

# Public administration in Albania from 1920-1945

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### *Abstract*

The Albanian public administration has been subject to a deep and thorough restructuring. This process has taken place in a lot of other ex-communist countries too. Contemporary reforms where this administration has been involved display as an important key element the application of the performance evaluation system. The study presents the public administration from a historical point of view, the period from 1920-1945. During this historical period Albania underwent transformations in the governing system, changes which had their reflection even in the functioning and management of the state administration.

This study aims to scrutinize the performance evaluation system of the state administration from 1920 to 1945, by examining the problem not only through the social and historical point of view, but also from the institutional and managerial point of view related with other aspects of managing the administration, such as: recruitment, promotion, career etc.

The study proves that the performance evaluation system of the Albanian state administration, which has been treated from two viewpoints interrelated with each other, has been effective for the creation of a professional administration considering the present conditions of the country. This system treated evaluation in regard to motivation, bonus, promotion, career etc. The system had also its faults which were the result of the policies and development of the time.

The data for the study were gathered by different sources including interviews, documents and observations. The public administration during this period, the evaluation systems, as well as all the other models of the applied systems in the public administration nowadays, have served the purpose of establishing a tradition of administration in our country.

## ***Introduction***

The efficient use of human resources in the public administration was and still remains an important element of the reforms expressed through the concept of performance which means that the administration should be subject to a performance evaluation system. “Enforcement of the government performance, improvement of productivity, quality, efficiency and effectiveness of public bodies and their programs is important for everyone, as beneficiary of the public services, as well as taxpayers” (Wholey 1989, pg. 1<sup>1</sup>).

It is important to establish several definitions of the performance evaluation within the context of the reform.

Performance evaluation accepts several definitions. According to Lansbury (1988:46<sup>2</sup>) performance appraisal is defined as “the process of identifying, evaluating and developing the work performance of the employee in the organization, so that organizational goals and objectives are effectively achieved while, at the same time, benefiting employees in terms of recognition, receiving feedback, and offering career guidance”

Performance evaluation implies the process through which the employees of an institution might reflect, discuss and change the method of their work. Considering the individual, the process enables changes in learning and behavior. Considering the institution, the process enables the systematic gathering of the data concerning individual performance. These data in turn serve the purpose of identifying the needs for training, promoting the individuals in the right position and establishing the path of the organizational progress of the institution”.

Performance evaluation has been defined as the evaluation of the past and present performance of an employee of the public administration in accordance with the standards of the performance of the organization.

*Performance appraisal evaluates the performance of an employee. According to Robins & Couter (1999<sup>3</sup>) it serves two purposes:*

- Firstly, the administrative purpose. It offers information about the salary, promotion, dismissal and offers the necessary documentation to verify decisions of judicial processes.
- Secondly, perhaps the most important, the purpose of progress. Information might be used to diagnose the needs for training; career planning etc. Feedback and training based on information of the evaluation provide the basis for the continuous improvement of the performance (Robins & Couter, 1999, fq.35).

*The process of performance evaluation includes:*

- Setting work standards,
- Evaluation of the present performance of the employee related to these standards,
- Provides feedback to the employee so as to motivate the person to decrease the weak points or to continue working hard. (Dessler 2000<sup>4</sup>)

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<sup>1</sup>Josepf S. Wholey,(1989) “Improving Government Performance” (with Kathryn Newcomer)

<sup>2</sup>Lansbury, R. (1988) “Performance Management: A Process Approach,” Human Resource Management, Australia, fq. 46-55.

<sup>3</sup>Robins, S.P., &Couter, M. (1999). Management. Botimi VI. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Performance evaluation is a managerial instrument which serves the employees, leaders and managers. If it is correctly executed performance evaluation establishes a culture of justice, continuous improvement and supports the established standards.

The western systems of performance evaluation have been widely used in Albania during the reforms of the political system which included the state administration and transformed it into a public administration.

## ***1 Motive and purpose of the study***

The purpose of the study is to observe the Albanian administration during the period of 1920-1945 and the performance evaluation system of the state administration during those years.

