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Ismail Kadaré

Fra Wikipedia, den frie encyklopædi

Ismail Kadaré (også stavet Ismaïl Kadaré eller Ismail Kadare), f. 28. januar 1936 i Gjirokastra, er en fremtrædende albansk forfatter. Han var protegé af Enver Hoxhas styre, men blev samtidig overvåget, hvilket Shaban Sinani har dokumenteret. Kadaré var en tid medlem af Folkeforsamlingen (Parlamentet).



Ismail Kadaré, foto: Bjørn Andersen, 2003

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1990: Afhopning til Paris

Hoppede af til Frankrig i 1990, bor fortsat i Paris, men er ofte på besøg i Albanien. Afhopningen fremkaldte undren fra mange sider. Hvorfor på dét tidspunkt? Nogle håbede på ham som den første *frie* albanske præsident og var derfor skuffede. Kadaré har adskillige gange afvist at han ville være præsident - sandsynligvis fordi han mente at han kunne gøre større nytte som forfatter.

2002: *De røde pashaer der forsvandt*

I marts 2002 opstod der røre om et digt som Ismail Kadaré har skrevet i 1974. Digtet hedder *Në mesditë Byroja Politike u mblodh (Politbureauet blev samlet ved aftenstid)* eller *Pashallaret e Kuq (De røde pashaer)*.

Maleren, forfatteren og arkitekten Max Velo, der var fængslet mange år i Hoxha-tiden, havde ikke kunnet finde digtet, men havde hørt om det. Han trak historien om digtet frem i ét af *sine* digte, hvis overskrift er: *De røde pashaers forsvinden*.

I den følgende tid var der mange gætterier, indtil digtet blev fundet i statens arkiver.

Forfatteren Fatos Lubonja, også en forfatter der havde været fængslet, mente at det forsvundne digt var en hyldest til Enver Hoxha m.fl. og at Kadare *flirtede* med regimet, mens andre, f.eks. Bashkim Shehu, søn af daværende premierminister Mehmet Shehu og ven af Kadaré, antog at digtet var kritisk, i det mindste mod *bureaukraterne*. Begge dele var sandt.

Digtet skulle have været trykt, men det blev forhindret *højt oppe fra* - Enver Hoxha skal have været negativ over for det. Så vidt det fremgår blev Kadaré kaldt til møde hos en af Kommunistpartiets ledere, Ramiz Alia (den sidste præsident under Hoxha-styret), hvor der blev læst og påskrevet, for man brød sig ikke om det. Måske fordi det var *for* underdanigt?

Nogle i partiapparatet mente at Kadaré skulle straffes, andre - bl.a. Hysni Kapo - at det var tilstrækkeligt hvis han bøjede af og formulerede en selvkritik, og dette blev øjensynligt resultatet.

Heri skal Kadaré ifølge den albanske avis *Gazeta Shqiptare* have skrevet:

The only aim and preoccupation of my life is to return in the quarries, in that great and honoured place of party's aids, without which, either my life, nor my work would have a meaning. And I thank my friend, who banned the publishing of my poem, and prevented me from the fatal fall.

Kadaré selv skal i 2002 have sagt at han ikke mente det gamle digt var systemkritisk, og han mindede om de omstændigheder hvorunder det blev skrevet.

I midten af marts fandt *Gazeta Shqiptare* digtet i statens arkiver (og forelagde det for Kadaré).

I digtets begyndelse spørger han: Hvorfor samles politbureauet? Der er ingen trusler udefra. Men der er noget galt, og der må gøres noget. En sort kræft er på vej nedefra. De mange der opfører sig som bureaukrater underminerer bygningen. Men frygt ikke Enver Hoxhas skarpe øje vil finde dem.

2003: Konference om religion og samfund med udgangspunkt i Huntingtons teori om *clash of civilizations*

Kadaré var i 2003 én af hovedarrangørerne af *the international conference »Religions and Civilization in the New Millennium: the Albanian case«* (Tirana). Konferencen tog udgangspunkt i Samuel Huntingtons berømte bog: *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. Hensigten var at vise at netop i Albanien var der stor fordragelighed mellem personer med forskellige religiøs baggrund, og at det meget længe havde været sådan. Konferencen blev fulgt op af en lidt anden Balkan-konference året efter - og også i Tirana. Denne konference blev afholdt i samarbejde mellem UNESCO og den albanske præsident og drejede sig om *religiøs tolerance*. Konferencen vedrørte albanske forhold, men også forholdene andetsteds på Balkan.

2005: Man Booker International Prize

Fik den første *Man Booker International Prize* i 2005. Er flere gange nævnt som kandidat til Nobelprisen.

2005-2006: Roman om forholdet mellem Enver Hoxha og Mehmet Shehu

Ismail Kadaré har omkring årsskiftet 2005-2006 udgivet en roman på det engelsk-amerikanske marked om forholdet mellem Enver Hoxha og Mehmet Shehu. Romanen hedder *The Successor* og er på vej i dansk oversættelse.

Værker på dansk

Flere af hans værker er udkommet på dansk, således: *Her er Tirana* (1981), *Den døde hærs general* (albansk 1964, dansk 1985), *Nichen i muren* om Ali Pasha fra Tepelena (albansk 1984, dansk 1989), *Hvem hjemførte Doruntine?* (albansk 1986, dansk 1990), *Drømmenes palads* (albansk 1981, fransk 1990, dansk 1994) og *Ufuldendt april* om slægtsfejder og blodhævn i Nordalbanien og om den sædvaneretlige tradition der findes i *kanun* (albansk 1980?, fransk 1982, dansk 2000). På svensk findes desuden *Brölloppet* (albansk 1968, svensk 1976) og *Den hårda vintern* (fransk 1978, svensk 1980) om skismaet mellem Sovjetunionen og Albanien. På norsk findes *Albansk Vår*.

Krønike, Brev, Refleksjoner (albansk, fransk og norsk 1991).

Eksterne henvisninger

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- Shaban Sinani: *Një dosje për Kararenë*, Tirana. Om Hoxha-styrets overvågning af Kadaré
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Blodets Bogholderi [Ismail Kadare]

Om Ismail Kadare: »Ufuldendt april«, Tiderne Skifter, København 2000, oversat af Gerd Have efter »Avril brisé«, Paris 1982. 192 s.



Det Albanske Parlament (Folketingsamlingen) vedtog i December 1979 en Straffelov. Forfatteren Ismail Kadare var Medlem af Parlamentet og ses (hvis øjet ikke bedrager) på en fremtrædende plads - nr. 2 fra venstre på 2. række - på rækken bag Nexhmije Hoxha, Enver Hoxha's magtfulde kone. Alle stemte for.

Fortiden

»Ufuldendt april« er en mærkelig bog - og Ismail Kadare en bemærkelsesværdig forfatter.

Bogen udkom oprindeligt i begyndelsen af 1980'erne - i slutningen af Hoxha-perioden; den handler om noget der skete på Kong Zog's tid engang i 1930'erne - og den er udkommet på Dansk - og efter sigende filmatiseret - i 2000. Tre meget forskellige, tre meget vanskelige perioder i Albansk historie.

Ismail Kadare er ikke politiker, men forfatter, en stor forfatter der jævnlig nævnes som kandidat til Nobelprisen i litteratur - og én man kan lære meget af - men han har som så mange andre på Balkan, og andetsteds, været ude hvor kragerne vender.

I mine gemmer har jeg en artikel fra 1977, som Kadare har lagt navn til. Den må være skrevet omtrent samtidig med »Ufuldendt april« eller kort tid før. Titlen var »The Literature of Socialist Realism is Developing in Struggle against the Bourgeois and Revisionist Pressure« - og artiklen kunne læses i firmabladet »Albania Today« (3/1977).

Der er ingen grund til at referere artiklen i detaljer, for den er frygtelig og aldeles uaktuel, men den er et typisk eksempel på hvor svært, for ikke at sige umuligt det var at være en fri fugl på Hoxha's tid.

Man kunne ikke - end ikke som én der var anerkendt langt ud over landets grænser - træde op med egne meninger, hvis man ellers havde nogle, men var bundet på hænder og fødder, og

man skulle passe meget på, også når man skrev litterært. Det var Kadare - trist nok - selv med til at sikre med en artikel som den nævnte.

Er bemærkninger om Kadare's fortid relevante i dag? Er der grund til at hænge ham ud? Så meget mere som han *efterfølgende* har taget afstand fra *socialrealismen*?

Jeg er ikke ude efter personen Ismail Kadare - som jeg har haft stor fornøjelse af at læse og også har stor respekt for - men han er et levende eksempel på hvor svær tilværelsen kunne være.

Kadare valgte *sin* måde at tage ved lære. Så snart det blev muligt - uden at nedkalde sværdet over venner og slægtninge - *sprang* han fra og slog sig ned i Paris. Hvis han var blevet i Albanien, kunne han *måske* være blevet præsident som forfatterkollegaen Vaclav Havel i Tjekkiet - men det er langt fra sikkert, og det er heller ikke sikkert at han ville være blevet god eller tilstrækkelig slagkraftig, de komplekse omstændigheder taget i betragtning.

Jeg gætter på at Kadare greb chancen for at koncentrere sig om dét han var god til og for at trække sig ud af dén politiske Praksis han kunne siges allerede at have *brændt fingrene på*.

Det er temmelig nemt at pege fingre ad en passage som denne perle fra ovennævnte artikel:

»Marxismen-Leninismen lærer os at Historien har et bestemt udviklingsforløb. Kampen mod den Borgerlige og den Revisionistiske [=Sovjetrussiske] kunst vil derfor blive vundet, og den Revolutionære Kunst vil nå store sejre«,

men så *farlig* er den vel ikke?

Værre er det derimod når Solsjenitsyn og Pasternak noget senere omtales som *kontrarevolutionære* (altså som forfattere man ikke burde læse), og når der lægges op til at alle Albanske Kunstnere og Kritikere aktivt skal *bekæmpe fremmed* indflydelse.

Væk med Garaudy, Ernst Fischer, Sjolokov og Solsjenitsyn. Langt væk.

Selvfølgelig var der mange af disse forfattere der var problematiske eller skrev problematiske ting, men hvorfor skulle man ikke kunne læse dem og danne sig sine egne tanker?

I dag kan man hurtigt komme til at glemme at tingene var temmelig sammensatte omkring 1980.

Der var et stærkt modsætningsforhold mellem de to store supermagter - som havde stor indflydelse på forholdene mange andre steder, ikke mindst i de små lande - og nabolandet Jugoslavien var - omend på en anden måde end i 1990'erne - en vanskelig udfordring.

Alt i alt var det svært for Albanerne at finde en passende balance, og det lykkedes heller ikke for dem. Det *endte* i paranoia, intolerance, undertrykkelse og særdeles problematiske økonomiske og sociale forhold i stedet for i åbenhed og positiv udvikling.

Man ville stå på sine egne ben, men man lukkede sig inde og slog sig selv omkuld - hvad der var årsag til at man siden har haft det så svært med sig selv og med omverdenen.

Måske kunne det have gået anderledes, måske kunne man have sprunget en meget kedelig mellemfase over? Men det er svært at sige - og en anelse *post festum*. På den anden side er det vigtigt at både Albanerne og vi andre skriver os de forskellige historiske erfaringer bag øret og alvorligt *lærer* af dem.

Ufuldendt?

Bogen er en *rigtig* Kadare-bog. Den er nem at gå til, umiddelbart spændende, men også komponeret overordentlig bevidst i mange lag og med skiftende synsvinkler; komposition og indhold passer nøje sammen.

Udviklingsforløbet er dels spiralsk, dels cirkulært - jo længere ud på Højlandet man kommer, desto mere cirkulært er forløbet, akkurat som *livsforløbet* havde været det i århundreder: En bunden gentagelse.

Selv om bogens Franske titel - *Avril brisé* - vel nærmest betyder *afbrudt april*, er den Danske titel ganske rammende - omend tragisk-ironisk - for er der noget *dén April* er - for *helten* Gjorg Berisha - er det *fuldendt* eller *afrundet*, akkurat som de skæbnetunge Græske tragedier.

Et sted i det Albanske højland, i nærheden af *Prokletija* (De forbandede Bjerge) højt mod nord begik Gjorg engang i 1930'erne dét hævn drab han var forpligtet til efter *Kanún*³⁶⁸. Han havde været længe om tage sig sammen til at hævne sin eneste bror - og gjorde det kun fordi hans far sagde at han *skulle*. At begå hævn drab var på det nærmeste ensbetydende med at begå selvmord, og det var formentlig årsagen til at Gjorg har tøvet som en anden Hamlet.

Der skal nok været en del andre der ligesom Gjorg har været tilbageholdende, men skal man tro Edith Durham - der var på dé kanter *nogle* år før - havde man normalt ikke de samme problemer eller forestillinger som Gjorg. Det hørte med til livet at man var *fanden-i-voldsk* og at man på et tidspunkt kunne blive dræbt, men hellere dét end at lade skammen sidde på sig.

Som sædvanen byder får Gjorg en måned til efter drabet at *bringe sig i orden*.

Først skal han til Borgen i Orosh (nær Rrëshen?) for at give Borgherrens Forvalter den afgift han er forpligtet til; derefter kunne han som andre - der netop havde dræbt - gifte sig, havde det ikke været fordi hans trolovede netop var død af en sygdom, eller han kunne gøre noget andet af en vis betydning - men frem for alt kunne han til sidst bringe sig i sikkerhed i ét af de befæstede tårne hvor så mange andre drabsmænd havde gemt sig for de hævnende forfølgere.

Bessian og Diana

Parallelt med denne historie fortælles en anden om forfatteren Bessian og hans kone Diana som er taget på bryllupsrejse til Højlandet. Normalt bor de i Tirana hvor livet leves helt anderledes end mod nord - og selv om især Bessian interesserer sig for Højlænderne og vist har skrevet om dem, ved han og Diana ikke så meget *virkeligt* om dem.

Kadare har givetvis været lidt i samme situation som dem, for han kom fra Gjirokastra i den modsatte ende af landet hvor leveforhold og traditioner var en hel del anderledes og stadig er det.

Bessian, Diana og Gjorg mødes ikke for alvor - får kun nogle glimt af hinanden - men Diana besættes af Gjorg og hans skæbne, og Gjorg giver sig til - noget omtåget - at efterstræbe Diana's *skygge* i stedet for at bringe sig i sikkerhed.

Hver af tingene kan muligvis være meningsfuld i litterær forstand, men virker ikke særlig overbevisende sociologisk eller historisk, endsige psykologisk, og gensidigheden gør det ikke bedre, tværtimod.

En Dickens ville have fået læseren til at spørge hvad der *bagefter* skete med Bessian og Diana, men sådan er moderne forfattere ofte ikke, og Kadare langt fra.

Bessian og Diana skaffer sig et *nydeligt* problem, det er en vigtig del af plottet, men så interessant er det nu heller ikke, den øvrige historie taget i betragtning, og det spekulerer man ikke synderlig over når bogen er læst.

Mange drab, men også en del forlig

Selv om bogen *kæntrer* hvad denne del af plottet angår, får man meget at vide om *Kanún* og om sædvanen, og man må tro at Kadare har sin research på plads.

Dé gang i 1930'erne var der omkring 1000 drabsmænd der holdt sig i skjul. Mange af drabene - måske 1/3 - skyldtes uenighed om materielle forhold (vandingsrettigheder med videre), men langt de fleste af drabene og konflikterne havde en lang *forhistorie* - for der var tale om fejder der rullede videre generation efter generation.

368) Om *Kanún* - se nærmere i omtalen ovenfor af Edith Durham: »*High Albania*«.

Ligesom man kan lære hos Edith Durham, skete det imidlertid - ifølge denne bog - jævnlige i 1930'erne at fejderne blev afblæst, enten fordi parterne fik stablet et forlig på benene, eller fordi man enedes om at tilkalde en kyndig mægler. En sådan navnkundig mægler og hans lille følge spiller en stor rolle i bogen, ikke mindst med hensyn til at sætte tingene og historien i relief.

Dén fejde som er bogens ramme var *næsten* ved at blive forligt et stykke tid før bogens begyndelse. En tante vidste at et hævn drab ville bevirke at dén del af slægten ville dø ud og fik med stort besvær og megen stædighed arrangeret forligsforhandlinger, men de mislykkedes alligevel til sidst fordi en *enkelt* slægtning satte sig imod, og *historiens hjul* måtte derfor male videre på gammel manér.

Mæglingsmanden er uafbrudt på farten (hvad der tyder på at man i mange tilfælde - muligvis hyppigere end tidligere - foretrak et kompromis frem for en ny fejde) og han bliver ledsaget af to specialister.

Den ene er en læge, som dog ikke skal pleje nogen, men vurdere *invalideringsgraden* så at den rigtige erstatning kan fastsættes. Havde man *kun* slået sin fjende halvt ihjel, havde man fortabt sin ret til hævn - med mindre man betalte en betydelig erstatning; jo mere tilredt offeret var, desto mere. Havde man slået sin fjende helt ihjel skulle man derimod ikke betale nogen erstatning. *Alt eller intet* - og dét måtte man om fornødent betale for.

Den anden ledsager er landmåler - og evigt beruset - men det forbliver uklart hvorfor mæglingsmanden har taget ham med, for han har ingen praktisk funktion (bortset fra en litterært kontrasterende).

Når der er opstået uenighed om græsningsrettigheder og skel, vil man vil ikke vide af hans *videnskabelige* opmålinger, men holder sig til sædvanerettens metoder, så hans udstyr er aldrig i brug og kunne lige så godt være bortkommet.

Bogen fortæller at der var en borgherre som af uvisse grunde skulle have afgift for hvert drab, og at en væsentlig del af hans udkomme ahang af disse afgifter, som nu var ved at tage af.

Durham fortæller ikke ét ord om sådanne Borgherrer og deres Forvaltere i »*High Albania*« - hvad man nok burde forvente (hvis de havde spillet en rolle) - men kun om at man - hvis man var uheldig - skulle bløde en afgift til de Osmanniske Myndigheder som havde den overordnede magt på hendes tid, og det er noget andet ³⁶⁹⁾.

Hvad der sker på Borgen, hvordan Arkivet er indrettet og hvilke tanker Borgforvalteren gør sig er en spændende historie for sig, der bringer »*Nichen i muren*« i erindring, Kadare's roman om den navnkundige Ali Pasha af Tepelena ³⁷⁰⁾.

Hvor vil Kadare hen?

Bogen blev skrevet på et tidspunkt hvor blodhævn og slægtsfejder mere eller mindre var kommet under kontrol, så det mest sandsynlige er at Kadare har skrevet bogen for at fortælle *en god historie* og bruge den til at fortælle om hvad *Kanún* gik ud på og hvordan den skulle fortolkes.

Kadare viser frem for alt at *Kanún* ikke var vilkårlig, selv om efterlevelsen af den havde konsekvenser som kunne forekomme absurde - og desuden at der skulle en del til for at *vende skuden* og løse problemerne på en anden måde.

Det er i den forbindelse udmærket at han fortæller om de to modsatte fortolkningsmodeller, som har været ført i marken op gennem 1900-tallet: At *Kanún* gav anledning til drab og hævn drab, og at *Kanún* skulle tjene til at begrænse drab og hævn drab. Kadare viser at der er *faktorer* der trækker hver sin vej. Visse *faktorer* holder hjulet i gang, visse *faktorer* hæmmer det.

369) Skulle der være en læser der véd noget om denne side af sagen, hører jeg meget gerne. Skriv for eksempel på post@bjoerna.dk

370) Ali Pasha kan man læse om i »*Krudttønden i baghaven*«.

Om det har været Kadare's hensigt ved jeg ikke, men man kan nok se en *vis* lighed mellem den Middelalderlige *Kánun* og *dé* (mulige) absurditeter dens efterlevelse kunne føre til - og *dé* vilkår man levede under i Hoxha-tiden.

I Hoxha-tiden gjaldt det *også* om at følge en *Kanún*; gjorde man det ikke var man fortabt, men i modsætning til den Middelalderlige *Kánun*'s logik - som byggede på at hver mand tog sit ansvar på sig og håndhævede *sin* del af Retten - var det ganske anderledes i Hoxha-tiden.

Her var det et *apparat* der havde *monopol* på at formulere og fortolke *Kanún* og til at håndhæve Retten, herunder til at skille sig af med dem, der havde en forbudt opfattelse (for eksempel i forbindelse med springene fra et *Jugoslavisk* til et *Russisk* til et *Kinesisk* til et »*autonomt*« *paradigme*).

Havde man en sådan forbudt opfattelse, måtte man skjule sig - mændene i Højlandet kunne i sin tid flygte til en *kulla*, en Digter i Hoxha-tiden måtte gå i indre landflygtighed - og eventuelt snakke Styret efter munden.

Hverken i Middelalderen eller i Hoxha-tiden var tingene uforklarlige, men de var lige ubønhørlige.

Nogle småting

Oversættelsen *går* ganske udmærket, men der er nogle småting.

Man har en tradition i Albanien for at holde fred eller våbenhvile i en bestemt periode eller på bestemte steder; man aftalte eller erklærede *Besa* (bestemt form, *besë* i ubestemt). Af én eller anden grund hedder det *bessa* i oversættelsen (i bestemt form: *bessaet*). *Dén* stavemåde er vist ikke meget brugt på Dansk.

På s. 44 skrives flere gange *doreräs* i betydningen *drabshånd* = *dén der har dræbt i en fejde*. *Sprogligt* er der et problem, for der er mig bekendt ikke noget *ä* på Albansk. I nærheden finder man *dorë* der betyder *hånd* og *doras* der betyder *drabsmand*.

Borgen i Orosh kaldes både *Borgen*, *Slottet* og *Fæstningen* - foruden det Albanske: *Kulla*'en. Vi har muligvis ikke et ord på Dansk der dækker præcist, men *Borgen* **ELLER** *Fæstningen* kunne vel bruges, hvorimod *Slottet* forekommer at være noget misvisende. (Jeg ved ikke om den inkonsekvente betegnelse stammer fra Kadare eller den Franske udgave).

Den berusede *landmåler* bliver de fleste gange kaldt *geometeren*; det er vist mere Fransk eller Norsk end almindelig Dansk? Et enkelt sted eller to bruges dog: *landmåleren*. Men da Albansk har *gjeometër* - skulle jeg måske stikke piben ind?

Gjorg's bror hedder dels *Mehill*, dels *Mëhill*.

Dritëro Agolli

Fra Wikipedia, den frie encyklopædi

Dritëro Agolli f. 13. oktober 1931 i Menkulas i nærheden af Korça. Albansk forfatter.

Han gik i gymnasiet i Gjirokastra og fik journalistisk uddannelse i Leningrad i 1950'erne.

Han var kommunist i Hoxha-perioden. I nogle år var han journalist på partiavisen *Zëri i Popullit*. Han debuterede som skønlitterær forfatter i 1958 og var formand for den albanske forfatterforening fra 1973 til 1992.

Efter Hoxha-styrets sammenbrud og etableringen af demokratiet i begyndelsen af 1990'erne blev han medlem af Socialistpartiet. Han har været medlem af Parlamentet for dette parti.

Han har skrevet digte, noveller, romaner og artikler.

På albansk foreligger bl.a.: *Në Macka Shtet*, *Arka e djallit* og *Komiser Memo*.

På dansk foreligger: *Manden med kanonen* (1987).

Eksterne henvisninger

- [Robert Elsie's internetbiografi over Dritëro Agolli]

Artikler af Dritëro Agolli. Interview

- *Proletarian Partisanship and Some of its Aspects of the Waging of the Class Struggle*, 1979. Om den socialistiske litteraturopfattelse i 1970'erne med udfald mod 'borgerlige' og sovjetrussiske ('revisionistiske') opfattelser
- *Literature and Arts towards a New Qualitative Leap*, 1983. Om den socialistiske litteraturopfattelse i den sidste del af Hoxha-perioden
- *Some Features of the Albanian Novel*, 1984. Bl.a. om nogle af Ismail Kadarés romaner
- *Rethinking the past. Interview in Tirana Times*, august 2006. Om Hoxha-perioden, nutiden og Agollis egen situation

Hentet fra "http://da.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drit%C3%ABro_Agolli"

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Dritëro Agolli



Artikler fra 1970'erne og 1980'erne

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PROLETARIAN PARTISANSHIP AND SOME OF ITS ASPECTS OF THE WAGING OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE

by Dritëro Agolli

Writer, Chairman of the Writers' and Artists League of the PSR of Albania [PSR: People's Socialist Republic]

»In today's conditions of the waging of the class struggle ensuring the leading role of the Party in art is one of the fundamental requirements for the implementation of proletarian partisanship. Nowadays, the principle of party leadership in art, as the essential element of proletarian partisanship, is the main target for attack by the bourgeois and revisionist theories and all the other opportunist trends«.

MARXISM-LENINISM LONG AGO SHOWED THAT THE WAY IN WHICH LIFE IS REFLECTED IN ART DEPENDS ON THE INTERESTS OF DEFINITE CLASSES AND THE CHARACTER OF THEIR IDEOLOGY, WHILE AS THE EXPERIENCE OF OUR PARTY OVER MANY YEARS HAS SHOWN, THIS CLASS NATURE OF THE REFLECTION OF LIFE IN ART IS REVEALED IN THE MOST COMPLETE AND OPEN WAY, IN THE CONDITIONS OF THE UNINTERRUPTED DEVELOPMENT OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE. IN THESE CONDITIONS, OUR IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE IN THE SPHERE OF ART ASSUMES A SPECIAL SHARPNESS, AND PLAYS A DECISIVE ROLE FOR THE FURTHER HEALTHY QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF ARTISTIC CULTURE. THE CORRECT WAGING OF THIS STRUGGLE HAS TO DO WITH THE FUTURE OF LITERATURE AND ART, WITH THE COURSE OF THE WHOLE CONTEMPORARY CREATIVE PROCESS, TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE. AND IT MUST BE SAID THAT THIS STRUGGLE IS NOT WAGED SIMPLY TO ELIMINATE SOME WEAKNESSES WHICH SHOW UP FROM TIME TO TIME IN THE CREATIVE PROCESS AND WHICH ARE UNACCEPTABLE TO US BECAUSE THEY ARE FAR REMOVED FROM OUR ESTABLISHED AESTHETIC TASTES. THIS STRUGGLE IS OF AN IDEOLOGICAL NATURE.

Thus, our struggle against bourgeois and revisionist alien influences displayed in their most complete form in literature and art prior to the 4th Plenum of the CC of the Party, as a consequence of the savage imperialist-revisionist pressure, from both inside and outside the country, cannot be explained simply as an effort to escape from certain distorted artistic tastes that we did not like, but as a principled struggle that was necessary to destroy the roots of these manifestations, behind the modernist nature of which lurked an entire, conscious, elaborated class ideology, a complete reactionary ideology, with well-considered and far-reaching aims. The representatives of, and agitators for, this ideology had tried to use the weapon of art to achieve their sinister desires and aims against socialism.

Summing up, on the one hand, the rich experience of the development of literature and art in the recent period, and on the other, the experience of leadership by the Party in the field of artistic creativeness, the 7th Congress reached the conclusion that the consistent defence and strengthening of proletarian partisanship comprise not only the main condition for all outstanding achievements, but also the fundamental requirement for the further progress of artistic culture. The class essence of our art and its aims are reflected, and the interests and the socialaesthetic ideals of the working class are expressed, in the principle of proletarian partisanship. This principle makes our art capable of militating for the line of the Party, militating as a powerful ideological weapon of the working class for the construction of socialism and the complete triumph of the revolution. The implementation of the principle of proletarian partisanship in literature and art in the conditions of the development of the class struggle in our society, has several main aspects which we consider of particular importance. These aspects may be summed up in three directions: **1) Enhancement of the leading role of the Party in literature and art; 2) Strengthening of proletarian partisanship in literature and artistic creativeness; 3) Raising the level of the worldoutlook of writers and artists.**

1. ENHANCEMENT OF THE LEADING ROLE OF THE PARTY IN LITERATURE AND ART

In the presentday conditions of the development of the ideological struggle in our country, the direction of art with definite aims, with lofty proletarian partisanship, direction which should exert an active influence on artistic creativeness, assumes special importance. In this manner, literature and art become part and parcel of the great cause of the Party, are closely linked with the tasks of our socialist revolution and fully in the service of this revolution. *»The sound leadership of the Party,«* says Comrade [Enver Hoxha](#), *»has given culture and education, literature and art a development, a direction and mobilizing force, and has linked them more closely with the people, the working class and the cooperativist peasantry, with the great tasks of our socialist revolution«* [\[1\]](#).

Our Party has given art very consistent guidance, has orientated and assisted it at many moments when artistic practice and the class struggle in this field have raised complicated ideo-aesthetic problems. It has focussed its attention on, and strongly criticized the partial slips and deviations that have occurred in our creative work, while severely condemning those ideological enemies who have tried to weaken the leadership of the Party in literature and art and to encourage modernist alien influences. While ensuring its leadership in literature and art, not only has the Party fought for their ideological purity, but it has also encouraged their enrichment in content and form, in styles and genres, by constantly opening up fresh creative possibilities for every writer and artist. This has come about because the Party has constantly kept in mind the specific character of creative art, having trust in and respect for the artist, valuing his work, while at the same time, never reconciling itself to any negative alien influence.

The strengthening of proletarian partisanship is not only an ideological problem, but also a political, organizational, and economic problem. It has many other aspects, too. Proletarian partisanship implies all the comprehensive activity to implement the line of the Party and to defend the dictatorship of the proletariat in the field of artistic culture. It is embodied in the various directives and instructions of the Party. This fundamental principle of socialist realism is connected with the fulfilment of many tasks: with the deepening of the Marxist-Leninist ideological orientation of literature and the arts, with the activity of the Writers and Artists' League and the literary press, with the work of the schools of art, with the training of cadres to work in and run the sectors of creative literary-artistic work, with the amateur movement, and with all the aesthetic education in the general educational system. On the

other hand, the strengthening of proletarian partisanship is linked with a more thorough development of aesthetic studies on the current problems of literature and art and the unmasking of modernist and revisionist trends. Finally, it is linked with all the work of the party organizations and state organs, which lead the cultural and artistic institutions. If there is not a united front of struggle for the consistent implementation of directives and instructions of the Party in all these directions, and this is forgotten, distortions which hinder the achievement of the leading role of the Party in individual links and sectors emerge.

Although the leading role of the Party in the implementation of proletarian partisanship has been enhanced and strengthened, sometimes there is still an oversimplified administrative concept of it, for instance, thinking it sufficient to ensure the number of items in the repertoire, publications or performances, and not extending this leadership to the main orientation of the content and the artistic level.

In today's conditions of the development of the class struggle, ensuring the leading role of the Party in art is one of the fundamental requirements for the implementation of proletarian partisanship. Nowadays the principle of the party leadership in art, as the essential element of proletarian partisanship, is the main target for attack by bourgeois and revisionist theories and all the other opportunist trends. The bourgeois and revisionist ideologists and aesthetes and all our ideological enemies consider party leadership in creative work as a petrification of art, a restriction on the expression of individuality. The bourgeois and revisionist ideologists constantly raise their notorious slogan against leadership by the party in art, while trumpeting the idea of the freedom of the artist. All this is concealed under the mask of an ideology that stands above classes. In reality, bourgeois and revisionist art, itself, is guided by their ideologies and their reactionary partisanship which destroys the artist, turns him into a market commodity, and gives him no possibility of entering into the life of the people. The notorious revisionists **G. Lukacs**, **E. Fischer** and **R. Garaudy** come out openly against party leadership in art and against the Leninist principle of proletarian partisanship. In his notorious article, *»Art and the Ideological Superstructure«*, **E. Fischer** long ago theorized about the inevitable *»ancient«* conflict between the state and *»the spiritual elite«*, as he calls the artists. *»If the socialist artist,«* he writes, *»is a supporter of the Central Committee, a qualified worker in the sector of agitation and propaganda, then as a result, not only will he be degraded as an artist, but he will also be a bad agitator and propagandist. If art is forced to adept itself to the requirements of the current tactical situation, life forsakes it«.*

This revisionist ideologist puts the proletarian policy of the Party in open conflict with the artist, whereas it is known that this policy arms creative practice, orientates it and helps it to reflect the life of the people truthfully, to judge and analyse the main directions of social life scientifically.

