

**Cultural collaboration between Albania and Serbia and
what can be done to use the potential in the future**

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Introduction

Potential membership in the European Union (EU) is the main foreign policy priority of both countries. In accordance with its European orientation both Serbia and Albania are willing to prove their commitment to the promotion of regional cooperation. The initial step that should be undertaken is the establishment of cultural policy in order to bring freshness into the strained relations of the two countries. The historically burdened relationship with the various aspirations of the two neighbors led to an unforgivable ignorance of two nations, two languages, two cultures, developing long-term intolerance and prejudice. In one word, it has led to a great silence in the field of cultural policy. Political action at the time of the communist regime, which was under the full control of the state, caused certain isolation and closeness of society and the lack of cultural policy, cultural activity and cultural freedom, and above all the cultural awareness.

Cultural relations in the 20th century

Although for centuries live next to each other, Serbs and Albanians do not know much about each other. Until 2000 there was almost no cooperation in the field of culture. During the rule of Enver Hoxha, the border between the two countries was almost completely closed for cultural events. With the development of modern media, especially television, the former Yugoslavia became a kind of a "window to the West" for ordinary Albanians. Yugoslav television was watched almost everywhere, although it was officially not allowed. Yugoslav films and music significantly influenced the Albanian audience, so many Albanians from Albania, thanks to television, understand the Serbian language. During the 20th century, Albanian-Serbian relations included short periods of cooperation and good neighborly relationship. The first official contracts between National Committee for the Liberation of Yugoslavia (NKOJ) and The Provisional Government of Albania were signed 20th February 1945. For the beginning of cultural support and help of the Yugoslav authorities to a ruined neighbor was of great importance Article 5 of the Treaty on Association and Mutual Assistance between Albania and

Yugoslavia that insisted on maximizing the development of cultural and economic cooperation.¹ On July 20th, 1946, Albanian State Choir has performed in Rijeka and in Opatija. After that the stay of the Yugoslav art group during 1947 in Albania lasted for 23 days. During this time, members of the group performed 17 events and three radio shows. There were also attempts to organize an art exhibition. The Albanian Committee for Culture and Art sought cooperation, and in particular the creation of repertoires (programs and texts for Albanian art institutions), sought professional literature on theater arts, school programs for current music, theater and painting schools. Albanian cultural workers received the greatest help in the development of classical music. For this purpose, the Yugoslav Committee for Culture and Art sent a conductor and music pedagogue Bojan Adamič. At the beginning of the may 1947 a mixed choir was established with the association for the cultural cooperation of Albania with Yugoslavia in Tirana. The conductor of the choir was Milo Asic. After 1 July 1948, all interstate agreements were terminated.

Cultural cooperation in 21 Century

Although political relations often cast a shadow on cultural cooperation, cultural exchanges between Serbia and Albania are in constant growth in the past 10-15 years. Official channels of cooperation and communication were established after 2000, but the initiative is mainly on individuals and civil society organizations. Serbian culture is accepted in Albania with interest. Works by writers such as Dragan Velikic, Svetislav Basara, Vladimir Arsenijevic and others can be found on the market. Even the books of Vuk Draskovic, a writer and former Minister of Foreign Affairs, are now being published in Albania. Goran Bregovic's music is very popular, and films by director Emir Kusturica are often shown on television. Since 2000 various institutions, art groups, amateur theaters and others have established cooperation and constant exchange of cultural contents. To mention only some of them: participation of the Children's Cultural Center from Belgrade at the Children's Festival in Durres (October 2007), joint Serbian-Albanian co-production of the film "Honeymoon" by Serbian director Goran

¹ Ljubomir Petrović, *Kulturne veze Jugoslavije i Albanije 1946-1948 = Cultural Relations Between Yugoslavia and Albania, 1946-1948*, Institut za savremenu Istoriju, 2002

Paskaljevic in cooperation with Genc Permeti from Albania, etc. Intercultural projects are mostly proposed and funded by international or foreign agencies. The main channels of official cooperation (at the state level) have been established through multilateral initiatives and programs such as the Council of Ministers of Culture of South East Europe (First Round Table: Tourism, Culture and Inter-University Cooperation) and Cultural Heritage: The Bridge to a Common Future in the field of culture and cultural heritage established in 2004).