The motive which encouraged me to choose this topic was exactly the evaluation system which was used by the governments during those years. It was an evaluation system which evaluated the work of each individual, and was related to other elements such as recruitment, motivation, career, parallel movement and dismissal from the state administration. The research shows that because of its successful implementation the system was beneficiary for the time. This was another motive for the choice of this topic.

The evaluation system also had its own problems which will be mentioned later on while elaborating on the topic. The performance evaluation system nowadays has naturally been developed further and is subject to a complete reform which orientates the public administration towards the European space. This study will be a valuable contribution to analyze the different aspects of this reform for the performance evaluation of public services. Within the framework of “good governance” the engagement of the government to bring about changes related to the institutional reform is also being increased continuously.

## ***2. Consolidation of the Albanian state during the 1920-ies***

The presented study will initially deal with a presentation of the administration during those years as well as the performance evaluation system of the employees in those times.

In 1921, as a country detached by the Ottoman Empire, Albania needed to force its institutions in order to democratize its political, legislative, economic and social life. The first parliamentary elections were held in 1921 and the National Council (the Parliament), elected by the Congress of Lushnja had to make way to another legislation elected by the free will of the people. The government of that time issued the “***Rulebook of curriculum***” for the functioning and management of the state administration, which defined and regulated all the aspects which were related to the administration, from the moment of recruitment to dismissal by the state administration. Its special articles clearly defined the criteria, rules and anything else which was related to these elements.

Thus, article 6 of these rules related to the evaluation of the employees stated: “*At the end of each year Heads of each office will write in the official note their opinion on the employees and even inform new employees for their respective notes*”.

Article 7 stated: “*Heads of the office will include the following information in the secret note: ability, work, behavior and initiative, positive and negative sides of the character based on their consciousness. This note is kept secret and might be read only in case it is necessary by*

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<sup>4</sup>Dessler G.(2000),“Human resource management” [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). Management & Leadership

*the Heads of High Offices”*<sup>5</sup>. This rulebook was administered and put into practice by the Ministry of Interior Affairs of the time.

In 1922 there were changes in the higher state bodies, the government and the High Council.<sup>6</sup> Ahmet Zogu was appointed Prime Minister and the government’s program predicted measurements for the reformation of the state administration to further strengthen the Albanian state and calm down the situation of the country. The policy intended to be followed was *“to found an occidental state full of civilization”*<sup>7</sup>, to respect guaranteed freedom, to cut the budget deficit, strengthen the administration with educated employees etc. An achievement to be mentioned in strengthening the administration and the institutions: *the expansion of Lushnja’s Statute*, which was concise and could not meet the problems of the time. Out of 6 articles there were 129 separated ones, divided in 4 chapters, where the most important ones had to deal with the elaboration of “Details of the Canon”, “Form of governing”, and the competences of three institutions which exercised the power (legislative, executive and judicial)<sup>8</sup>. This statute preserved the Monarchy as a form of governing. Ethics and good behavior of the employees with the people was considered important. A circular letter related to this problem wrote: *“To give a modern, desirable form to the state it is known that regular continuity of employees on duty, their hard work full of energy on national level, as well as their behavior towards all the people, not only when they happen to be in offices, but also out of the office hours should be quiet, honorable and human. Any employee who does not meet the above mentioned points, who does not behave humanly to the people offering them the easiest official solutions for their duty, but misuses the job position given by the state will immediately be dismissed and based on the guilt might be further punished”*.

In 1924 the government administration was degenerating. F S. Noli’s government was created and included a range of reforms in its program, in the state administration such as simplification of bureaucracy, dismissal of conservative employees, reorganization of work in healthcare and education etc.

In 1925 the Constitutional Assembly declared the Republic of Albania, which was later transformed into Parliament<sup>9</sup>. The President was head of the state as well as of the executive. Albania was a presidential republic and Zogu was its president. Zogu took several precautions to create a centralized administration which in addition to establishing a strong central power mainly for its interests would also lead to the formation of the state and extinguish regional separatism and strengthen the interior unity of the country.