The Soviet revisionist theoreticians and scholars have resorted to shameless distortion of **Lenin**, presenting him as a leader *»tolerant«* towards liberal and decadent trends in art, claiming that he was allegedly in favour of the flourishing of many trends and that he understood *»tolerance«* in art. Thus, in a recently published book, entitled, *»That's how it happened«*, the revisionist Soviet writer, **O. Litovsky**, writes that **Lenin's** policy in the sphere of art was *»liberal in the finest sense of the term«.*

It is clear that revisionism is not ashamed to become the most cynical falsifier when it comes to attacking the sacred principles of revolutionary ideology.

By ensuring the leadership of the Party in literature and the arts we fight, at the same time, for the strengthening of proletarian partisanship in every work, and for its defence against the attacks of enemies and renegades from Marxism-Leninism.

2. THE STRENGTHENING OF PROLETARIAN PARTISANSHIP IN CREATIVE ARTISTIC WORK

By making art an inseparable part of its great cause in the fierce class struggle, our Party created in our country a rich artistic culture closely linked with the life of the people, with their interests and dreams. This advance of our arts on a broad front could not have been made if class tendentiousness in the artistic treatment of the range of themes and problems, which the revolutionary development of our society brought to the fore through fierce class struggle, had not been strengthened by affirming lofty ideals and rejecting old, inhibiting, alien, anti-socialist concepts. At the 7th Congress of the Party Comrade **Enver Hoxha** said about this: **»The 4th Plenum of the Central Committee sternly criticized some harmful manifestations that had to do with imitations of reactionary foreign trends, with the wrong treatment of contradictions in our society, with theories that disparaged folk creativeness, etc. It put forward important tasks over the entire front of culture. Their implementation gave a fresh impulse to the development of literature and art, to all cultural and artistic activity«** [2].

But looking at the process of creative work in the light of the decisions of the 7th Congress of the Party and the requirements of its own mission in the development of the class struggle, for the further strengthening of proletarian partisanship in literary and artistic works, a series of new tasks, which assume particular importance in the presentday conditions, have emerged.



»The Moscow Meeting« by G. Madhi [billedet er tilføjet ift originalartiklen]

First, the class struggle must be a subject reflected, and a permanent and cardinal theme in our literature and arts. This theme broadens the horizons of arts, gives them an indisputable superiority, because the class struggle pervades all the fields and pores of social life. It manifests itself in the economic and political relations between people, in collectives and families, in town and countryside, in intimate actions and moral relationships, at school and in production, in the past, the present and the future. The treatment of the class struggle in literature and the arts is one of the ways to strengthen their tendentiousness, to link them with the fundamental problems of the internal and external developments that engage the attention of the Party and the people. If some

works, such as »*The Great Winter*« by **I. Kadare**, »*The Moscow Meeting*« by G. Madhi, »*Confrontation*« by **T. Laço**, »*The Girl of the Mountains*« by **N. Zoraqi**, »*The Fall of Idols*« by **S. Drini**, »*The Grand-Mother*« by **K. Kosta**, and a number of films produced in recent years, have had a favourable reception from readers and audiences. This is due not only to the mastery of their authors, but also to the class tendentiousness with which they treat the problems of our society, and the political line of the Party. We have many other works, too, which have reflected the reality from the angle of the development of the class struggle. But it is essential to do more in this field. The reflection of the class struggle in literature and art is one of the most important problems of our creative work, because it is linked with many other problems, such as those of the recognition and correct solution of contradictions in our society, those of a thorough understanding of the typical and the individual, those of the relationship of the hero to the mass, those of the aesthetic and social ideal, those of the class stand towards tradition and its relationship with innovation, and many others. A thorough Marxist-Leninist knowledge of the development of the class struggle in our society helps the artist to capture the fundamental trends of development of our revolution in a scientific manner. The writers and artists **»are required to reflect accurately in their works the fundamental processes and trends of development of our revolution, the contradictions of life, and to fight any manifestation of formalism and stereotyped treatment of them, to faithfully and creatively apply the method of socialist realism, which is the foundation of the proletarian art which the future belongs«** [3].

Although improvements have been made since the time of the 4th Plenum of the CC of the PLA, erroneous solutions to these difficult problems of our arts are still seen occasionally. Sometimes the reflection of the class struggle is superficial and there is no thorough analysis of its processes in certain works.

Second, the strengthening of proletarian partisanship is also linked closely with the treatment of the acute current problems which engage the attention of the Party in the stage of the complete construction of socialism. Thus more stress should be put on certain themes such as that of the [hegemonic] role of the working class, the revolutionary transformations in our countryside, and the revolutionizing force of communists, which require more profound treatment in all their breadth and magnificence, because, despite the indisputable achievements, we think there is a disproportion in this direction, which must be overcome. The problem is that these themes should occupy the place they deserve in our literature and art, in conformity with their intrinsic importance in the context of the struggle our Party is waging today to enhance the leading role of the working class, to reduce the essential distinctions between city and countryside, to liquidate the sources of bourgeois-revisionist degeneration and to complete the construction of socialism. On the other hand, greater attention must be focussed on the treatment of all the cardinal problems of social development, as laid down by the 7th Congress of the Party such as the themes of our people's resistance and struggle against the imperialist-revisionist encirclement, patriotism and proletarian internationalism, the implementation of the principle of self-reliance, defence and revolutionary vigilance, etc.

The treatment of this range of themes and problems with class tendentiousness helps to link literature and art better with the great cause of the Party, with the entire presentday and historical reality of Albania. Linking art with the problems of the Party invigorates it with rich social content and lofty communist ideals. Then it is not imprisoned in the shell of petty eroticism and never becomes a means to delve into the murkiest depths of the consciousness of the egoistic isolated individual, such as is seen in the degeneration of the literature and arts of the bourgeois and revisionist countries. One of the functions of Western and Soviet modernism is to destroy man's confidence in himself and his own thinking. According to the US aesthete and writer, **R. Kostellians**, art is **»blinding, deafening, maddening spiritual suffering«**. That is why books are centred on psychopaths,

idiots, the spiritually crippled, sadists and prostitutes. In his book entitled, »*Love, fight back!*«, the Soviet poet, **V. Kotov** extols the figure of **Eva Braun**, **Hitler's** wife, who burnt herself to death together with her husband, demonstrating her conjugal »fidelity« with this gesture. The poet counterposes **Eva Braun** to the wives of great men, who allegedly, were not loyal, but quarrelsome and unfaithful. According to him, such were the wife of **Socrates** of antiquity, the wife of the great poet **Pushkin**, and **Leon Tolstoy's Sophia!**

*What was Hitler...
But Eva Brawn, the screen star,
Remained faithful to him to the end!*

. . .
*What was Pushkin....
But his beloved Natalya
Slyly winks at Dantes!*

. . .
*Leon Tolstoy, great as a god
Flees demented from Sophia....*

(**V. Kotov**, »*Zashchishchaysya, Liubovj!*« Moscow, 1969, pp. 55-56).

In a word, alongside that revisionist Soviet literature which, with overworked cliches, sings to the glory of the chauvinist soldier of Russian expansion, another literature, which boosts criminals, their »faithful« wives, and prostitutes, under the veil of »all-conquering love«, is flourishing.

Our militant and pure art, with all its power and beauty, stands in contrast to this aggressive degenerate bourgeois and revisionist modernism. This contrast becomes more militant when we deal with the whole wide range of problems and themes which was presented and analysed at the 7th Congress of the Party, with an even sharper class tendentiousness. The fullest possible treatment of this range of themes and problems, does not narrow the creative horizon of our literature and art, but, on the contrary broadens and deepens it, because it contains a wealth of aspects which give rise to an endless variety of subjects and forms. Within this broad horizon each writer or artist finds a boundless field for the flowering of his creative individuality, and the utilization of all means of artistic expression.

Third, the strengthening of proletarian partisanship in the conditions of the development of the class struggle requires the ceaseless raising of the artistic level of literature and the arts. Proletarian partisanship cannot be achieved without the all-round development of all means of artistic reflection, without a continuous evolution of artistic form. Only an art with sound content and fine artistic form can become a powerful weapon of the working class in the class struggle. We must struggle to achieve a sound content embodied in a perfect artistic form. On this question, Comrade **Enver Hoxha** has said: »**And such content is bound to be conducive to the search for and discover of new forms**« [4]. The Party teaches us, on the one hand, to regard art as part of the overall cause of the proletariat, i.e., not to divorce it from ideology, politics, [sociology], ethics and other forms of social consciousness, and on the other hand, to regard it, also, as a reflection of the reality with its own specific means, its varied forms, while encouraging the initiative of creative thought and imagination. **Lenin** recommends: »**All these things are indisputable, but this only proves that the literary part of the work of the proletarian party cannot be fitted into the same mould as the other parts of the work of the Party of the proletariat**« [5].

It is true that the artistic level of our creative literary and artistic work has risen, and the efforts of the writers and artists to cultivate all forms of art and to find fresh means of

expression have been intensified.

Nevertheless, sometimes a narrow concept of proletarian partisanship is encountered, giving it the tone of routine agitation. This weakness is more apparent in variety theatre and plays. In these fields, banality and schematic treatment of the material from life are observed. In children's literature and some of the poetry published, there are also instances of the treatment of themes and problems with empty pompous phraseology. In some instances there are obscure and incomprehensible figures in poetry, a phenomenon which has been criticized following the 4th Plenum of the CC of the Party.

When we speak about the strengthening of proletarian partisanship, we do not exclude the demands for a higher artistic level. To raise the artistic level while maintaining proletarian tendentiousness means to achieve a broad understanding of the problem of proletarian partisanship, to put art more effectively in the service of people and to democratize it further.

Alien manifestations, old and new, conservative and liberal, schematic and modernist, are expressions of the class struggle in the field of artistic form.

The alien influences, manifested in the most complete way prior to the 4th Plenum of the CC of the Party, were camouflaged at first under the idea of »the quest for forms«. In fact they were intended to distort the proletarian partisanship and change the proletarian tendentiousness of our art. All those metamorphoses which the lyrical hero of poetry went through, for example, »I am a prickly pear«, a »shell«, a »fossil«, and what not, alienated art and cut it off from the major problems of the time by extinguishing the class spirit of action. Therefore the task remains to defend the form against the modernist distortions, which are in fashion today in bourgeois and revisionist literature and art. Form is always more vulnerable to formalist pressure, to alien creative trends and practices.

In present-day revisionist Soviet criticism, this quest in the field of form has become the fashion. In his article »*The Class Spirit in Literature*« (»*Znamya*«, 1968, N° 2, p. 217), the well known revisionist Soviet critic, **G. Kunitsyn**, writes: **»Our enemy in art is, of course, neither *Kafka* nor any other close to his artistic trend, but in the first place the various forms of pseudo-realism and naturalism, which unlike *Kafka*, try to preserve the truth in details while affirming the overall lie.«**

It is clear that the revisionist critic is disturbed neither by **Kafka** nor by modernism. All these things are acceptable to him. What worries him is realist art, which he calls »naturalism«. **F. Paçrami**, too, was worried only by conservatism, naturalism and schematism, as he understood them, whereas to him liberalism was not a problem.

Therefore, in order to face up to the great bourgeoisrevisionist ideological pressure and to keep our art in attacking positions, it is necessary to step up the struggle for the formation of the revolutionary worldoutlook in the ranks of our writers, artists, scholars and critics.

3. RAISING THE LEVEL OF THE MARXIST-LENINIST WORLD OUTLOOK OF WRITERS AND ARTISTS

The strengthening of the proletarian partisanship is closely connected with the ability of each writer and artist to interpret and analyse all the material from life in the spirit of our Marxist-Leninist ideology. Therefore, in the realization of proletarian partisanship, the world outlook of the artist himself plays a decisive role. We say this because his world-outlook determines the direction and the character of the creative work of each artist. For this

reason every writer and artist should feel that the effort to raise his ideological level is an objective necessity, because only in this way can the complicated character of the class struggle be reflected correctly, can the pressure of the alien ideology be coped with and works of a sound militant spirit of attack be created. At the 7th Congress of the Party, Comrade **Enver Hoxha** said, **»Those artists who work ceaselessly to raise their Marxist-Leninist ideological level, who master the teachings of the Party, who lead an active political life, who are thoroughly immersed in the life of the masses and have a profound knowledge of the road of the revolutionary historical development of our people and culture, succeed best in these tasks. Revolutionary art is created by revolutionary artists whose hearts beat in time with the heartbeat of the people«** [6].

These words of Comrade **Enver Hoxha** clearly express the idea that the Marxist-Leninist world outlook not only has theoretical importance, but also has great practical activating force. All our literary and artistic practice, guided by the Party has confirmed the validity of this idea. Those artists who have thoroughly mastered the Marxist-Leninist world outlook have always stood in sound positions and have created a militant and partisan art of a high artistic level. Without mastering the Marxist-Leninist world outlook one cannot find one's bearings in the complicated phenomena of life, cannot disclose the fundamental trends of the development of our society, from the revolutionary class standpoint. However, the Marxist-Leninist ideology should not be studied for curiosity's sake, or simply to add to one's general culture, to be able to answer a question or to display one's ability as an orator in certain auditoriums. Its study, too, should be tendentious, should pursue an aim. In his report to the 7th Congress of the Party Comrade **Enver Hoxha** said: **»We do not study Marxism-Leninism for the sake of erudition. We study it to apply it in life, so that we are guided by its principles in every action and judge everything in its spirit. Such a study of theory, closely linked with life and revolutionary practice, serves true communist moulding, the creation not only of a scientific outlook but also of a revolutionary character, so that our people will always be resolute fighters for the cause of socialism, irreconcilable with the enemies and their ideology«** [7].

In the documents of our Party, in the Works of Comrade **Enver Hoxha**, the experience of the creative application of the general laws and principles of Marxism-Leninism in the conditions of our country has been reflected and summed up, a synthesis has been made of the rich experience of the revolution and the practice of socialist construction, and the struggle against imperialism and revisionism. While gaining a thorough knowledge of Marxist philosophy, political economy, scientific socialism, of our ethics and aesthetics and theoretical thinking, our writers and artists must also make themselves better acquainted with the rich experience of our literature and arts which have developed on a correct course, according to the principles of socialist realism. This should be done not only by the writers and artists, but also by all the editors, critics, scholars and cadres who direct the sectors of art. All books devoid of ideas which are published have first gone through the hands of the reviewers who have recommended them to the publishers. The second concession is made by the editors, and the third by the directors of publishing houses themselves. In all these practices either personal friendship is placed above principles, or one's world-outlook is insufficiently formed, or ideological vigilance is lax. Two years ago was published the book *»Poets of the Thirties«* in which the editor had collected even writings of authors compromised with the foreign invaders and the antipopular regimes, writings that were published in the fascist press even in the beginning of the Forties. This comes also from insufficient study of the documents of the Party over that period, as well as from a sentimental stand towards the literary and artistic past.

But the revolutionary education and tempering of the artists and writers are not achieved through ideological work alone. It is essential that the party organizations concern themselves, also, with all the other aspects of the activity for the revolutionization of writers

and artists, with integrating them into the life of the country and activating them in the solution of social problems, so that their lives are intensively involved with the political situations. They must be militant people, people who live with the policy of the Party. At every moment our artist is a political person in the first place. The policy of the Party gives the artist the powerful passion and class standpoint so that he can consistently defend its principles. Nowadays the bourgeois and revisionist theoreticians try either to make the writers stand aside from revolutionary politics, or to turn them, in general, into people indifferent towards the problems of society. The aging revisionist Soviet writer, **Marietta Shaginian**, in her book *»Four Lessons from Lenin«*, published in the Soviet Union recently, counterposes politics to art, as the bourgeois theoreticians have always done. Leafing through **Lenin's** correspondence with **Gorky** [Gorkij], this revisionist author and publicist writes: **»Reading every word of this correspondence, one begins to be aware of how necessary the shy, withdrawn, stubborn, sensitive, fiery Gorky was to Lenin, who sharpened up his thoughts on this friendship, on the questions asked by this rough, different, strange man. The artist was as necessary to the politician as air, food, as the left foot is necessary to the right foot.«** And further: **»...I think that had Gorky been another person, had he not made mistakes in 1908, in 1917, and perhaps more than once, before and after those dates, Ilych would not have loved him as he did, getting angry with him, persisting with him, sharpening his thought on the polemic with him«.** (**Marietta Shaginian**, *»Chetyre Uroka u Lenina«*, Moscow, 1970, p. 281). These few lines bring out clearly the monstrous distortion, not only of two great figures of the proletariat **Lenin** and **Gorky**, but also of the Leninist policy of partisanship in art. On the one hand, the revisionist writer counterposes the artist to the politician, and on the other, puts **Gorky** in the role of the entertainer of the leader of the proletariat. Everybody knows that **Lenin** did not keep close to **Gorky** in order to *»sharpen his thought«* on polemics with him, but to make him a cofighter and a soldier of the revolution. Moreover, **Lenin** never considered **Gorky** *»alien«* to the cause of the revolution. What **Shaginian** says is shameless fabrication.

The Soviet revisionist theoreticians, guided by their bourgeois world-outlook, are now coming out openly for the revision of the principle of partisanship, not only in creative practice but also in theory. In reality they are for partisanship, provided it is revisionist partisanship. Indeed they have come out with the *»theory«* that, in the countries with a bourgeois system, only those writers who are *»organized in the communist parties«* (read: revisionist parties) can master this partisanship. We all know that proletarian partisanship is not only for those artists who are organized in parties. But according to the revisionist theoreticians this principle should allegedly be reviewed. The revisionist critic, **G. Starets**, [writes]: **»Thus, in the framework of the bourgeois system, communist partisanship, as a rule, can be achieved only by those writers who are organizationally linked with the party«.** Hence, according to this theoretician, it emerges that, **Gorky** and **Mayakovsky** [Majakovskij], who, were not party members, allegedly did not achieve partisanship in their works. True, they did not achieve that revisionist partisanship this theoretician is after!...

The essence of all the modernist and reactionary trends, schools and methods, whether camouflaged as art *»that stands above classes«*, or manifested openly, is bourgeois and revisionist partisanship, which deviously and hypocritically, but also aggressively, tries to counterpose itself to proletarian partisanship and socialist realism. Hence, to adhere to proletarian partisanship today, means to combat the bourgeois and revisionist ideology, to combat its reactionary world outlook within the country and in the international arena, and to propagate the line and ideology of the Party tirelessly. Today the revisionist and bourgeois aesthetes have made decadence, irrationality, the preaching of absurdity, etc., fashionable throughout the world. **Allen Ginzburg**, who is well known in the Soviet Union, writes: **»Now all revolutionary ideas and the usual methods of acting on the human consciousness have become obsolete«.**

Faced with all this ideological chaos and all these reactionary trends that exert fierce pressure on our life, the struggle to raise the level of the Marxist-Leninist world-outlook of every writer and artist in all fields of our art is more necessary than ever. As Comrade **Enver Hoxha** teaches us: **»We must cope with the united front of the enemies by strengthening our internal front in all directions, in the fields of defence and the economy, politics and ideology, always consistently waging the class struggle«** [8]. The formation of the artist's world-outlook plays a major role, not only in strengthening the content of his creative work, but also in his treatment of many theoretical problems that face our arts in the party spirit. The confusion which sometimes arises over the question of the national character, tradition, innovation, etc., also stems from inadequate Marxist-Leninist formation.

The problems of the national character of art at the present time cannot be dealt with simply as academic analyses, because they are important political and ideological problems which are subject to class tendentiousness and proletarian partisanship. The reflection of special national features, and the national character in general, in art cannot be divorced from the class struggle and history. One of the most distinctive and active elements which expresses the national character is the patriotism of the artist himself, the originality of this patriotism which he finds among his own people. With their impudence devoid of all principles, the Soviet revisionists do everything they can to hit out directly or indirectly at the patriotism of our people in their publications and translations from bourgeois artistic and political literature. Recently in Moscow was published **L. Mosley's** book *»Time lost«*, where among other things, the English author says: *»On April 7th, the Duce dispatched his naval ships to the port of Durrës and occupied the whole of Albania without meeting resistance«* (**L. Mosley**, *»Time Lost«*, Russ. edition, 1972; p. 219). This is an ill-intentioned distortion of the history which cynically hurts the patriotic feelings of our people. Everybody knows that on April 7th, 1939, our people, although betrayed by **Zog** and the feudal-bourgeois regime, fought heroically to defend their land and honour against the fascist invaders.

Our literature and arts have found their patriotism in the very life of our people. This reality has given our arts their national tone and colour. Therefore, the national character of art assists directly to increase its educative power, with its love of country, its feeling of civic responsibility and its militant character. Hence, we come to the conclusion that the question of the national character is closely linked with the ideological leanings and the world-outlook of the artist, is closely linked with his partisanship. The ideology and world-outlook of the artists also determine his concept of patriotism and his reflection of the national character in art. **Gjergj Fishta** wrote in the Albanian language, was a master of the octosyllabic verse, portrayed the originality of life in our Highlands, drew on folk songs, but his ideology and world-outlook were reactionary because they were an expression of the interests of the anti-democratic and obscurantist exploiting classes. Even a reactionary writer may use national elements such as folk customs, traditional dress and headwear and popular phraseology, but he cannot be a patriot and a man of the people because he lacks the progressive ideological trend which is determined by his world-outlook. For this reason we say that the national character of an artist is linked with the popular spirit of his work, which stems from his treatment of the major problems of the life of the people. And the highest form of expression of the popular spirit is proletarian partisanship, the quintessence of class tendentiousness. Proletarian partisanship places art completely in the service of socialism, in the service of the communist education of man, while protecting it against cosmopolitanism and other antinational trends.

The insistence on the strengthening of the national character and the popular spirit in our literature and arts is linked directly with the requirements of the development of the class struggle in literary and artistic work. The socialist realism of our art is in open struggle

against the ideology of the two superpowers the United States of America and the Soviet Union, which, proceeding from their expansionist intentions, are doing their utmost to divest the cultures of peoples of their national character and to make them cosmopolitan. For this reason the defence and the strengthening of the national character is not simply a question of aesthetics, but a question of political principle and of world-outlook in the arena where class struggle is waged. That is why, at the 7th Congress of the Party, Comrade **Enver Hoxha** takes both the national character and the popular spirit as inseparable from the positions of the Marxist-Leninist ideology, the class standpoint, proletarian partisanship. Dealing with the three cardinal problems of our arts: proletarian partisanship, the national character, and the popular spirit, all inter-connected with one another dialectically, he comes to **the conclusion: »The national character and the popular spirit are expressed through the truthful reflection of reality, from the standpoint of Marxist-Leninist ideology...« [9].**

It is from this angle that the revolutionary artist or writer of the new type should see his task as a creator and a citizen. Only through a sound ideological moulding can works with a high proletarian partisanship, with a clear national character and a thoroughly popular spirit, be created.

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LITERATURE AND ARTS TOWARDS A NEW QUALITATIVE LEAP

by Dritëro Agolli

Chairman of the League of Writers and Artists of Albania

Socialism and its reflection in art enliven and refresh the cells of literary artistic creation

OUR LITERATURE AND ARTS HAVE BECOME AN IMPORTANT FACTOR OF SOCIAL INFLUENCE BECAUSE THEY HAVE FOCUSED ON THE ACTIVITY OF THE PEOPLE, THEIR HISTORY, THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION, THE DAY-TO-DAY WORK AND PROBLEMS AND THE BATTLE FOR THE TRIUMPH OF THE IDEALS OF COMMUNISM. THEY PLAY NOW A GREAT ROLE IN THE FORMATION OF THE WORLD OUTLOOK OF PEOPLE, THE ENRICHMENT OF THEIR SPIRITUAL WORLD AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL OPINION. PROCEEDING FROM THEIR ROLE IN SOCIETY, AS THEY TREAT CARDINAL PROBLEMS OF SOCIALISM, WE ALSO SPEAK OF CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE AND ART, THE GREAT VALUES WHICH SOCIALISM, ON ITS ROAD OF CONSTRUCTION, HAS CREATED. THEREFORE, AT ITS 8TH CONGRESS THE PARTY OF LABOUR OF ALBANIA MADE A HIGH ASSESSMENT OF LITERATURE AND ART, OPENED UP BROAD HORIZONS AND SET IMPORTANT TASKS TO ALL THE CREATIVE FORCES OF THE COUNTRY.

This assessment is based on the reality of the artistic and literary creations of recent years and their process of development. They have some features which distinguish them from those of the previous periods. Among them we can mention:

The enrichment of art in content and form, which results from the strengthening of the socialist spirit, is a process which must be further deepened. The socialist spirit is felt in the broader reflection of presentday life, as a consequence of the ever growing interest of the creative forces in the great variety of themes and problems presented by the socialist reality. This spirit is also seen in the works of art treating problems from the historical past and the National Liberation War.

Another feature is that a more correct ratio has been established between themes from life in socialist society and the historical past, although some problems still remain in this field. However, it must be said that life, its acute problems, the uplift of the cultural level of people, the all-round development of their personality and the extension of the frontiers of their knowledge exercise a powerful pressure on artistic creativeness which must turn its attention more towards life and establish a more correct ratio between themes from the present and from earlier history.

An important feature is that the literary and artistic activity has assumed extensive development in all its kinds and genres: literature, cinematography, theatre, figurative arts, music and choreography. Let us take an example from literature. From the year 1976 to the end of 1980 we have seen 996 titles, published, of which 128 novels. The League of Writers and Artists has swelled its ranks to include 1,500 members and candidate members, apart from hundreds of new talent and thousands of amateurs. An activity of such unprecedented proportions is bound to yield valuable works that enrich the treasury of literature and art.

In the field of more recent creativeness worth mentioning is the ever growing preoccupation of the writers and artists about their own ideological, aesthetic and cultural formation. This the creativeness of each of them. In their creative process they have thrashed out problems of art content and form, discussed principles and methods of the developing socialist revolution. Some questions of the deepening of the socialist spirit and national originality are treated far more extensively than several years before and the cultural and professional level of writers and artists is in constant rise. From a rapid excursion into the literature and art of the recent period we notice undeniable achievements which make us optimistic about the perspective of artistic production. However, considering literature and the arts from the heights of the 8th Congress of the Party, we find ourselves faced with many problems, the correct solution of which will quicken the transition to a new qualitative leap in literary and artistic activity.

* * *

The demands of our society for higher quality in literature and art are not unattainable, abstract ones. Quality is not the result of a simple addition of expression means used in the process of creation, but the result of a whole development connected with the world outlook of the writer or artist, his truthful, though artistic, reflection of the essence of the life of the people in socialist society and in the historical past. When we lay the stress on a more complete reflection of life, this means that we have to go deeper into it, because it is precisely in the great socialist reality that phenomena and problems are more acute and their reflection calls for a high artistic level in literature and the arts. We live in the socialist

reality and when we see it reflected in art, we immediately feel both the beauty of the artistic work and its faults. Conversely, in a book reflecting the past, the reader does not notice its faults so easily, since he is attracted by the plot, by what is romantic and exotic in it. On the other hand, in reflecting the past we have gained an experience from both national and international sources. Here come into play our great teachers, the classics, with their works. The reflection of the past lacks the acute problems of the present reality in which we live and with which we are confronted every day. In the works treating problems of the present-day reality there is the invariable difficulty of coping with a complex reality, with complex phenomena which demand an all-round ideological, cultural and aesthetic formation.

True art is tendentious, since without being tendentious the artist cannot defend his views and fight for his lofty aims. Engels is quite outspoken about the problem of tendentiousness. Speaking in favour of this feature of progressive art, he says: *»I think that tendentiousness should emanate from the milieu and from action, that we must not overstress it, and that the writer is not compelled to provide the reader with readymade historical solutions to the social conflicts which he depicts.«* [10]

Cut and dried treatments of problems have overdoses of tendentiousness, expressed through pompous-sounding phrases. The use of pompous phrases necessarily demands the squeezing of all ideas and principles of a manifesto in to one work, however small it may be. A manifestation of schematic phraseologism is the polishing and embellishment of the reality, the idealization of the hero and the milieu. Schematism is sometimes responsible for the harm caused to generally positive works of writers of talent and literary experience, preventing them from going to the end of the conflict or leading them to shifting the main stress from the principal to the trivial.

Our literature and arts, in the first place, point out the new phenomena in life, but they also stigmatize everything which inhibits their development; they exalt the bold builders of socialism, the working people, the peasants and the intellectuals: the main place in them is occupied by the positive hero while enemies, traitors, scribblers, creepers and individualists are made the target of stern criticism. Our society is strong, and with the struggle it wages against every difficulty and inhibiting phenomena it becomes even more so. The atmosphere in our society is so healthy that even the extreme individualist finds it hard to act freely. One of the missions of socialist arts is to educate moral fortitude, therefore it finds such heroes as try to live up to their own ideals. Such heroes may even look unsensational, unglamorous. We have works which reflect such heroes. The main tendency in such works is: the ordinary man harbors in himself lofty moral virtues, which, when revealed in dramatic moments, shine in all their human splendour.

Today even the greatest artist must develop and enrich his means of expression, otherwise time, discards him. This development of structures and forms we see from the vantage point of Marxist-Leninist aesthetics, without separating it from its content. Marx says: *»Form is devoid of all value if it is not the form of the content.«* [11] The new does not lie in the form, but in the personality of the artist, in his world outlook. This personality and outlook can make form advance and break off with routine.

These, in turn, have to do with artistic skill, without which literarism and schematism cannot be combat through to the end. *»To take up the theme of the day, to write about the positive hero, the socialist reality, etc is not enough. This alone, without artistic skill, cannot arouse emotion, cannot educate or inspire you for the present and the future.«* [12]

I want to stress that we must make more efforts in this direction, aware that any superficial reflection of life in socialist society is a hangover of the past and as such is alien to the

method of socialist realism.

A more thorough reflection of the socialist society requires from writers and artists a more comprehensive understanding of the themes of present times. The theme of the day in our literature and arts has two broad aspects: that which reflects the National Liberation War and that which reflects the period of the socialist construction of the country. These two aspects constitute one single theme, completing each other, and being treated with growing maturity in our literature and arts. Sometimes by actual themes peoples understand themes of the day or the moment, day-to-day events and momentary achievements of individuals of collectives. Actual themes are something else. They are major events in the life of society, events which form the background of major moments. Art is the generalization of events and the destiny of man in dramatic and important moments of history. It portrays our time, our hard struggle and work, the great transformations of our society, our socialist advance in town and countryside. First and foremost, it exalts man. Our literature and arts have now gained a rich experience in the reflection of the man of our time, the man of the socialist ideals. Even though our literature and arts have made a great contribution to the reflection of the man of our time, of his work in the construction of the new society, even though they have reflected the great epoch of socialism, [there] are still many shortcomings in the observation of the processes of development of socialism and the new phenomena of life. In many cases they treat only the simpler processes of development, the day-to-day manifestations of life, without going deeper into them, therefore there must be an extension of the gamut of themes in literature and the arts so that they comprehend with greater depth and variety all our socialist life. Compared with the rates of transformation of society and the psychology of people, artistic creativeness, as an ideological and aesthetic phenomenon, lags behind, if it fails to take account of life which changes rapidly. Our literature and arts will make a qualitative leap only if they find their nourishment in real life. This will ensure them a broader range of themes. Here lies the special importance of contemporary themes for literature and the arts in the present stage of the development of our society.

