. In its initial encounters with the "mythologized"[73] Greece, Albanians were understandably shocked and awed at the opulence of Greek society[74]. It seemed as if they were, for the first time in their lives, living the "dream" they had created through secretly watching foreign TV channels and programs. Soon, however, they encountered the "real" Greece, very different from the one they had seen on the TV. Blerina, for example, who came in 1991 described how disappointed she became, once she and her family began to settle in Greece:

"At first, I was so impressed with the supermarket. Because we had never seen supermarkets before. And the beautiful houses, and the clean streets. And the fact that my husband made much more than in Albania. But when I first began to live. It was terrible. We had to live in a room in an abandoned small house. This was a house of an older woman who had died. The house was closed for about 30 years. They gave us a room. It was about 100 meters away from the yard. The conditions were terrible... You see, in Albania, I never lived in difficult conditions. I had good conditions in my house and at my husband's house." Other immigrants, too, stated that they had encountered similar difficulties with housing situation at the beginning of their life in Greece.

Some others highlighted the difficulty of raising their children in Greece, pointing to problems such as drugs, demands for consumer goods, children's rebellious behavior, various "degenerate" TV programs, as their major concerns in child rearing. Said Edlira: "I am afraid for my children. Because they grow up like Greeks here. Very different from

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[73] I am paraphrasing here from the work of Barjaba and King (2005), who use the words "mythologized West."

[74] Gold (1995) describes similar reactions on the part of Russian Jews from former Soviet Union when they arrived in the United States

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us. I do not dare to say anything to my son. I told him when he finished eight year school, to attend a vocational high school. You think he would listen to me. I would not dare to say anything. We almost got into a big fight. Different from my time. I would not dare to talk back to my parents. They would not allow such a behavior.... Because here, you are afraid. Afraid of drugs. Because they take drugs here. When he goes to a party, I got am extremely concerned until he comes back. I stay awake. I call him at his cell phone. Very different from us. We would not dare to do such a thing to our parents."

In spite of the difficulties and hardships they have encountered, Albanians have decided to stay in Greece since in the words of an immigrant "in Albania things are worse. Here I have a job, back home there are no jobs, there is no security." Moreover, many felt that the future of their children, difficulties notwithstanding, was better in Greece than in Albania. This illustrates what Waldinger and Lichter (2003: 40-41) have already suggested that immigrants should be understood as workers distinctively characterized by a dual frame of reference, in which conditions in the host society are always assessed relative to conditions in the home society. On the other hand, Greek employers, while they may despise Albanians who have "invaded" their country, they are, however, quite willing to hire them, since they too are cognizant of immigrants' dual frame of reference. And as long as the comparison "here" with "there" remains relevant, employers are likely to see immigrant as more accommodating, if not necessarily happier, workers than the native-born ones. As one immigrant related what her boss had told her: "I don't understand why you Albanians complain? We have brought you so many good things. You live in a city full of lights. You live in houses. You don't have jobs, we give you jobs. We feed you. We support you. What more do you want?"

Moreover, as the years have passed by, Albanians have learned their ways around their host country. The world that was so alien, distant, that awed them at first, has become a daily reality that they inhabit. The 1998 regularization amnesty provided immigrants with the ability to move from the position of illegality to that of legality, in turn providing them with a sense of legal (though not permanent) security they largely lacked. The acquisition of green card, short term though as it may be, enabled them to improve their job situation, mainly in terms of obtaining work-related benefits, although this cannot be said for majority of women. Yet, they still occupy low-status, low prestige jobs, with not much upward job mobility.

Gender plays a vital role in shaping immigrant men and women experiences. For one, unlike men, women were overwhelmingly concentrated in domestic service. The clustering of women in this particular sector of economy has meant lack of work related benefits such as health insurance benefits, vacations, sick leave days, right to a pension when they retired, benefits that were taken for granted during the communist regime. In addition, lack of formal job meant lack of the right to reside in Greece. As a result of this, married women relied for these benefits through their husband's work, although none of them had the right to a pension upon retirement. This situation will most likely increase the dependence of women on men. Moreover, women with newly born and small children had encountered another disadvantage. The lack of legal employment, meant they were not eligible for child-care facilities, a situation which forced women to resort to other ways, such as putting their children under the care of their mothers in Albania, or under the care of their older siblings, sending them to private day care, or even staying at

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home and raising their kids. Contrary to what other researchers have found, therefore, these findings reveal that women lose, rather than gain in immigration.

CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSIONS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Conclusions

As stated in the introduction, this study aims at fulfilling two goals: First, the study explores Albanian migrants' experiences in Greece. These experiences include motivations of exits as well as immigrants' adaptation in the Greek labor market. Analysis of motivations is vital to understanding immigrants' experiences, because the decision to migrate is one of the most important decision people make in their life time (Gold 1997: 410). In addition, analysis of motivation provides us with the understanding of the nature of migration in general. Second: the study examines the social mechanisms that underlie perpetuation of migration after its initiation, as well as its transformation from forced migration to labor migration.

Albania serves as a good example where economic and political factors that cause migration are inextricably intertwined. Earlier researchers (Barjaba and King 2005) have used the world "economic refugees" to describe Albanian migrants. In this dissertation, given the constellation of economic and political forces (i.e., the deteriorating economic conditions, political and social instability, and the fact that escaping the country was still considered an act of betrayal by the government officials) that propelled migration, I define Albanian migrants as forced migrants.

Respondents pointed out economic reasons (i.e., poverty, high unemployment, a desire to give their family a better life), family-based reasons (conflict in the family, desire to join their spouses, siblings who were already in Greece), political instability, professionals reasons, as well as a desire to see the Western world as their main reasons

for leaving Albania and moving to Greece. These micro as well as meso explanations, however, are not fully capable to explain what motivates people to leave. For one, the problem with micro-based explanations is that they are post-migration reconstruction for reasons to migrate, therefore they may be highly influenced by immigrants' personal experience as well as the social environment he/she lives in. In addition, immigrants may be unaware of the larger structural, historical, economic, political and social developments that shape immigrants' motivations to leave. Social networks, on the other hand, as our examples revealed, while significant in shaping motivations to leave the country, cannot explain the majority of migrants' motives. More importantly, it could be said that micro, meso as well as macro explanations could not account for the timing of leaving Albania. In view of these considerations, it was argued that a full explanation of forces that shape Albanian migrants' motivations must take into account the role of the Albanian communist state.

During their rule, the communist government of Albania pursued a highly centralized economic and political system, which limited economic opportunities for its citizens, while at the same time creating a gap between Albania and its prosperous capitalist neighbors. This system went hand in hand with a Soviet type control of people's movement, in which nobody was allowed to leave the country. Any attempt to do so, would meet with severe punishment, including, in some cases, the death penalty. These rigid policies created the conditions for initiation of migration. The deterioration and the final collapse of Albanian authoritarian government triggered large-scale migration. Within a period of less than a decade, Albania went from a country with virtually no emigration, to one in which about 20 percent of its own citizens live abroad.

Immigrants reported various ways and means of making the journey to Greece. Those of Greek and Vlach ancestry, given their ethnic background, were able to obtain visas at Greek consulates or the Greek embassy in Albania. A few immigrants managed to get their visas through friends or acquaintances who were members of the Albanian political parties and had access to bureaucratic officials in charge of granting visas in Greek consulates. Many, however, given blocked official channels resorted to other ways, including bribing custom officials, purchasing fraudulent visas, or even using forged passports. Others crossed the borders illegally, walking through the mountains, overcoming many difficulties and hurdles during their perilous journey.

While the communist government of Albania created the conditions for immigration, once immigration took off, it continued and took on unprecedented massive proportions. Social ties that connected immigrants and non immigrants lie at the basis of this continuation. Pioneer immigrants recalled how they took their journey to Greece without knowing anybody to receive and assist them upon arrival. Once they found a job, housing, and became familiar with daily life in their new country, they encouraged their family, and friends to join them. The latter, in turn did the same. Over time, given the structure of networks, whole families and communities arrived and settled in Greece. In the course of this process, the Albanian state has been largely absent from the life of immigrants, leaving its own citizens to fend off for themselves as they try to get adjusted to the new life. Almost all immigrants voiced their complaints about the lack of support on the part of their own government.