Another step was the new administrative division which took place along with the civil administration.<sup>10</sup> The country was divided into 10 prefectures which included several regions and communes. Communes were supported by the Aldermen of the villages. This way of organization was copied by the French Constitution.

The Gendarmerie was a strong support. Its organization was carried out under the heading of the English organizers. The Albanian Penal Code was approved as per the Italian one of 1899.

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<sup>5</sup> 100 vjet administratë “Rregullore e jetëshkrimeve”.

<sup>6</sup>Bezhani N. Ahmet Zogu dhe trashëgjimtari Leka (Pas ardhjes së Lekës I në Shqipëri).

<sup>7</sup>Reka B. (1997), E drejta kombëtare si sistem i sovranitetit shtetëror (Analizë komparative: Kanuni i Lekë Dukagjinit dhe sot) - Rilindja, nr. 1102, 14 janar 1997, fq. 14; nr. 1103, 15 janar, [g. 14; nr. 1104, 16 janar fq.

<sup>8</sup> DAP “100 vjet administratë”. “Ditë e re” Vit I, 24 maj 1922, f 5-7

<sup>9</sup>Elezil.Zhvillimi historik i Legjisllacionit Penal në Shqipëri S 120E63-E65

<sup>10</sup> Selenica T.(1928 ), Organizimi i Komunave/ Ndarja administrative e shtetit. Qëllimi i organizimit e ndarjeve administrative e prefekturave. Telegraf, nr. 126, 17 qershor.

The Monarchy was declared in 1928<sup>11</sup>. Zogu undertook a lot of reforms which were legislative, agrarian and religious in order to strengthen the state.<sup>12</sup> He approved two constitutions, one republican (1925) and one monarchic (1928)<sup>13</sup>. This situation still went on up to 1939, later in 1944 up to the liberation of the country. The executive was centralized and affiliated. In March 1928, there were changes in the “Law of the Civil Administration of the republic”. The “Law on the organic constitution of the Ministry of Interior Affairs” was decreed in June 1928, where “Chapter V” “Ways of grading employees” wrote<sup>14, 15</sup>:

*“Grading the employees as per Ist, IInd and IIIrd category is done based on the documentation and qualities mentioned above, on the approval of the Minister; grading of employees of other categories is done by decision of the Council of Ministers, by taking into consideration: 1) seniority, 2) behavior on duty, 3) Moral and energy, 4) Reports from inspectors or superiors of the employee, 5) Zeal and attention about the work.*

*No employee may be graded two grades simultaneously (grading is done regularly preserving the right of the other employees). The right to be graded from one category to another is gained by serving at least for 4 years in that category”.*

Zogu’s government had also predicted the forms of bonuses for the employees of the administration, such as moral reward (a letter of praise) as well as material bonus.<sup>16</sup>

*“When an employee works hard and full of energy the highest authority esteems him with a letter of appraisal which is written in his curriculum”.*

*“Employees who have the right to be graded, but cannot be graded because there are no vacant job positions are given salary increase as follows:*

*Employees working from 5-10 years 10% of the salary;*

*Employees working from 10-20 years, 25% of the salary;*

***Employees, who do not meet the requirements but are hired under different circumstances, are not entitled to full salary, but only two thirds of the salary which lasts up to the moment his skill on that job is proved. Also from the execution of this law within two years those employees who do not meet the required qualifications, or because of incompetence have no hope for future qualifications, should be dismissed and retired or given a bonus. After the above mentioned period of time passes all employees have the rights mentioned in this law.***

*Employees are given disciplinary measures in case they do not meet the duties required by the laws and regulations of the Ministry in their services.*

*Disciplinary changes include the following:*

- a) Oral reprimand,*
- b) Reprimand written even in the employee’s curriculum,*
- c) Deduction of one salary,*
- d) Transfer to another country,*
- e) Decrease to a lower grade,*
- f) Dismissal from work*

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<sup>11</sup> M. Mbreti- Shekulli i ri 1928, nr. 49, 24 gusht.