Since 2000, several meetings of senior officials have been held and several cooperation agreements have been signed. In 2005, at a meeting of culture ministers of SEE countries in Tirana, (February 9th), a meeting was held between Minister of Culture RS Dragan Kojadinovic and Albanian Minister of Culture Bujar Ljeskaj. At the invitation of the Albanian Minister of Culture, in Tirana was held a meeting of Ministers of Culture of Serbia, Albania and Kosovo and Metohija Astrit Harachi, attended by representatives of UNMIK, as well as representatives of expert teams from Belgrade and Pristina, who discussed on cooperation in the field of protection of cultural goods, with the aim of improving the relations between the two countries. In 2017 Minister Vladan Vukosavljević and the Minister Mirela Kumbaro-Furxhi, have signed the Program of Cultural Cooperation between the Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Serbia and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Albania for the period 2017-2021.

In 2016 Forum for International Relations of the European Movement in Serbia (EMinS) and the Albanian Institute for International Studies (AIIS) have launched the project of the Joint Centre for Albania-Serbia Relations, with the support of the Federal Republic of Germany. The cooperation between Serbia and Albania has a strategic importance for the European integration of the Western Balkans. Main obstacles to the establishment of normal and fruitful relations between Albania and Serbia include the lack of knowledge about each other and the lack of opportunity for contact and mutual cooperation. Bearing all this in mind, the Albanian Institute for International Studies initiated the establishment of a joint center that would encourage interaction between experts, journalists, researchers, artists and decision-makers of the two countries. The project will help young people to fight against mutual prejudice, open the space for cooperation between the media, ect.²

² <http://www.emins.org/english/news/article/joint-centre-for-albania-serbia-relations>

Literature

Culture is one of the most important channels for the establishment of better mutual understanding and perception. Through the literature, two nations can come closer to each other, get to know two cultures, customs, traditions. Serbian culture is accepted in Albania with interest. On the other hand, very few Albanian writers are present in the Serbian cultural offer. Serbs and Albanians should do more to find areas of common interest. Centuries of common history are mostly blurred. Citizens and elites know more about what divides two people than about what connects them. Serbian medieval history is important for Albanian historiography, but there is no one Albanian expert who knows medieval Serbian. These issues can be addressed bilaterally, through a contract on scientific-educational cooperation. It should also be noted that there was little research and no documentation of Serbian-Albanian relations from the time of Tito and Enver Hoxha. Until recently, cooperation in education almost did not exist.³

On the other the Department for Albanology (Albanian Studies) at the Faculty of Philology of the University of Belgrade has a long tradition, since 1925, in educating new generations of teachers of Albanian language, literature and culture.

According to the latest curriculum of the faculty, annually there are 19 places for the future students at the department. Since the establishment, around 400 students graduated in this department. Currently, this Faculty has cooperation agreements with the Universities in Shkodër and Tirana. Every year, two professors from Albania are teaching at the Faculty of Philology as visiting professors. The Library of the Department of Albanian Language and Literature was once very rich in Albanian language books. At the end of 1947, the library received a large number of books and magazines from Tirana. In 1949 books and magazines were transferred to the library of the “Albanian seminar”, that were sent in the period 1945-1948. by the National Library of Albania to the then Cultural Association of Yugoslavia-Albania in Belgrade. During a visit to Belgrade in 2007, Albanian Foreign Minister Ilir Meta donated about 50 new books on Albanian language and literature to the library of the Albanian Chancellery. In May 2010, the Department hosted a delegation from the University of Tirana.