Psychological insights is imperative especially for the works of prose and drama, which reflect the emergence and growth of the new man. In poetry, a more profound content will relieve it more and more of rhetorical and declamatory elements, while reaffirming its lyrical and epic elements in the artistic analysis and expression of the spiritual world of man. The many-sided reflection of life in socialist society gives new features to the national character of literature and the arts. Since socialism is built in a given country and in special historical conditions, literature and art which reflect this process must have their own original features. Our literature, its content and form, are closely connected with the national way of life, with the economic, political and cultural peculiarities of the country, with the spiritual formation of people and the entire history of the nation. The national originality of the writer is clearly reflected in his work, in its content and its means of expression, in its general spirit and its [style].

One of the most distinguishing and most active features, which express the national character of our artistic creativeness, is the patriotic spirit of the writer and the originality of this patriotism. A genuine writer [is] a patriot who fights for the advance of his country. His patriotism is conspicuous in all his work, down to the tiniest detail, even in the manner in which the home landscape is depicted. But the reflection of national peculiarities and the national character, in general, cannot be achieved in isolation from the class struggles and from history. The question of the national character in the creative activity of the writer is closely linked with his ideological tendentiousness. The ideological position of the writer determines the degree of his patriotism and the national character of his production. The reactionary writer, the collaborator with the fascists, **Father Gjergj Fishta**, wrote in Albanian was a past master of the octametre, expressed the originality of the Albanian

milieu, made skilful use of popular songs, but his ideological tendency was antipopular, because it represented the interests of the exploiting, anti-democratic and obscurantist classes. The national character and originality of Fishta set him apart from the reactionary writers of other countries, but his reactionary ideological tendency united him with them. With the English writer and poet **Kipling** the national character is expressed in his descriptions of the presentday adventurous colonizer who enslaves the peoples. In the present-day Albanian writer the national character is revealed in his patriotism, in his love of country, in his struggle for the construction of socialism and in his internationalist spirit. The assesment of the national element in the creativeness of a writer is connected with the popular spirit of his production. A work of popular spirit is one which expressed, to a high degree, the progressive interests and aims of the people, which is accessible to the people, both in content and form. The popular spirit is expressed when the writer takes up problem from life which have great importance for the entire people. Without a popular spirit the national character cannot be expressed. The highest form of expression of the popular spirit in art is proletarian partisanship, the very essence of class tendentiousness, the ideology of the working class. Proletarian partisanship places art in the service of socialism, in the service of the communist education of the man. Socialism fully expresses the interests of the peoples. Therefore, socialist art is profoundly popular. The national character is not [an] unchangeable category. It develops with the advance of society and assumes ever new features. The more complete reflection of life will further enrich it and the arts will gain ever new originality.

Socialism and its reflection in art enliven and refresh the cells of literary-artistic creation. The problem today is not that we have few works of art which treat the socialist reality in all its diverse aspects. We have many productions of literature, cinematography and the figurative arts which deal with its problems. But many of them do not treat the fundamental aspects of this reality.

The writer feels that he is one of the builders of socialism, that he is responsible for his social mission, therefore, in the work he produces he exalts the epoch in which he lives. Great aesthetic pleasure is derived from great artistic inventions. Trivial [inventions] are bound to arouse small aesthetic pleasure.

For a more complete reflection of life in socialist society it is absolutely necessary to protect literature and art against liberalism. Without a ceaseless struggle against liberalism in art there can be no pure content and vanguard form. With the development and consolidation of the method of socialist realism, the struggle against bookish prejudices and abstract treatment of problems, against a lifeless, phrase-mongering and schematic reflection of the reality, grows fiercer, and together with it, the offensive against liberalism in art grows more extensive. The method of socialist realism is against any scheme, conservative or liberal. This method is in continuous development, and it is against its nature to accept petrified forms which inhibit its progress and suffocate its innovatory research. However, negation of schematism does toy no means imply that we must forget the struggle against liberal stands which are reflected in the form of the alien influences. We do not wage the struggle against schematism in order to tone down, even in the slightest, our struggle against liberalism. On the contrary rejection of schematism creates a smothering atmosphere for liberalism as well. Nevertheless, liberal stands and alien influences always constitute a threat to literature and the arts, therefore, opposition to them and irreconcilable struggle with them are on the order of the day for every writer and artist.

In works treating contemporary themes liberalism ignores the typical and the realistic reflection of our life, disregards its main stream and takes up some blemish of our society, exaggerating it out of all proportion and generalizing it. It is quite a different thing from literature treating the shortcomings of a society and submitting them [to] a stern trial

proceeding from the positions of the interests of the people. In the literature of socialist realism characters polemicize, affirm and negate, and those who make mistakes and crimes are criticized and condemned for the sake of the triumph of lofty ideals.

Our literary and artistic experience shows that time and again we have had to cope with distortions in different genres. They have been more outrageous in poetry, in which they manifested themselves especially in strange figures, in incoherent, illogical and foggy verses, etc. Liberalism in poetry sometimes manifests itself in the irregularity of versification, in the obliteration of the frontiers between the prose and the poetry, etc. It also manifests itself in mannerisms as a pretended originality of expression.

In the world today there is a confusion of all sorts of trends and tendencies in literature, art and philosophy, which have debased all intellectual values, both in the West and in the East. This is connected with the cultural expansion undertaken by the United States of America and the Soviet Union together with their satellite countries. This expansion through literature and art, which is the official policy of the two superpowers, is a source of decay, degeneration, crime, scandal and bestiality. There is an entire industry of words, colours and sounds, which, although ramified in literary and artistic trends, schools and [styles], boils down to one and the same thing: literature and art are used as a drug against human consciousness, a drug against what is truly human. Revived and popularized in a new garb, Freud's subjectivist and idealist theories, especially his theories on sex and its role as a stimulus in literature and the arts, have become widespread today. Not less widespread are Freud's theories of dreams and their interpretation, on the line dividing dreams from the reality, implying that this line should be almost imperceptible in literary works, which will only gain from this approach. In his book »*Dream Interpretation*« [Freud] writes: »*The dream represents the (hidden) reality of the (suppressed) desire*«. According to him, the treatment of dreams in art is very important, because through them the artist expresses his hidden and suppressed desires. Therefore, both in the West and in the East there are thousands of novels in which it is hard to distinguish between the world of dreams and the world of reality. This only confuses the art consumer.

Gangsters and egotists, sadists and narcissists are the protagonists of Western and Eastern literature. Western literary criticism says that the narcissist of modern times is a man without ideals, indifferent to all problems and preoccupations. All the important questions are confined within the cell of his own self.

Bent on cultural and artistic expansion, capitalism and revisionism spread degenerate forms and structures. The degree of degeneration of the forms of art, especially poetry, which according to the bourgeois aesthetes is the form of modern times, is well known. We have closed our doors to this sort of poetry and this sort of forms, and will keep them closed for ever.

Our literature and arts, by raising their qualitative level, and by strengthening and perfecting their form, are in a position to defend themselves better from any negative influence, while on the other hand, heightening their authority with the reader. With this we make our modest contribution to world literature. Our literature and arts have achieved important successes also in their affirmation before the international public. They have more and more attracted its attention and have been positively assessed by progressive people, who find in them not only progressive ideas, a sound realistic spirit, but also democratic and human spirit unlike the decadent and reactionary spirit of modern bourgeois and revisionist art.

Our culture, with its present qualitative level, is a culture rich in vital elements which is in a position to convey its own values and takes from world literature and art whatever is

progressive, human and revolutionary. The struggle against liberalism and alien influences does not shut us away or isolate us from world culture, on the contrary, it makes us better able to appropriate it in a dialectical manner. We continuously translate works of the progressive literature created by mankind in the centuries. We have translations of most classics, from **Homer** to modern authors. And we shall continue to translate more works of the world literary treasure, works with valuable content and form.

The literature created in **Kosova** is widely read in our country. Almost all the Kosova writers have been published by the »Naim Frashëri« Publishing House in Albania and they are popular with our readers, writers and artists. It is a literature in development, a literature with patriotic feelings and progressive ideas, which discloses genuine aesthetic values to the reader. Genuine literature and art of the same trunk cannot be isolated, no matter how hard the **Titoite** illwishers and chauvinists may try. They will spread constantly and will have thousands and thousands of readers and wellwishers. They, too, play their role in our culture, in its enrichment and qualitative development. Whenever we speak of Albanian literature and art we cannot be silent about the important part of it which is created in Kosova in the same language and with an indubitable national originality.

* * *

One of the demands on literature and arts about quality is connected with the general issue of the ratio of themes from the present and the past. Certainly, this ratio cannot be gauged simply by arithmetical methods or percentages. Nevertheless, the general, the average can be easily traced out if literary and artistic processes are attentively analysed. The ratio of themes in general, is correct.

Certainly, we shall continue to write about our historical past and the period of antiquity, because works taking up such themes carry an actual note and educate patriotic and aesthetic feelings, educate people to be proud of their nation, and enrich literature and art. In his report to the 8th Congress of the Party, speaking about the importance of the themes drawn from history, Comrade **Enver Hoxha** stresses: »*But the development of literature and art is inconceivable without the broadest reflection of the great surge of life and presentday reality in the novels, poems, films and musical and figurative arts. By basing themselves firmly on the reality in which we live, by reflecting it extensively, literature and the arts will also be able to reflect the past better, more correctly and at a higher ideological level.*« [13]

The writer is a vital social element, is the contemporary of his own epoch. Should he grope about in history and record its stages and periods as a pedantic historian? No! History, of course, aids him to see better and more clearly into the present which lives, fights and seethes around him. The present reality also gives historical themes some of its actual note. This has great importance. History provides facts and themes. But facts and themes remain lifeless without problems and the actual note. It is in this dialectical relation that themes from history find their vitality.

The ever growing interest in the themes of the earlier life of our people and their history is favoured by some factors existing in our socialist society today. With the development of socialism in Albania with the raising of the general level of culture, with the advance of education, science, literature and the arts and with the ever better assimilation of knowledge and the Marxist-Leninist theory, the demands of people to know more about their past, their ethnic development, their spiritual values, the treasury of their folklore and legends, their wars and struggles for freedom and the independence of the country, have increased and imposed themselves as an absolute necessity. A consolidated and mature

society want to know everything possible. This is true of man, too. When he grows up and matures his curiosity increases, and he wants to know about his origin, is interested about his forefathers, about their life and struggles. On the other hand, the pressure of [alien] bourgeois and revisionist ideologies on our country has become fiercer. The enemies, in fighting socialism which is built under the leadership of our Party, in fighting Marxism-Leninism in general, have gone over to the offensive also against our historical past and the spiritual values of our people. And this induces us to given them their answer in our own language and reveal the truth to the world. But there is another factor, too. Our sociological and historical sciences have now reached a certain stage of development and facts have come to light in greater numbers than a few years before. Consequently, literature and the arts have a richer material to handle and reflect in their creativeness. Certainly there are shortcomings, there are also cases of a superficial [approach] to the reflection of the past and history, but the main trend is positive, has yielded fruit and will continue to do so. What is required now is that themes drawn from history should be reflected according to the requirements of the conscious writer and not by way of imitating the successful work of other authors. Besides we must bear in mind the ratio between the themes and guard against disproportions. We will continue to reflect history and handle themes from history. There are moments in life in which this is important, like this year when we celebrated the 70th anniversary of the Proclamation of Independence. On this occasion, historical themes occupy an important place and carry a strong actual note which is necessary in every historical work.

Almost all our arts have treated life in the past society in all its contradictions, with its progressive movements and social revolts. This is especially true about the recent years when history has been seen in its different aspects.

It is only natural to stress that one of the main places in our literature and art is occupied by themes from the National Liberation War, which also are treated at the highest artistic level. However, in themes of the National Liberation War, too, the time has come to go over to a new qualitative leap and do away with a certain monotony in the handling of characters, heroes and milieus.

Today and in the future the National Liberation War is and will be a major theme for our writers. Interest in and reflection of this period will always be growing. However, along with the growing interest in its reflection, there should be more profound study of written and live documents so that the works treating these themes should always be truthful to history.

* * *

A special feature of our society is that cultivated art develops together with popular art, with folklore and the creativeness of the amateur movement. This phenomenon has its originality and gives the arts their freshness and impels them to further development. Our folklore does not remain shut up in museums and cultural institutions. It is there, out in the streets and on the stages. It is assimilated and kept alive by ordinary people, who create it, and by the artists. It is given a powerful impulse at the local and regional folkore festivals, an especially at the National Festival of Folklore in **Gjirokastra**, in which the great talent of the people manifests itself without restraint. From this inexhaustible source inspire themselves our composers and poets, our critics and scholars, our journalists and writers, our singers and dancers. So the impact of this art is powerful and makes its contribution to the advancement of artistic and cultural creativeness.

Viewing the problem from a general point of view, the ratio between cultivated art and popular art is correct. However, we must bear in mind that this ratio should be constantly

maintained and no disproportions allowed.

And here three questions emerge: first, detachment of cultivated art from popular art is harmful; second, putting the equalizer between them is unacceptable; third, mechanical imitation of popular art should be avoided.

There have been harmful tendencies of bitter consequences, especially at the end of the 60's and in the beginning of the 70's, before the 4th Plenum of the CC of the Party in 1973, when people of liberal tendencies tried to detach our music from popular art, because, according to them, this connection only prevented the development of new forms. We felt the dangerous consequences of this trend in our songs, until it reached its culmination in the 11th Radio and Television Song Festival in 1972. The dialectical relationship, between cultivated art and folklore must necessarily be maintained in music because it gives it that unrivalled national originality which cannot be found in other forms.

Trying to equalize cultivated art with popular art, making this equalization paramount in the creativeness of the writer or the artist, only dampens down their creative and demanding spirit, petrifies artistic and cultural creativeness, in the first place, in music, turning it into a mere derivative of folklore and preventing the development of all the forms of music - the opera, ballet, symphony and song, thereby creating an anachronic monotony and uniformity which is alien to socialism. Tendencies towards this equalization have manifested themselves time and again in recent years, especially in songs and dances.

In recent years there have been manifestations of mechanical imitation of popular art, especially in the field of music. The art of the people is as magnificent as nature itself. Folklore will continue to be cultivated and the amateur movement developed. The development of folklore should not be contained, in order to maintain a correct ratio between it and cultivated art. On the contrary, cultivated art should rise towards its heights, and never say to folklore: Wait, I cannot keep in step with you! Wait, otherwise the ratio is upset!

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SOME FEATURES OF THE ALBANIAN NOVEL

by Dritëro Agolli

Chairman of the Writers and Artists' League of Albania

Albanian writers have always asked themselves: does the content of their works respond to the tasks the country is solving, the economic, social, ideological and political tasks our socialist state has to cope with? That is why they have not allowed themselves to be attracted by petty ordinary themes, but by the great theme of the revolution and the building of the new society

THE NOVEL EMERGED RATHER LATE ON THE HORIZON OF THE ALBANIAN LITERATURE. WHEN THE ALBANIAN WRITERS BEGAN TO WRITE NOVELS IN THEIR

MOTHER TONGUE, THIS GENRE OF LITERATURE HAD EMERGED AND REACHED ITS COMPLETE MATURITY CENTURIES AGO IN EUROPE. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUROPEAN NOVEL, WITH ITS PEAKS IN FRANCE, BRITAIN, RUSSIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES, COULD NOT GO UNNOTICED BY THE ALBANIAN WRITERS OF OUR NATIONAL RENAISSANCE, BECAUSE THEY WERE CULTURED PEOPLE WITH BROAD INTERESTS. BUT AT THAT TIME, IN THE 19th CENTURY, THE NOVEL COULD NOT BE WRITTEN IN ALBANIA, BECAUSE THE ALBANIAN LANGUAGE STILL HAD NOT ITS OWN ALPHABET; THE ILLITERATE PEOPLE WERE LANGUISHING UNDER THE YOKE OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE, THE MEN OF LETTERS HAD TO SOLVE MORE IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS CONCERNING THE AWAKENING OF THE NATIONAL AWARENESS BY MEANS OF POLITICAL AND TEACHING PAMPHLETS, POEMS AND ARTICLES, ASSEMBLIES AND OPEN AGITATION, ORGANIZATION AND DIRECTION OF THE PATRIOTIC MOVEMENT, WITH PLEASANT READERS FOR THE PUPILS, AND SO ON.

It is true that, at that time, the gap left by the lack of the novel was filled to some extent by the poems and poetry which were composed in the form of a long narrative with a fable and characters. The poet **De Rada**, for example, published the long poem, »*The Songs of Milosao*« in 1863, which may be called the first novel in verse of the Albanian literature. Nevertheless, we still cannot speak of the novel in the true sense of the word. At that time in place of the novel we had narratives about the popular fighters, legends about extraordinary events and supernatural heroes, rhapsodies about the valiant knights and the songs to heroes. Just as we today have the radio novel, at that time they had the long stories of their grandfathers and grandmothers, which were transmitted by word of mouth. Our grandmother and grandfathers were **George Sand** and **Dumas**. This was the cradle in which the future Albanian novel was rocked, though not on paper, a novel which, even when it was born, would always retain a tinge of the strange narrative of our grandmothers and grandfathers.

The history of the Albanian novel has some specific phenomena which it would be of interest to mark out. The theme of our history was treated by European novelists even before Albanian writers took it up. In the 16th century the Italian **Antonio Posenti** was attracted by the figure of Skanderbeg and wrote his novel »*Terror of the Turks*« in 1548. Later, in 1644, the French writers **Y. Chevreau** wrote »*Scanderbeg*«, just as his contemporary **I. Chevier** did in 1732 writing the novel »*Scanderbeg or the Adventures of the Albanian Prince*«. The figure of Skanderbeg and later that of Ali Pasha of Tepelena attracted the attention of many European writers of the 19th century, of whom we may mention the Englishman **G. Lodlow** who wrote »*The Captain of the Jenissaries*«, the Italian **A. Gioconda** (»*Scanderbeg*«), the Pole **T. Jeszi** »*About Life*« and many others. Our men of culture, who had been formed in schools abroad, or who lived in emigration, were glad that the European writers found an inspiration in the Albanian history and life and used the Albanian material to write novels and stories, but, at the same time, they could not but be sorry that they could not do themselves what the foreigners were doing. At this point, another important phenomenon in the history of our novel occurred. At the time when the Albanian theme was cultivated by foreign writers, the Albanian writers began to write their novels in foreign languages, on the local material of their own country. Without doubt, these no veils are the fruit of the labour of beginners, but they are important for our culture. The first novel of this kind was that written by **Sami Frashëri**, »*Telat's Love for Fitnet*«, published in Turkish in 1872, for which he based himself on the works of Göte [**Goethe**], **Hugo** and **Lamartine**, who, as he admits: »*sang to true love, truth, freedom and humanity instead of religious fanaticism*«. However, the most valuable work written by the Albanian writers in a foreign language is **Pashko Vasa's** »*Bardha of Temal*«, written in French and published in Paris in 1890 under the penname of **Albanus Albano**. The novel reflects

aspects of the Albanian life in the past century through the vicissitudes of two young lovers at the time of the Ottoman rule. The writer emphasizes the pride and valiance of the Albanians, their customs and noble virtues, without overlooking the serious social ulcers such as the blood feud, fanaticism, religious strife and the deplorable state of the Albanian women.

It is true that the novels written in a foreign tongue by our writers could have no great response among the readers abroad and were read at a relatively late time in Albania. Nevertheless, they prepared the ground for the emergence of the true Albanian novel. At the beginning of the 20th century, when shortstory writers began to appear and some books by foreign writers were translated, the first novels in the Albanian language were published. The year 1913 saw the publication of the novel of **Ndoc Nikaj**, **Betrothed from the Cradle or Ulqin Captured**" and »*Shkodra Besieged*«. Before he turned to the novel, the writer had published some historical studies written in a narrative vein. Since 1902 he had published the books »*The History of Albania*« and »*The History of Turkey*«. In 1914 **Zef Harapi** published the historical novel, »*The Traitor's Rifle*«, and in the period 1909-1919 **Foqion Postoli** published »*For the Defence of the Homeland*« and »*The Flower of Souvenir*«.

The first novels in Albanian were, thus, written in the second decade of our century, in the period 1913-1920, which is the time of our national independence. It was a period charged with dramatic tension and full of heroic events, in which the destiny of Albania was decided. Albania, which had just won its independence and was liberated from the five hundred-year old yoke of the Ottoman Empire, became the token of barter for the big imperialist powers and was in danger of being partitioned by its neighbours, Serbia, Greece and Italy. The reactionary governments of the neighbouring countries, aided and abetted by the imperialist states, and incited by a savage traditional chauvinism swooped on the Albanian territories, committing unexampled atrocities. In these turbulent times which stench of blood, which were full of threats to and dangers for the national existence, the true popular patriotism and heroic spirit stood out in full splendour. Precisely in this period the first Albanian novelists emerged in the arena of the Albanian literature. Therefore, they placed in the centre of their novels the spirit of patriotism and the Albanian drama of the time, the theme of the defence of the land and honour, the theme of the enhancement of the national awareness. The first steps of our novel were taken right in the ashes and ambers of the burned down houses, in the devastated fields and ruined villages. The first novels may lack some of the perfection and lustre which come from mastery and style, they lack psychological insight, spiritual struggle and meditation, but they are full of the pathos and total involvement in the patriotic movement, which is the main characteristic of these novel. We pointed out this because the patriotic movement set the tone to the political struggle, the life of the country, culture, literature and the whole superstructure. In Europe the novel is the creation, of the bourgeoisie, of that new class which wanted transformations in the social life, which wanted new forms in art. The novel of that time in Europe reflected the social life, analysed the society and centered on the personality of the man. In various manners and forms it reflected the class struggle of that time. Whereas our novel, which developed in its own specific conditions, could not make the analysis of society, but reflected only the patriotic movement of the time and the clash of the democratic and progressive sections of the population with the foreign occupiers. Our novel would tackle social problems and study the personality of the man at a much later period, in the 30's of this century, with the generation of new novelists such as **Haki Stërmilli** with his novel »*If I Were a Boy*«, and **Sterjo Spasse** with »*Why?*«. They tried to reflect the difficulties of the man against the background of the obscurantist regime of **Ahmet Zog**, the suppression and curb on the personality of the man and, especially, of the Albanian woman. Poetry and the short story were working on same lines at that time.

Despite the efforts of our progressive writers, our novel remained almost at the initial phase.

It marked only little progress and its forms were naive. It was perfected as a genre after the National Liberation War in the conditions of the new socialist society. It was raised to higher levels by such novelists as **Sterjo Spasse**, **Jakov Xoxa**, **Fatmir Gjata**, **Ali Abdihoxa**, and later by writers of the younger generation such as **Ismail Kadare**, **Dhimiter Xhuvani**, **Sabri Godo**, **Teodor Laço**, **Skënder Drini** and others. The novels of these writers who are well-known in our country, treat the themes of the socialist revolution and the past of our people, the new social life and its problems, the man and his personality. The new novels reveal the national life through the clash of views, the world out-look and ideas of the characters, in conformity with the aims of the author and his social and aesthetic ideal. The success of the novel of **Ismail Kadare**, »*The Great Winter*«, lies precisely in the strength of ideas and views, the new psychology and morality of the characters and in the manner in which the problem is raised and solved: Will the communist ideals and progress win in a complicated situation? The answer is in the affirmative, but the road is long. The dialectic of the morality and psychology of the central character, Besnik, speaks of the difficulty and complexity of the situation, the turbid situations and clarity, the dilemma and the resolve which lead him to conquer his own weaknesses for the sake of the great cause. This dialectical clash of the ideas in complex situations is not realized through a simple narrative. The narrator is something different from the true novelist. The former narrates the feats of his heroes, the foolish acts of the stupid, the stratagems of the cunning. Whereas the novelist uses the narrative in order to reveal something else, to reveal the history of man in the given conditions of society.

Characteristic of our novel are high-tensioned events full of contrasts and ups and downs like the barbarian hordes which swept the country and were routed, which temporarily won and then lost; events like the patriots' bands or the partisan detachments in the gorges and valleys of the country; events like the craggy mountains and the narrow plains of Albania. The plot of our novel is frequently interrupted and its characters wait impatiently for time to end. It is like the Albanian landscape with little space for endless voyages. It is no landscape for the characters travelling for months on end across steppes and deserts. In our landscape all travel comes up against a mountain. And there are inns and innkeepers, there are inviting café-keepers and malissors. So the measure of time itself is changeable. Days are short. Nights are long, with conversations and talks. Days invite to shorter journeys. Nights, with their stories and narrations, make journeys longer. Take our novels and draw a diagram of time and space in them and you will see how characters describe distances and how long days and nights last. This is due to such national peculiarities as hospitality, loyalty and respect for guests. And guests need conversation not during the day, but during the night. Take the novels »*The Awakening*« by **S. Spasse** and »*The General of the Dead Army*« by **I. Kadare** and you will find there what I am saying in these few lines. And this stems not only from the peculiarity of space in our country, but also from the culture of its people. In the night, the heroes of our legends fall into profound thoughts about their tomorrow's travels. As a foreign critic says, the reins, the stirrup, the harness and the horse itself are made ready during the night. In the night the hero also falls into meditations. Perhaps more than in the literature of other countries, this aspect is better preserved in our literature, especially in the prose, but also in poetry. Why? Because industrialization has not spoiled tradition, because respect for tradition continues to be great in our country. Socialism itself has taught us to honour tradition. Socialism considers tradition as the basis on which innovations strike root. We are nearer to legends than many other peoples. We preserve them, for otherwise great dangers, which are known to all, would be threatening us. And this has had an influence on all our literature, especially, the novel.

In our novel live all the forms of the narrative: the narrative manner, the narrative-meditative manner and the manner of the interrupted narrative. And here lies the originality of our novel. I say this that, while expressing itself in all these forms, it is a rich, not monotonous,

novel. Our novel has revived the classical forms of the novel with the new ideas and thoughts of the time. Its forms sound new because of their great social thoughts. At times they are fresher than vain format experiments. Our novel has set out on the road of its revival and perfecting, of finding new forms for expressing new ideas. Apparently today it is drawing ever more closer to musical works, with sounds and echoes, with distances and contiguities. It is like a polyphony. In our presentday novel man never descends to the level of things. Man is the master of things and objects, so the novelist does not number things and objects as the symphony does. If he did so he would make the hero the slave of things. The modern novel is the concentrated history of one or several heroes. Being a history, every character is a type and an individual at the same time. The hero of the traditional novel goes through many external adventures. The hero of the modern novel sees these adventures take place more in the consciousness or thoughts of the character. The more time goes by the more autobiographical the novel becomes, because the writer lives himself intensely with the life of society, lives among the people. The more the time goes by the more the author and the hero resemble each other. Why? Because the author does feel no great difference of social position from the character he represents. The author does not speak »*ex-cathedra*«.

Being the characters the masters of things and not their slaves or their contemplative observers has had an influence not only on the plot, but also on the time it develops, the time of narration. Time in the traditional novel is measured by hours, by the calendar, while the modern novel introduces this time, these calendar hours into the consciousness from which it takes them out again. So, the modern novel does not leave time out of the consciousness, does not leave it only in things. That is why in our modern novel time is not reflected always on one line. We say so because every character has his own time, his own biography, and biography does not develop outside time.

As I dwelt on the problems of space, time and narration as well as on some aspects of the changes of structure the novel has undergone, I want to add also something about some other elements of the enrichment of the expressive means of the novel.

A peculiarity of our novelist is that he is more and more accentuating his irony towards negative phenomena. This makes the novel more lively and more intelligent while at the same time strengthening its dialectics. Such a peculiarity is a sign of intelligent people, of intelligent characters who do not feel themselves satisfied with everything a milieu or time gives them, because, along the major social advance, there are still inhibitive phenomena. We see this ironical stand in the prose of **I. Kadare**, **T. Laço**, **F. Gjata**, **Jakov Xoxa**, **K. Kosta** and others.

On the other hand, the language of the novel has become livelier and subtler, with strange surprises, at times in the form of oddities. The surprise interventions like those of the old woman Nica in »*The General of the Dead Army*« or of some characters of F. Gjata's novels not only make the language of the novel more dynamic, but also step up the evolution of events and break the monotony.

Now let us deal with the dynamization of events. The novel cannot live a full and true life without, what I might call, the spring which pushes action ahead and, together with it, thought, too. If the spring of the novel slackens, the reader is bored and reading time seems to him longer. But, speaking in figurative term, this spring does not consist in the subject which lies at the foundation of the novel. This spring is the dialectics of the author's thoughts, it makes itself felt in their clash and opposition, in original assertions and negations. The boring and unreadable novels resemble the watches which lag behind because their springs have slackened.

I tried to express some opinions about the Albanian novel. Of course, our novel is faced with many problems which have to do with its content and form, its structure and language. In its process of development it affects ever broader spheres of society and people's destinies, revealing ever new or less treated aspects of the life of our people. The construction of socialism in Albania has enriched the spiritual life of people and produced a new man, a man of advanced and lofty social ideals. This man is being reflected ever more fully in our novel. And this is due to the method of socialist realism.

Our writer never forgets that the conditions of living created by a society exercise a powerful influence on people's ideas, morality, and passions, just as economic and cultural achievements or the rights a social order secures the individual. This influence is expressed in the novel itself, which if followed step by step, enables you to recreate the history of society, to single out the main lines of its development, to imagine the ethics, tastes and behaviour of people, to discover their psychology and world outlook.

Albanian writers have always asked themselves: does the content of their works respond to the tasks the country is solving, the economic, social, ideological and political tasks our socialist state has to cope with? That is why they have not allowed themselves to be attracted by petty ordinary themes, but by the great theme of the revolution and the building of the new society. Proceeding from these Lofty aims they have continued to make broad summings-up of the National Liberation War, of the past and present history of our country and treated monumental tableaus worthy of the epoch of socialism. At the same time they have introduced new themes, uncultivated so far, into the horizon of art, such as those of work and the joy of work in which the possibilities, abilities and high moral qualities of man are revealed. So, there are many broad tableaus of the struggle and work of our people which have remained artistic documents of the years when they were written and enjoy great popularity among all the Albanian readers.

Noter:

1979-2

- [1] Enver Hoxha, Report to the 7th Congress og the PLA, p. 76 (Eng.ed.)
- [2] Enver Hoxha, Report to the 7th Congress og the PLA, p. 150 (Eng.ed.)
- [3] Enver Hoxha, Report to the 7th Congress og the PLA, p. 153 (Eng.ed.)
- [4] Enver Hoxha, Report to the 6th Congress og the PLA, p. 160 (Alb.ed.)
- [5] Lenin on Culture and Art, 1960, p. 51 (Alb.ed.)
- [6] Enver Hoxha, Report to the 7th Congress og the PLA, p. 153 (Eng.ed.)
- [7] Enver Hoxha, Report to the 7th Congress og the PLA, p. 142 (Eng.ed.)
- [8] Enver Hoxha, Report to the 7th Congress og the PLA, p. 113 (Eng.ed.)
- [9] Enver Hoxha, Report to the 7th Congress og the PLA, p. 152 (Eng.ed.)

1983-2

[10] K. Marx - F. Engels »*On Literature and Art*«, vol. 1, p. 10, Tirana 1976, Alb. ed.

[11] K. Marx, F. Engels, »*Works*«, vol. 1, p. 258, Russ. ed.

[12] Enver Hoxha, »*Report to the 8th Congress of the PLA*«, pp. 150-151, Eng. ed.

[13] Enver Hoxha, »*Report to the 8th Congress of the PLA*«, p. 149, Eng. ed.

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Dritëro Agolli: Rethinking the past



Interview in »Tirana Times« August 2006

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Dritëro Agolli was born in 1931. By 1950 he had become an established writer in Albania. Of working class background, he completed studies at the University of Leningrad and embarked on his career in journalism and writing when he returned to Albania. He began by writing poetry and in 1970 began writing prose too. Although he had feelings of hostility toward the then Soviet Union in the sixties, Agolli was Chairman of the Writers and Artists League from 1972 until 1992. Both as a member of the communist nomenclatura, and as a public figure, Agolli retained respect even after the collapse of the communist regime. Still a prolific and popular writer, in the 1990's he took a seat in the Albanian Assembly at the outset of the transition of the Socialist Party.