<sup>12</sup> Falimentimi i Parlamentarizmit dhe avantazhet e sindikalizmit-Shekulli i ri 1928, nr. 24, 25, 26, 27 korrik.

<sup>13</sup> Kavaja E. (1928) Baza e suksesit të Monarkisë - Statuti Themeltar, - Atdheu, nr. 15, 27 qershor 1997, fq.4.

<sup>14</sup> DAP 100 vjet administratë, Fletorja zyrtare, mbledhja 9

<sup>15</sup> Këshilli i Shtetit Shqiptar. Ligji për krijimin e Këshillit të Shtetit. Organizimi i aparatit dhe personelit administrative/ Kombi Shqiptar 1928, nr. 19,31 mars.

<sup>16</sup> TH. S. Qeverija dhe nëpunësit (Drejtimi- Qeverija e popullit dhe për popullin,-Interesat jetike të kombit). Gazeta e re 1928, nr. 18, 21 nëntor.

*An employee who is reprimanded orally twice within three months, in case a new punishment is necessary the last punishment will not be less than the official reprimand written in the curriculum.*

*An employee who is reprimanded in a written form twice within six months, in case a new punishment is necessary the punishment will include deduction of one salary and prohibition of being graded.*

*An employee whose salary has been deducted and whose grading has been prohibited for a year, in case of a new punishment will not be less than his transference as well as decrease of a grade.*

*An employee who is transferred and degraded, in case a new punishment is necessary will be nothing but dismissal from work.*

From 1928 to 1944, there were only temporary governments and the administration was in their service<sup>17,18</sup>. There was a new administrative division, different changes considering the legal framework<sup>19</sup> etc.

In 1931 the government of Ahmet Zogu issued a “Project- Law on the legal state and the hierarchical regulation of the civil employees” where:

*Article 13 :*

*“In January of each year each employee is given qualification marks. These marks will contain all the notes on the physical conditions and intellectual qualities of the employee, on his official and private behaviors, the zeal and attention shown while executing the official service as well as on all the special circumstances which belong to the fulfillment of duties, on his skills for a higher degree of employment and any other notice which is seen as reasonable.*

*Article 14:*

*Qualification grades are edited and described by the official heading the office where the employee works. These grades are reviewed and signed by the higher official in the hierarchy of service. The written notes are sent to the employee through a special letter which he signs himself. The employee has the right to object qualities that have been attributed at the Higher Council within 15 days of this communication. The Higher Council reviews the official record of the High Official and formulates the final qualification<sup>20</sup>.*

*Article 15:*

*Final decision includes the following expressions: Very good, Good, Average and Bad.*

The qualification “very good” was for the employees who were excellent among others considering the ability, culture, cared about work and had model behavior, those who performed studies and publications for the administration, who worked in sacrifice and difficulty etc.

The qualification “good” was for the employees who carried out the duties of the employee constantly and had good behavior and moral.

The qualification “average” was for the employees who had displayed sufficient skills on their ability and work in a lower grade than “good”. These employees had the right to be graded no sooner than two years after the first qualification.

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<sup>17</sup> Raport, Alfred. Shqipëria si nevojë evropiane/Domosdoshmëria e ekzistencës së shtetit Shqiptar, për të siguruar paqen në juglindje të Evropës dhe Mesdhe.- Vullneti i popullit, 1930, nr. 193, 3 dhjetor.

<sup>18</sup> Luan Omari - Historia e shtetit dhe e së drejtës në Shqipëri (1987) S 128 A7-A8;

<sup>19</sup> L'administrationen Albanie/ Misioni i aparatit të ri shtetëror shqiptar- Shqipëria e re 1929, nr. 391, 13. Tetor.

<sup>20</sup> DAP 100 vjet administratë, Fletorja zyrtare , mbledhja 9, fq.133

The qualification “bad” was for the unskillful employees who behaved badly in and out of the office and were punished and suspended by work and salary. They were subject to being dismissed for two years in a row. *They had the right neither to compete, nor to be graded up to the moment improvement was obvious.* Another aspect worth mentioning is in case of being suspended from work, as mentioned above, which went on for one to six months, is that the wife and minor children of the employee were given compensation for food, not more than one third of the employee’s salary”<sup>21</sup>.

