

CONTRIBUTION OF PROF. DR. PERIKLI QIRIAZI IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALBANIAN GEOGRAPHY AND CARTOGRAPHY

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ABSTRACT

The development of geo-cartography has attracted a special attention in recent decades. Albanian geographers are also involved in this development, who are constantly contributing to rise geo-cartography in contemporary levels. Through many works, they have not only deepened the knowledge and analysis in the geo-cartography of Albania, but at the same time have continuously supplemented the geographical and cartographic knowledge as a whole.

This article introduces us to the multiple pedagogical and scientific contribution of prof.dr. Perikli Qiriazzi in the development of Albanian Geo-cartography and geo-cartography in general. In his scientific work, based on studies and new geographical concepts, prof. Qiriazzi analyzes the physical, morphodynamical and bioclimatic bases of Albania and treat natural heritage, karst ecosystems, degradation and desertification of landscapes, the consequences of global warming, climate, and water crisis in Albania, etc. Of special importance are the geomorphological and cartographic studies that accompany the entire geo-cartographic work of prof. Qiriazzi.

Keywords: Geography, Geomorphology, Cartography, Perikli Qiriazzi, Albania

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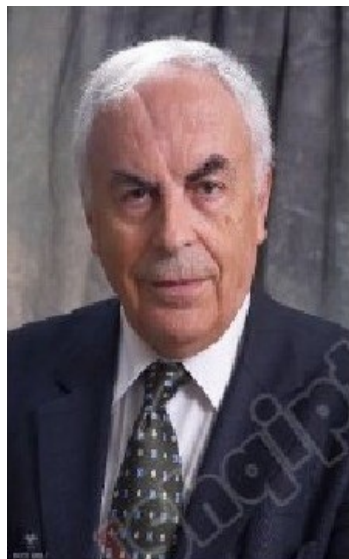
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INTRODUCTION

Prof. dr. Perikli Qiriazhi is one of the most prominent authorities for pedagogical talent, professional and scientific skills, numerous publications, and tireless work in the field in the discipline of geography and especially Albanian Geography. He is best known for his contributions to the development of geography, geomorphology (Qiriazhi, 1987), natural heritage (Qiriazhi, 2017), environmental protection, speleology, and thematic cartography, along with the use of natural resources and the planning of land use. As a physical geographer he has been and is active in the search for sustainability in terms of spatial balances, in the analysis of human interactions with the environment, in the interpretation and design of environmental change, etc.

He was born in the village of Podë (Leskovik) in 1944, where he completed his primary education. He completed his seven-year and secondary pedagogical education in Korçë (1961). In 1968 he completed his studies in History-Geography at the University of Tirana (UT) with very good results. In 1970 he was appointed lecturer in the Department of Geography at UT, where he worked until his retirement (2011). He is currently an external lecturer at several universities in Albania. He has the scientific degree "Candidate of Sciences" (1983) and the "Doctor of Geographical Sciences" (1993); he has the title "Docent" (1986) and "Professor" (1995). He completed scientific specializations at the University of Bucharest (1975), Paris VII (1987) and Anger (1998), etc.



He is the head of several undergraduate and postgraduate disciplines: Physical and Regional Geography of Albania, Methodology of Physical-Geographical Studies, Natural Heritage of Albania, Degradation and Desertification of Landscapes, Introduction to Regional Geography, for which he has prepared programs and textbooks and has held lectures at several Albanian and foreign universities.

Has headed university and national educational and scientific structures as: head of the Department of Geography at UT (1985–1994); Dean of the Faculty of History and Philology of UT (1997–2000) and of the Faculty of Tourism at UET (2011–2012); member of the Steering Council of the Faculty of History

and Philology (1997–2003) and of its Council of Professors (2006-2011); member of the UT Senate (1997–2003); member and chairman of the National Commission on History and Geography (1997–2000); secretary of the geography editorial office of the Albanian Encyclopedic Dictionary (1976-1980); chairman of the editorial board of the Journal "Albanological Studies" (1997-2000); leader of several doctorates and master's theses, etc.

Prof. Perikli Qiriazhi has a wide scientific and publishing activity in the country and abroad. He is the author and co-author of 7 scientific monographs, the Albanian Encyclopedic Dictionary (published by the Academy of Sciences (1980) and its revised reprint (2008)); of the monograph "Geography of Albania" (co-author) in the process of publication by the German publishing house "Springer", 2021; about 100 scientific articles published in the country and abroad; 15 books about the geography of Albania; 5 maps and 2 geographical atlases; 6 university texts and 14 texts for pre-university education, etc. Prof. Perikli Qiriazhi is a participant and director of several scientific studies on the geographical problems of Albania, etc.; he has participated with referrals to 40 international scientific congresses and conferences and to 25 national conferences; has participated and directed several environmental projects, etc. He continues to contribute to the recognition and application of contemporary directions in geography and at the same time has initiated the geographical study of the natural heritage of Albania and its inclusion in the curricula of pre-university, university, and post-university education. He co-directed the project "Natural Monuments of Albania" (1996-2000), which was crowned with the National List of Natural Monuments of Albania (Qiriazhi, 2005 & Qiriazhi, 2007). Currently, he leads the Albanian Scientific Speleological Didactic Association, which initiated the Albanian speleology and, in cooperation with several sister European associations, has discovered and explored many karst caves; has helped in their legal and institutional support and in turning the caves into tourist facilities. In journalism, prof. Qiriazhi has raised very worrying environmental problems.