This brings us to the issue as to what the Albanian government should do for its citizens abroad. So far, the government has addressed the issue of emigration mainly in

terms of repressive measures: measures against trafficking and management of borders controls (National Strategy of Migration 2006). As mentioned above, it has only been recently that Albanian government in cooperation with IOM has managed to formulate a National Strategy on Migration[75] as well as an Action Plan on how to implement it. The aim of this strategy is to provide Albania with a more comprehensive and holistic policy of migration, a policy that is based on migration management of migration, in particular emigration flows. This policy covers the following areas: "the protection of the rights of Albanian emigrants abroad, building up and linking Albanian communities abroad, driving remittances of emigrants into business investments, organizing an adequate policy for labor migration, facilitating the travel of Albanian citizens confronted with short-term visa requirements and finally, the development of the adequate legal and institutional framework." (Albanian National Strategy on Migration 2006: 3)[76] While this plan address the major emigration issues, the rigorous implementation of these policies remain of vital importance. This, above all, requires, intensive efforts to establish lots of contacts with the Albanian community abroad (National Strategy of Migration 2006).

In addition, I would suggest that Albanian state should learn from immigration strategies and policies of countries (i.e., Mexico, Dominican Republican) that have a long history and tradition of emigration (see Levitt and de la Dehesa 2003 for an excellent summary of emigrants' policies of Brazil, Mexico, Dominican Republican, and Haiti). For example, Dominican Republican has stuffed its consular services in United States with Dominicans who are U.S. residents (and members of the governing party). Albanian

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[75] National Strategy of Migration was funded by Cards programme of the European Union.

[76] For a detailed outline of Albanian government's strategy of emigration see National Strategy of Migration (2006).

government could follow this example and appoint to its consular services, in particular Greece and Italy, immigrants (permanent residents, or citizens of these countries) who live and reside in these countries (Itzigsohn 2000). These immigrants, given their membership in Albanian immigrant communities, are much more familiar with, and sensitive to immigrants' problems and are familiar with host society's environment. As a result, they will be in a much better position to help immigrants with difficulties they encounter. Another important step also could be granting voting rights to its immigrants abroad (Levitt and de la Dehesa 2003 talk about immigrants' voting right issues with regard to Mexican and Dominican case). This will put Albanian political class and its government much more attentive to the needs of its immigrants abroad.

The arrival of thousands of Albanians found Greece, itself a formerly emigrant country, largely unprepared to respond to the new situation. The initial response in 1991 was the formulation and implementation of an "exclusionary" law, as well as repressive measures, such as apprehensions and deportations. As a result of these policies, the overwhelming majority of Albanians were left in the conditions of illegality. Eventually, realizing that immigrants were not going to return soon, the Greek government implemented two legalization programs, which enabled hundreds and thousands of Albanians to change their status from forced, illegal migrants to legal, labor immigrants. Yet, the short term (one to three years) legal status, coupled with the *jui sanguinis* basis of Greek citizenship, leaves immigrants in a largely uncertain, unpredictable and vulnerable position for the future.

Legalization programs undertaken by Greek government have certain implications for United States. Certainly, Greece and United States have very different immigration

histories and traditions: Greece, as mentioned earlier, was, for a long time a country of emigration; United States, on the other hand, is deemed to be a "country of immigration" a "settler" society, although "the contradictory impulses to both welcome and exclude immigrants have reflected and reinforced Americans' long-standing ambivalence towards immigration." (Lee 2006: 29). These differences notwithstanding, there are certain similarities between two countries as far as immigration is concerned. For one, Greece is to Albania, like United States is to Mexico: both countries are hosts to large number of migrants from their neighboring countries, even though Mexican migration to United States has a much older history than Albanian migration in Greece. Moreover, a large number of immigrants in United States, like Albanians until 1998, have, for a long time, worked (in jobs that natives have shun away) and reside illegally. Some will return to their countries, but many, like "guestworkers" in Europe (see above), and Albanians in Greece, will settle in the US permanently. As a result of this, it is suggestive that U.S. government look at the experience of Greece (as well as Italy) in the realm of undocumented immigrants' legalization programs and learn how can these programs be best applied to the US situation.