The period of time we are considering and the system of evaluation used in that period, in addition to its advantages had also its own disadvantages which were the result of culture and progress of the time.

In those years the country was characterized by a deep economic backwardness and political instability. There was a fierce political battle among the three higher state organs, the Government, the National Council of High Council, which damaged the normal political progress of the country.

As mentioned above, Zogu took precautions for the creation of a centralized administration which in addition to establishing strong central power would also serve for its own interests. ***This could be considered a weak point for the administration of that time.***

F S. Noli’s government which was founded in 1924 included a lot of reforms in the state administration, such as simplification of bureaucracy, dismissal of conservative employees from the administration, reorganization of work in health and education etc.

Upon his return to power Ahmet Zogu started work for the strengthening of his authority and the establishment of a strong administration, which was capable of maintaining order and collecting taxes. The precautions taken by this government as well as the political situation of the time could not stop the democratization of the institutions, a phenomenon which was now dictated by external factors and the situation in the region.

Pursuant to the situation of the country as we already know there was the Second World War, as a result of which the country was destroyed and a stable administration was out of the question, ***because the governments were temporary<sup>22</sup> and from the documents it results that some employees served the foreigners.*** Thus during this period we might say that the performance evaluation system was dictated by the interests and influence of foreigners.

### ***3. Critical overview on the administration and the evaluation system***

In case we analyze the state administration and the evaluation system of that period we might say that despite the period of time the performance evaluation system is applied, it has its influence on all the employees.

During the period of his reign Zogu elaborated several programs for the progress of the country, chose the French and Italian models of 1899, in compiling the acts, their approval, reorganized the local administration and everything else related to the state administration and leading the country. The model of the performance evaluation system was extracted by the Italian “Civil Code” of 1899 as well as the French one, also by the Italian Penal Code of 1899, which were considerably well developed for the time, and the Albanian code was compiled based on them. Other special aspects of the evaluation as it was even mentioned above such as motivation of the employees, bonus, grading or promotion were executed

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<sup>21</sup>DAP 100 vjet administratë, Fletorja zyrtare , mbledhja 9, fq 145

<sup>22</sup>Omari L. Problemi i pushtetit në Luftën Antifashiste Nacionalçlirimtare S 121 S63-S67;

Omari L. Historia e shtetit dhe e së drejtës ne Shqipëri S212E31-E33

based on the results of work; were transparent as each note had to be presented to the individual, etc. It has to be stated that human capital in implementation of models was not sufficient to fulfill this process. At this time a lot of Albanians were sent abroad on scholarships to study in foreign universities. Despite the difficulties that had to be overcome the period of Albanian kingdom was a stabilized period where the strengthening of the Albanian state made an important step. H. G. Grand, based on his personal and official experience during the years that he stayed in Albania as a Minister of the USA and “by studying the chaotic international situation” which later on led in the breakout of the Second World War wrote: *“I think that king Zogu acted properly and was the right person to lead the country as needed by the nature and the traditions of the Albanian people”*<sup>23</sup>.

The evaluation system used in those years served the employees to estimate and reflect on their faults, as they gained a better understanding of their faults; were punished for them based on the procedure mentioned above and were graded for their distinguished qualities, which were necessary for the situation the country was in. During that period when the presence and influence of foreigners was considerable, where the administration could sell the interest of the country the execution of a fair policy, evaluation was necessary to fulfill the objectives and to create the good image on the people, which did not have the right culture to understand such processes at that time. Some of the reforms to be undertaken by the governors in those years which aimed the western modernization of the country, although they were so necessary could not be executed immediately because of the low economic and social level and the conditions of Albania in those times.

Based on the existing theories like Weber’s, the research carried out and the materials found concerning the administration of 1921-1939 and later, we think that the state administration in those years could be called an administration with modern tendencies considering the time in which it was applied. To prove this hypothesis let’s analyze the administration of those days based on Max Weber<sup>24</sup>’s theories, where “bureaucratic was any kind of big organization, be that public or private, which was distinguished by a clearly defined hierarchy of impressionable duties as well as employment of specialists who were put under strong discipline and control”.