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF GEOGRAPHY, GEOMORPHOLOGY AND GEOMORPHOLOGICAL MAPPING OF ALBANIA

Equipped with a broad culture and deep knowledge in the field of geography and other related fields, prof. Perikli Qiriazhi has given a qualitative impetus to the development of geography in general and the Albanian one, both through the contribution to the development of higher geographical education, as well as through numerous studies with theoretical and practical values. His

contemporary scientific interpretations in many publications in the form of university textbooks, monographs, articles, references, etc., have been evaluated by local and foreign scholars (Qiriazi, 1991). The general features of the relief of Albania and its morphotectonic and morphoclimatic evolution are widely treated in university textbooks and in the monograph published by the Academy of Sciences of Albania (Qiriazi, 1986; Qiriazi 1990; Qiriazi 1998; Qiriazi 2019; Qiriazi 2021). From a comprehensive analysis, Prof. Qiriazi reaches the important conclusion that: “The relief of Albania is distinguished for its pronounced hilly and mountainous character, for the variety of morphological and morphographic forms, for the high degree of horizontal and vertical fragmentation, for the great slope of the slopes, for the complexity and variety of its genetic types. The relief of Albania has passed through two morphotectonic stages: tectogenetic and orogenetic” (Qiriazi 1986; Qiriazi, 1990, Qiriazi 1998; Qiriazi 2019). A special place in his scientific works is occupied by the analysis of morphological features, where prof. Qiriazi states that “In the relief of Albania is characteristic a very pronounced regularity: mountains, ranges and highlands in the west come decreasing and gradually being replaced by hills and plains and in addition, the variety and contrasts of the relief become more slightly pronounced. This morphographic feature of the relief is related to the migration (movement) of orogenesis from the eastern to the western parts of Albania, becoming increasingly weaker in this regard” (Qiriazi 1986; Qiriazi, 1990 Qiriazi 1998 & Qiriazi, 2019). In contrast to other Albanian geographers, prof. Qiriazi has the merit of successfully using morphometric methods in the analysis of analytical parameters of relief fragmentation, giving us the relevant maps for Albania (Qiriazi 1986; Qiriazi, 1990; Qiriazi 1998; Qiriazi, 2019). The physical-geographical regionalization of Albania is also important (Qiriazi, 1989), successfully realized by prof. Qiriazi. In addition, he has analyzed from the geographical, geological, morphometric point of view the whole Central Mountainous Province of Albania and its constituent units such as: the Korça and Perrenjas Pit-fields; The pits of Pogradec, Prespa and Kolonjë (Qiriazi, 1985); Upper Devoll and Upper Shkumbin valleys; the highlands of Mokra, Gora and Kolonja, etc. (Qiriazi, 1986, Qiriazi, 1990, Qiriazi 1998). Prof. Dr. Perikli Qiriazi, in his scientific work, based on studies and new geographical concepts, analyzes the physical, morphodynamical and bioclimatic bases of Albanian territory and, for the first time, deals with:



natural heritage, karst ecosystems, the degradation and desertification of landscapes, the consequences of global warming, the climate and water crisis in Albania, etc. The above elements make the work of prof. Qiriazit, a necessary basis for the formation of geography and history students in Albanian universities. Other researchers as geologists, climatologists, hydrologists, pedologists, biologists, ecologists, environmentalists, etc.; tour operators; natural resource planners and managers; decision-makers and government employees; geography and history teachers; media and those interested in recognizing the physical-geographical features of Albania, in this work, will find the latest scientific information, conceptions and interpretations on these features (Qiriazit, 2019).