- *Mr. Agolli, as a writer you are a long standing favourite of the Albanian public and your books have also been published abroad. Your life time has spanned a good part of the socialist phase of the country and these years of radical change. First of all we would be interested to know what values have been important to you in your life?*

It's quite difficult to talk about oneself. For this description to be a little more objective, it should be done by others. Usually when you speak about yourself you are embarrassed to reveal everything, so you leave things unmentioned, or perhaps you are even prone to boasting.

As a writer and like the rest of my generation, I was formed in a period that is now past

history, the period of socialism. All of us have acquired positive and negative features pertaining to that system. You could perhaps say that we are like row boats encrusted with shell fish and seaweed, dragged up onto the sands to be scraped clean. That was a difficult period. Everything was heavily censured. Of course literature and the institutions and instances of culture and politics were no exception. It goes without saying that this period, the system, and the society left indelible marks behind.

These things are reflected in my works, particularly from a critical angle. My works are not mere volumes of praise for the system, but more like a critique of it. This is the reason why several volumes I wrote were prohibited or even reduced to pulp. In 1964 my first book of short stories was printed. It was entitled, »*The Rustle of Winds of the Past*«, and was immediately banned from circulation because it allegedly diluted the heroism of the characters. This was the terminology used at that time. The play, »*The White Age*« and the book, »*The Splendour and Downfall of Comrade Zylo*« also disappeared from circulation following their first publication. This last book was published again in 1973. It was regarded as being critical of society and it focused on power and the individual and how power transforms the individual. This novel received acclaim in other European countries.

- *You mentioned that censorship made things difficult for literature and politics in socialist Albania. What sort of a relationship did you have with politics at that time?*

I am not a professional politician. I am a writer who dabbles in politics - inasmuch as any other citizen does when he goes to the polls to vote. When a citizen casts his vote he also dabbles in politics; when he doesn't vote, he doesn't dabble in politics, that's the extent of it. Aristotle was right when he said that, »man is a political animal«.

I am a kind of political animal, seeing I am also a writer, I have worked this ability to perfection, because every writer is the mirror of the society he lives in. Therefore I was a member of the Party of Labour, I was a communist, and even a member of the Central Committee of the Party. But I was also Chairman of the Writers' and Artists' League for a long time. Subsequently I could do far more, as I did, like Ismail Kadare and others [1]. Irrespective of the conditions of the time, we did reflect that reality. When the time came and the regimes changed I joined the Socialist Party, which emerged from the Party of Labour, changing in name only. In the first years it carried over many dyed-in-the-wool communists, but slowly these elements dropped out of its ranks. I also changed and shed a lot of useless deadweight, although some things still remain.

- *You speak about a kind of purging, which the country, your party, and also you yourself have undergone. Did this occur without problems? Was this cleansing process obstructed by certain issues?*

I remember a verse by the Greek poet Seferis [2], about an island where there was a Church and a Saint. One day many serpents appeared on the island. The Saint called the cats on the island and the cats devoured the serpents. The island was purged of all the serpents, but at the same time all the cats died too. Why? Well, because they had consumed so much venom. In our society today too, people have consumed a great deal of venom. With this venom you could eliminate an opponent, occasionally even an old friend who has become your opponent. But this venom has also done its work on you, I mean one's self as well.

This is precisely the kind of society I come from too. I was admitted into the Socialist Party, I was elected to its forums, first to the Executive and then to its Steering Committee. Then I

wanted to leave the Party. This Party now is more modern, which means it has offloaded a lot of the past dogmas of the period of socialism. It has drawn closer to other European parties in kind. There have been a great deal of polemics and debates, and in the time when I was involved fully in politics, I was always ready to talk about the flaws of the Socialist Party. Over the last eight years I have frequently raised my voice in criticism, writing articles and in interviews, perhaps even more than its own political opponents. Anyway, I did not drop out of the SP and no one made the slightest effort to have me expelled. I have always been a writer and their firm supporter.

• *This means that you joined them, and you have sought confrontation in a party sensitive towards changes-which in the meantime you even thought of leaving, as you just mentioned. Does this differ from the stand you had towards the communist Party of Labour?*

What I would like to explain is the fact that one should always speak up about the good and bad even when referring to a political party you are a member of. A contemporary French philosopher Bachelard [3] once said, *»Before you get to know a person you must first quarrel; you must oppose the person so the truth emerges; without quarrelling or without debate you can never get to know anyone, because the truth is not the daughter of sympathy, it is the daughter of discourse.«* I always bear this in mind.

When the Chairman of the Socialist Party stated, *»The Party resembles a marshland«*, I opposed that and said he himself was bloated like a swamp toad. I was never shy to speak out when it came to the truth and within my limitations I have done a great deal of criticising. However, I have always been in support of the party. Like everyone else, I too have my pet foibles, I have my good sides but also my weaknesses. Perhaps I should have criticised somewhat more in the past system, but the conditions were such...and not only that, but you create a family and you certainly don't want anything bad to befall them. One piece of verse says that in the time of Galilee, there were also other Galileans who could have come out and said the truth, but they had families. They also knew that the Earth was round, but if they had said this in public they would have been burnt alive at the stake. This is also the case with writers who lived during that system, they knew so much, they also knew the Earth was round, but they also had families. I am one of those individuals.

• *What ideals do you regard as being fundamental in the field of politics and society? Although you do not consider yourself a politician, are there any foreign or local politicians who have had such a special impact as you have?*

I grew up and was moulded in a socialist society, and at that time we had communist ideals. We were sincere in these ideals and like many other intellectuals in the world, talented writers such as Aragon [4], Paul Éluard [5] or even Picasso and Majakowskij [6], embraced this idea of communism. We also believed that the world could be changed. We believed that there could be more equality between people; that poverty could be eliminated; that there could be greater solidarity, and a more complete freedom. These were the ideals we had and which influenced our formation. Philosophical figures like Marx, as well as political figures like Enver Hoxha did have an influence on me. This was our ideal, and our generation cannot deny this. For some time it was the same ideal, but as the years went by the enthusiasm began to wane, because we could see there were so many flaws in our society.

As a writer I idealised Naim Frashëri [7], because he was a poet inspired by the West and in particular by the French Revolution. He was very humane, he loved freedom, he worked

for equality between people but also fraternity. His work helped me a great deal to create my own opinion on the development of society. From this angle, Frashëri became my idol in my creativity and other political issues. He was my idol, not only as a writer because he was also a distinguished politician, but especially regarding his approaches to issues of the country and how he fought the evils perpetrated against our country. He also wrote in Greek and one of his most famous poems is entitled, »*The Albanians and the Greeks*«. So there is also an international side to his spirit. Another idol I had was Fan Noli [8], one of the finest socialists. I believe so because he headed the June Revolution. Although he only governed for six months, he jump started development in Albania, bringing it closer to Europe. That is what the people wanted and what I wanted for my country. From outside of my country, Marx and Lenin and later on Willy Brandt were figures I respected. I thought highly of Brandt as a socialist and as a person with his own views. By this time I was an adult so I was not greatly influenced by Brandt, but I thought he had charisma at the time. The same went for other socialists of the epoch such as Mitterand. Naim Frashëri, Fan Noli and Enver Hoxha were the individuals whose work influenced me the most.

• *It is obvious that drawing closer to Europe has always had significance for you. Today, Europe is no longer merely a geographic and cultural notion; on the contrary, this now means social-economic and political structures. Do you believe that Albania has the maturity needed to become part of these structures?*

No, I don't believe it has. First of all, to be able to approach the more developed countries, we must have a developed economy. That goes for the social side of the coin, including cultural and educational levels.

People must show greater tolerance with one another, and also towards politics. A political debate should not automatically lead to a fight and to hostility, as if every change of government resembles the installation of a new invader. What I mean by this is that we lack a developed democratic and political culture. If, hand in hand with economic development, democratic culture also increases, and if tolerance is predominant in the debates on issues, then dogmatism and intolerance are avoided. If there is no longer any revenge in society, then yes we will be mature enough to enter Europe. This hideous ulcer of our society, revenge, must be eradicated.

• *How can the International Community assist Albania? What do the Albanians themselves have to do to be included in the process of becoming part of the EU?*

Representatives of the EU who come to Albania should carefully study the conditions of this country. They should not all come and go with the same approach they have had towards other countries. On the contrary, they should have studied and know the nature of Albanian society. They should know what customs and traditions there are, and what the positive sides of the Albanians are. They should know the country's spiritual constitution. It is worthless if intelligent people come and go who do their work well in Bulgaria or Rumania, because even though we have many things in common with other Balkan countries, we are also different in many ways.

• *Where do the differences lie? From a socio-psychological angle, is there any such thing as an individual type of Albanian?*

Albanians are very intelligent and they are people with a great deal of imagination. But they are also very impatient and lose interest in their work very quickly. If a job takes ten years to

do, they want to do it in one year; they want to complete in one hour something that takes five months to do. If someone who would know the psychology of Albanian society well came to work in Albania, this person would do a great service to the country.

However, first of all the Albanians must build their own country themselves. Unfortunately, we are used to others doing our work for us - but this is a very bad lesson. It depends on our psychology: when others direct us, we appear to be very clever. For example, in Turkey there were thirty Prime Ministers and who knows how many commanders, soldiers and statesmen who were remarkable individuals of Albanian origin. Or Take Greece as another example - how many heroes of the Greek Revolution were Albanian?

The Albanians are exceptionally resourceful if they are led by others, but if they are the ones at the helm they are forever at loggerheads. Only the Albanians themselves can change this psyche. First of all they must fight to do their own chores themselves and not perpetually depend on others on the journey to Europe.

So, the Albanians must work themselves to reach Europe. At the same time they are resourceful, but impatient and badly coordinated. Is this the gist of what you said?

Within a very short period of time, the Albanians have made major changes, particularly in the cities. They have the energy and limitless imagination in all fields. But they are also very masterly at being the Mafia - on this point they have even surpassed the Russians and the Italians. In the case of the Mafia, they make their way to the top very quickly. So they are not only very capable in just the one direction, but on many planes. This is why they need skilful leaders. A leader should never shirk work. Here people develop rapidly and well and they pick up things better and quicker than the leader, who understands very little or pretends he does. This means that the people are more advanced and skilful than the leaders.

- *The political future hinges a great deal on the future politicians. How do you conceive the young people of today? It seems that during these last few years, the youth are being left out of politics and its commitment is decreasing.*

Previously, young people were active in politics. Young men and women wanted to make change and progress. But it is as if the youth of the country has shifted to slow motion mode because the party leaders have failed to encourage younger people to join; only the senior membership remained, who never really understood the youth properly. This very weak policy became obvious when the Socialist Party split and all the young people went with the Socialist Movement for Integration. Only if party leaders offer qualified young men and women leading posts in society, in the economy, in the party and in culture and education, will they get the chance to come in and make their contribution. And in the final account, these are the young people who have studied and know how to operate so they should be activated and not left idle.

- *Do you consider the epoch of communism in Albania as time wasted?*

No, I don't. Irrespective of the enormous flaws of the socialist camp and in that system, there were very positive sides too. I would mention here, in the moral-political field, the solidarity, which was extensive, because people lived in collectives. The emancipation of women also proved a huge help. Women were isolated in the Balkans and their emancipation helped in developing schooling, culture and similar fields. In the time of Ahmed Zogu [9] and up until 1944, there were only seven secondary schools in Albania.

During the years of socialism 370 secondary schools were opened and 12 Universities. There were no universities at all previously. We even had a Ballet and Opera Theatre, a People's Theatre, and Film Studios that produced 14 features films per year and many other institutions.

To this day, Albania is fed by electric power generated by the same hydropower stations of that period. Music and literature benefited the most in cultural development. Prior to the socialist period, not a single one of the works by our authors was ever translated into any foreign language, so the world could come into contact with them. But in this time, our translations and literature became known in countries like Germany. This reveals a high level. Books from the beginnings of literature in the Middle Ages or of the time of Ahmed Zog up until the epoch of socialism were translated. This played a very important role.

• According to what you have said above, the socialist period was therefore a phase of development of the country in the direction of modernization. But at the same time it was also a time of isolation, to a far greater degree in comparison with the other countries of East Europe. Could Albanians communicate with the rest of the world seeing that this was so restricted and irrespective of the fact that this could only be realized through the works by Albanian authors?

You are quite right regarding Albania after 1960. Isolation was exceptionally stringent. However, there was trade with other countries in the West as well as the Eastern Bloc. Although through mediation of a third party, there was communication with the world. Our artistic ensembles, such as the State Folk Song and Dance Ensemble all performed overseas. Archaeological exhibitions were opened in Paris and Rome. In other words, there was a level of communication.

Unfortunately we are used to thinking only in black and white and the rest we discard. Some even ask whether people fell in love in the years of socialism. If people had not loved, there would not have been children. We were so sick of such questions about those times. The only question that was not asked was whether or not there were children in socialism?

• In other words, you keep on differentiating about the period of socialism. Does that mean that this period produced values that are of importance to you?

Yes, socialism also had its good aspects. The backward customs of the Middle Ages were eliminated and there was no longer any fratricidal killing. People were not confined behind the four walls of their homes for fear of being tracked down and killed; these things do not exist in a dictatorship.

Families were more consolidated than today. There was greater equality between people and the huge ratios of differences between incomes did not exist. Without doubt this led to a level of backwardness when you look at the levels the rest of the world enjoys today, because the ratios are hugely different in pay scales in capitalism.

At that time the solidarity between people was something positive and led to a situation where everyone worked together. In the time of socialism, the communists tried to play on the positive sides of our people, like solidarity, which was demonstrated in certain moments of our history. Today, we harshly criticise that system because of the existence of a dictatorship and Enver Hoxha.

At the founding congress of the Socialist Party, where the name changed from the PLA, I

was the first to stand up and attack the system, Enver Hoxha and the dictatorship. All the delegates turned on me. Naturally, this was painful for me to do. Why did it have to happen this way, why were so many things so futile? But not the entire period of socialism was futile. The Middle Ages were not a waste either. In every system you can find positive elements. In the Middle Ages, there would not have been a Cervantes, but he emerged with Don Quixote. There were the Niebelungen of the Germans; artists of genius emerged from that time and not from today's modern times. Socialism was a system that was established over half of Europe. Similar things occurred in the time of Charles the Great. Did Charles the Great bring Europe together through war?

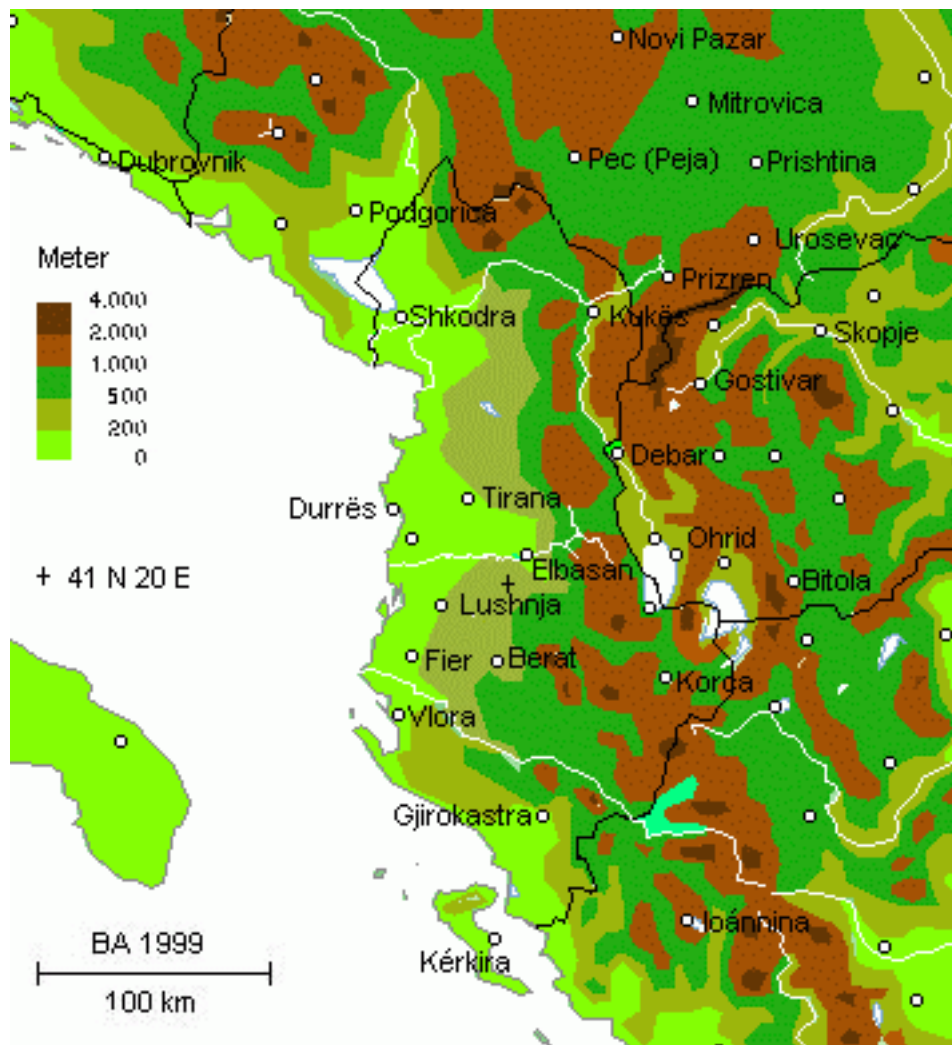
Notes

- [1] Ismail Kadare (*1936), writer of renown in and outside of Albania. 1990-1999 Kadare lived in Paris seeing that whilst in Albania he had written about the collapse of the communist regime and because, in general, he was a person who could not abide by the rules of the regime; he returned to live in Tirana in 1999.
 - [2] Giorgios Seferis (1900-1971), Greek Poet who won Nobel Award for Literature in 1963.
 - [3] Gaston Bachelard (1884-1962), French philosopher and critic, professor in Dijon and at the Sorbonne (Paris).
 - [4] Louis Aragon (1897-1982), French writer, co-founder of the Surrealist Movement and later on a member of the French Communist Party.
 - [5] Paul Éluard (1895-1952), French poet, active during the Resistance and a member of the French Communist Party.
 - [6] Wladimir Majakowskij (1893-1930), Russian writer, co-founder and chiefly the representative of Russian Futurism; Bolshevik since 1908.
 - [7] Naim Frashëri (1846-1900), Albanian writer, first and foremost, a poet, wrote in Albanian for early on, fighter for the liberation of the country.
 - [8] Theophan (Fan) Stylian Noli (1882-1965) Albanian orthodox priest and politician, committed to the independence of Albania and its recognition whilst being a resident in the USA. In 1924, after the downfall of Ahmed Zog, Noli became Prime Minister, but he was brought down during the same year and he fought the self proclaimed King Zog from abroad. During WWII Noli was in contact with the Albanian communists of Enver Hoxha.
 - [9] Ahmed Zogu(1895-1961), known as Zog, the Sovereign of the Albanians, as he was from 1928-1939 up until the invasion of Albania by the Italians. He officially abdicated in 1946; he was PM 1923-24 and President of Albania 1925-1928, before proclaiming himself King.
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TIRANA TIMES

»*Tirana Times*« - <http://www.tiranatimes.com/> - is an Albanian weekly in English. **Editor-in-chief** is Jerina Zaloshnja. Information about **subscription**: <http://www.tiranatimes.com/subscription.php>

Links: • [Dritëro Agolli. Biography in Danish Wikipedia](#) [PDF] • [Agolli-articles from the 1970's and 1980's](#)



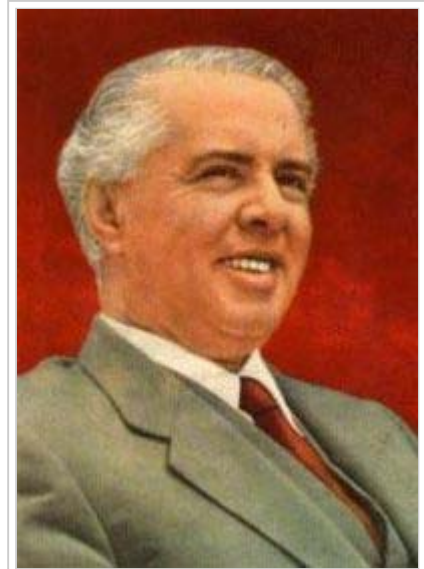
Enver Hoxha

Fra Wikipedia, den frie encyklopædi

Enver Hoxha, (IPA /ɛnvɛr hɔdʒa/, 16. oktober 1908–11. april 1985) var leder af Albanien fra anden verdenskrigs afslutning og til sin død i 1985.

Indholdsfortegnelse

- 1 Tiden før anden verdenskrig
- 2 Tiden under og efter anden verdenskrig
 - 2.1 Skiftende politisk kurs
 - 2.2 Uenigheden med Mehmet Shehu
- 3 Udviklingen af det albanske samfund
- 4 Hoxhas sygdom, død; hans bisættelse
- 5 Bøger af Enver Hoxha



Enver Hoxha

Tiden før anden verdenskrig

Enver Hoxha var apotekersøn. Han stammede fra Gjirokastra i det sydlige Albanien og kom på det franske gymnasium i Korça, der var blevet grundlagt i 1917. Han fik stipendium til et studieophold i Montpellier i Frankrig i 1930, men stipendiet bortfaldt efter et år hvad grunden end kan have været. Hoxha stiftede bekendtskab med albanske kommunister i Paris. Efter et par år flyttede han til Belgien hvor han arbejdede for den albanske legation, dvs. for Kong Zogs udenrigstjeneste. I 1936 vendte han tilbage til Korça og fik arbejde som lærer på det franske gymnasium.

Tiden under og efter anden verdenskrig

Enver Hoxha blev leder af Befrielseshæren under 2' Verdenskrig og leder af det kommunistiske Albanians Arbejderparti fra ca. 1945 til sin død i 1985; han trak sig tilbage fra dagligt politisk arbejde omkring 1983. Han var premierminister fra 1944 og frem til 1954, hvor han blev afløst af Mehmet Shehu.

Skiftende politisk kurs

Hoxha - og det kommunistiske parti - skiftede flere gange politisk retning. Til at begynde med samarbejdede man med det jugoslaviske kommunistparti og modtog økonomisk støtte fra Jugoslavien, men i forbindelse med Stalins opgør med Tito i 1948 brød man med jugoslaverne og udrensende de albanske kommunister, der var mest Jugoslaviensorienterede, således Koçi Xoxe.

Senere fulgte en periode hvor man samarbejdede med Sovjetunionen og fik økonomisk og militær støtte derfra, men da Nikita Khrusjtjov i midten af 1950'erne begyndte en udsoning med Tito, førte det til det næste brud omkring 1960 og til udrensning af flere Moskva-orienterede albanske kommunister.

Herefter fulgte en periode frem til omkring 1978 hvor man samarbejdede med Kina og fik økonomisk og militær støtte derfra.

Kinas åbning mod Richard Nixons USA gav anledning til endnu et brud; herefter stod Albanien politisk isoleret og fik i stigende grad økonomiske problemer, både med hensyn til

udenrigshandelen og med hensyn til investeringer i landbrug og industri. Man forsøgte en politik med at *stole på egne kræfter*, men kræfterne var for begrænsede til at man kunne følge med udviklingen i nabolandene og dette var formentlig én af årsagerne til at ind- og udrejse af Albanien fortsat var stærkt begrænset og kontrolleret.

Uenigheden med Mehmet Shehu

Omkring 1980-1981 opstod der uenighed om den politiske linie, hvilket førte til at premierministeren, Mehmet Shehu, enten blev myrdet eller - som det officielt blev erklæret - begik selvmord. Enver Hoxha beskyldte ham bagefter for at have været hemmelig agent for en række udenlandske stater.

Ismail Kadaré har omkring årsskiftet 2005-2006 udgivet en roman på det engelsk-amerikanske marked om forholdet mellem Enver Hoxha og Mehmet Shehu. Romanen hedder *The Successor* og er på vej i dansk oversættelse.

Udviklingen af det albanske samfund

Da kommunisterne greb magten, var Albanien et feudalt samfund, et landbrugsland der blev ledet af godsejere. I Hoxha-perioden skete der en vis industrialisering og i landbrugssektoren blev godserne omdannet til kollektivbrug og statsfarme.

Hoxhas sygdom, død; hans bisættelse

I sine sidste år led Hoxha af diabetes og af forskellige følgesygdomme.

Enver Hoxha var gift med Nexhmije Hoxha, født Xhuglini, og efterlod sig en datter, Pranvera Hoxha, og to sønner. Pranvera Hoxha er arkitekt og forestod efter faderens død bygningen af *Pyramiden* på et centralt sted ved Lana-floden i Tirana. Enver Hoxha blev bisat her, men hans kiste blev i 1992 ført til den almindelige begravelsesplads i udkanten af Tirana, og bygningen omdannet til udstillingsformål. Forskellige medievirksomheder har også til huse i bygningen.

Hoxhas fødehjem i Gjirokastra har været museum. En bombe eksploderede i huset i december 1997 og anrettede en del ødelæggelse.

Bøger af Enver Hoxha

- *Yugoslav 'Self-Administration' - a Capitalist Theory and Practice*, 1978
- *With Stalin. Memoirs*, 1979
- *Reflections on China. Extracts from the Political Diary 1962-1977*, 1979
- *Imperialism and the Revolution*, 1979
- *The Krushchevites. Memoirs*, 1980
- *Eurocommunism is anti-communism*, 1980
- *The Titoites. Historical notes*, 1982. Uddrag om Mehmet Shehu
- *Laying the foundations of the new Albania*, 1984

Nogle af bøgerne findes i dansk oversættelse.

Hentet fra "http://da.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enver_Hoxha"

Kategorier: Albanere

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Mehmet Shehu

Fra Wikipedia, den frie encyklopædi

Mehmet Shehu var en albansk kommunistisk politiker. Han blev født 10. januar 1913 i nærheden af Mallakastra og døde i Tirana 17. december 1981.

Indholdsfortegnelse

- 1 Militæruddannelse. Deltagelse i den Spanske Borgerkrig
- 2 I den albanske modstandsbevægelse
- 3 I den kommunistiske partiledelse. Minister. Premierminister
- 4 Forholdet til Enver Hoxha
- 5 Selvmord eller drab?
- 6 Ismail Kadaré's roman
- 7 Eksterne henvisninger

Militæruddannelse. Deltagelse i den Spanske Borgerkrig

Mehmu Shehu studerede militærvidenskab i Napoli i 1930'erne. Han deltog i den spanske borgerkrig fra 1937 til 1939 som medlem af den Internationale Garibaldi Brigade. Han var interneret i Frankrig fra 1939 til 1942.

I den albanske modstandsbevægelse

I 1942 indgik han i den kommunistisk orienterede del af den albanske modstandsbevægelse. Han avancerede til chef for den 1' partisanbrigade (1943-1944) og blev senere divisionskommandant i befrielseshæren. Han var én af de ansvarlige for undertrykkelsen af bjergbønderne i Nordalbanien, der var negativt stemt over for kommunisterne.

I 1944 blev han medlem af modstandsbevægelsens regering (Den Nationale Befrielses Anti-fascistiske Råd).

Mehmet Shehu blev næstkommanderende for befrielseshærens generalstab og senere general og generalstabschef efter at have studeret militærvidenskab i Moskva. Blandt andre der har studeret militærvidenskab i Moskva er Albaniens præsident, tidligere general Alfred Moisiu.

I den kommunistiske partiledelse. Minister. Premierminister

Fra 1948 og frem overgik Mehmet Shehu i det væsentlige til civilt politisk arbejde. Han blev medlem af den kommunistiske centralkomité og af den øverste ledelse, politbureauet, og var også i en periode indenrigsminister og ansvarlig for politimyndighederne.

I perioden 1954 til 1981 var Mehmet Shehu premierminister (formand for ministerrådet), fra 1974 var han tillige forsvarsminister.

Forholdet til Enver Hoxha

Han var i mange år Enver Hoxha's støtte, både i opgøret med Tito's Jugoslavien i 1948, med Sovjetunionen i 1961 og med den kinesiske folkerepublik i midten af 1970'erne.

Det er hævdet at Mehmet Shehu omkring 1981 begyndte at anfægte den politiske isolationisme som Enver Hoxha, hans kone Nexhmije Hoxha og flere andre var ansvarlige for.

Selv mord eller drab?

Han blev fundet skudt i sin seng natten mellem den 17. december 1981 og 18. december 1981, og det blev straks efter officielt meddelt at han havde begået selvmord på grund af et nervøst sammenbrud. Han blev hemmeligt begravet ved landsbyen Ndroq.

Kort efter hævdede Enver Hoxha i taler og i sin bog *The Titoites* fra 1982 at Mehmet Shehu havde været flerdobbelt spion for den Jugoslaviske efterretningstjeneste, for KGB og for CIA.

Det formodes i almindelighed at Mehmet Shehu blev likvideret på ordre af Enver Hoxha, fordi denne ikke ville acceptere kritik af sin isolationistiske linie og af sin øverste politiske ledelse.

Mehmet Shehu's kone, Fiqret (født Sanxhaktari), og to af hans sønner blev fængslet. Den yngste søn, Bashkim, søgte efter sin fars grav og lokaliserede den den 19. november 2001.

Ismail Kadaré's roman

Ismail Kadaré har omkring årsskiftet 2005-2006 udgivet en roman på det engelsk-amerikanske marked om forholdet mellem Enver Hoxha og Mehmet Shehu. Romanen hedder *The Successor* og er på vej i dansk oversættelse.

Eksterne henvisninger

- Kilde: Bjørn Andersen: *Albansk navnebog 2000*

Hentet fra "http://da.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mehmet_Shehu"

Kategorier: Albanere | Albanske politikere

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A portrait of Shaban Sinani, a man with glasses wearing a brown suit jacket, white shirt, and patterned tie. The background is a light-colored wall.

Le Dossier Kadaré

Shaban Sinani

suivi de

La Vérité des souterrains

Ismail Kadaré

avec

Stéphane Courtois



bjoerna.dk [Kultursociolog Bjørn Andersen](mailto:Kultursociolog.Bjorn.Andersen) post@bjoerna.dk

Interview with Shaban Sinani about *Dossier K*



Interview by Fiqiri Sejdiqaj in »*Trepça Net*«,
January 2004

Version 1.0 - 10.09.2006. - Summary thanks to Gina Schaar

Introduction

In December 2003 and the following years, the author Ismail Kadaré donated several manuscripts-for his novels »*The Shadow*«, »*Agamemnon's Daughter*« and »*The City without Advertisements*« to the Albanian National Archives (ANA), under the direction of Director General Shaban Sinani.

The manuscripts started the Ismail Kadaré Fund, the ANA's repository of Ismail Kadaré's documents. As part of the Ismail Kadaré Fund, Shaban Sinani decided to create what he called »*The K Dossier*« by digging into the ANA files to find documents related to political investigations of Ismail Kadaré himself. The interview concerns the so-called K Dossier.

Interview

Question: Why such a long delay for an author who is so well-known, who has been writing for more than a half century?

Shaban Sinani: The same is true for all post-war authors. There is a disturbing general lack of manuscripts and documents in the ANA. Many manuscripts have disappeared, excepts those that were attached to political investigations, like Ismail Kadaré's poem »*One Afternoon the Political Office Held a Meeting*« [[»The Red Pashas«](#)].

Political figures were more important than cultural ones under the ideocratic state. Cultural activities were neglected during the upheaval of the 1990s.

Manuscripts disappeared because there was no law forcing them to be archived. The practice among publishers was to notify authors that the »manuscript will not be returned«.

Question: What does the Ismail Kadaré Fund currently consist of?

Shaban Sinani: The Ismail Kadaré Fund was started because Ismail Kadaré wanted to donate the three manuscripts.

»*Agamemnon's Daughter*« and »*The Shadow*« had been in a Paris bank vault during the 1980s to avoid political consequences to the author and because they were originally not written for publication in Albania. They were later published as the political times changed.

Now the manuscripts are important for textual research.

Question: Can you explain in more detail where this importance stems from?