³ <https://www.isac-fund.org/download/sr-al-ENG.pdf>

Although it has been almost twenty years since the renewal of diplomatic relations between Serbia and Albania, and in recent years, regular visits and meetings between statesmen, as well as the signing of the agreement of the two ministries of culture on cultural cooperation, literary cooperation between Serbian and Albanian authors remains at an extremely low level. Literature from Albania available in Serbian remains limited to several older Kadare's novels and some isolated translation in anthologies or a "missed" translation from surrounding countries. Recently, the books of Albanian writers began to be translated and published in Serbia.

As for the translation from Albanian to Serbian language and vice versa, until now were translated from Albanian to Serbian these books:

Ismali Kadare – The General of the Dead army (1977) by Esad Mekuli

The Siege (1977) by Vehap Shita

Chronicle in Stone (1979),

The Palace of Dreams (1991), by Shkelzen Maliqi; 2016. – Samizdat B92

The Dark Year (1997), translation from French language

Three Elegies for Kosovo (2000) by Gjon Mirdita

The fall of the Stone City (2011).

Chat for Brilliants in the afternoon of December - short stories.

Chief-editor Lidija Kusovac said that the publishing house "Samizdat B92", which exists for 23 years, has paid special attention to the books of Albanian authors and is also planning to provide translation of Serbian titles into the Albanian language. During 2016 except for the novel *"The Palace of Dreams"* of **Kadare**, "SamizdatB92" have repurchased the copyright for his collection of stories that will soon come out. They have also published, after the novel *"Millionaire"* and essayist-publications under the title *"Ambassador and other Heretic Notes"*, another novel by **Veton Suroi** - *"All Love of Marija Gjakoni"*. "SamizdatB92" also published the publicist work of Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama *"Sacrifice"*, on the eve of his arrival in Belgrade. This publisher translated the first and second autobiography of the famous actor **Beckim Fehmiu** *"Brilliant and terrifying"*. The latest books that have been published are three bilingual books (three volume), in Serbian and Albanian, of **Petrit Imami** *"Serbs and Albanians through the ages"*, which demystifies established historical misconceptions about Serbian-Albanian relations.

The other books that have been published earlier are:
Bashkim Shehu – The feast (2003), Anilda Ibrahim – Red like a bride (2013), Fatos Kongoli - The dog's skin (2013), poetry of Luljeta Lleshanaku - Child of Nature, edition “Small box” (2012). Occasional translations of prose fragments are featured in the literary period in Serbia, for example the stories of Radvan Dibra Zija Çela, Arben Idrizi or a passage from the novel by Luan Starova.

The publishing house "Književna radionica Rašić" in Belgrade has published a book in Serbian language "*Dolap*" (*wardrobe*), a book of essays by writer **Arian Leka**. The book consists of two main parts: "In search of the lost shirt" and the essay "Born in the Province". The book, translated by Natalija Žaba Stojilković and Sabri Halili, is accompanied by the preface of writer Andrej Nikolaidis, one of the most esteemed literary pencils of the region today.

On the other hand much more books were translated from Serbian to Albanian language.

On the first place is of course the most famous Serbian writer, **Ivo Andrić**, whose books have been translated the following books:

The Bridge on the Drina (2005),
Bosnian Travnik's chronicles (2012).

In 2006 two books from **Milovan Gijlas** were translated: The Unperfect Society: Beyond the New Class and The face of totalitarianism.

It is interesting that the book – The Judge (2012) of **Vuk Drasković**, who is a politician, was translated to Albanian language.

Two **Milorad Pavić**'s books have been translated into Albanian - Dictionary of the Khazars (2012) and collection of the Terrible Love Story. Albanian publisher Onufri has published the luxurious hardcore edition of Hazar, while the translator of the second translated book, Terrible Love Stories (2012), Nikola Sudar, did much to bring Serbian literature closer to Albania. Both books had a solemn promotion at the recent Book Fair in Tirana.

Vladimir Arsenijević is a Serbian novelist, columnist, translator, editor, musician, and publisher. His books have been translated into 20 languages, among which is Albanian - Mexico: war diary (2015),

Predator (2010),
In the Hold: roman 2012.