A summary of the occupational concentration of immigrants of my sample revealed that the overwhelming majority of them work in low-paid, low-status jobs. The majority of men work in construction, while the rest work in small factories, agriculture, transportation, various services, landscaping, with a few being self employed, mainly cleaning the apartment buildings. The overwhelming majority of women, on the other hand, are employed in domestic service, while the rest work in small factories, restaurants/tavern, hotels, and hospitals. Of all the people with university or post

university degrees, only three had managed to work in jobs commensurable with their educational level and training.

Immigrants' personal stories revealed the difficult process of transition from the labor environment of the socialist Albania, where the job was guaranteed, and the fear of losing one's job was non existent, to the job insecurities of capitalist Greece. As many immigrants stated, trying to find a job, fear of losing their job, and of constantly being on the lookout for a job, had been one of the most stressful experiences they had to overcome in Greece. A few of the participants in my sample, even looked nostalgically to the job security and the benefits (work related benefits) of the jobs in the past regime. Others, however, while recognizing these difficulties, expressed their satisfaction with the opportunity capitalist market provides to people to move ahead.

The social status immigrants held prior to immigration played an important role in immigrants' adaptation. Former professionals and university educated people, who, by virtue of the low status jobs they performed in Greece, had undergone significant downward mobility, had had the most difficult time adjusting to the new realities. On the other hand, immigrants who hailed from rural Albania were much more content with their work and quality of life in Greece. The reason for this is that people who lived in the rural areas under communist Albania were subjected to conditions that were much harsher than those who lived in the cities. Work and life in Greece, therefore, hard as it may be, is still much better compared to the ones they left behind.

Gender influenced immigrants' experiences in profound ways. For one, the concentration of the overwhelming number of women in domestic service, meant a lack of work related benefits, such as health insurance, vacations, sick leave days, right to a

pension when they retired, benefits which were taken for granted under the communist regime. As a result of this situation, women have had to rely on their husband's work to obtain these benefits, although none of the women had the right to a pension. This situation, then, will, very likely increase the dependence of women on the men. Moreover, women with children, given their lack of formal employment, were not eligible for child-care facilities. In view of these circumstances, often women had to resort to other ways such as sending them to expensive private day care, leaving them under the care of their older child, or even staying at home to raise their kids. These findings, therefore, contrary to what other researchers have found, reveal that women lose, rather than gain, in immigration.

Exploitation and discrimination were experiences that loomed large in immigrants' stories. Most of the immigrants were very critical and expressed anger and bitterness about these encounters. Legal status was closely connected to these experiences. As mentioned previously, until 1998, a large number of immigrants were living and working illegally in Greece. As such immigrants were forced to work in the "underground" economy, where jobs pay little and lack social security benefits. Moreover, they were paid much less than their Greek counterparts. Several of the immigrants also related their stories of how they were deported and sent back to Albania while they were working illegally in their jobs. Albanian Muslims, in particular, faced many more obstacles in Greece, because they are not "Orthodox Christians." As such, their religious status relegates them to the lowest position in the Greek "ethnonational" hierarchy. They are perceived as a "danger" to the very essence of Greek ethnic identity,

orthodox religion. Moreover, like the rest of their compatriots, they hail from Albania, the poorest country in Europe, hence a reason to be exploited and discriminated against.

Contributions and Limitations of the Study

This study contributes to scholarship on migration studies in several areas:

First: This study enables us to understand social forces that underlie the establishment, perpetuation and normalization of a new kind of migration, that from the former Eastern Bloc to the capitalist West. Few, if any studies are done in this area. Moreover, given the fact that Albanian migration started out as a forced migration and shifted on to normal labor migration, this research has provided an opportunity to explore the social mechanisms that underlie the transformation from forced migration to labor migration.

Second: This study expands our knowledge on the role of the state in migration. The existing body of scholarship on migration and state focuses on how states "manage" migration, that is, the criteria states use to let people in and out. In the case of Albania, however, the state is not currently involved in migration. It was prior political and economic decisions pursued by communist Albanian state that created the current immigration environment, as it drastically reduced economic opportunities for its people. Moreover, the fall of the very state unleashed large-scale migration. Thus, by shifting the focus of study of the state and migration, this project furthers our understanding of the role of this important actor in migration.

Third: This study enhances our understanding of human drama element in migration: how do immigrants make the transition from a tightly controlled society to a free capitalist society? Human experience in transformation has not been studied much

in European literature. This research, then, has been able to address the gap in the European scholarship and advance our knowledge on migrant's human experiences in the migration literature in general.