Shaban Sinani: Manuscripts are a national treasure. Also, they are a basis for research into the »literature between two eras« on a deeper level than just the significance of, for example, instances where one geographical name in the manuscript was substituted by another name in the published version.

It is important to compare the manuscript and the published work not just for differences in wording but also for the artist's vision in a repressive society as compared to a free society. This has broader significance than just the literary one.

Question: Has it been technically difficult to compare the manuscripts with the books?

Shaban Sinani: Comparison of two of the three manuscripts has been very difficult. »*Agamemnon's Daughter*« contains supplements and additions on the reverse of the pages. The pages of »*The Shadow*« was intentionally written confusingly and the pages misnumbered to destroy the logical sequence, so that the meaning could not be deciphered.

Question: What is still lacking from the Ismail Kadaré Fund in terms of documentation?

Shaban Sinani: In archival science, a literary or personal repository ought to include several categories of documents, a number of which are missing from the Ismail Kadaré Fund. These categories are works, official or public acts, correspondence and bibliographical items.

The Ismail Kadaré Fund now contains:

- Manuscripts of the three novels mentioned above
- The poem mentioned above
- A long section that was to have been added to the novel »*The Great Winter*«
- Unimportant discussions about Ismail Kadaré in Parliament
- Self-critiques that were politically motivated
- Very little correspondence other than a letter from Ismail Kadaré to an important politician in support of the Lasgush Pogradeci family

Documents pertaining to Ismail Kadaré are found all over the world in the possession of many different people and organizations, even his former political enemies.

Question: So, is there a »Kadaré Dossier«, or »K Dossier« as you have called it, in the ANA?

Shaban Sinani: There is no »K Dossier« as such in the archives. That is just a descriptive name I invented for the media in order to explain the concept. It was a take-off on the name of Ismail Kadaré's novel »*Dossier H*«, later republished under the title »*A Dossier on Homer*«.

Question: What is the significance of the fact that you have created such a dossier?

Shaban Sinani: The ANA is not creating any such dossier. We are just making literary historical research easier by managing documents. It is the cultural responsibility of the ANA to preserve unpublished administrative/political documents, starting with the complaints about the publication of »*Princess Argjiro*« and up through the late 1990s and later.

Question: Do you believe that after the publication of the »K Dossier« Ismail Kadaré's works will be evaluated differently by students and readers? Why have you undertaken the publication of these sources?

Shaban Sinani: The primary reasons are for literary and cultural history. It would be depressing if the K Dossier would be seen as a kind of democratic payback for Ismail Kadaré. ANA must respect individual rights according to the new law on the state archives. People have a right to know what is written about them.

Question: Are there legal or other obstacles to making these documents public?

Shaban Sinani: There are few legal obstacles for documents older than 25 years, and there are exceptions for newer documents. The ethical obstacles can be overcome by identifying only the office or institution of the document's author, not the individual names. It is important that the debate not be personalized.

Moral obstacles are the most difficult to deal with, because the documents about Ismail Kadaré written by specialists, and it can't be said that their intellectual viewpoint was »wrong« for trying to prevent the publication of certain works because they were »disparaging of events or personalities«. Still, the use of terms such as »decadent literature«, »psycho-freudian influence«, »antagonistic activity«, »deformation of history and reality«, »surrealistic novel«, etc. must be questioned in the political context of the times during which Ismail Kadaré's books were published.

Question: Do you think that this book will complicate Ismail Kadaré's relations with his writer-colleagues?

Shaban Sinani: I don't think so at all. Ismail Kadaré knows about everything in the documents and has lost interest in taking it further. He has never talked about people by name, but about the need for Albanian literature to recognize the difficulties of the post-war period. Other literary figures cannot avoid this confrontation, because without it Albanian literature cannot be understood.

Question: Can you mention some of the writers who have made unpublished official evaluations of Ismail Kadaré?

Shaban Sinani: This is not important to the whole process. Refer to the harsh discussions in the 1970s at the Writers' Union plenum concerning the banning of Kadaré's poem.

Question: The history of Kadaré and the ANA?

Shaban Sinani: When he left Albania in 1990, Ismail Kadaré made a special request to the then-President that care be taken for his archives in the ANA. This wish was respected and encouraged him to donate the three manuscripts (as described earlier in the interview) later in the 1990s.

During the donation ceremony, Ismail Kadaré mentioned the need to respect one's country and its institutions, even if not all of them are serious. He also mentioned his concern for what would happen to the manuscripts, for example if he died while in France, they would likely be published abroad. Since the communist regime fell, there is no reason they should not instead be published in Albania.

About the donation of the manuscript of his first novel, Ismail Kadaré said the first work of any author is of special interest. »*City Without Advertising*« was written in Moscow and the first 30 pages were published but immediately banned after his return. He hid the rest in his house and never spoke of them again because it was too risky. Drago Siliqi, who read part of it, told Ismail Kadaré that it was foolish to print even 30 pages and that he should not say that there was an entire novel.

Ismail Kadaré said that he was giving the manuscripts to the ANA because they would be safe there, and as a sign of respect for the importance of the institution to the nation, and to encourage other authors to do the same. He believes that an author's emotions behind the published work can be judged by reading the manuscript. The tracks of writing are like fingerprints. Through them, one can identify the individual's character.

Question: »Princess Argjiro« was a text Ismail Kadaré was »spied on«?

Shaban Sinani: For several years I have been working on a text concerning the town and region of Gjirokastra, but a few days ago I was surprised to notice that Ismail Kadaré as a young poet published the poem »*Princess Argjiro*« whose title is completely wrong. Gjirokastra was not founded by her and did not take her name. Archival sources, history and well-preserved writings contradict the legend as it appears in the poem. Gjirokastra comes from the year 568 A.D. and did not take the name of Argjiro in the 15th century, since the Turks came at that time, not to mention the fact that the Turks would not have allowed a town to name itself after one of its military enemies.

If the poem had been based on solid history and writings, and the poet had consulted historical scholars, it would have come out without any flaws. Moreover, even the State Publishing Enterprise, if asked, would not have allowed the publication of a poem not based on historical fact. Besides that, I can say about Albanian geography that on the contrary Gjirokastra appears to have been built by Gjin Bue Shpata. This is also in error, so that by presenting different versions the history of the country is damaged.

- Links:**
- [Ismail Kadaré. Biography in Danish Wikipedia](#) [PDF]
 - [Article about Ismail Kadaré](#)
-



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Enver Hoxha on Mehmet Shehu



Version 1.5 - 05.09.2006.

From: Enver Hoxha: »*The Titoites, Historical notes*«, Tirana 1982.

Republished on the occasion of the publication of Ismail Kadarë's novel »*The Successor*«

Cf.: [Article in Danish on Ismail Kadarë \[2006\]. Appendices in English](#)

Wikipedia (Danish) on Enver Hoxha: <http://bjoerna.net/Kadare/Hoxha-WIKI-060904.pdf> [PDF]

Wikipedia (Danish) on Mehmet Shehu: <http://bjoerna.net/Kadare/Shehu-WIKI-060904.pdf> [PDF]

Bjoern Andersen, <http://bjoerna.dk>



Enver Hoxha. Photo in the book

The plots continue

Already in May-June 1948 we were more than aware that Tito and the Titoites, as traitors to Marxism-Leninism, were and would remain inimical and dangerous to all the communist parties, to the revolutionary movements and national liberation struggles everywhere in the world, but for us, the Albanian communists and people, besides this, they were and would remain direct, savage, sworn anti-Albanian enemies. We were convinced that they would never give up their plans and aims to gobble up Albania, and to this end would not lay down their arms of subversion, interference and plots against our Party and country.

We would be vigilant and with our fist clenched at every moment, because, although it had suffered heavy blows, the Titoite agency in Albania would not cease working for the future and for long-term plans and variants. In this context, in a thousand and one ways, Tito and company would do everything in their power to regain their lost positions, to create conditions and the terrain in order to penetrate amongst us and destroy us. They could never reconcile themselves to the fact that Albania had «escaped» from their hands, could never sleep easily when they saw that a party, which they had wanted to turn into a blind tool, but which to their regret had constantly attacked them and their old pan-Slav dreams and in the end had smashed them, was working and leading in Albania. Hence, as long as [580] they remained in power, the Titoites would be real and dangerous enemies of our Party and country.

It did not take months or years for the Titoites themselves to prove the truth of this. On the contrary, when we still had not denounced them publicly, in order to «forestall the evil» they launched a whole campaign of slanders and accusations against our Party and its leadership, and immediately after the 1st Congress of our Party, Belgrade's anti-Albanian campaign assumed unprecedented proportions and intensity. The newspapers, radio stations, pamphlets and publishing houses, all the means of Titoite propaganda were activated in this dirty campaign, pouring out monstrosities against us. Amongst other things, at that time they accused us of being «violators of democracy» in the party and among the people (!), of killing «communists» and «honest patriots» (!), and later went on to the accusation that we were turning Albania into a «barracks surrounded by barbed wire» where everything was trampled under the «military jackboot», etc., etc.

According to this alarm for propaganda which thundered from Belgrade one would have thought that havoc was being wrought in Albania, but when it came to providing facts and arguments «the defenders of democracy» in Belgrade found themselves in a deplorable position: they were able to mention only one name, that of Koçi Xoxe!

But who were these «ideal defenders» of «pure democracy» who, simply because our organs of the dictatorship had condemned to death only one sworn enemy and agent, Koçi Xoxe, arrived at the «horrified» conclusion that we were «murderers» and «violators of democracy»?!

Here I shall not mention the mass murders, eliminations and exterminations which the Titoite army and the organs of the UDB perpetrated during the period 1945-1948 on the orders of Tito-Rankovic and company, under the pretext of the struggle to «clean up ustase

and cetnici elements», «criminal bands», «remnants of the old regime», etc., nor shall I mention the black terror which they unleashed at this period (especially from the end of 1944 right through 1945) [581] upon the people of Kosova and the Albanian population living on their own territories in Montenegro and Macedonia, under the pretext of the struggle against «Ballist gangs», «nationalists», «great Albanians», etc. For comparison, however, I shall dwell a little on how «the Titoite democracy» acted and how our democracy acted in 1948 towards the respective opponents and enemies.

As I related in detail above, the whole picture of the treacherous work of the gang of Koçi Xoxe, Pandi Kristo and others as agents in the service of the Yugoslavs became more than clear to us especially in the early months of 1948. However, although they were not accused simply of having alien views, but especially of high treason towards the Party and the country, we allowed Koçi Xoxe, Pandi Kristo and company to take part in all the meetings of the Political Bureau, in the 9th, 10th and 11th Plenums of the CC of the Party, in the meetings of party activists which were held later and even in the 1st Congress of the CPA. Not only did we allow them to take part, but we also gave them the right to speak as often as they considered necessary.

What special type of «democracy» did Tito and Rankovic in Yugoslavia offer all those thousands of elements of the CPY who expressed solidarity with the letters of the CC of the CPSU and the Resolution of the Cominform?! They were clapped in handcuffs as soon as they began to open their mouths! And when hundreds of others simply demanded that what was written in the letters of the CC of the CPSU should be discussed in the party, that is, when they had not yet expressed themselves either for or against, the Titoite «democracy» arrested them, threw them into prison and killed them in secret. So, while we analysed the criminal work of the Koçi Xoxe gang for five to six months on end in the Party (where the traitors themselves were present), the Titoites did not allow their opponents to speak even in a single meeting of the organization of which they were members! Out of the whole network of anti-state agents that we discovered we handed over to the court only 4-5 persons, while the Tito [582] clique filled the prisons with thousands and thousands of people who were simply ideological opponents! And after all this Tito and company had the temerity to accuse us of being «violators of democracy»!

Of the four or five elements whom we handed over to the courts for punishment at the end of 1948, in fact, only one, Koçi Xoxe, was sentenced to death as a sworn traitor to the Party and state, as chief of the gang which had done everything in its power to put Albania in thrall to Yugoslavia! The 3 or 4 others were sentenced to 5-20 years imprisonment according to the degree of their culpability and the stand they adopted when they were caught red handed in the plot. In Yugoslavia, however, the Titoites killed the bulk of those thousands of Yugoslav communists who were thrown into prison as supporters of the Cominform or they simply disappeared leaving no trace. Nevertheless, they had the temerity to accuse us of being «murderers» !

The notorious concentration camps like Goli Otok, a kind of Mathausen in the conditions of «Yugoslav socialism», were set up not in Albania, but in Yugoslavia. It was not our communists and patriots who were incarcerated, maimed, and wiped out in them, but Yugoslavs, including hundreds of thousands of Albanians from Kosova and others who lived

on their own lands in Montenegro and Macedonia. That is, we did not fill Albania with Goli Otoks, but the Belgrade leadership filled Yugoslavia with such notorious camps. And they had the temerity to accuse us of turning Albania into «a barracks dominated by the military jackboot»!

That, then, is what the «Titoite democracy» was, that is what the «advocates of Christian charity», Tito and Rankovic, were, who perpetrated the most monstrous crimes against the party and peoples of Yugoslavia without a tremor, while they were «horrified», because we had condemned to death one sworn enemy of ours and their obedient agent! It is the same «Rankovic democracy» which has been wreaking havoc in Yugoslavia for 35 years on end, the same «Titoite democracy» which recently unleashed the black [583] hundreds and thousands of Rankovices, Lubicices, Stambolicices, and Herlevices against the peaceful demonstrations of the people of Kosova demanding respect for and implementation of their constitutional rights.

However, since 1948 Tito, as the rabid anti Albanian he was, could not and did not content himself simply with propaganda attacks against us.

Just like the reactionary governments of Western countries, the Titoite leadership set up on Yugoslav territory whole camps in which criminals and other agents, enemies of the new socialist order in Albania, were assembled, trained and prepared to infiltrate into our territory for sabotage and subversion. Thus, the time came when instead of the earlier «party» and state emissaries, Tito and his henchmen began to send us dozens of bandits, criminals, thieves and other reprobates who had fled from Albania together with the occupiers in 1944 or afterwards, on account of the crimes they had committed and the hostility they nurtured towards the new order of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In collaboration with the foreign imperialist and chauvinist agencies, especially those of the neighbouring countries, the renegades of Belgrade collected up the anti-Albanian scum of agents, political and ordinary criminals and fugitives wherever they were and brought them to Yugoslavia to prepare them as mercenary forces against the Party of Labour of Albania and the Albanian socialist state. Naturally, we were to receive these bandit «guests» from Yugoslavia as bandits and criminals are received — with the trap set.

These sinister forces constituted, you might say, the «external echelon» which the Yugoslav leadership was to throw in against us, as it did. At the same time, the Yugoslavs did not overlook the «internal echelon», either. In this were included not only those elements long recruited by the UDB. whom we had still not discovered, but all the remnants of the old order which we had overthrown. All these elements were predisposed to prick up their ears and accept the orientations and signals which came from Belgrade. This is under- [584] standable: the overthrown classes, the traitors, the discontented elements, enemies of the people's state power, all those who could not endure the justice of the Party and our people's state power, had pinned all their hopes on external support. And if up till 1948 they had pinned their hopes on the Americans and the British, now it was no trouble to add another ally and new patron. They were bound to try, just as they did, to activize themselves, to enter into contact with and operate in the Titoite's network, too.

In time, however, they, too, were uncovered and attacked. The hopes of Tito and company

about arousing discontent, panic, despair, confusion and disorder in Albania were not justifying themselves. One after the other, all the gangsters and wreckers and the secret agents who were thrown into action in our country during this period fell into our hands, like rats in a trap. {1 From 1948 to 1955 the Yugoslav secret agency infiltrated into and organized in Albania 307 gangs of secret agents, wreckers and criminals who were all captured or wiped out. During the same period groups and secret organizations of agents set up and guided by the Yugoslav secret service in collaboration with Western secret services were discovered and wiped out in our country.}

Still we did not go to sleep. Time was to show that the Yugoslav leadership, either with «its own forces» or in secret agreement with the imperialist secret agencies, kept other «pawns in reserve» to bring into action at the moments which appeared most opportune and when their interests required. As to who these «pawns in reserve» were, this would be brought to light by the progress of our revolution. The main thing is that we remained permanently vigilant, aware that we would not be left to pursue our course in peace, because, apart from anything else, our many enemies would never allow us to work and live in peace.

In this way the initial phase of Tito's efforts to change the situation in Albania through wreckers and secret agents came to an end. Nothing shook our socialist fortress, its foundations were unshakeable. Step by step, along with the advance in [585] all fields of life, along with the cleaning out of imperialist, Titoite and imperialist-Titoite gangs and networks of secret agents, we became stronger and more determined on our course. About the beginning of the 50's it was seen clearly that Tito could achieve nothing against us through the methods of wreckers, secret agents and the old anti-Albanian and anti-socialist scum. However, precisely when his hopes of overturning the situation in Albania were fading, another renegade, Nikita Khrushchev, came to the aid of Tito, like a «gift from God».

The Khrushchevite betrayal, one of the greatest traumas the international communist and workers' movement has ever suffered, gave Tito new possibilities and means and, together with them, great hopes of changing the situation in Albania. Now his old chauvinist greed to gobble up Albania was to be combined with two other fundamental factors: with the hatred of the renegades of Belgrade for socialism which was being built in Albania, and second, with the desire to avenge themselves for the repeated blows and exposures which our Party and people had been inflicting on them for years on end.

The Titoites did not wait long before they launched their first attack on us through Tuk Jakova. It was by no means an accident that precisely when Tito and Khrushchev were putting their fiddles in tune, a month or two before Khrushchev went to Belgrade to kiss Tito, Tuk Jakova got up and repeated the hostile thesis of the Yugoslavs that allegedly they had created the Communist Party of Albania (!) and that the «merit» for all the victories achieved during the Anti-fascist National Liberation War belonged to them(!).

I have already dealt in detail with what this «thesis» is and why it was raised. Here I want to point out something else: Tuk Jakova was one of the participants in the Founding Meeting of the CPA in November 1941 and, during the years of the war up till 1955, like all of us, he, too, had heard this thesis many times and had not accepted it, but on the contrary had opposed it strongly. Then, how did it come about that he changed his mind and spat in his

own face in April [586] 1955?! Undoubtedly, Çalamani (Dusan Mugosa) who, according to the code-word of the UDB, «remembered and did not forget» his recruits, signalled Tuk to go into action. Tuk's other «theses» were all those which the Khrushchevite team were peddling wholesale in their preparation of the terrain for the 20th Congress of the CPSU: the dying out of the class struggle, re-examination of the line pursued by the Party, especially the rehabilitation of those enemies who had been condemned for opportunism and Trotskyism; the changing of the composition of the CC of the party and the bringing of condemned elements into the leadership, etc., etc.

Our Party immediately dealt powerful, merciless blows at the «theses» and aims of Tuk and those who had dished them up to him. Only one person, Bedri Spahiu, long known as an opportunist, a megalomaniac, and a partisan of the thesis of the dying out of the class struggle, etc., associated himself with Tuk Jakova. In condemning these two capitulationist and anti-party elements, the Plenum of the CC of the PLA held in June 1955, not only expressed the determination of the PLA not to fall into that mire in which the other parties of the then socialist countries had begun to sink, but, at the same time, gave Tito and company a good lesson. The Titoites' first attempt against us in the period when the Khrushchevite epidemic had broken out was foiled. Despite this bitter outcome, however, the Yugoslav leadership did not lose hope and did not spare its efforts to make new attempts at interference and subversion in Albania.

These were precisely the moments when the sensational and disgraceful reconciliation of Tito and Khrushchev was being brought to fruition in Belgrade at the end of May and the beginning of June 1955. Our clear-cut opposition to this notorious action is well known.

As soon as Khrushchev informed us at the last minute that he was going to Belgrade in person to make peace with Tito, to beg his «pardon» for «the mistakes committed against him» in 1948 and in 1949 (!) and to publish in the press the «decision» (which Khrushchev himself had taken) about annull- [587] ing the resolutions of the Cominform, we wrote a strong letter to Khrushchev in which we expressed our disapproval of these actions and especially of his annulling the resolutions of the Cominform. {1 «The daily experience of our Party in relation to the Yugoslavs,» we wrote to Khrushchev among other things, «both before the breach with the Yugoslavs in 1948 and later, to this day, proves clearly and completely, with many incontestable facts, that the principled content of all the resolutions of the Cominform in regard to the Yugoslav question has been completely correct... In our opinion such a hasty (and ill-considered) decision on an issue of great importance and of principle, without first making a profound analysis together with all the parties interested in this issue, and what is more, the publication of it in the press and proclamation of it in the talks in Belgrade, would not only be premature, but would also cause serious harm in the general orientation. .. We are convinced that this general line of our Party in its relations with Yugoslavia is correct. ..» (*From the letter of the CC of the PLA to the CC of the CPSU, May 25, 1955, CAP.*)} In several meetings which I had those days with the Soviet ambassador in Tirana Levichkin. I presented the Soviet leadership with a wide range of powerful arguments in support of our correct stand on this question. However, the Tito-Khrushchev accord came about. A few days after this act of treachery, on June 17, 1955, with the measures which our Plenum of the Central Committee took against Tuk Jakova and Bedri Spahiu, we gave Tito and Khrushchev direct and indirect warning that we would not

reconcile ourselves to their plans, but on the contrary would mercilessly attack any attempt of theirs or their agents to subjugate us. However, it must be said that, although we never on any occasion accepted the line which Moscow dictated to us, but on the contrary opposed it, we could not remain «unaffected», as you might say, outside the waves which it stirred up. Both Khrushchev and Tito were to work, sometimes in unity, sometimes separately, in order to give it the maximum striking force, that is, to create a situation which would lead towards the «submission» of Albania.

Among the more serious events during this process, the Party Conference of Tirana in April 1956 must be mentioned. [588] In the context of the first phase of the open emergence of Khrushchevite revisionism it undoubtedly constitutes the main attempt of Tito and Khrushchev to overturn the situation in Albania, Held very shortly after the ill-famed 20th Congress of the CPSU, the Tirana Conference of April 1956; from the ideological standpoint, was a reflection of that congress .and the revisionist platform which it codified, while, from the organizational standpoint it was simply a plot hatched up by the Titoite leadership through the Yugoslav, embassy and, as it turned out later, in collaboration with the Soviet embassy, too.

It is a recognized fact that especially after the 20th Congress of February 1956, Khrushchev, in collusion with Tito, did everything in his power to overturn the situation in all the countries of people's democracy. As I wrote above, one of the first measures which Khrushchev took was the rehabilitation of those condemned in the time of the Cominform, bringing them into the leaderships of the parties and countries of people's democracy. Rajk in Hungary, Gomulka in Poland and Kostov in Bulgaria were all rehabilitated one after the other, the so-called movement for democratization» for «the re-examination of decisions taken under the influence of Stalin and the Cominform,» etc.. was launched. In many countries the «new line» of reconciliation with the former enemies, «peaceful coexistence» with imperialism, etc., were made law. None of the other erstwhile people's democracies of Europe, nor Mao Zedong's China, lagged behind in this headlong gallop.

Tito watched this process with satisfaction and did everything possible to give it new impulses and develop it in his own interest. Hoping that the time had come for him to take up the banner, he declared more than once that the «blame» for all that had occurred lay in the socialist order itself and, consequently, the «dogmatic», «Stalinist» socialism must be overturned and the Yugoslav order of «vital», «human self-administration» must be established.

Many were deceived by or enthusiastically welcomed all [589] this betrayal which was now codified and became an official ideology. Only our Party and country remained unshaken on the former line. This could not fail to infuriate, the preachers of modern revisionism, Tito and Khrushchev. When they saw that what was happening in the other countries was not happening here, they decided to pursue their old course — that of plots. In this direction Tito was a master.

The Tirana Conference was precisely a part of the Tito-Khrushchev plot to overturn the situation in our country. I say a part, because their plan, or their plot, was much more wide-ranging and of much greater proportions. At the Tirana Conference only the first step was to

be taken, the feeling of the pulse, the preparation of the terrain, and later it would be carried further, especially at the 3rd Congress of the PLA which was to be held and did take place a little after the Tirana Conference. {1 The 3rd Congress of the PLA was held in Tirana from May 25 to June 3, 1956.}

In fact, what occurred at the Tirana Conference?

Initially, in Tirana and throughout the whole country the meetings of the party organizations had been held, meetings which were characterized by the political, ideological and organizational maturity of the whole Party, by the love which the communists nurtured for the Party, for its leadership and its line, by their determination to carry forward and defend this line resolutely, etc. At these meetings the delegates to the Party Conference of Tirana were elected, too. Up to this point, then, as I said, everything proceeded quite normally. The organization of the Party in Tirana, as the organizations of the Party throughout the country, once again confirmed its maturity and the correctness of the general line of the Party. Precisely when the delegates had been elected and were preparing themselves for the Conference, the Yugoslav embassy in Tirana was ordered to launch into urgent action the secret agents prepared long before, discontented elements, etc. The reason for this haste of Belgrade is easily understood: [590] the revisionist theses and decisions of the 20th Congress of the CPSU had just been published and the Yugoslav leadership judged that time must not be lost. In their view, a rapid, secret and intensive action in Albania might disturb and completely confuse the situation, otherwise «the Stalinist leadership of Enver Hoxha» could not be shaken. They started to spin the threads of the plot.

Under the pretext of «acquainting» people with and «popularizing» the decisions and theses of the 20th Congress of the CPSU, which the whole world was propagating noisily, the agents of the Yugoslavs and other elements condemned by the Party, instructed by the Yugoslav embassy, began secretly to indoctrinate the delegates elected to the Conference. Indeed, a «legal» course was followed: taking advantage of the love which our Party had cultivated for the CPSU, many delegates were «instructed» to demand from the organizations which had elected them that there should be a further «discussion», following the example of the «Soviet sister party», to ensure that «complaints» and «criticism», which would be in conformity with «the new spirit», were made against the leadership of our Party; that the communists were called on to tell «everything» «about the present and the past»; that efforts were made allegedly to «correct the mistakes and distortions» under the disguise of «democracy», «listening to the voice of the masses», «bringing the voice of the base to the Conference», etc., etc.

From the first day of the Conference, and especially in the first sessions of the second day, this «spirit of criticism» was very obvious, indeed the accusations very quickly advanced so far that the situation was becoming grave and disturbing even to the secret organizers of the plot.



Mehmet Shehu i: »Report on the 6th Five-Year Plan (1976-1980)«, 1976. The illustration is added by BA

Precisely in the middle of the second day of the Conference, quite unexpectedly Nexhmije arrived in Vlora. I had been about a week in Vlora on holiday, although in fact I was working, preparing the report for the 3rd Congress of the Party which was to be held in May that year. Nexhmije told me that that day (I remember clearly it was Sunday, April 15) Mehmet [591] Shehu and Begir Balluku had summoned her, and Mehmet Shehu had told her that «the situation in the Conference is serious», «they are demanding the rehabilitation of Koçi Xoxe, Tuk Jakova and Bedri Spahiu», calling for «links with Tito and the Yugoslav party» etc. «I am telling you these things,» Mehmet Shehu had concluded, «so that you go to Vlora to inform Comrade Enver and we think that it is necessary that he personally should come to the Conference.»

Later I shall explain why Mehmet Shehu gave this information, why he saw it «necessary» that I should go to the Conference and what was his true role in this plot. Here I want to point out that even without Mehmet Shehu's «request», after what Nexhmije told me, I could not have stayed a moment longer in Vlora. I ordered my car and two hours, later was back in Tirana.

I immediately summoned Mehmet Shehu and Beqir Balluku (who officially was the delegate of the Central Committee to the Conference, but in fact, as was proved later, he was the «delegate» of the Yugoslav secret service). Hysni Kapo was present at this meeting, too. I demanded from Beqir Balluku especially that he informed me in detail about what was being done and said at the Conference and, alternately flushing red and turning pale, he began:

«Yesterday, as soon as Fiqret Shehu finished delivering the report, they bombarded us with questions. The questions are. .. hard, shattering: 'Why is the Central Committee not acting quickly and extensively to popularize the 20th Congress of the Soviet party?'; 'Are we going to adopt its theses and decisions as the sister parties have done?!'; 'Does the Central Committee think that the decisions taken against Koçi Xoxe, Tuk Jakova, Bedri Spahiu and others should be re-examined in the light of the 20th Congress?'; 'Why has the publication in the press of articles and materials of the sister parties, which have been written in the spirit

of the 20th Congress, been banned by the Central Committee of the Party?'; 'Why has the leadership of our Party not condemned Stalin's cult of the individual, as the others have done, and are there [592] manifestations of it amongst us?'; 'How does the leadership of our Party judge the Yugoslav question?'; 'Why are we not linking ourselves with the CPY like the others?...»

After mentioning a number of other such questions (the formulation of them may have been different, but in essence they are identical with these I mentioned above), Balluku concluded:

«These were the questions which were raised yesterday and the contributions of the delegates are developing in this spirit.»

«Did all the delegates ask such questions, and did they all speak in this spirit?!» I asked him there and then.

Balluku was silent for a moment, red-faced, and looked at Mehmet Shehu, but since Shehu sat like a mummy, he cleared his throat and replied:

«No! Only some comrades spoke about these problems and in this spirit, however, they are setting the tone for the Conference.»

«And did you give the proper reply to these questions and accusations raised against the Party and its line?»

«Yes, I gave it, but as it turns out, the problem has reached a serious stage. They are continuing to raise these questions. Therefore, Comrade Mehmet Shehu and I thought we should inform you and ask you to go to the Conference yourself to reply to them.. .»

«That is clear!» I interrupted Beqir Balluku. «You did well to inform me and ask me to come back. We shall go immediately to the Conference and not we, but those elements who are trying to put a spoke in the wheel and to distort our correct line, should be afraid of the confrontation. But before we go there I have something I must say to you.

«First, from what I heard from you, it is clear that we are facing a hostile attack which, undoubtedly, is not only inspired, but also organized. How and by whom we shall find out, indeed very quickly, but my opinion is that the Yugoslavs have had not only a finger but a whole arm in this pie. We shall look at this, too. However, I am of the opinion that [593] you, Beqir Balluku, as the delegate of the Central Committee of the Party, should not have allowed the situation to reach this point. You know the line of the Party and our stand on all those problems which a few 'bold spirits' are now raising, seeking their 're-examination', is more than clear. We have discussed all those problems and taken collective decisions on them at the proper time and I am not aware that any of you is unclear about them, let alone opposed to them.»

«That is so!» put in Mehmet Shehu in a low voice. «We have been in agreement and said so.»

«Then, why was it necessary for me to come to cope with the situation and to give the answer to questions which you know very well?!» I asked Mehmet Shehu and Beqir Balluku. «From every standpoint, this is not only incorrect, but also impermissible for main leaders of a party. All of us must defend the things which all of us have settled and decided. Nevertheless,» I continued, «the main thing now is to deal with the existing situation and, since you considered it in order that I should do this work, I will certainly do it.»

«The second thing I wanted to say to you is about the tactic which must be pursued. I think I should act in this way: I shall ask for the floor immediately and quietly, without attacking the accusers for the time being, I shall make the delegates clear about the essence of the truth in connection with the questions and base accusations which have been raised. I shall explain what the stand of our Party has been and is on those problems, how we have acted, and from what positions the accusations are raised and where they lead to, if they are allowed to become established, I am convinced that the overwhelming majority of the delegates are sound elements loyal to the Party and, if any of them are confused, matters will soon be made clear to them. In regard to those 'bold spirits' who want a revisioning, I shall deal with them concretely in the second phase when the delegates have been made clear about the truth. I shall demand that each of these elements explain to the Conference from what positions he raises these filthy accusations, on whose behalf he [594] is speaking and who has inspired him. I am convinced that, confronted with the truth, they will be exposed and discredited.»