Prof. Perikli Qiriazit has a special contribution in the geomorphological studies of Albania where through many works, references, articles, monographs, and other publications he has analyzed the most widespread and developed geomorphological phenomena in Albania, the most general characteristics of the relief, the relief by regions and specific areas, etc. (Qiriazit, 1980; Qiriazit, 1982; Qiriazit, 1985 & Qiriazit, 1988). In these scientific works he has treated in detail the karst and erosion, denudation processes, lithological and structural relief, coastal landscape, etc. (Qiriazit, 1994; Qiriazit, 1997 & Qiriazit, 2003). Thus, he has treated in the necessary breadth and depth the morphology and morphogenesis of the Southeastern Pits of Albania and the surrounding mountains (Qiriazit, 1985). In the extraordinary natural diversity of Albania stand out the karst ecosystems (Qiriazit, 1999) with strange forms of relief, with the chaotic distribution and pronounced contrasts of the surface relief, with the magical and mysterious world of gaps, galleries, labyrinths and numerous underground caves; with confusing and poor hydrographic network, often temporary, but with stormy bloating and immediate drying up, with sudden appearances and disappearances; with the great water wealth inside the karst massifs, which erupts in large springs in their surroundings; with vegetation and special soils and with the various forms of appropriation of natural values by human society living in these landscapes.

The studies about degraded terrains, erosion, river valleys, etc.; for the evolution of geographical landscape, the tectonic relief, etc., are an important part of the scientific activity of prof.dr. Perikli Qiriazit. He has used different methods in geomorphological and regional studies, but the most important are geomorphological mapping and morphometric methods. Prof. Qiriazit has given important speeches at the 28th International Congress of Geographers in the Netherlands (1996), at the International Conferences in Bologna - Italy (1997), Bulgaria (1997), etc.

Prof. Perikli Qiriazit has always used the concepts of Modern Geomorphology established in the nineteenth century as an exercise in the historical interpretation of landscapes and developed as a research to understand the

processes by which landscapes are modified. He considers geomorphology as a 'system science', thus reaching important conclusions on relief forms and their development in Albania. It is important to address the complexities of geomorphological processes and the history of soil forms including the geomorphological role of living organisms, especially microorganisms, the role of climate in geomorphology and the now dominant role of humans as geomorphic agents. In the studies of prof. Perikli Qiriazhi occupies an important place the treatments on social and economic human values with the changing environment and human impact on the environment.

Considerable progress has been made in geomorphological and geographical mapping in Albania as well. Thus, several detailed geographical and geomorphological maps have been created for the whole territory and for specific parts of it up to the scale of 1: 25000. A special contribution to the development of geographical and geomorphological cartography has given prof.dr. Perikli Qiriazhi. He is the author and co-author in the compilation of: Physical Map of Albania, scale 1: 200 000; Environmental map of Albania, published in Atlas Ost - und Sudosteuropa, published by Osterreichisches Ost - und Sudosteuropa - Institut; Physical map of Albania, published in the Geographical Atlas of the Population of Albania; Map of Albanian Environmental Pollution, published in the Geographical Atlas of the Population of Albania; Map of the Natural Monuments of Albania; Geographical Atlas of Albania, published by IDEART Publishing House, 2010, etc. We also single out the geomorphological map of the Middle Erzeni valley (Qiriazhi, 1995) and the geomorphological map of the hilly region around Tirana (Qiriazhi, 1990).

WITH OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALBANIAN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

A special contribution, prof. Qiriazhi has given as a lecturer in several geographical disciplines (Geography of Albania, Regional Geography of Albania, Physical-geographical research methodology, Natural Heritage, etc.), but also in drafting and supplementing of the content of geography and geomorphology curricula in the Department of Geography of UT and in other geographical departments of Albanian Universities (Qiriazhi, 1978). In collaboration with prof. Vasil Kristo, he has decided the most appropriate criteria for the treatment of the relief of Albania. They have argued that the fairest criterion is the genetic criterion, as in this way the general laws of relief development are better defined and the theoretical foundations of the development of geomorphology are given. This criterion responds better to

the study of the features of the relief of Albania, which is distinguished for the existence of more genetic types of relief of the globe. In the curriculum of Geography department, prof. Kristo and prof. Qiriazhi have envisioned the study of relief forms from the point of view of morphography, morphometrics, morphogenetics, evolution and morphochronology, considering the influence of internal and external forces, of factors and processes, geological and climatic conditions, etc. In the early 70s, prof. Kristo and prof. Qiriazhi placed in the curriculum of the subject of geomorphology a new chapter entitled "Survey and geomorphological regionalization". This chapter, which consisted of several topics, was a guide to orient the geographers on how to conduct geomorphological studies (what to consider before going to the field, during fieldwork, and how to process materials collected in the field), how to compile partial geomorphological maps and complex geomorphological maps, etc. Later in the geomorphology program took the place "engineering geomorphology or applied" through a chapter entitled "Geomorphological studies in the construction of socio-economic works", which deals with the role of relief and conducting geomorphological studies for agricultural purposes, in the construction of urban works, in the construction of traffic works (roads), in the construction of hydro-technical works, etc. Currently, the methodology and processes of creating geomorphological maps at different levels are included in the curriculum of geomorphology. Professor Qiriazhi is the author of several university textbooks on Geography of Albania and geomorphology (Qiriazhi, 1988; Qiriazhi, 1990; Qiriazhi, 2001; Qiriazhi, 2011 & Qiriazhi, 2019).