Recently the books of Filip David have been translated: *The House of Remembering and Forgetting* (2016) and “A Dream of Love and Death” within itself has: “*The short novel of love*” and “*The short novel of death*”.

In the past few years there is much more debates and festivals. The International Poetry and Literature Festival "Poeteka" which every year presents alongside each other important and well-known authors and creators of the art of speech. So far representatives from Serbia participated two times in the festival, two writers – Sasa Ilic and Vladimir Arsenijevic.

The Residential Program “POETEKKA – TIRANA IN BETWEEN”, which has been inviting writers and translators from the region and Europe for four years, in association with “REJA”, has organized a poetic performance “RE-typing” with Dejan Čančarević. The Serbian author Dejan Čančarević was invited to the “Writer in Residence Programme” during the month of May 2016. Dejan Čančarević held the discussion with the poet and journalist Ben Andoni. The “RE-typing” performance is designed as a demonstration to re-evocate the process of creating poetry from an intimate and personal act, it becomes a shared experience with the public.

26 May 2017, a joint center for Albanian-Serbian Relations organized a cultural event "Albania recognized literature," dedicated to the Serbian-Albanian literary and cultural cooperation. The aim of this event was to get informed with the contemporary literature of Albania, present the latest translations, and encourage them to expand and publish as a comprehensive anthology, as the countries in the region already have. In addition, this meeting is at the same time an opportunity to consider the possibilities for further and wider literary and cultural cooperation between Serbia and Albania. A guest from Albania was Arian Leka (Durrës, 1966), a prominent Albanian poet, essayist and translator, and founder of the influential magazine and cultural club "Poeteka", which promotes translations and cooperation in the Balkans. In 2017 another book event in Tirana should be held.

Diana Çuli, an Albanian writer and journalist, said in an interview that Albania and Serbia would have a much deeper understanding if they exchange more culture with each other, especially literature. “Both nations have almost the same background, Western and Balkan, which is an interesting and original mix. If we are able to overcome objective obstacles - that are lack of translators or for

example political and other divisions that are known and difficult – it can be changed into a special and enthusiastic model of exchanges and cultural enrichment. Serbian authors are known and read, like: Vasko Popa, Ivo Andric, Mesa Selimovic, Danilo Kis and recently were published Milorad Pavić and Filip David. In our countries there is a mentality that good writers are those outside of the Balkans and we forget that the Balkans is one of the areas where literature has been born since ancient times.

A literary contest Balkanika, which has its center in Sofia and which gives Balkanika literary prize, is organised every year in the capital cities of the Balkans, Sofia, Belgrade, Tirana, Skopje... At Balkanika meet a lot of Balkan authors and this events that gather, connect and get to know people.

Filmography

Relations between Serbs and Albanians have always been complicated, and events of recent history have unfortunately not contributed to overcoming differences, which from time to time become an open hostility. These relations inspired domestic filmmakers, both during the SFRY, and even after its collapse. As the film directly communicates with a large number of people, it also carries a certain responsibility for the emergence and overcoming of cultural prejudices and differences, and should lead to better understanding.

In 2006 the traditional film festival in Tirana opened the film "Optimists" by Goran Paskaljevic. At the invitation of the film school "Marubi" in Tirana was a film director Srdjan Karanovic, who during four days gave lectures to students of the third and fourth year at this school.

The director Ljubisa Samardzic was hosted and his film was showed at International film festival in Durres (23-31 August), which was also attended by the director Goran Paskaljevic.