So, in the afternoon of April 15, I went to the Tirana Conference and followed the tactic which I outlined above. I must say that as soon as I entered the Conference hall I was surrounded by an atmosphere which gave me even greater confidence and strength: as soon as they saw me the delegates rose to their feet and burst into applause and cheers for the Party and its Central Committee. Excitement and joy began to appear in their faces. It was clear, the comrades were being freed from an anxiety which had disturbed and worried them for nearly two days on end. I was even more convinced of the truth of this as soon as I began to speak. The explanation in a comradely spirit which I began to make of the problems, the arguments which I raised to prove the correctness of the general line pursued by the Party, very quickly electrified the hall. Time after time the delegates shouted from the body of the hall:

«That is the truth! Long live the Party!»

Only a few individuals were out of tune with this general spirit: when all the delegates rose to their feet they were obliged to stand up with the majority, but they did not applaud or cheer. Of course, we did not want their applause, even if it cost us nothing. They had to be gripped firmly in the vice, to admit through their own mouths that in all the things they had raised they proceeded from hostile anti-Albanian and anti-party positions, that they had carried out the orders and «directives», of the Trotskyite Yugoslav leadership, and for all this evil work they would have to render account. On the following day, April 16, in particular, I had to deal especially with these elements. As I said, the phase of quietly clearing up the problems in principle had ended with success. Now it was the time for the devastating attack on the plotters and their tools at the Conference. I called on one of them by name and demanded that he «explain» to us there and then what had impelled him in

the accusations which he made!

[595]

At first he began with a show of «boldness», but then began to mumble that he had brought forward «the opinion of his basic organization».

«Leave your basic organization out of this!» I told him. «First of all, explain to us what you were doing in the car of the Yugoslav embassy on such and such a date, where you went and what instructions you received?!»

An excited ripple ran through the hall.

«It was a mistake,» the tool of the Yugoslavs dared to «defend» himself. «I thought it was an Albanian car.»

«Let us assume that at first you made a mistake,» I continued with his «logic», «but when you got in and heard them speaking Serbian, did Serbian sound to you like Albanian?!»

The whole of the hall burst into laughter. The agent of the Yugoslavs was deathly pale. He did not know what straw to cling to and what to say. We continued in this way with two or three others who, up till yesterday, had shown themselves «unrestrained» and «very bold» but were now left completely isolated and discredited.

After this there was virtually no further need for me to intervene. The delegates began to speak and, with the maturity, courage and the spirit of criticism and self-criticism which have always characterized our communists, ensured that the proceedings of the Party Conference of Tirana were carried through to the end with complete success.

The attempt to turn it into the first action to overthrow the sound leadership of the PLA and change the situation in Albania was nipped in the bud.

During the Conference, and especially after it, we made a dispassionate analysis of what had occurred and, as I said, on the basis of an endless series of facts we arrived at the conclusion that everything had been organized by the Titoite leadership through the Yugoslav embassy in Tirana. Likewise, as early as those days we arrived at the correct conclusion, that it was the revisionist platform of the 20th Congress of the CPSU which had inspired and encouraged both the Yugo- [596] slav leadership and its agents within our ranks to undertake this hostile attempt.

After the group of conspirators at the Tirana Conference was routed, some of its participants were expelled from the Party and some others, those who turned out to be in contact with the Yugoslav embassy (because at that time we had no facts about the Soviet embassy) were handed over to the court.

At that time, however, because of the level of our knowledge, we did not manage to discover and attack the most powerful implement of foreign agencies who, on this occasion, set in action by the Yugoslav UDB, secretly played the main role in the plot hatched up. This

was Mehmet Shehu. The facts which had to do with his stand at the Conference did not permit us to arrive at any conclusion other than the ones we did. Now, from analysis of earlier and later events, especially of the facts which we discovered after his suicide on December 18, 1981, the Party has arrived at precise and completely proven conclusions.

However, before I speak about the role and conspiratorial aims of Mehmet Shehu and his enemy group at the Tirana Conference in 1956 and after it, up till the moment when he killed himself, I consider it necessary to go back to the past to show who Mehmet Shehu really was, where he came from and whom he served.

From the investigations following the suicide of Mehmet Shehu and from the documents in the possession of the Party, it results that Mehmet Shehu was an agent recruited by the Americans from the time he attended Fultz's school in Tirana. On Fultz's orders, Mehmet Shehu went to study in a military school in Italy, on the orders of the American secret service he was sent to Spain to penetrate into the ranks of the International Brigades. The aim of the American secret service was to provide its agent with the «aura» of an «internationalist fighter» so he could be used for long-term aims in Albania later.

After the defeat of the anti-fascist war in Spain, Mehmet Shehu went to a refugee camp in France where he stayed [597] for three years, at a time when many of his comrades escaped from it. In the camp he was recruited as an agent of the British Intelligence Service also. He was taken out of the camp by an officer of the German Gestapo and one of the Italian SIM, passed through Italy, where he was held two months, and was then handed over in Durrës to the Albanian notorious spy in the pay of the Italian secret service Man Kukaleshi, who released him after 20 days, and Mehmet Shehu went to Mallakstra and linked up with the organization of our Party there.

During the National Liberation War, Mehmet Shehu and his wife Fiqret Sanxhaktari were recruited as agents of the Yugoslavs, too, by Dusan Mugosa. Mugosa began his work with Mehmet Shehu in Vlora in the spring and summer of 1943 and intensified it even more when the pair of them «arranged» that they should be together in the 1st Shock Brigade which we formed in August of that year. While in the brigade Mugosa capped his work neatly. He recruited Fiqret Sanxhaktari and arranged her betrothal to Mehmet Shehu for the aims of his secret activity. Like every foreign secret agency, the Titoite agency, which was emerging and taking form «in the flames of the war», operated with its recruits for short-term and long-term aims: in the short term, immediately, Mugosa demanded and urged his agent Mehmet Shehu to commit the maximum number of sectarian acts with the aim that later, when necessary, the Yugoslavs could use this sectarianism, which they implanted and encouraged themselves, to accuse the leadership of our Party of «sectarianism», just as they did (as I said above, this was consummated at Berat in November 1944). At the same time, in the context of «collaboration with the allies», the Titoite secret agency learned a great deal from the experience of the Intelligence Service. Apart from what I said above, it also took into account that it might suffer defeat in Albania, therefore, it prepared Mehmet and Fiqret Shehu as agents for difficult times in the future. To this end, the former was given the secret pseudonym MISH (**M**ehmet **I**smael **S**hehu), [598] and the latter the pseudonym FISARI (**F**iqret **S**anxhaktari).

From the written documents of Mehmet Shehu, which have now been found, it is proved that he was a member of the Berat plot, together with Koçi Xoxe and Nako Spiru, irrespective of the fact that he was not at Berat in November 1944.

Thus, in a letter addressed to the Central Committee of the Party [to Koçi Xoxe] in December 1944, Mehmet Shehu attacks the line of the Party as «sectarian» and «localist» and describes its sound leadership as a «clique within the Party». And in order to leave no doubt as to whom he was referring, Mehmet Shehu, enthusiastic over the anti-party turn at Berat, writes with his own hand that «if the Party... had not made the turn which it is making we would certainly be heading for disaster.» {1 From the letter of Mehmet Shehu addressed to the CO of the CPA [to Koçi Xoxe] on December 10, 1944. *CAP*.}

Naturally Mehmet Shehu, as a recruited agent of the Yugoslavs, would take an anti-party stand and unite with the plotters. At the same time, through this letter of solidarity he found the opportunity to express his personal discontent with the leadership of the Party and, especially with me, and to demand from Koçi Xoxe and those who directed Koçi Xoxe a reward for the services which he had rendered and was rendering.

During the war, too, Mehmet Shehu had displayed signs of discontent, because at the 1st National Conference of the Communist Party of Albania at Labinot in March 1943 he was elected only a candidate member of the Central Committee and at Permet, at the Anti-fascist National Liberation Congress in May 1944, he was not promoted to general, like several others whom he scorned.

Mehmet Shehu wanted the mistakes which he had made and continued to make by violating the line of the Party and failing to carry out the orders of the General Staff, over which he had been criticized several times, to be forgotten, [599] and now it is quite clear that he did not do all this without a purpose. So he had used terror in the villages through which the 1st Brigade passed to discredit the Party and the partisan forces, elevated to a legend the «incursion» of two battalions of the 1st Brigade to rescue the General Staff from the German-Ballist encirclement, although he not only did not rescue it (because the Staff broke through the encirclement with its own forces), but Mehmet Shehu deliberately lost two weeks, in place of two days, taking the forces of the Brigade over a number of dangerous paths, thus, causing many brave fighters of this Brigade to lay down their lives heroically.

During the war Mehmet Shehu opposed the order of the General Staff for the 1st Division to cross the Shkumbin River and move to the north. This opposition of Mehmet Shehu's was not something accidental. It was in accord with the Anglo-American plan to prevent the movement of formations of the ANLA from the south to Central and Northern Albania and with the great pressure which the Anglo-American Mediterranean Command exerted on the General Command of our Army to stop the movement of the Division to the north {1 See Enver Hoxha «The Anglo-American Threat to Albania» (Memoirs), Tirana 1982, pp. 248-268, Eng. ed.} and prevent any attack on the forces of Abaz Kupa describing this movement and the vigorous development of our fighting actions as «interference in its strategic plans». However, our Party and the General Staff had their own strategic plans for the liberation of the whole of Albania as quickly as possible. Our categorical order for the immediate movement of the 1st Division to the north resulted in foiling the Anglo-American plan and

the services of Mehmet Shehu towards his patrons.

Hence, Mehmet Shehu came to Albania and fought not as a communist and partisan, but as a mercenary sent by the Anglo-Americans to serve their plans for the future of Albania. {2 That Mehmet Shehu was a secret agent of the Americans and served them, is also borne out, among others, by a letter dated February 6, 1944 which the CIA agent Larry Post (who later was sent by the American secret service to Albania) wrote to another secret agent of the Americans Hasan Reçi, «I repeated many times to them that we wanted **facts, facts, and facts** about every situation and everything,» stressed Larry Post in this letter and continued: «Transmit to Mjekrra — Mehmet Shehu — my warmest greetings. Is it possible for him to send me a report on his situation and activity?! You do not write whether you have contacted him. . .! P.S. Mjekrra may read this letter, too.» (*From the original copy of the letter in CAP.*) After his suicide, a program written by his own hand [600] in 1942, at the time when he came to Albania, was found in his safe. This was nothing but a bourgeois-democratic program which made no mention at all of socialism and the communist party, but of many parties, just as the Anglo-American missions and the reactionary groups which supported them tried to bring about in the period immediately after Liberation. We are now in possession of documents which fully prove that Mehmet Shehu was an agent of the Intelligence Service, too. In these documents figure his name and some coded pseudonyms such as, BAB-008, etc. From them it emerges that Mehmet Shehu had even received money for his services and the centre instructed to leave him at peace, which meant that he was one of those potential agents that are left, in the language of spying agencies, »dormant« so as to be used when needed {1 From its assessments of the situation in Albania in the end of 1944, the British secret service envisaged the eventual organization of an opposition to the new state of people's democracy which was created. They included Mehmet Shehu among the main elements of this opposition. This is borne out by a document dated November 10, 1944, the photocopy of which has been taken from the archives of the Foreign Office, London, and which, among other things, says about Mehmet Shehu, «. ., he is a communist, but his personal ambition exceeds his loyalty to the Party». (*FO 371/43554 PRO.*) Whereas in another document dated February 10, 1945, the section of the British Intelligence Service for Albania (Force No. 399) describes Mehmet Shehu «to be the only man with sufficient following to prove dangerous to Hoxha, should they disagree» (read: over the program of the British Mehmet Shehu brought with him on his return to Albania in 1942, which was found in his safe after his suicide. See p. 599 of this book). *WO-204.*}

[601]

Thus, this hidden agent of the American secret service, later trained by the Intelligence Service in the refugee camps of former volunteers from the International Brigades in France to sabotage the National Liberation War in Albania, linked, as I wrote above, during the war with the Yugoslav OZNA (UDB), could not but go further down the road of betrayal: immediately after Liberation, on the 'Orders of his boss, Fultz, who at that time was official representative of the American mission in Tirana, he was not long in infiltrating into the Soviet secret service. We are now in possession of a letter which Mehmet Shehu sent Major Ivanov immediately after Liberation, couched in so many vilifying terms against the line of the Party and full of hatred for the sound cadres who defended this line, especially against

the General Secretary Enver Hoxha, Hysni Kapo and others. This proves that Mehmet Shehu, apart from his links as a secret agent of the Yugoslavs, had also established links with a greater power, with the secret service of the Soviet Union. This is what, among other things, he wrote to the Major of the Soviet secret service, Ivanov, chief of the Soviet military mission in Tirana:

«... I feel it my duty to tell you my opinion about the things which I see and express what I think. I know very well that this action of mine on this occasion is contrary to the rules of the organizational line of our Party, but having confidence in you... I take the responsibility of referring directly to you.» {1 From the letter of Mehmet Shehu addressed to Major Ivanov. *CAP.*}

The letter in the form of a report to Ivanov goes on to make an all-round attack on the line of the Party, which led the National Liberation War and triumphed. He attacks the historic periods and events from the past struggle of the Party, such as the Conference of Peza, the Congress of Përmet, and the 1st National Conference of the Party, and is in complete conformity with the anti-Marxist and anti-Albanian views of Velimir Stojnic and Koçi Xoxe. Like Velimir Stojnic, Mehmet Shehu, too, describes Enver Hoxha and the [602] other comrades as «a CLIQUE» {1 The words in capitals are quoted from the original letter.} which must be purged, going further than the decisions which were taken at Berat. «In order to make the change,» writes Mehmet Shehu, «a total revolution in our Party is required» (implying a total purge).

While describing Tito as «a head of INTERNATIONAL value» and in order to fulfil his personal ambition which he could not achieve during his struggle full of vacillations and sectarian and anarchist mistakes, Mehmet Shehu closes his letter to Major Ivanov with certain «conclusions» and appeals written in capital letters.

«Amongst us, Albanian communists,» he writes, «there is **no one as capable as Tito** in Yugoslavia. . . In order to help us to advance well, it is necessary that we have direct and **immediate** aid from the CI [Communist International] or the CPY [Communist Party of Yugoslavia] {2 Underlining and brackets in this excerpt of the letter are ours (Editorial Board).} and this is needed quickly because the situation has given rise to very important problems.» (After Mehmet Shehu's suicide, in his safe was found a note in his own hand about his having written a letter to Ivanov.)

In this context it is easy to understand the acrobatic twists and contradictory stands of Mehmet Shehu during the National Liberation War and after Liberation, before and after the 8th and 11th Plenums of the Central Committee (in 1948), sometimes defending the Yugoslav theses, sometimes opposing them under the protection of Soviet military advisers.

At the 8th Plenum Nako Spiru was denounced and condemned as an enemy by the Yugoslavs and Koçi Xoxe, while, as I wrote above, Mehmet Shehu was described as «anti-Yu-goslav» and the «attacks» and «pressure» of Tito's delegates and Koçi Xoxe to remove him from the army were stepped up. However, these same «critics» from Belgrade, indeed, in Tito's name, insisted that Mehmet Shehu should not be completely eliminated, but on the contrary, should be given the [603] portfolio of a ministry(!). He was appointed minister of

communications, that is, a member of the government. {1 At the 11th Plenum Kristo Themelko declared: «The Yugoslavs liked Mehmet Shehu.» Indeed, at one moment he turned to Mehmet Shehu and said: «It's true that I have a whole load of mistakes, but don't forget that whenever we went to Belgrade, it was you Tito received first and not me!» «As for the criticisms in December 1947,» continued Kristo, «true, the Yugoslavs criticized him, but they told me to exert pressure on the leadership to appoint him a minister! They wanted to keep sweet with Mehmet Shehu, because they were afraid of him!» (From the minutes of the 11th Plenum of the CC of the CPA, CAP.)

Further evidence of Mehmet Shehu's «special» links with the Titoites is provided by his «confidential» correspondence with Dusan Mugosa. Thus, in the letter which he sent Mugosa on February 9, 1944, Mehmet Shehu wrote among other things: «The letter which you sent me reassures me. . . ; there you show what special personal interest you have taken [in me]. The letter reassures me, comforts me, advises, helps and teaches me. I am keeping the letter and it will serve me as your photograph with which to remember you. . . Ah! If only you were to desert and come back to us we would keep you under cover as an illegal fighter!»

In the letter of April 22, 1944, on the occasion of Mugosa's departure from Albania, after a dithyramb of praise and describing him with servility as «our teacher», Mehmet Shehu calls the Albanian communists «communist brigands», a «hotch-potch of bitter vegetables» and concludes: «Oh, Sale! [the pseudonym of Dusan Mugosa]... To whom will you entrust this special mission. . .?» (*The letters are kept in the CAP.*)

After the letters of the CPSU(B) to the CC of the CPY, after the 11th Plenum of the CC of our Party, Mehmet Shehu adapted himself to the line of the Party, defending the Soviet Union and Stalin and «exposing» Tito and his clique as agents of imperialism, as our whole Party did. Despite the thundering of Mehmet Shehu against the Tito clique, Belgrade remained silent. The Yugoslav UDB, in collaboration with the American CIA and the British Intelligence Service, did not denounce him, because he was their potential agent infiltrated into the Soviet secret service, the trust of which he enjoyed.

Following the death of Stalin, the team that came to [604] power condemned Beria, the chief of the Soviet KGB, for many violations of the law. We asked Mehmet Shehu to examine whether mistakes had also been made in the organs of our Ministry of Internal Affairs of which he was the head. Mehmet Shehu was afraid that his links with the Soviet KGB or with the Western secret agencies had been discovered and he might suffer the same fate as Beria. He went to the Soviet ambassador Levichkin, whom he assured of his loyalty to the new Khrushchevite team that had come to power, and sought Soviet protection, because, according to his statements, «Enver Hoxha regards me with suspicion» and he was very disturbed about this. Levichkin advised Mehmet Shehu to come to me and make his position clear, while ensuring him that he, Levichkin, would protect him. Levichkin personally came to me, told me of Mehmet Shehu's worries and that he had advised him to come to me. Mehmet Shehu did not come for two or three weeks. At a subsequent meeting, Levichkin asked me:

«Have you talked with Mehmet Shehu?»

«He has not sought any meeting with me,» I replied.

«Perhaps you should summon him,» said Levichkin.

«By no means!» I said. «I have no reason to summon him. On the contrary, he must come to me himself and make a thorough self-criticism. It is true, we are friends with you, but I consider it a very grave mistake that he went to talk with you about a problem which has to do with us, without first talking to me, as General Secretary of the Party.»

Levichkin was alarmed and «ordered» Mehmet Shehu to come to me. First he sent Fiqret Shehu to feel my pulse. She came to enquire what was wrong with Mehmet Shehu, who was «extremely worried» (as if she herself knew nothing!). «We have no problem with him,» I replied, «so you had better ask him whether he has something against us!» In this way Mehmet Shehu was reassured that we had not made any discovery and had no suspicions about him. On Levichkin's urging too he came to me, made a self-criticism and also made a self-criticism in the Political Bureau and in the Plenum of the Central Committee, saying that he had made a [605] serious mistake in going to the Soviet ambassador to complain about the General Secretary of the Central Committee without discussing the matter with him and without raising the problem in the leadership of the Party.

Later, something else occurred which greatly alarmed and worried Mehmet Shehu: Sokrat Bufi, a party cadre who was studying in Moscow at that time, sent the Central Committee a letter in which, amongst other things, he said: «Mehmet Shehu is a provocateur...» Mehmet Shehu was furious about this and demanded insistently in the Secretariat and in the Political Bureau of the Central Committee and several times to me personally that Sokrat Bufi should be arrested and condemned. We did not accept his proposal, because to condemn him simply for the fact that he had made a criticism of a party cadre would be contrary to the norms of the Party. Since Sokrat Bufi was appointed vice-chairman of the Executive Committee of a district, the doubts of Mehmet Shehu that we had discovered some of his sins were further aroused and he continued to live and work in feverish anxiety. The coming to power of Khrushchev and the 20th Congress of the CPSU, which brought reconciliation between the Soviet revisionists and the Titoites, found Mehmet Shehu still in this state of anxiety.

After the abortive attempt through Tuk Jakova and Bedri Spahiu to change the situation in Albania, the foreign secret agencies considered that Mehmet Shehu, too, should be brought into action. I say the foreign secret agencies, because at those moments the aims of the Soviets and the Titoites, as well as of the imperialists, with American imperialism at the head, for the disruption and destruction of the socialist countries by means of the «Khrushchev line», were all in accord. Subsequently, of course, after the sound leadership of the Party and state had been replaced with a revisionist team, the foreign secret agencies would commence their usual fights, each of them striving to take Albania under its own wing.

Hence, Mehmet Shehu was ordered by the Soviets and the Yugoslavs (but with the approval of the British and [606] American agencies) to go into action with all his group in

order to achieve in Albania what had been or was being achieved in the other former countries of people's democracy. Precisely at this point begins the implication of Mehmet Shehu in the Party Conference of Tirana, where the task of first secretary of the Party Committee of the district was performed by his wife and long-term agent of the Yugoslavs, Fiqret Shehu. By chance (but also through the secret machinations of Mehmet Shehu) the other agent of his group, Beqir Balluku, was appointed the delegate of the CC of the Party to the Conference. In regard to the others, the «claque» of the group of plotters, the need did not arise for MISH, FISARI or Balluku to be involved in their orientation. No, the chiefs of the plot, especially Mehmet Shehu, had to operate in secrecy, far behind the scenes, so they could escape in any unexpected eventuality. The employees of the Yugoslav embassy and their henchmen long known and condemned by our Party, such as Liri Gega, Dali Ndreu, Hulusi Spahiu and others, were to deal directly with the «claque», as they did.

On this occasion, the duty of the chiefs of the plot initially was to create for elements from the floor, concealed under the mandate of «delegates», conditions and possibilities to vent all their spleen and give the tone to the Conference. Only when they were assured that everything was proceeding normally could other more obvious and decisive steps be taken. Beqir Balluku and Fiqret Shehu accomplished this secret task. The fact is that from the first day of the Conference they created all the possibilities for the enemy elements to pour out all the filth of their anti-party questions and, when the time came for discussion, through their «inac-tivity», allegedly because «they were taken by surprise and dumbfounded» and were «incapable» of «explaining» things to the enemies, they arranged that enemy elements were given the floor one after the other, and this brought about that the first phase of the plot proceeded as they had envisaged and planned behind the scenes.

Precisely when the anti-party discussions at the Confe- [607] rence blazed up, Mehmet Shehu and Beqir Balluku «consi-dered it in order» to demand that I go to the Conference. Why? They had two main aims for this urgent demand which they made:

First, to place me personally directly under the main anti-party attack, to raise the tempers higher and, if I were faced with an irresistible attack or retreated, then Mehmet Shehu would manoeuvre in the troubled waters that would be created to disrupt the situation further, to take the lead and, coming out openly, carry through to the end the scenario prepared by his patrons.

Second, Mehmet Shehu had also taken account of the possible failure of the plot, indeed, even he was afraid when he saw the reins were slipping from his hands. Not knowing that their leader was Mehmet Shehu himself, the enemy elements, «the claque», did not spare their attacks on him and his wife, since they identified them with the sound leadership. In such a case he considered it in order that I should come, do battle myself, and if he saw that the plot had failed, then he would act as was his custom: would come out «beside me», would launch the «attack» against minor elements, the pawns in the game, and no doubt, against Tito, too, and as before, would wait in gloom and anxiety for more appropriate moments.

However, his patrons, too, both the new ones (Khrushchev and company) and the old ones (the Anglo-Americans and the Titoites), sensed and knew that those situations which

existed then in the other parties and countries of people's democracy did not exist in Albania. The unity of the PLA was powerful. In the 15 years of its existence the PLA had proved that it did not tolerate mistakes, slips and deviations, its political and ideological past was pure, it had strong links with the masses and enjoyed the boundless love and respect of the people. In such a sound situation it was not at all easy for the enemies to stir up anti-party feelings and triumph, It was more likely that everything would burst like a soap bubble, as it did.

[608]

The enemies calculated these things well, and understandably, they were not so silly as to destroy their main agent for nothing. On the contrary, they did everything in their power to ensure that he remained as «clean» as possible, attempted in one instance or the other to launch him into the attack, but as soon as they saw he might be in danger they gave him the signal to change his position and come out «on the side» of the sound leadership.

This is what occurred on this occasion and what was to occur even later. As soon as they saw that the Party did not fall into the trap set, Mehmet Shehu and Beqir Balluku retreated into the background and «condemned» the plotters, while Fiqret Shehu vowed that she had not had the slightest warning, that the plotters had operated «behind her back», that she had been shut up at home preparing the report, etc. Fiqret Shehu was dismissed as first secretary and the reprimand was recorded on her registration document. At that time, we knew nothing in regard to Feçor Shehu {1 An anti-party element and sworn enemy of the PSRA. On the proposal of Mehmet Shehu he was appointed minister of Internal Affairs. After the disclosure of the activity of Mehmet Shehu as a secret agent, the true features of Feçor Shehu were revealed, too, and he has been handed over to the organs of justice for investigation of his enemy activity.}, who, it now turns out, was an agent in the service of the UDB and was the liaison agent between the Yugoslav embassy and Mehmet Shehu. Mehmet Shehu personally maintained the direct links with the Soviet embassy, readily exploiting the good relations we had with the Soviet Union at that time.

In the situation which was created after the failure of the Khrushchevite-Titoite plot at the Tirana Conference and the resolute, open unmasking by our Party of the events in Poland, and especially those in Hungary, the UDB of Tito-Rankovic ordered their agents Liri Gega, Dali Ndreu and Panajot Plaku to flee to Yugoslavia in order to create an opposition abroad and to fight us through their mouths. The first two were arrested attempting to cross the border, while [609] Panajot Plaku, with the aid of Mehmet Shehu and his collaborators amongst the officers of the army and the state security, such as the former minister of defence Beqir Ba-lluku and the former minister of internal affairs Kadri Hazbiu, crossed our state border and worked for some time in an allegedly clandestine radio which broadcast the old Titoite poison against our Party and country from the territory of Yugoslavia.

Here it is important to point out that even in the stand towards Dali Ndreu, Liri Gega and Panajot Plaku, not only the continuous anti-Albanian activity of the Titoite leadership, but also the collaboration of the Yugoslavs with the Soviets was clearly obvious. When our organs captured Dali Ndreu and Liri Gega red-handed and placed them in the dock, the Yugoslavs jumped up in rage, and so did Khrushchev. He sent an urgent radiogram to the

Soviet ambassador in Tirana Krylov to intervene with me to ensure that the enemies and traitors were not condemned. These were precisely those days of November 1956 when, as I said above, Tito delivered his notorious speech at Pula in which, amongst other things, he called openly for the overthrow of the leadership of the PLA and for my condemnation. Khrushchev sent Krylov with two main instructions: we were not to reply sternly to Tito's speech and not to punish the captured agents who were rendering account before the people's court. We very quickly gave Khrushchev and Tito the answer: in regard to the first instruction, we published articles in the press in which we fired off all our batteries against Tito, Titoism and the speech at Pula; in regard to the second instruction, we gave the agents and traitors the punishment they deserved.

This was bitter medicine for Khrushchev and Tito, but they did not stop their anti-Albanian actions. A little after this, the flight of Panajot Plaku to Yugoslavia was achieved. However, the Titoites were soon to be convinced that they could do us nothing **from outside**, either through the «op-positions» the Dusan Mugosas tried to set up with the reactionary emigrées, or with the spleen the abject traitor Panajot Plaku vented on us through a so-called clandestine radio, so they sought Khrushchev's help. The Yugoslavs hoped that Khrushchev would exercise pressure on us and influence us so that we would accept Panajot Plaku in Albania with the aim that he, together with their agents and other secret enemies, could carry out the plots and plans of the Yugoslav and the Soviet secret services **from inside**. Sensing the advantages of this course, Khrushchev was ready to collaborate with Tito, as he did over the Polish and Hungarian question, to mislead the work of the Party Conference of Tirana (1956), etc., therefore, he did not fail to intervene for a «conciliation» with the traitor. As the first step, he told us that he was considering admitting him to the Soviet Union, since Plaku himself had expressed this desire in a letter he had sent Khrushchev.

«He is a traitor,» I told Khrushchev, «and if you accept him in your country, we shall break off our friendship with you. If you do accept him, you must hand him over to us so we can hang him in the middle of the square in Tirana.» {1 See Enver Hoxha, «The Khrushchevites» (Memoirs), Tirana 1980, p. 354-356, Eng. ed.}

This was the end of these old agents of the Titoite clique and, obviously, also of the hopes which both the Titoites and the Khrushchevites had based on them.

However, this by no means meant that from now on we would no longer have to deal with other attempts, traps and plots. Therefore, on no occasion did we permit any lowering of vigilance. On the contrary, our Party of Labour continued persistently with the ideological and political struggle against Titoism, at a time when our contradictions with the Soviet revisionist leadership were steadily mounting. We were heading for the confrontation of June 1960 in Bucharest.

Just as had occurred continually with the Titoites, the Khrushchevites, too, did not spare either their means, their pressure and blackmail or their agents, recruited long before, on [611] the eve of and after this great confrontation. The pawn with which they made their opening move was Liri Belishova. In the summer of that year Belishova was in Beijing with a parliamentary delegation, at the time that the meeting of the World Federation of Trade

Unions was being held there. Contrary to every party rule and norm, the profound contradictions which had developed in the ranks of the international communist and workers' movement between the Chinese and the Soviets emerged openly at that meeting. In opposition to the stand of the leadership of our Party, which did not want to pronounce itself prematurely on these contradictions, Liri went to the Soviet embassy and reported all that the Chinese had told her. We sent Liri Belishova two letters, one to Beijing and one that reached her on the way back to Moscow, in which we criticized her for her stand in Beijing and explained the stand she must take in Moscow. However, Liri Belishova, as an agent of the Soviets, not only did not follow the advice of the leadership of the Party, but met Kozlov, talked with him, listened to him and even handed over to the Khrushchevites our letters (radiograms) which, when we asked her for them, she told us she «had burnt».

When she returned to Albania, Liri Belishova took Comrade Hysni aside and said to him, «Let us keep Comrade Enver out of these clashes,» but Hysni denounced Liri. She had also met Mehmet Shehu and told him, «Don't talk about Khrushchev, because everything you say reaches his ears.» Mehmet Shehu reluctantly admitted this much later, when he saw that the leadership of the Party was condemning Liri Belishova. What other pressure Liri Belishova had exerted on him is not known.

Likewise, we do not know what Kosygin said to Mehmet Shehu when he was in hospital in Moscow for treatment. Mehmet Shehu told us that Kosygin had tried to convince him that China must be condemned and this «had angered» him, so he left the hospital and returned to Albania. Now it turns out that Mehmet Shehu, together with Fiqret Shehu, had been summoned to a meeting with Mikoyan at which Andropov [612] and I think also the chief of security Shelepin were present and talked for four hours with them.

In the end, apparently, the Soviets decided that they should set Mehmet Shehu in action for the subjugation of the leadership of our Party. I say «in the end», because some months earlier, in February of that year, they not only hesitated, but did not even want to inform Mehmet Shehu of the quarrels which they had with the Chinese.

As I have written in my book of memoirs «The Khrushchevites», when we arrived in Moscow for a top-level meeting in the framework of the Comecon and the Warsaw Treaty, they informed me that Mikoyan sought an urgent meeting «with Enver Hoxha alone». I insisted that Mehmet Shehu should be present, too, and since despite their wishes I took Mehmet Shehu with me, the Soviets hesitated, frowned, but were faced «with an accomplished fact». {1 See Enver Hoxha, -The Khrushchevites» (Memoirs), Tirana 1980, pp. 387-389, Eng. ed.} In order to avoid angering Mehmet Shehu, they justified themselves for not inviting him to the meeting on the grounds that they had decided to speak «only with the first secretaries of sister parties». Now it turns out that this «reason» was a bluff. They did not want Mehmet Shehu to learn what had occurred, because they knew that he was the man of many agencies and might carry information to the Americans and the British. However, the events evolved and in May-June the Soviets changed their tune.