Fourth: In the large body of literature produced on migration, the overwhelming majority of studies focuses on the traditional countries of immigration (i.e., United States, Canada, Australia, Israel), countries with a long history of immigration (i.e., France, England) as well as countries of North Europe which received millions of workers as part of "guestarbait system" in the post-World War Era, among which immigrants from Southern European countries (i.e., Greece, Italy, Spain) were well represented. Beginning with the late 1980s and early 1990s, the influx of large number of immigrants to Italy, Spain and eventually Greece turned these previously emigration countries to countries of immigration. Yet, little has been written about immigrants' experiences in these countries, even though the lack of a history of immigration of these countries will certainly shape migrants' experiences. The examination of Albanian migrants' experiences, then, brings to light experiences of immigrants in countries which are not used to immigration.

Despite these contributions, this study also has its limitations. For one, this is an exploratory study, using the case method. The case study provides a rich body of information on a certain topic and allows us to thoroughly and comprehensively understand a certain social phenomenon. Yet, as is the case with the studies of this nature, one cannot generalize for the whole population. Another limitation has to do with the instrument used to conduct interviews. As previously mentioned, the telephone interview is a highly effective tool to use in those cases where the population is geographically

dispersed, as Albanians are in Greece. The telephone interview shares many of the advantages of face-to-face interviewing (i.e., a high response rate; correction to misunderstandings; possible use of probes). In this respect, it enables researcher to collect in depth details regarding the social phenomenon under study. Yet, it may be limited because it lacks the visual cues resulting from face-face in interaction, which in turn, may cause certain problems in interpretation (Robins 1993: 241).

The analysis of immigrants' adaptation in Greece, provided, among other things, an insight into the life and daily struggles of immigrants while they were working and living in Greece under the conditions of illegality. Yet, this research has not included those immigrants who are still illegal due to two reasons: their inability to legalize their status during the two legalization programs, or given the onerous demands of maintaining their (green card) legal status, they may have fallen back to the status of illegality. Compared to people who managed to regularize their status, these immigrants have to endure many more difficulties and obstacles, which in turn will impact their life in Greece.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Summer 2006

Socio-Demographic Background

1. gender
2. age
3. region of birth
4. education
5. marital status
6. religion
7. ethnic group
8. occupation
9. # of children

Motivations
1. When did you leave the first time? (year)
2. Why did you leave? What were the reasons for leaving?

Networks and Cumulative Causation of Migration

1. How did you go the first time? Did you get a visa? What was your legal status
2. Did you know anybody in Greece when you left the first time? What were they, Albanians or Greeks
3. Do you think you know more people now in Greece than you did when you left the first time?
4. Where did you go the first time? Why did you go there?
5. Now, do you know many people in Greece? Are they your friends, relatives, and acquaintances? How many people did you have
6. Have you helped other people with their trips in Greece?
7. How many people have you helped
8. Who are they, your relatives, your friends, people from your community?

9. How many people do you know in Greece now compared to the very beginning?

10. If you needed financial help, where did you go?

Labor Market Experiences

1. What was your job before you moved to Greece (under communism)

2. What was your first job here?

3. How did you find the job?

4. Was it difficult to find the job? How did you find it?

5. What were your first experiences in the job?

6. What is your job now?

7. How many times have you changed jobs/employers?

8. Under communism the government gave you a job and you could be in it for the rest of your life. In Greece, you had to look for a job? What was this like? What do you think of the fact that you have to constantly look for job/ you have to change jobs in Greece?

9. How do you deal with this job insecurity?

10. What are some of your experiences at work? Have you ever-experienced discrimination because you are Albanian?

11. Do you think you are discriminated because of your religion?

12. Have you ever experienced discrimination at your work because you are a woman? Do you feel you are discriminated more as a woman or as an Albanian

13. Who makes more you or your spouse? Why do you think this is?

14. Did you have difficulty to find a job because you are a woman?

15. Do you think you had an easier time at work place in Albania than now in Greece?

16. Who is paid more, you or your spouse

17. Under communism, health care was free? What about in Greece? What are your experiences with it.

APPENDIX B
MAP OF GREECE

http://www.infoplease.com/atlas/country/greece.html

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