Honeymoon is the first Serbian-Albanian film from 2009. It was directed by Goran Paskaljevic, who also wrote the script along with Genc Permeti. The film was premiered at the Venice Film Festival on September 5, 2009, and hosted the domestic premiere on 24 November 2009 in Belgrade. Honeymoon, as the first Serbian-Albanian co-production, at least attempts to demolish self-imposed

barriers and unnecessary taboos. *GORAN PASKALJEVIC* said about the film and cooperation:

“I honestly believe that the Honeymoon can be an important step in the process of approaching two nations who live since forever as neighbors But who turned their back to each other. When I first came to Tirana three years ago, I was surprised, how well they know us, unlike us who know very little about the conditions of life in Albania. During the dictatorship of Enver Hoxha, many Albanians had their window into the world only through our and Italian television. Twenty years ago, our films, actors and celebrity stars were very popular in Albania.” On Question how did the cooperation with the Albanian screenwriter Genc Permeti come about? He answered: “Four years ago, at my first film festival in Albania, which was held in the only cinema in the Albanian capital, two of my films, *Bure baruta (Powder keg)* and *Midwinter Night's Dream* were shown. The reaction of the audience in a crowded hall was great. Genc Permeti, the direct "culprit" that the films found on the program, sent me a video clip showing how the projection looked like and convinced me to show my latest *Optimist* film in Tirana next year, whose filming just ended then.” “In private conversations with many intellectuals in Tirana, I realized that many of them think similar to me, beyond all the horrible nationalistic, predetermined attitudes. Word by word, we came up with the idea that it would be interesting to make a joint movie. The idea of a movie triptych was born the same evening when we started talking about future cooperation. We immediately called the project "Honeymoon".

When asked whether there are any favorable conditions for further cultural cooperation with Albania, he answered that the cultural cooperation with Albania will certainly continue to develop. “Our theaters have already been there with great success, in preparation are art exhibitions, our films will be invited to the festivals in Tirana and Durres ... it is a natural and unsustainable process.”

Kujtim Çashku is the Albanian director who founded the only academy for film in Albania. He said in an interview:

“Communication has begun after 2004, when Marubi academy was founded, in the form of cooperation between The Academy of Film & Multimedia “MARUBI” and Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade, on a project supported by Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. It was subsidized by the German government, which created the triangle Ludwigsburg, Belgrade, Tirana. Within the project students

produced together, students from Serbia came in Tirana, students from Albania went in Serbia and together they created short films.”

At the same time, an agreement on the exchange of pedagogues was reached. In addition to promoting his films, Paskaljevic also visited school and did a conversation with the students in Tirana. “Then we had the best deal with Goran Markovic, Srdjan Karanovic and Grlic and their films were shown. Grlic has held several classes on master. We are part of the same organization - Network, the international film school organization, which has created the opportunity to have periodical meetings at rector’s level. There we exchange methodology, the way of technological updates, there is a lot of profit from these meetings,” Within the global organization CILEKT, where all film schools are, there is a GEECT network, which includes our two countries. This is a very important network of communication for us.”

Kujtim Çashku every year organise International Human Rights Film Festival, and this year was held 12th festival. There are 3000 movies from the world that they select and every year they have films from Serbia. This year's main topic was radicalism and populism. He also went to Belgrade, at Faculty of Dramatic Arts, where he has shown his movie Colonel Bunker and also did the conversation with students about the concept bunker.

“We participate in the project of British Council, after which we tried to organize it in Tirana, to create a different map of perception, not the map that we project in our heads, i.e. that our maps mainly relate to border perceptions or not. And generally culture has another concept of cultural map, which does not have much reference, because culture crosses the cross-border all the time I ran beyond it and made it possible” says Kujtim after visiting Serbia.

Theatre

Cooperation of theaters started in 2005. Drama of the National Theater from Belgrade was hosted with the play "Kovači" on international theater festival in Korca. The show caused great interest of the public and the media. The play was performed in front of a crowded theater hall and the actor Milenko Pavlov won the main prize as the best actor of the festival. Besides that the director of the National

Theater Bozidar Djurovic and the National Theater in Tirana, Kico Ljondo had spoken about future cooperation. The same year in October a Memorandum of Cooperation between two theater companies was signed. After that, the National Theater from Tirana was hosted in Belgrade on 12 November.

In 2005 the Theater "Zoran Radmilović" from Zajecar was hosted at the traditional theater festival in Butrint.