Meanwhile, Mehmet Shehu saw that the leadership of our Party was not going to tolerate Khrushchev's plans against Marxism-Leninism and the international communist and workers' movement any longer. Our Party worked out the platform for the stand it would

take at Bucharest, retaining its right to present its views at the regular meeting of all parties (in November 1960 in Moscow). At that time Mehmet Shehu was in a quandary: whom to please and whom to displease? To place himself in opposition to the leadership of the Party was of no benefit to him, because he would suffer the fate of [613] Liri Belishova and all the other anti-party enemies. However, as a man of many foreign secret agencies he had to take the Americans, the British and the Yugoslavs into his calculations, besides us and the Soviets.

Which way would this multiple agent turn in this complicated situation?!

However, a way out was presented to him. At this time Mehmet Shehu was sent to New York at the head of a government delegation to the UNO. He travelled on the British trans-Atlantic luxury liner «Queen Elizabeth». We knew that Tito, also, was travelling on that ship, but it never crossed our minds that Mehmet Shehu might meet Tito. Now we learn from his fellow-travellers who were his collaborators and are now in jail that Harry Fultz of the American CIA and Randolph Churchill, who was an Intelligence Service agent but figured on the passenger list as a journalist, were also aboard. During this trip of several days, Mehmet Shehu, being their agent, had secret meetings and talks with Tito, Fultz, and R. Churchill, informed them of the situation in and the stands of our Party, the acute contradictions which were arising with the Soviet Union and the stand which the leadership of our Party intended to take in Moscow.

The strategies of the three agencies, Yugoslav, American and British, were in accord and they suggested to their super-agent that he should unreservedly «support» the correct stands of the leadership of the Party, which would lead to the great breach and rupture with the Soviet Union. It would be no loss to them that we supported China. On the contrary, this «friendship» with their secret pro-American, pro-Titoite friends (such as Zhou Enlai, Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping) would serve their longer-range strategic plans (to involve us in the liberal policies of China, such as it began later with the Nixon-Zhou Enlai meeting, or when Zhou Enlai urged Beqir Balluku to act relying on a Yugoslavia-Rumania-Albania alliance), etc.

Mehmet Shehu returned from the United States of America full of «courage» and became more catholic than the Pope. was unrestrained in his «defence» of the line of our Party [614] against the plans and stands of Khrushchev and the revisionist Soviet leadership. Indeed, he organized «scenes» in order to boost himself and thoroughly cement our trust in him. When we were at the Meeting of 81 parties in Moscow, in November of that year, he proposed we should leave the house in which the Soviets had placed us because «they are capable of poisoning us». (He was afraid rather on his own account.) When we went to our embassy in Moscow, through the secret microphones which the Soviets had planted and which we discovered, he «transmitted» to them a fiery message eulogizing our Party and its first secretary, while using all the gravest insults against them for their disgraceful act in eaves-dropping on their close friends, such as the Party of Labour of Albania and its leaders. Mehmet Shehu stubbornly opposed our return by ship via the Black Sea and organized our return by train through Austria and Italy. We agreed to these measures, because we no longer trusted the Soviets, either, but with the zeal which he displayed he strengthened our trust in him and also protected himself. Nevertheless, Mehmet Shehu

could not but be worried that he might pay with his head for the «betrayal» which he was committing against his Soviet patrons as a disobedient agent.

There was no lack of some hints and needling. In my book «The Khrushchevites» I have recorded that Kosygin said to me, «There are enemies in your leadership». {1 See Enver Hoxha, «The Khrushchevites» (Memoirs), Tirana p. 432, Eng. ed.} However, when I called on Mehmet Shehu to translate this to me better, because, although I understood Russian, I had never mastered those Cyrillic letters which hindered me from reading and learning it well, Kosygin shut his mouth and said that I «had not understood him properly». There, too, I have written about the pressure exerted on us by the Soviet militarymen who had an argument with Mehmet Shehu, too. Now another explanation can be given for why Khrushchev at our last meeting said to us: «This is how MacMillan wanted to speak [615] to me», at which Mehmet Shehu jumped to his feet and we broke off the meeting. Apparently, when Khrushchev mentioned the Englishman MacMillan, Mehmet Shehu feared that he might open a wound which would cause him great pain.

After the Meeting of 81 parties, Khrushchev and company tried to patch up their relations with us. This they tried to do at our 4th Congress, with the letters they sent us, as well as through the Chinese, etc. They also tried to turn us to their course through economic and military pressures, but they failed in all directions. We maintained our immovable stand. We expelled the Soviets from the base at Vlora; they cut off their economic and military aid, even broke off diplomatic relations.

Precisely at the extremely difficult and delicate moments which our Party and country were experiencing in 1960 we uncovered the dangerous plot of Teme Sejko, hatched up and supported by the American 6th Fleet, the renegades of Belgrade and the Greek chauvinist circles. In collaboration with one another, these forces of darkness had thrown into action their long-standing agent Teme Sejko and a number of other agents around him to prepare and cause «internal» disorders to break out in Albania which would serve as a pretext for a foreign military intervention against our country. However, although we were deeply involved in the struggle against our new Khrushchevite enemies, we had not relaxed for a moment our vigilance towards our old enemies — the imperialists, the chauvinists and the Belgrade renegades. We discovered their plot, smashed it and, at the 4th Congress of the Party, {1 The 4th Congress of the PLA carried out its proceedings from 13-20 February 1961.} spoke about it and publicly denounced it and its organizers. At those moments the Soviets pretended to be totally ignorant of and even alarmed about it, so much so that Gomulka asked that a commission from the Warsaw Treaty be set to «verify» things, which we turned down! What all this alarm of the Soviets was about, this we did not know at that time.

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Now it is fully proved that at a time when the Americans, the Yugoslav and Greek chauvinists were secretly hatching up the plot of Teme Sejko and company, the Soviets got air of this plot through their secret agents and made the most of it as a very favourable occasion to maintain and strengthen their positions in Albania, which were being shaken.

Let us not forget that the Soviet fleet was still at Vlora. Let us not forget that those were days and months when we were at daggers drawn with the Soviets. The Soviets sensed that their end was coming in Albania and feared that their naval fleet might be driven from Vlora. We had just launched the attack in Bucharest and were preparing the main and general attack for the Meeting of communist and workers' parties which was to be held in Moscow in November that year. To forestall the evil the Soviets threatened us in many ways, indeed, in one letter they wrote that we must extinguish the «spark» which was kindled at Bucharest. {1 See Enver Hoxha, Works, vol. 19, p. 128, Alb. ed. 616} We continued resolutely on our course. Then, they tried to find a way out through another more «powerful» and more «menacing» means: through their secret agents Mehmet Shehu, Beqir Balluku and Kadri Hazbiu they tried to employ the truth about Teme Sejko's plot as a means of pressure and blackmail on us in order to make us kowtow to the Soviets. They even gave Mehmet Shehu, Beqir Balluku and Kadri Hazbiu additional information ensured through the KGB, which confirmed the threat of an attack prepared by the West and the Yugoslavs against our country. After this the Soviets and their agents expected that we would fall into the trap and see our «salvation from the danger» in relying on the Soviets, especially on their fleet in Vlora. Hence, with the card of the imperialist-Yugoslav plot the Soviets said to us: Don't do anything silly, the attack is prepared, imperialism will gobble you up, therefore come to your senses, because you need us! What a masquerade! These plans and base calculations by the Khrushchevites in 1960 about the plot of Teme Sejko are very similar to the plans which the Titoites concocted with Koçi Xoxe and Beqir Balluku at the end of 1947 and the beginning of 1948, that we were allegedly under threat of a Greek attack and, therefore, the Yugoslav divisions should come «to defend and save us»!

However, just as we foiled the Titoites' plots and secret plans in 1947 and 1948, we also foiled the plots of the imperialists, the Yugoslavs and the Soviets in 1960. On the basis of many facts and documents which we discovered, we handed Teme Sejko and his network of agents over to the people's court where they admitted through their own mouths, not only their participation in the plot, but also the work that they had done as agents for the Yugoslav, Greek and American secret services.

Naturally, our foiling and public denunciation of the imperialist-Yugoslav plot would alarm the Soviets, as it did. The smashing of the first, American-Yugoslav-Greek, plot automatically blew up the second plot which the Khrushchevites. and their agents Mehmet Shehu, Beqir Balluku and others had hatched up in secrecy. The Soviets saw that after this they had their days numbered in Albania. And true enough, very soon we ousted the Soviet naval fleet from Vlora, without it ever crossing our mind that we could rely on it to «save ourselves». This fleet of the Khrushchevites had already become just like the American 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean and we knew that our salvation would not come from relying on it, but from expelling it, as we did.

The fact that we uncovered and foiled this plot right at the outset made Mehmet Shehu draw in his horns. Meanwhile, our Party pursued the course of Marxism-Leninism and Mehmet Shehu «endorsed» its line, indeed, he greatly advertised his role in these situations and, of course, in the eyes of the Americans and the Yugoslavs posed as if it was he that inspired this course. From the plans which they had made and the secret contacts which they

maintained, the Americans and the Yugoslavs knew this, while all the Western [618] secret agencies were in agreement that their «boy» should thunder against them with such statements as «We are dancing in the wolf's mouth», etc., etc. They accepted any abuse, content that their agent was climbing higher and higher and might turn the helm of our Party and state towards the West.

Mehmet Shehu zealously continued the «struggle» against the Soviet revisionists, but proceeding from other purposes and aims, quite the opposite of the lofty aims of the Party which worked for the defence of Marxism-Leninism and the supreme interests of our people and socialist Homeland.

The events of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 came about and the Party decided to denounce the Warsaw Treaty, to take our country out of this ill-famed treaty *de jure*, although *de facto*, we had withdrawn from it at the end of 1960. On this occasion, Mehmet Shehu delivered the speeches as prime minister and, of course, he presented this to his patrons as his personal victory. The American agency (and those linked with it, first of all, the Titoites) thought that Albania was left isolated and undefended, and since China was far away, it considered that the time had come when our country would turn its face towards the West.

The trump card of the Western and Titoite agencies, Mehmet Shehu, was brought into action. In 1972 he went to Paris for an operation, accompanied by the same team that accompanied him to the UNO, plus his wife Fiqret Shehu. There he made contact with a top figure of the American CIA, who said to him: «What are you doing? You are getting old, you must act!»

Mehmet Shehu reported to him about the situation and the plots which were being prepared (by Beqir Balluku and Abdyl Këllezi and company). The CIA recommended that he should act, but without compromising himself. It proposed three variants for the elimination of Enver Hoxha: 1) through a motor accident; 2) through shooting with a rifle from a distance; or 3) with delayed-action poison. It was left to Mehmet Shehu to put into action the variant he considered most feasible.

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Through Feçor Shehu, Mehmet Shehu received the same instructions from the Yugoslav UDB which was completely in agreement with the CIA.

In Paris Mehmet Shehu was also given a sophisticated radio receiver-transmitter which his eldest son, who was an electronics engineer, installed in his house, ready to function.

In fact, Mehmet Shehu had turned, or was to turn, his whole family into a nest of agents, a family of vipers. As we said, Fiqret Shehu had been recruited during the war by Dusan Mugosa and had the pseudonym FISARI, without taking into account what she might have done earlier when she went to Italy on a one- or two-year course during the occupation, or what Liri Gega (and Smith {1 Officer of the British military mission in Albania, secret agent of the Intelligence Service, a friend of Liri Gega and Mustafa Gjinishi. During the National

Liberation War he was attached to the Staff of the 1st Division of the ANLA. See Enver Hoxha «The Anglo-American Threat to Albania» (Memoirs), Tirana 1982, p. 224, Eng. ed.)) might have done with her when they worked together in the 1st Army Corps. Eventually Mehmet Shehu had made his second son Skënder a collaborator and when he went abroad (especially when he went to study in Sweden), Mehmet Shehu charged him to establish contact with the CIA and act as a liaison agent, while activating his younger son and his wife in the direction of a foreign embassy in Tirana.

Of course, the elements recruited by Mehmet Shehu over a long period, or the hostile and immoral elements of his own family would not suffice for him to accomplish the evil work the CIA and the UDB demanded of him. He would aim to extend the network of agents and conspirators everywhere. To this end in 1972 he was directed and ordered by the American CIA to work out concrete plans to overturn the situation in Albania in favour of the West, to set in motion and urge in this direction the agents known or unknown to him, regardless of whose they were, Yugoslav, Greek, British, Italian, and others, but avoiding compromising himself.

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Thus began the implementation, of the ramified conspiratorial plan organized under cover by Mehmet Shehu:

I. The hostile activity of Fadil Paçrami and his group in the field of culture, art and the radio and television service for the degeneration of the line in these fields. However, as is known, the Party quickly dealt with this group and its activity. Mehmet Shehu hastened to wash his hands of them, indeed, he thundered loudly against people of art and the youth in order to realize his anti-party aims in this way, as he had done during the War, to create antagonism in the relations and the links of the Party with these strata.

II. In 1973 the group of Beqir Balluku was set in motion. It prepared the military putsch through the black theses, «the theory of slipping away», of abandoning the coast and the cities to imperialist aggressors, the patrons of Mehmet Shehu. Beqir Balluku was completely unmasked. Even Petrit Dume and Hito Çako who were in the plot, abandoned him. Mehmet Shehu, who was the head of the plot and pulled the strings behind the scenes (now it turns out that all the strategic and tactical plans had been worked out contrary to the plans of the Council of Defence and these black materials, as they were called when we discovered them, had been approved by him), tried to save Petrit Dume and Hito Çako. They had great hopes that through Mehmet Shehu their «heads would be saved», as he told them in the Plenum of the Central Committee which met at that time on these problems, and they did not give Mehmet Shehu away, but he could not save them from the danger for fear of damaging himself.

III. Meanwhile Mehmet Shehu, this time more directly, set in motion his henchmen Abdyl Këllezi, Koço Theodhosi and Kiço Ngjela to carry out sabotage in the economic field, especially in the oil industry and agriculture, to disorganize the economy of the country by beginning to work out and introduce forms of Yugoslav self-administration.

However, as is known, Mehmet Shehu failed in these three directions.

Throughout this period Tito, who was following the situation attentively, thought that since he had his agent in the leadership of our Party and state, after the fall of Rankovic in Yugoslavia and the exposure of the barbarities which he had perpetrated in Kosova, as well as after the situations which were created with our leaving the Warsaw Treaty, he could make some concessions in regard to Kosova and our relations with it. Kosova began to breathe a little more freely, Albanian schools were opened, the University of Prishtina was set up, cultural relations, visits to one another and other activities began. Tito and company cherished the old dream that through Kosova they could influence the liberal forces in Albania and, in this way, make possible the union of Albania with Kosova in the framework of Yugoslavia. When the leaders of Kosova told Tito: «The Albanians are fanning up nationalist sentiments and speaking against you,» he replied: «That's not your business, let them abuse me if they want to...» Tito said this because he knew that in Albania he had Mehmet Shehu, who, after three failures, was regrouping the other conspirators, especially in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, with Kadri Hazbiu, Feçor Shehu and some others. Nevertheless, Mehmet Shehu needed time to hatch up new plots.

Meanwhile Tito died. A situation of political and economic insecurity was created in Yugoslavia. The world capitalist crisis had gripped Yugoslavia, too, which was up to its ears in debt. The situation was seething in Kosova more than anywhere else on account of the Great-Serb oppression, the unemployment and the gloomy prospects for the working people who saw that in their Motherland, in socialist Albania, the situation was quite different. Thus, Kosova did not serve as a bridgehead for the penetration of Titoite self-administration and ideological degeneration into Albania, but Albania showed Kosova the brilliant features of true socialism in our country. And this it did through normal, official bilateral relations and contacts with Kosova and not through secret agents, because, first, this was not the line of our Party and, second, the Yugoslav secret agency (through Feçor Shehu) was at the [622] head of the organs of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Therefore, the «theses» of the Yugoslavs about the alleged interference of Albania by means of secret agents for the organization of demonstrations in Kosova have no foundation. The American and Yugoslav secret agencies began to be worried lest Kosova escape from their control, lest Albania intervene, possibly, as they thought, in collaboration with Bulgaria and the Soviet Union.

Meanwhile, the situation in Kosova was becoming ever more difficult and complicated. The people of Kosova and the whole Albanian population living on their own lands in Montenegro and Macedonia were seeing more and more each day that in the Titoite reality their legitimate rights, indeed, even those rights written in the Yugoslav Constitution, were being violated and denied.

The profound economic and political crisis which had swept the whole of Yugoslavia was manifesting itself in more tragic colours in Kosova. Not only was the standard of living several times lower than the average of Yugoslavia, but the gap was being ceaselessly widened to the detriment of the Kosovars; unemployment, especially among the Albanian youth there, was wreaking havoc. Whereas 10-15 years earlier the demagogue Tito had laid the blame on Rankovic for the mass expulsions and displacements of Kosovars to Turkey and the Western countries, now the Kosovars were seeing that they were forced to leave

their lands and betake themselves to the markets of the West, just as in the «time of Rankovic». At that time Rankovic drove them out, now unemployment was driving them out just the same, indeed, in even greater numbers. Hence, it was not one or five Rankovices that were to blame, but the Yugoslav reality, the Titoite «self-administrative socialism». The people of Kosova were bound to become conscious of this reality, just as they did. However, these were not the only reasons which were bringing the cauldron to boiling-point. Above all, the people of Kosova and the whole Albanian population living in their own territories in Yugoslavia saw and felt deeply that in Titoite Yugoslavia they were treated [623] as second-rate citizens, their legitimate rights were trampled on and they were insulted and despised by the Titoites for what has always been dearest to the heart of the Albanian: his national pride and dignity.

Precisely in such situations which had long been boiling up, the demonstrations took place in Kosova at the beginning of 1981. The Great-Serbs and the Yugoslav UDB were alarmed, sent in the army and crushed the demonstrations with tanks. Hundreds of people were killed and wounded. A conflagration dangerous to the internal situation of Yugoslavia, now shaken by both economic crises and political crises, broke out. These savage repressive measures caused a great sensation in international opinion. Albania maintained an open stand, as resolute as it was wise.

Apart from the slanders that these demonstrations had allegedly been inspired by Albania, the Yugoslavs had to take immediate measures to «discredit» the «Stalinist» Albanian leadership in order to disturb and overturn the sound situation in Albania, as well as to confuse the patriotic-revolutionary forces in Kosova.

They demanded that their agent Mehmet Shehu acted. The Yugoslav UDB was in collaboration with the CIA and was aware of its directive for the liquidation of Enver Hoxha. Therefore, they demanded that Mehmet Shehu send his wife urgently to Paris. The demonstrations took place in March, while she went to Paris in April 1981. There an envoy from Çalamani (Mugosa himself had died, but his mission as an agent «lived on») presented himself to her and gave her the poison which had to be administered immediately to Enver Hoxha.

Fiqret Shehu and Mehmet Shehu had racked their brains together about when, where and how they would act with the variants which the CIA had suggested to them, and had found as the most feasible variant the administration of the delayed-action poison, which could be carried out when we paid each other visits. In the conditions under which I travelled the motor accident was ruled out, while the attempt [624] with a rifle was too sensational and With unforeseeable dangers.

The order which the Yugoslavs gave Mehmet Shehu to act immediately and quickly according to the third variant found him unprepared. Mehmet Shehu was afraid, did not like being placed in a corner with no room to move. Therefore, he appealed to his major patron, the American CIA. Fiqret Shehu began to visit the capitals of Europe — Vienna, Stockholm, Copenhagen. Both in Stockholm and in Denmark she met representatives of the CIA and put forward Mehmet Shehu's idea that they should not act hastily, as the Yugoslavs demanded, because they were not well prepared; the poisoning or physical liquidation of

Enver Hoxha could be put off until March 1982 (during the winter holidays), while up till that time they could undertake some action which might cause a split in the Party and encourage the liberal element. The representative of the CIA discussed the matter with his centre and at the second meeting, this time in Denmark gave his approval for Mehmet Shehu's variant.

In this context Mehmet Shehu arranged the engagement of his son to the daughter of a family in the circle of which there were 6 or 7 fugitive war criminals, including the notorious agent of the CIA Arshi Pipa. Such an engagement could not fail to attract the attention of the public. And it was done precisely with the aim of attracting public attention and causing a sensation. If it were accepted by the Party, it would lead to splits and liberalism among others, too, in the Party, the Youth organization, etc. If it were not accepted by the Party, measures would be taken against Mehmet Shehu, not imprisonment, of course, but demotion, removal from his position or even expulsion from the Party. This would cause a sensation and the Yugoslavs could use it, as they needed it for their propaganda purposes to discredit the leadership of the Party of Labour of Albania and especially Enver Hoxha, who, as they have repeated over and over again, is «eliminating» his collaborators, as Stalin did.

However, the plans did not work out as Mehmet Shehu [625] had intended. The Party intervened immediately, the engagement was broken off, Mehmet Shehu was criticized by the comrades for this major political mistake, he was required to make a profound self-criticism to find the sources of such an error and it was left that this would be done after the 8th Congress of the Party. {1 The 8th Congress of the PLA took place on November 1-8, 1931.} He did not expect this. He tried to make «some other mistakes»: he completely neglected his report for the 8th Congress of the Party, presented it late and with flagrant political errors and the Political Bureau rejected it. Mehmet Shehu wanted to make a «self-criticism» at the Congress over the engagement of his son (his aim was to cause an upset in the Congress), but it was refused, too. In the Congress he purposely sat like a «repentant sinner» and this was so obvious to the delegates and the TV viewers that they began to ask one another why.

Meanwhile, the question of Kosova was becoming dangerous. The Yugoslavs were being unmasked before international public opinion, while the authority of our country was rising. The Yugoslavs saw that nothing happened either before the Congress or after it. Mehmet Shehu delivered the report to the Congress, he was elected to the Political Bureau and no measure was taken against him, as the Yugoslavs hoped, to demote him or to remove him from the function he had in the state. Once the Congress was over, perhaps Mehmet Shehu informed the Yugoslavs that even after the delivery of his self-criticism he was being treated just the same. From what he had understood from his talks with us the measure of sanction would be of an internal party character. This was of no benefit to the Titoites, the Great-Serbs and the Yugoslav UDB, who were expecting and wanting disorder to occur in Albania at all costs. Therefore, on the eve of the meeting of the Political Bureau, at which the grave political mistake of Mehmet Shehu was to be discussed, the Yugoslav embassy in Tirana, acting on orders which it had received from Belgrade, sent its agent and contact man Feçor Shehu to [626] Mehmet Shehu to transmit the «ultimatum» of the UDB that «Enver Hoxha must be killed at all costs, even in the meeting, even if Mehmet Shehu himself is killed.» So

hard-pressed were the UDB, the Great-Serb and Titoite clique with the situation in Kosova, so gloomy seemed the future, that they decided to «destroy» their trump card, their superagent, provided only that something spectacular would occur which would «shake socialist Albania and the Party of Labour of Albania to their foundations»!

At ten o'clock at night, on December 16, 1981, Feçor Shehu went to Mehmet Shehu's home and transmitted the order of their secret centre.

On December 17, the discussion commenced in the meeting of the Political Bureau. All the comrades, old and new, took part in the discussion, and resolutely condemned Mehmet Shehu's act of engaging his son to a girl in whose family there were 6 to 7 war criminals. They expressed their dissatisfaction with Mehmet Shehu's self-criticism, demanded that he made it more profound and disclosed where the cause of such a mistake lay, asked him many questions, reminded him that he had made mistakes during the National Liberation War also that he had placed himself above the Party, they spoke about his unrestrained conceit and arrogance towards the cadres and towards virtually all his closest collaborators in the work of the government, the Political Bureau, etc. (On the day following the suicide, all these contributions to the discussion, which had been tape-recorded, were heard just as they were made by the whole Plenum of the Central Committee and the meetings of party activists.)

The criticisms by the members of the Political Bureau were strong, open and bolshevik, but only «the recording of a serious reprimand on his registration document» was demanded as sanction. This was the spirit in which I, too, had prepared my contribution in which I outlined the history of Mehmet Shehu's mistakes, beginning from the period of the war (this contribution, too, was heard by the Plenum of the Central Committee and by the meetings of party activists [627] as it would have been delivered following the contributions of other comrades). However, because the meeting went on late, my contribution was not delivered that day. Thus, it was left that the meeting would continue the following day. At the end of the discussion on the first day. I said to Mehmet Shehu:

«Reflect deeply all night and tomorrow tell us in the Political Bureau from what motives you have proceeded. Your alibi for the engagement does not hold water, something else has impelled you in this reprehensible act.»

What I said alarmed Mehmet Shehu, he suspected that the crime which he was preparing might have been discovered. The «bold» Mehmet Shehu thought all night about how to escape from the tight spot, worked out and applied a plan of his own. Apparently, he judged matters in this way: «I am as good as dead, the best thing is to save what I can,» and he decided to act like his friend Nako Spiru, to kill himself, thinking the Party would bury this «statesman», this «legendary leader», this «partisan and fighter in Spain» with honours, would not sully his reputation but would say that «the gun went off accidentally» (as he suggested in the letter which he left), and thus, at least, he would not lose his past and his family would not suffer.

Together with his wife he flushed the poison down the WC and charged his eldest son with dismantling and removing the compromising parts of the radio which he had installed for

him.

Figret Shehu, as the agent she was (she who trembled and wept over nothing), agreed to the suicide of her husband coolly and cynically, provided only that their «historic» past and she and her sons were saved.

However, they had reckoned their account without the innkeeper. As soon as they informed me about Mehmet Shehu's final act, within moments I proposed that his suicide should be condemned, that he had acted as an enemy, and the Political Bureau expressed its unanimous condemnation of the act of this enemy. Not only the leadership and the Party, [628] but our whole people considered this a hostile act and maintained a revolutionary stand. The Party and people continued with enthusiasm, indeed, with greater determination and unity, the work for the implementation of the decisions of the 8th Congress of the Party.

The UDB and the CIA were left biting their fingers. The foreign news agencies related the fact as we had given it, that Mehmet Shehu «committed suicide in a nervous crisis». Here and there some comment secretly paid for by the Yugoslavs was made. However, even the Yugoslavs were unable to exploit this act in their official press apart from charging a student's newspaper in Zagreb to write about the «drama» which had occurred at the meeting of the Albanian leadership (according to the version which the UDB had planned). According to this newspaper, «...Mehmet Shehu fired some shots with a Chinese revolver of this or that type and calibre (!), but Enver Hoxha's comrades killed him. The fate of Enver Hoxha is not known...»

A scenario modelled on westerns with gunfights which occurred in the saloons at the time! But what could they do? This is what they wanted! But their trump card, the super-agent of the CIA and the UDB in Albania, was thrown away for no advantage.

Albania has always supported Kosova and the population of other Albanian regions of Yugoslavia in their legitimate rights, but Kosova, all the Albanians who rose in demonstrations, do not realize what colossal assistance they gave Albania by forcing the Yugoslav UDB to play its trump card and destroy its last «great hope» of overthrowing the Marxist-Leninist leadership in Albania, which had continually unmasked and was relentlessly unmasking the Titoite betrayal, self-administration, non-alignment, this filthy agency of American and British imperialism, of international reaction, of social-democracy and whoever else you like.

Together with Mehmet Shehu, the agencies of the imperialists, social-imperialists and others, like the Yugoslav UDB, received a blow which they will feel for a long time. [629] Their network of agents which had Mehmet Shehu in the centre was uncovered thread by thread, attacked in all its joints and connections, and everything which had to do with this terrible network of long-standing secret agents and conspirators is now in our hands.

Here I must point out that the dangerous plot of Mehmet Shehu, just as other plotters and plotting groups before it, were discovered through the strength and vigilance of the Party and its leadership and none by the State Security. Why? Because, as is known, Koçi Xoxe, a notorious agent of Tito-Rankovic, who was condemned as such for crimes which have

been dealt with in detail in this book, was minister of the internal affairs until 1948. Then, he was succeeded by Mehmet Shehu to be followed later by Kadri Hazbiu and more recently, by Feçor Shehu. Unfortunately for the people and the Party none of them was suspected to be an agent, while the three of them, just like Koçi Xoxe, were active agents, mainly of the Yugoslav UDB, who covered up the dirty linen and crimes of one another and some of their collaborators around them, and for almost four decades kept hidden from the Party all information about the espionage activity of one another. None of these plotters, Mehmet Shehu included, openly opposed the line of the Party, because they were afraid of the Party, its unity and the Party-people unity. The uncovering of all these plots, especially the criminal plot of Mehmet Shehu, as well as the information and documents now in the hands of the Party, some of which have been dealt with in these notes, go to prove that Mehmet Shehu and his collaborators acted simply as agents behind the back of the Party and its leadership, not as open opponents of the line or policy of the Party, but as plotters in the service of foreign secret services. Their mission was to act and plot secretly so as to change the sound situation in Albania, to overthrow the people's state power and clear the way for their foreign patrons, who for more than 40 years, not to go even further back, have always hatched up sinister plans and have had criminal aims, to violate the independence [630] of Albania, to deprive the Albanian people of their freedom and rights won at the expense of so much blood and sweat.

After the final traumatic blow we dealt them, the foreign secret services, and the Titoite UDB among them, in their rage and despair turned to forms and methods which we had long experience of and from which they themselves had never seen any good: they tried to feel our pulse and shake us through a group of hired mercenaries and bandits! Apparently, they forgot what «victories» they had scored with the saboteurs and criminals they had sent us in the first years after Liberation! But we, too, were quick to riposte to them: if in the 50's there were cases when we needed even 4-5 days, and at times even more, to detect and wipe out their bands of saboteurs now we needed no more than 5 hours to discover and wipe out the terrorist band of Xhevdet Mustafa, which was sent by the UDB. This ought to serve as a lesson to the enemies of Albania abroad, that such bands of criminals, large or small, from the East or the West, will be wiped out mercilessly by a people who are all armed and on guard. This is what has occurred and always will occur with any one who dares to carry out the adventurous orders of imperialists and revisionists! We are well aware that even after this the foreign secret services, and together with them the UDB, will not sit idle. However, they will never catch us asleep. We will never be lacking in vigilance.

Let everyone understand clearly: the walls of our fortress are of unshakeable granite rock.

This is in general outline the history of our relations with the CPY and the revisionist Yugoslav state: on their part, it is a history of interference and traps, of ceaseless plots to damage our Party and socialist state, while, on our part, it is a history of just and consistent struggle by our Party and people determined never to fall for any of their traps and plots, to uncover and foil them before they cause us serious harm. For socialist Albania to develop and march forward we [631] defined and consistently followed the road which seemed to us to be the most correct one — the road which is based on the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, and which has always fulfilled the loftiest aspirations and desires of our brave, hard-working and revolutionary people. This has been and is the road of the constant

consolidation of the leading role of the Party and of the active participation of the masses in all the life of the country, of the defence of the independence of the Homeland, of the deepening of the all-round revolution in all fields, of the gradual and constant raising of the well-being of the masses, etc. All along this time, our numerous enemies, and the Yugoslav Titoites in particular, resorted to all means of pressure to swerve us from this course, sometimes through threats, sometimes «pitying us» or accusing us of being «on a wrong», «dogmatic», «Stalinist road», etc., etc.

We never listened to this «advice» or «admonishments» of the enemies, but followed consistently the road we had mapped out, conscious of its correctness. Only time was to prove and our people were to judge whether we had gone in the right or wrong direction. And tune, the reality, has long proved and continues to prove with the utmost clarity who was right and who was wrong.

The so much advertised creature of Tito — the «self-administrative» Yugoslavia of «specific socialism», has been totally engulfed by the gravest crisis in its history and is now in a very grave situation with no way out.

The Yugoslav system has been reduced to bad shape, the development of events has torn down all masks and dispelled all illusions. The external pompous appearances, the misleading advertisements of a «well-being such as can be found in no other place» (!), of a «Yugoslavia of freedom and abundance» (!) have left the place to all-round crisis, poverty and growing unemployment, galloping inflation, and increasing shortages of even the most essential goods and articles of broad consumption, etc.