The administration at this period could be considered stable up to 1939 for the execution of duties and responsibilities that functioned according to the set rules which were written and obligatory to be executed by all, because later the governments often changed and this was not a good indicator for the administration.

The authority to give orders came by official rules, but it must be stated that it came by the authority of Ahmet Zogu, who chose the kingdom as a form of governing.

In those times the people employed were qualified for their duties, although they were not a lot considering the time and they guaranteed the right and continuous execution of the duties of the organization. Whereas the unqualified people who could join the organization using other means were not paid and promoted up to their authenticity of professional skills.

There was an escalated system of the authority as well as the hierarchy and this was respected under no discussion.

Management at the time was based on written documents and evidences that enabled step by step following the correspondences and all the important issues.

Work in the office was considered a profession, primary not secondary job and the official working hours were obligatory.

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<sup>23</sup>Myzyri. H. Historia e Shqipërisë dhe e Shqipëtarëve.Fq. 271

<sup>24</sup> Robert B. Denhart; Janet V. Denhardt “Administrimi Publik”, Veprim i orientuar fq. 160.



Even though the term “bureaucracy” is negatively used nowadays, considering the seven points of Weber’s theory it was more technical and did not contain negative connotations. Ahmet Zogu’s government was a completely bureaucratic government considering the period of time when it operated. According to Weber “experience shows that the entirely bureaucratic is capable of achieving the highest level of efficiency and is in this sense the most rational mean acknowledged to put human beings under control”.<sup>25</sup> In addition to these the bureaucratic way of governing and employee evaluation had several disadvantages, which as Weber mentions would cause troubles in the management of administration. The disadvantages were as follows: (a) the power and expertise might destroy or exceed the democratic control, (b) the consequences that bureaucracy had on the freedom of the individual. Considering the latter ones we might say that the evaluation system for the work at this period of time had its own disadvantages. Based on Weber’s theory it was a good system for recruitment, motivation, bonus, grading etc. It could be considered efficient for the time considering the administration of that time. Some of the disadvantages were as follows: It was centralized and A. Zogu himself enabled this with his post. Recruitment of people by means other than the public competition did not give them the right to be paid up to the moment they proved their work ability, etc. On one hand this could be considered as a violation of humans rights, but on the other hand it might be judged as efficient for the professional progress of the administration. Considering these we might conclude that the state administration of the period 1929-1939, with all its strong and weak points displayed several elements of a modern administration, whose elements are present even nowadays, but under new conditions of the country’s progress.

#### **4. Conclusions**

*Based on the research carried out we drew the following conclusions:*

The public administration during the period of 1921-1939 was a genuinely bureaucratic administration considering the time and the period in which it operated. When the country was in a low economic and social level the evaluation system used in that time motivated and promoted the employees to work efficiently, helped in strengthening the state and well management of the state administration as well as strengthening the service to the people who needed these services to improve its welfare and standards based on the model of neighbor countries, such as Italian, French etc.

Public administration emerged as a separate field of study during the period of rapid developments of the science and industry, and it is being developed and reformed nowadays under completely new circumstances. The Albanian public administration is being reformed daily towards the European integration. Considering the study we might confirm that the administration of those days 1921-1939 contains elements of the modern administration.

During this period the human element was treated with well defined “laws, rules, principles” almost controlled in their form, made public and declared anywhere in different forms and places with the purpose of giving individual contribution in order to aim the increase of general efficiency, despite the conditions and the present level.

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<sup>25</sup>Weber te Gerthand Mills, 1946, fq 337

This system was centralized and this was enabled even through the form of governing that A. Zogu chose.

H. G. Grand emphasizes: “based on the personal and official experience gained during a lot of years of my stay in Albania as a Minister of the USA and by studying the chaotic international situation which later led into the explosion of the Second World War, *“I think that king Zogu acted properly and was the right person to lead the country as required by the nature and the traditions of the Albanian people”*”.

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