In September 2006, the theater director Nebojsa Bradic and his Performance *Little Trilogy of Death* arrived an unusual and intriguing call. Mr. Alfred Bualotti kindly invited them to participate in the Eighth Festival of the Theater "Butrint 2000", which is held in the far south of his country of Albania, in Butrint. The director and the actors first hesitated, because on one side there was curiosity and the desire to look into this mysterious, long-year closed, isolated and rarely accessible country and on the other a difficult and complex past and threatening the present-day angry Serbian-Albanian relations. In the end they accepted the call and had broken the prejudices. The Belgrade Drama Theater performed the Small Trilogy of Death. The Serbian performance according to the text of the Austrian Nobel Prize winner established a full interaction with the audience and it was received well.

The other performances of Serbian theaters in Albania:

- In 2007, a young Belgrade artist Miona Patrovic has been guest at the international festival of modern ballet in Durres (April 16-21). She had a very notable performance;
- In 2008 National Theater of Nis has performed at the International festival in "Butrint 2000" with the play "Dundo Maroje", directed by Irfan Mensur, recorded an enviable success and aroused not little interest in the media and the cultural public;
- During 2010, theaters from Serbia again participated in festivals in Albania. Theater "Zoran Radmilović" from Zaječar was hosted at the Balkan Theater Festival in Tirana (September 1-7);
- The National Theater from Nis was guest at the International Festival of Contemporary Theaters in Elbasan (October 23rd).

The one who puts a seal on such a co-operation between Serbia and Albania in the field of culture is Dejan Savic, Belgrade Theater Director who has come to the Albanian capital to direct the Symphonic Concert of 26 September 2015 at the Opera and Ballet Theater. Savic has found in Tirana the support of the symphony orchestra artists of Tirana and hopes in other collaborations of this kind. He has drummed Symphony No. 9, by Antonin Dvorak, and the concert for violin, cello and piano, Op 56 "The Triptych" of Beethoven. He then sent a message to football teams wanting football to understand how two nations and two cultures can work together nicely.

As for the performance of Albanian theater, only a recent performance was recorded. The national theater of opera and ballet from Tirana were guests on April 8, 2016, on the "Rasa Plaović" scene with solo ballets "Noces" and "La Stravaganza" in the choreography of Angelin Prelocaj. In addition to Belgrade, they also performed in Novi Sad and Nis. On the same day, at the National Theater Museum, Director of the National Theater of Opera and Ballet from Tirana, Ilir Kerni and acting director of the National Theater in Belgrade, Dejan Savić, have signed the Protocol on Cooperation.

On 7 June 2016, in the national theater in Tirana was realized the performance „Romeo and Juliet" directed by Miki Manojlović (attended by the Minister of Culture Mirel Kumbaro on June 8th).

Classical music and ballet in Tirana and in Belgrade

Cultural cooperation between the two countries, especially classical music, brings another spirit and a climate of communication.

The joint project of the opera "Karmina Burana" was held in Podgorica Darinka Matić-Marovic conducted an orchestra of Radio Television of Albania, which together with the choirs "Krsmanoivić" and "Obilić" followed the performance of the opera (2005). The same year, Boris Kraljević, a pianist from Podgorica, held a concert in Tirana.

In 2006 the Piano Quartet "Haimos" organized a concert at the Academy of Arts in Tirana (October 13th) organized by the Citizens Association "Responsibility for the Future" from Neggrad and "Neighbors for Peace" from Bujanovac.

In 2007, guest of the musical ensemble "Duo Moderato" from Belgrade, who presented himself with a concert at the Academy of Arts in Tirana (February 14). The members of the ensemble gave interviews for TV "Top Channel" and they were guests on the RTSH.

Aleksandar Dojkovic, tenor of the National Theater from Belgrade who participated in the international opera project on the occasion of 20 years since the demolition of the Berlin Wall organized by Albanians. He is the first opera singer from Serbia who stepped into the scene of the National Opera in Tirana. Dojkovic's performance of the famous German opera "Salome" Richard Strauss, the Albanian audience and the media warmly welcomed, and his hosting opened the space for the necessary cultural cooperation between the two neighboring nations.