The contribution of prof. Qiriazhi is also special in dealing with the improvement of methods of teaching geography in school (Qiriazhi, 1986; Qiriazhi, 1999 & Qiriazhi, 2002), designing programs and publishing textbooks for pre-university education. We mention here the textbooks of Geography of Albania and Albanian Territories for 9-year education and general and vocational secondary education (Qiriazhi, 1979; Qiriazhi, 1984; Qiriazhi, 1988; Qiriazhi, 1993; Qiriazhi, 2000; Qiriazhi, 2002; Qiriazhi, 2003; Qiriazhi, 2007; Qiriazhi, 2010 & Qiriazhi, 2011).

PROFESSOR WITH SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

For excellent work as a lecturer and director of several university structures and for the high level of his pedagogical-scientific preparation, prof. Perikli has been awarded the title "Docent" since 1986 and later the title "Professor". He was honored with the order of Naim Frashëri III (1984) as well as a series of other medals. Prof. Perikli Qiriazhi has given an extraordinary contribution

to the development of the branch of geography, in terms of preparing plans and curricula of this branch, in the preparation and publication of lectures and textbooks on geography, geomorphology, cartography, etc.

During his teaching-scientific activity he has prepared dozens of titles of books of university and postgraduate level which have been published, revised and republished several times. He has prepared hundreds of scientific articles published in scientific bulletins in Albania and abroad. He has prepared monographs and scientific studies, is co-author of the Albanian Encyclopedic Dictionary, Publication of the Academy of Sciences, etc. He has never been detached from participating in the study work of the Department of Geography in cooperation with the different institutions. He has led and participated in several studies such as: areas of formation of avalanches in Albania and safeguards to them, environmental relief and environmental strategy studies, on the state of the environment in Albania, about the tourist potentials of the Saranda area (Lukovë - Konispol), the tourist potentials of the Pogradec area around Lake Ohrid, the tourist potentials of the Prespa - Kapshtica area, natural hazards in Albania (Natural hazard map, scale 1: 200.000 and its explanatory text), geological-engineering map of Albania in scale 1: 200.000, strategy and action plans for the protection of biodiversity in Albania, Protected areas of Albania - problems of the current situation and management them, nature monuments of Tirana region, nature monuments of Gjirokastra district, nature and culture monuments of Skrapar district, geographical features of Dajti National Park, karst ecosystems of Albania, environmental problems of the area Tirana - Durrës, etc. Also, prof. Qiriazhi has made environmental impact assessments of several engineering projects such as: construction of the Durrës - Kavaja Highway, construction of the liquefied gas plant and TPP in the coastal area Darzezë - Vija e Ngjalës (Fier); construction of hydropower of Dardha (Puka), on the river Çëmerica, in the cascade of rivers: Drini i Zi, Vjosa, Devoll and Osum, in the cascade of the river Suha, Shala and Cem, on the river Ziu (Puka), etc.

Prof. Perikli Qiriazhi is a well-known in the Albanian academic world up to the international arena with studies and geo-cartographic analyzes materialized as material (several hundred study pages, documents, etc.); as fields of study (geography, geomorphology, natural heritage, cartography); as a subject (published, in manuscript, translated, adapted) etc. Prof. Perikliu distinguished as organizer and coordinator of academic and scientific activity. He is known for his simplicity, sincerity, exemplary correctness, and dedication. He is one of the most excellent methodologists in Albanian higher education, who with his model lectures, leaves an indelible impression on all students who assist in his fluent, concise lectures and with a high scientific

level. Prof. Perikliu is a rare model of human and scientific behavior and communication and is distinguished for an unparalleled dedication in transmitting geo-cartographic knowledge to students and all other specialists. He is a complete scientist and scholar, a dedicated and tireless researcher, a rare leader of scientific research and initiatives.

CONCLUSIONS

In the generation of Albanian geographers, should be singled out Prof. Perikli Qiriaz, who is dedicated with perseverance and passion to University lectures and geographical studies. He is distinguished in the history of Albanian Geography for his ideas and theses in the geographical regionalization of Albania (Qiriaz, 1996), methods of geographical and geomorphological studies, geomorphological mapping, caves, and their treatment (Qiriaz, 2007), classification and protection of nature monuments, protection and development of the environment, etc. His publications are original and illustrated with Albanian geographical and geomorphological phenomena, unique where theory is organically intertwined with theoretical interpretations. Thanks to his professional training, work, and persistent character, he has reached original conclusions and theses with special scientific values. Even today, prof. Perikli Qiriaz works tirelessly and with tremendous passion. With his work he has contributed and is contributing to the successful development of geo-cartography in general, especially of Albania Geography.

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