The Albanian Folklore Ensemble was guest at the International Folklore Festival in Surčin, on which occasion they held a concert in Belgrade.

The protocol on cooperation signed in 2016, officially came to life in May 2016 with the performance of one of the most famous opera singer from Albania, the world famous lyric soprano Inva Mula, who played the role of Mimi in Puchini's "Bohemians". "I think it is very important to be the first, but I am not the first opera singer from Albania who performed here. It was Tefta Tashko Koco, who also sang in the opera "Boemi" 71 years ago in Belgrade. But, in any case, my hosting marks a new epoch for our countries. I am sure that in the future we will exchange many well-known artists from Belgrade and Tirana", she said for the Serbian daily newspaper Danas.

Fine arts

Cooperation in the field of fine arts has so far been at a very low level, mostly reduced to individual initiatives.

In 2005, the Natural History Museum from Podgorica realized the exhibition "Prokletije, the Pearl of the Balkans and Europe" (July), which was organized in the National Gallery of Tirana and Skadar.

Klik Ekspo Group has organized the International Fair of Tirana on 22-26 November 2014 at the Palace of Congresses. Domestic and foreign entrepreneurs were focused on several sectors. The emphasis will remain on the "Gallery of States", the unique treasury of the Tirana International Fair, where in addition to

the countries of Asia and Western Europe, also took part closest neighbours such as Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina with their State Pavilions.

The Natural History Museum from Podgorica realized the exhibition "Prokletije, the Pearl of the Balkans and Europe" (July), which was organized in the National Gallery of Tirana and Skadar.

Marina Abramovic and Ulay (International artists of performance art) were part of XXI Onufri exhibition – SIO2 the reason for the fragility /Contemporary artists face with the glass (November-January 2016.)

On the VIII International exhibition "Art in miniature MajdanArt 2017" in Majdanpek, Serbia, were also exhibited artworks by artists from Albania - Shkreli Jozita, Visual artist, Tirana – Albania.

What can be done in the future?

Although cooperation since 2000 has been significantly increased compared to the period before, still the cooperation is much greater at the individual level than at the state level. There is not much information about the course of program that was signed in February this year, nor about the plans of the program in the future.

Cultural cooperation in the future should continue to be based on individual initiatives, but also that Ministries have to support and encourage initiatives, events, travels, exchanges, etc. Bearing in mind everything that has been done so far in the field of culture, but most in the last few years, I believe that cultural cooperation will increase. As we see, both sides are interested in getting to know the neighbour literature, so publishing houses are also interested in translating and publishing books. Both sides are interested in movies, theatre performances and music. Student exchanges should be increased, more camps and schools for breaking prejudices and learning about culture should be organized. Young people should be familiar with cultural festivals and events that exist in both countries. The media play a key role in promoting culture, so one and the other country should be promoted in this way.

Policy recommendations

1. We can organise the meeting of writers and translators in Translation Houses in Serbia and Albania, where they could discuss issues related to translation, the themes of books, reading and literature development. Under the UNESCO standards are being realized a number of collaborations in the area of cultural heritage. But until now, there were almost no literary exchanges. That could be used in the future for translating books.
2. Authors should participate in the book fairs in both countries and have their presentation, so people can meet them and their culture.
3. We all now know how important a role have medias in creating public opinion so we should use media to promote each other. During the hostage of writers in Tirana or in Belgrade, they should take part in the show on televisions. For example, in Albania exist a show on TV Ora News which invites domestic and foreign authors. But, until now they didn't have authors from Serbia.
4. From the perspective of young person, I think that mass culture should serve as a tool for better understanding for socializing and cultural enrichment of young people. By that I mean about music concerts of rock and roll, jazz, blues, techno and popular music as a form of informal breaking of prejudices. For the beginning, we need to promote festivals in both countries.
5. Cooperation should begin at the lowest level. Organizing children's games, quizzes, competition in different areas.

<http://www.albanianbooks.al/index.php/highlights/tirana-in-between-dejan-cancarevic/>

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