Just as they did with Tito in his last breath, the im- [632] perialists and social-imperialists are doing their utmost to give the Yugoslav system a new lease of life, to keep it alive, although this system is wholly gangrened. No blood transfusion, either from Washington, Moscow or whatever international bank or fund, can save it. This is the logical end of all revisionist theory and practice. The imperialist and social-imperialist creditors take the money from their safes, not because they ache to help the peoples of Yugoslavia out of their misery, but because they want to protect their political and economic interest in Yugoslavia, to expand or consolidate the domains Tito has long ago sold them in return for the credits he has received from them. But if for a period of time it seemed as if Yugoslavia was to gain in this dangerous game, now the time has come for Yugoslavia to put itself up for auction to the imperialists and social-imperialists. A first-class borrower, shaken to its very foundations in all respects, with no clear perspective, without the necessary means and forces to find the road of salvation — such is the present-day Titoite self-administrative Yugoslavia.

We cannot watch without concern this extremely grave and dangerous situation, not only for the fraternal peoples of Yugoslavia, but also for peace and security in the Balkans and beyond the Balkans. We have never wished those peoples ill, on the contrary we have always been for good neighbourly relations with them. In vain Tito, and company accused us — and his present-day successors follow him in this, of creating turbulent situations and interfering in their internal affairs. No, the evil seed is in their midst, they have planted and tended it to grow with their own hands, so let them find it and fight it there where they have it.

Quite the opposite is the case with our country, with our course of the construction of socialism. Consistently applying the Marxist-Leninist principles in the construction and leadership of the entire life of the country, socialist Albania has marched with sure steps ahead, without holding its hand out to anyone. We have come up against many difficulties [633] and obstacles, have grappled with them fearlessly, have been fully aware of and accepted privations and sacrifices, while always, like a thrifty family, going by the principle of building and enjoying what we build, not only for ourselves and just for today but going about it in such a way that our life and that of the new generations become ever better and at the same time, the future, the life of the coming generations, be ever happier, richer and more secure. Our wonderful people have understood the road the Party has shown them, and aware of it, have mobilized all their mental and physical energies to turn the teachings and directives of the Party into reality. Every generation in our country is fighting and working so as to bequeath to the future generations an ever stronger Albania, an Albania permanently free and independent, with a beautiful present and with clear and brilliant perspectives.

So, with the Party at the head, having its Marxist-Leninist line as our guiding compass, we will always go on working vigilantly, further tempering unity, marching ahead, with the Party and people united as one, so as to keep the name of our heroic Party always honoured, to raise the prestige of socialist Albania ever higher, to preserve the sacred independence of our Homeland intact. This has been and remains the lofty mission of our Party of Labour. To this mission, to the good of the people and socialism, we have devoted and will devote all our life, all our forces and energies.

1981-1982



Albaniens Historie

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En oversigt

Artiklen er under udbygning

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De synspunkter der fremsættes i artiklen er mine egne. Hvad Miqësia mener som forening vil være underskrevet af bestyrelsen eller vedtaget på en generalforsamling.

Når artiklen er skrevet som den er, er det fordi jeg mener man bør sige tingene så ærligt som muligt, og fordi det er dét der er til størst gavn for de albanere der stædigt arbejder for modernisere deres samfund.

Evt. kommentarer, korrektioner, spørgsmål og informationer vil være meget velkomne og blive overvejet grundigt.

[BA](#)

INDLEDNING

Albaniens og Danmarks historie er vidt forskellige, og derfor er albanernes og danskernes baggrunde for at indgå i verdenssamfundet også helt forskellige.

Der har ikke i historien været nogen særlig relation mellem Danmark og Albanien [{relationer}](#). De to lande ligger langt fra hinanden, Albanien har været utilgængeligt på mere end én måde - og der har ikke været nogen naturlig anledning til at have med hinanden at gøre.

Det er først i de senere år, dvs. efter Hoxha-styrets sammenbrud, at der *har* været forbindelse af betydning, og det er først på det seneste at det er blevet realistisk at tage på charterferie til Albanien. Albanien opfattes i almindelig som et *anderledes* og eksotisk land, selv om det kun tager få timer at flyve fra Kastrup til Tirana via Budapest eller Wien. Albanien bliver jævnlig brugt som kulisse eller »baggrund«, således i den amerikanske film »*wag the dog*«.

I en forholdsvis kort periode der sluttede ved udgangen af 2003 har Danmark givet *overgangsbistand* til Albanien (størrelsesordenen var 100 mio kr). Vi var involveret i en række

projekter på forskellige områder, demokratiområdet, menneskerettighedsområdet, rets- og politiområdet, medieområdet, undervisningsområdet og sundheds- og socialområdet. Dertil kommer at vi i 1999 har givet katastrofehjælp til flygtninge fra Kosovo.



Fotocollage: Henning Larsens Tegnestue. HLT's projektbeskrivelse kan downloades fra: <http://www.hlt.dk/binfiles/Tirana-mappe.pdf> (7 MB)

Kommercielt samkvem af betydning har der ikke været tale om, men det er ved at komme i stand nu, hvor foretagender som Carlsberg overvejer at »slå sig ned« og foretagender som Rohde Nielsen og Henning Larsens Tegnestue er involveret i større, men tidsbegrænsede projekter.

Den danske indsats var måske ikke så stor i international målestok, men særlig nyttig fordi den blev gjort af et lille land der ikke kunne mistænkes for at have stormagtsinteresser. Noget af indsatsen har givet umiddelbar succes, andre dele af den har større eller mindre vanskeligheder med at udvikle sig eller blot at overleve.

Når man fra dansk side standsede overgangsbistanden med slutningen af 2003 var det så at sige i sagens natur. Man havde fra begyndelsen haft et kortvarigt perspektiv. Om det har været klogt at stoppe kan imidlertid diskuteres.

I øvrigt er det nu - hvor Danmark netop er blevet medlem af FN's Sikkerhedsråd {[FN](#)} og hvor Tyrkiet, Serbien-Montenegro, Makedonien og Albanien ønsker optagelse i EU - af særlig stor betydning at vi fastholder enhver positiv kontakt til Balkan-landene, ikke mindst til Albanien og til Albanien's nabolande. Hvis vi ikke fastholder og udbygger sådanne kontakter, vil det besværliggøre vores deltagelse i løsningen af de mange og tunge problemer der er på dagsordenen, hvoraf ét er meget aktuelt allerede i 2005: Kosovo's fremtid {[DK-i-Kosovo](#)}.

På den ene side er det klart at et land som Danmark har begrænsede ressourcer og at man må bruge de ressourcer man har ud fra klare politiske prioriteringer - og dér hvor nøden er størst.

På den anden side forekommer det selvmodsigende at man sætter aktiviteter i gang og derefter overlader en evt. fortsættelse til EU eller - i visse tilfælde - til Norge. Som en albansk bekendt har udtrykt det: »*Danskerne er mærkelige. De bygger et hus der er halvanden meter højt, hvorefter de giver sig til at bygge huse helt andre steder i Verden*«.

Det er fint at efterlade et hus på halvanden meter, hvis dét vi er dygtige til er at lave fundamenter, og hvis der er nogen til at tage over, primært lokalt, men også internationalt. Men sådan forholder det sig ikke helt i det albanske tilfælde. De albanske samarbejdspartnere (på lokalt niveau eller på institutionsniveau) er *ikke* stærke nok, men må nu bruge en del tid på at rejse penge fra andre donorer. I nogle tilfælde er der andre der kan træde ind i stedet for os, primært Norge på visse særlige områder, men i andre tilfælde vil en »erstatning« være af en helt anden type.

De internationale organisationer og stormagterne er gode til nogle ting, danskerne til helt andre.

Det var givetvis nødvendigt da OSCE's daværende ambassadør, Geert-Hinrich Ahrens, slog i bordet for nogle år siden og forlangte at de to store partier, Socialisterne og Demokraterne, satte sig sammen og løste nogle af de tunge tekniske problemer, således at det parlamentatiske arbejde kunne udvikle sig i en mere konstruktiv retning. Men der var næppe kommet bukser af skindet, hvis ikke også Jørgen Grunnet, der var missionschef for Europarådet i Tirana, havde været på banen og på *sin* måde overbevist parterne om at man ville nå væsentlig længere - med hensyn til en optagelse i EU - ved at samarbejde end ved at strides.

Det er også nødvendigt at nogle af de »store« bliver ved med at insistere på at der skal gøres op med den udbredte korrupsion, at der gribes godt fat for at bekæmpe den organiserede kriminalitet - og at der gøres noget mere alvorligt ved den omfattende trafficking til Grækenland eller over Adriaterhavet til Italien.

Men det er lige så nødvendigt at nogle af de »små« bliver ved med at bistå græsrodder, lokalområder og enkeltinstitutioner med at overleve og videreudvikle sig. Det er overordentlig positivt at Danmark har støttet etableringen af en albansk ombudsmandsinstitution, at vi har støttet moderniseringen af politiet, at vi har støttet dommeruddannelsen, at vi har bistået ved etableringen af en konfliktmæglingsinstitution osv. - men det er *ikke* nok; der skal bruges nogle penge, men frem for alt noget »manpower« til at holde kontakten ved lige og til at udvikle den.

Relationerne mellem Danmark og Albanien bør videreudvikles. Vi kan måske sige at første fase - etableringen af kontakter og gennemførelsen af en serie »forsøgsprojekter« - nu er afsluttet, men så skal vi videre til næste fase, hvor der stabiliseres og arbejdes videre, således at vi engang - om nogle år - kan komme i en situation hvor der er tale om et mere ligeværdigt samarbejde, både i økonomisk og i kulturel henseende.

I dag står Albanien i mange henseender »udenfor«. Man banker på døren til NATO; måske kan man (som Makedonien) blive optaget inden for et forholdsvis overskueligt antal år; den nuværende amerikanske administration lægger tydeligvis op til noget i dén retning og søger at fastholde en positiv kontakt til Tirana.

Man banker på døren til EU, men det har temmelig lange udsigter før en optagelse kan komme på tale. Albanien er ikke langt nok, hverken i politisk eller økonomisk henseende.

Albanien er alt i alt i en vanskelig og skrøbelig situation. Der er for meget der får de kreative elementer til at benytte skæve metoder til at skaffe sig indkomst, for sådan som landet ligger kan energiske folk få langt mere ud af at arbejde inden for den »grå« og »sorte« økonomi end inden for den »hvide«.

Det er langt fra nok at påpege at dén form for trafik er uacceptabel og at kræve at der bliver taget energiske initiativer fra toppen af samfundspyramiden. Der skal også etableres langt bedre muligheder for et økonomisk samarbejde. Hvis kreative albanere ikke kan tjene penge på hæderlig vis - fx ved eksport til andre lande - så gør de noget andet, og det er den almindelige befolkning i Albanien (og for den sags skyld også i Danmark) ikke tjent med.

Bjørn Andersen

Artiklen vil blive suppleret og bearbejdet i løbet af 2005.

Den danske baggrund

Når Danmark i dag er et af Verdens rigeste samfund - og Albaniens et af de fattigere har det sine grunde.

Vi har i Danmark haft vores problemer, både indre og ydre. Blandt de indre var nogle af problemskaberne nogle af kongerne og de ledende statsmænd, blandt de ydre problemskaber var svenskerne, tyskerne og englænderne. Op gennem århundrederne er landet derfor blevet mindre og mindre - men trods mange tilbageslag - og helt paradoksalt - også *rigere og rigere*.

På Holberg's tid havde vi ganske vist tabt Skåne, Halland og Blekinge, men Norge og Island hørte fortsat med til familien, og vi havde større eller mindre besiddelser i Indien (Tranqobar og Nicobarerne), Afrika (Ghana) og Vestindien (St. Croix, St. Thomas og St. Jan).

Slesvig-Holsten hørte frem til 1864 stadig til Danmark {[Slesvig-Holsten](#)}, men i dag er det kun den nordligste del der er dansk. Selv Flensborg valgte i 1920 at høre til Tyskland.

I 1920 kom sindene i kog. Den højre del af samfundet var blevet voldsomt irriteret over grænsedragningen mod Tyskland, og det provokerede kong Christian X til at forsøge et statskup. Kuppet mislykkedes imidlertid fuldstændig; det var tilstrækkeligt at Stauning blot *raslede* med »sablen«. Resultatet af kupforsøget blev at grænsen kom til at ligge fast, og at Kongens betydning blev yderligere reduceret. Indtil da kunne man måske mene at han havde en *vis* politisk rolle, men fra da af var den kun symbolsk.

Den økonomiske, politiske og kulturelle dagsorden er i dag helt forskellig fra dén der gjaldt i 1600-,1700- og 1800-tallene. Danmark har et fortræffeligt samvirke med Sverige, Norge og Tyskland, og grænsen mellem Danmark og disse lande spiller ikke længere nogen afgørende rolle. Skulle der være nogen der i dag ville tale om at vi skal passe på tyskerne, og at det ikke er så længe siden de besatte os, ville de fleste ryste undrende på hovedet, hvis de overhovedet gad interessere sig for det.

Engang levede vi i »*den florissante periode*«. Det var tiden fra 1740 og frem til 1800.

Købmændene tjente penge ved omfattende skibstrafik. Der blev hentet kaffe og krydderier, og man udviklede en indbringende trekantshandel. Man sendte skibe til Afrika for at hente slaver. Så sejlede man slaverne Vestindien for at de kunne blive solgt til de store plantager. Og til sidst sejlede skibene til København med sukker og fyldte pengekister. Traficking er ikke noget der er forbeholdt nutiden.

Op gennem 1800-tallet ændredes samfundet helt fundamentalt. Hoveri og stavsbånd blev afskaffet, og fæstebønderne blev til landmænd og husmænd og endnu senere til industriarbejdere.

Engang efter krigen i 1864, som kostede os en stor del af Sønderjylland, blev oberst Dalgas kendt for sit handlekraftige *bon mot*: »*Hvad udad tabes, skal indad vindes*«. Dette ord blev overskriften på en storstilet indsats hvor heden blev opdyrket og vanskelig jord blev lagt under plov {[Dalgas](#)}.

Samtidig kom der gang i andels- og højskolebevægelsen, og det parlamentariske demokrati blev grundlagt og stabiliseret. I slutningen af 1800-tallet kom der desuden fart i industrien, og der blev grundlagt en arbejderbevægelse der fik stor betydning både i det økonomiske liv og på det politiske plan.

Det danske demokrati er ikke etableret på kort tid, men over en meget lang periode - og med mange tilbageslag.

De sociale forhold var meget forskellige for dem der levede i toppen af samfundet og dem der levede i bunden, så der var adskillige der måtte udenlands for at få en acceptabel tilværelse. Så mange som 300.000 rejste ud i tiden efter 1864 og frem til 1. Verdenskrig, og af dem var der mange der slog sig ned i Amerika. 300.000 var op mod 10 % af befolkningen.

Nogle arbejdere og intellektuelle mente at det økonomiske og politiske system var råddent og måtte kastes omkuld for derefter at blive genopbygget på en ny, socialistisk eller kommunistisk, måde, men langt de fleste mingelerede sig frem, og efterhånden kunne man se at det førende arbejderparti, Socialdemokratiet, og størstedelen af fagbevægelsen lagde sig på en samarbejdsorienteret kurs.

Tiden fra 1' Verdenskrig til kort efter 2' Verdenskrig var en sej periode for mange danskere, selv om vi var forskånet for at være direkte involveret i de store europæiske krige {[Tvangsrekruttering](#)}. Der måtte stoppes strømper og vendes frakker, og skoene blev brugt til de ikke kunne mere. Men det »indre« grundlag for den følgende vækstperiode blev samtidig lagt; demokratiet blev udbygget, uddannelsesniveaulet blev bragt i vejret, de sociale sikringssystemer etableret, og vi stod derfor parat ved samlebånd og i butik da pengene begyndte at rulle. Nogle år efter kunne den socialdemokratiske Viggo Kampmann gå til valg på at ville *gøre gode tider bedre*.

Selv om der under Besættelsen var en modstandsbevægelse, så fik den ikke - trods en ærefuld indsats - den store militære betydning. Betydningen lå på det holdningsmæssige og det politiske plan og gav et grundlag for at Danmark kunne regnes med til de Allierede og til dem der kunne optages i NATO fra *day-one*.

Hvad der er grunden er svært at sige, måske er der flere årsager - men den almindelige

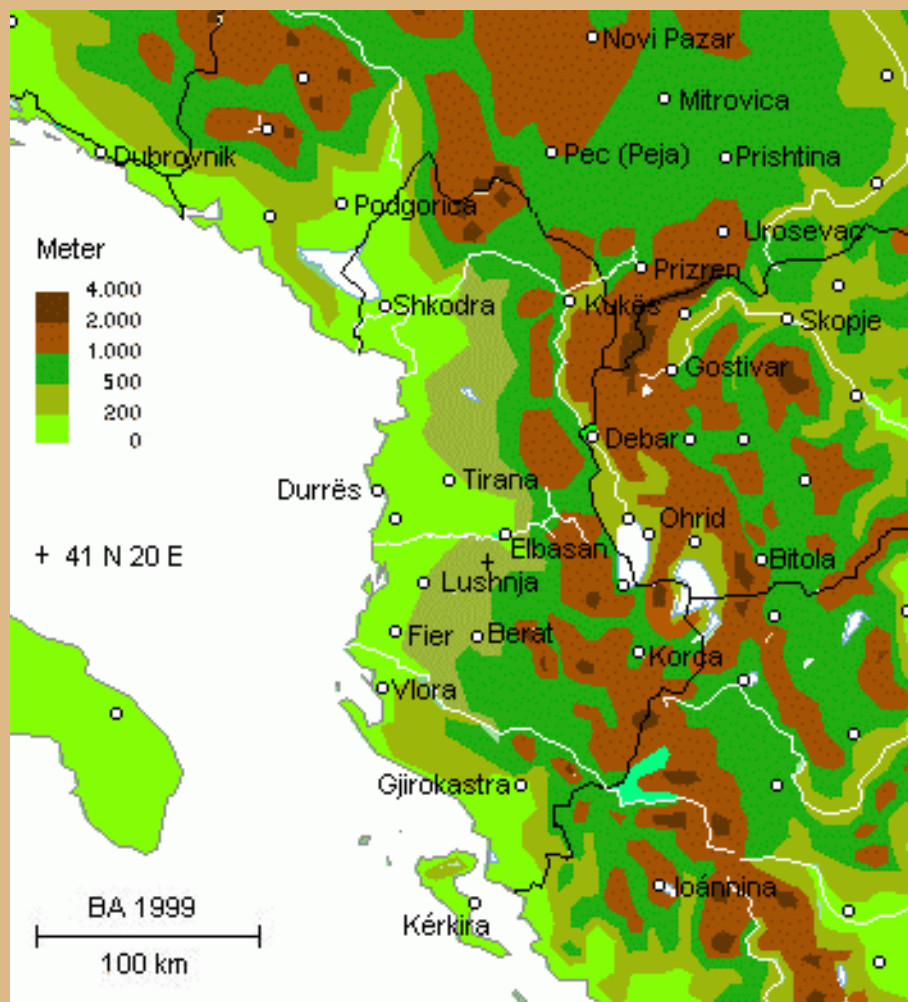
embedsmand på de nordlige himmelstrøg kan ikke beskyldes for korrupsion. Når en dansk politiker eller embedsmand fra tid til anden gribes med fingrene i klejnekassen, så betragtes det som en skrigende og uacceptabel undtagelse som da en Marius i Aalborg ville have et grønt badeværelse eller da en Brixtofte i Farum tilsyneladende drak en stor del af sit Byråd fra sans og samling. Bevæger man sig derimod lidt uden for det offentlige's sfære, så ser tingene anderledes ud. Det er i mange sammenhænge blevet til en indgroet vane at handle »sort«, at købe smuglervarer eller at betale »under bordet«. Nogle typer af den økonomiske kriminalitet accepteres mand-og-mand imellem, andre betragtes som anstødelige.

En almindelig dansker vil ikke finde sig i at en politiker eller embedsmand beriger sig på skatteborgernes bekostning, modtager bestikkelse eller optræder som skrankepave, derimod nok i man selv tilbydes »sorte« ydelser.

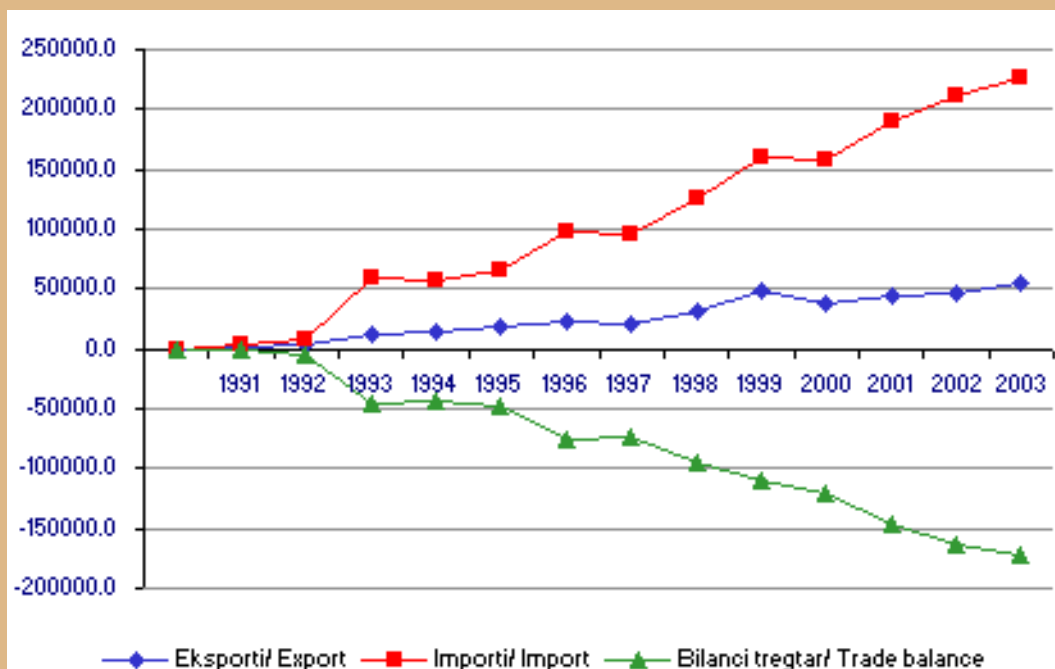
Albanien i dag

Albanien har *på meget kort tid* skullet omstille sig fra at være en marxistisk arbejderstat - der i praksis var et temmelig hårdhændet diktatur hvor der ikke var frihed til at tænke, tale og skrive, til at rejse udenlands eller til at gøre business, og hvor der var styr på alt for mange ting - og til et moderne markedsorienteret demokrati.

De første år efter de første frie valg i 1991 var tumultariske og endte i 1997 med en meget voldsom udladning, nyvalg under NATO-kontrol og udskiftning på alle de politiske topposter på statsniveauet. Præsident Sali Berisha blev erstattet med Rexhep Meidani (og senere med den nuværende Alfred Moisiu), og den demokratiske premierminister med en socialistisk.



Årene siden 1997 har været roligere. Det demokratiske system er ved at blive stabiliseret og »normale« parlamentariske rutiner er ved at blive accepteret, men der er en række tekniske problemer som man har betydelige vanskeligheder med at tackle på en konstruktiv måde. De seneste valg, parlamentsvalget i 2001 og lokalvalgene i 2003, er forløbet tydeligt bedre end de forrige valg, men dog ikke tilfredsstillende. Alle er enige om at gennemførelsen af valget i sommeren 2005 vil få stor betydning for Albaniens internationale anseelse og vil få betydning for de løbende forhandlinger med EU.



Beløb i mio lek. Kilde: Albaniens Statistik

Den officielle albanske økonomi er lille og overordentlig sårbar. Eksporten er minimal og retter sig særligt mod Grækenland og Italien. Importen af varer og elektricitet en hel del større. Betalingsbalanceunderskuddet bliver bl.a. dækket ved at familiemedlemmer der arbejder i udlandet sender penge hjem, men også ved at der stadig tilføres mange midler fra andre lande og internationale organisationer ([Handelsunderskud](#)).

Oliven, grøntsager, ost har en udmærket kvalitet, men har vanskeligheder med at få afsætning på det europæiske marked, fordi man ikke er medlem af EU og fordi man møder voldsom konkurrence fra EU-Middelhavslande og andre lande i regionen der producerer de samme varer.

Ved siden af den officielle økonomi er der en temmelig stor uofficiel ([OECD](#)). En del af denne er givetvis forbundet med eller finansieret af kriminell virksomhed (trafficking, narkotikahandel, smugleri m.v.), mens en anden del er af samme karakter som den »sorte« økonomi i Danmark, hvor det kan formodes at det kun er en begrænset del af den der er forbundet med anden form for kriminalitet.

Og endelig er der i landdistrikterne *en vis naturaløkonomi*, dvs. produktion til eget forbrug og til simpelt varebytte med venner og bekendte.

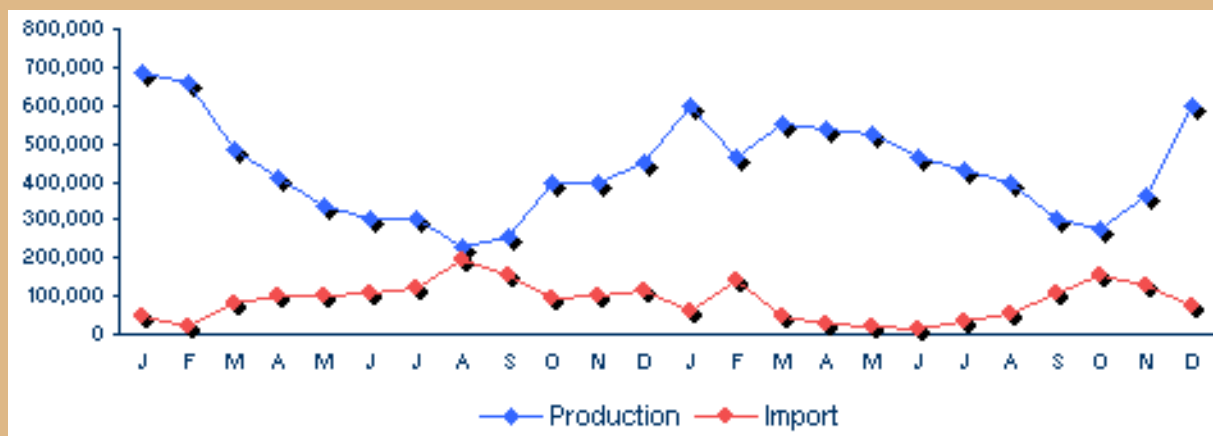
Når albanere gør forretninger med hinanden bruger de »forbindelser«, og det kan give mange problemer hvis man ikke accepterer dette. Det har selv sagt sine fordele at bruge »forbindelser«, for tingene går - i en vis forstand - hurtigere når man kender hinanden i forvejen, men i det grundlæggende er det et meget problematisk »mønster«, eftersom mange ordrer vil gå til foretagender der ikke nødvendigvis arbejder så effektivt eller konkurrencedygtigt som det var ønskeligt; dertil kommer at prisstrukturen også bliver helt forvredet.

Korruptionen er omfattende ([Korruption](#)). Det er svært at sige om den er blevet mindre eller større de sidste år. Det sker med mellemrum at Politimyndighederne skiller sig af med

medarbejdere der har haft hånden for langt fremme, men det er en udbredt opfattelse at man er nødt til at smøre den politimand der stopper én når man kommer kørende; det er ikke engang sikkert at politimanden personligt får så meget ud af det, for det formodes at han skal levere størstedelen videre til sin overordnede. Der er tilsvarende problemer på højere niveau. Det sker fx at selv ordrer der finansieres internationalt på ugennemskelig måde havner hos venner og bekendte. Det har derfor sine vanskeligheder at gennemføre en simpel udbudsforretning som i Danmark.

Under Kosovokrisen i 1999 blev korrupsionen meget synlig for hjælpeorganisationerne. Der kendes talrige eksempler på at man først blev ekspederet når man havde betalt et passende beløb til toldereren. Det gik så vidt og førte til så meget kritik at regeringen i en længere periode erstattede toldererne med militært personel.

»Forbindelses«- og »korrupsionskulturen« passer meget dårligt til de vilkår der gælder i vesteuropæisk sammenhæng, og albanerne vil kun vanskeligt kunne gøre sig gældende på det europæiske marked hvis de ikke skifter stil. Når »forbindelses«- og »korrupsionskulturen« stadig lever, er det fordi albanerne næsten ikke kan leve uden, den er en vigtig del af deres mentalitet. Kunne man fjerne kulturen med et snuptag ville det svare til at man med ét fjernede alle biler fra Tiranas gader. På den ene side ville det være befriende (og løse en stor del af *smog*-problemet), men samtidig ville det sætte det økonomiske liv i stå.



Elproduktion og -forbrug 2003-04. Kilde: Albaniens Statistik

Infrastrukturen er utilstrækkelig eller forældet. Man producerer en hel del elektricitet på store vandkraftværker langs Drin, men mængden er afhængig af hvor meget vand der er til rådighed. Desuden produceres elektricitet på en række mindre værker. I 2004 blev der indgået en aftale med bl.a. Bulgarien om levering af *olie/gas* dérfra.

Vejnettet er i de senere år blevet udbygget - ikke mindst finansieret af internationale midler - og har fået hævet standarden, men der er stadig mange veje der er for små eller meget dårligt vedligeholdt. Dette gælder i særlig grad i fjerne og afsides dele af landet.

Det er i international sammenhæng besluttet at *Korridor 8* skal føres gennem Albanien fra Durrës, via Elbasan til den Makedonske grænse og derfra videre til Varna i Bulgarien. I Albanien følger korridoren på det nærmeste den gamle romervej *Via Egnatia* (se nedenfor) {[Via Egnatia-1](#)}. Jernbane findes i et vist omfang, og der blev for et par år siden etableret forbindelse til

Montenegro, hvilket er af betydning for varetransporter.

Der findes *havne* i Shengjin mod nord, i Durrës »i midten« og Vlora og Saranda mod syd. Visse udbedrings- og udbygningsarbejder er pågået i de senere år. Der går færger mellem Italien og Albanien og mellem Korfu og Albanien.

Der er i de senere år sket en kraftig tilstrømning til byerne, især Tirana, og der er bygget mange huse med og uden behørig tilladelse. I 2004 har man påbegyndt et omfattende byfornyelsesprojekt i Tirana; det ledende arkitektfirma vandt opgaven i en international konkurrence, og i 2005 tager man stilling til flere konkrete projekter. Et af dem - der vedrører et stort byggeri ved Skanderbeg-pladsen - blev i januar 2005 vundet af Henning Larsens Tegnastue A/S.

Flere hundrede tusinde albanere opholder sig permanent eller midlertidigt i udlandet. Nogle er på studieophold i USA, Tyrkiet og forskellige europæiske lande. Mange flere har manuelt arbejde inden for landbrug, industri, håndværk og service - fortrinsvis i Grækenland og Italien, men også i lande længere mod nord som fx Tyskland. Et ukendt antal er på illegalt ophold rundt omkring i Europa - vist nok især i Grækenland og Tyrkiet; nogle af disse har underbetalt arbejde i landbruget eller i servicesektoren, men adskillige lever af prostitution eller tilsvarende. Endelig er der en del albanere (fra Albanien, Kosovo og Makedonien) der lever af mafia-agtige aktiviteter og fx er involveret i narkohandel [{Fast mand}](#).

ALBANIENS HISTORIE

Oldtiden og Middelalderen

Det er en almindelig antagelse i Albanien at albanerne nedstammer fra *Oldtidens illyrere*. Om dem ved man noget, men ikke meget. Der er bevaret enkelte ting fra perioden, som arkæologerne har vendt og drejet, men - mig bekendt - kan man ikke med fuldstændig sikkerhed fastslå forbindelsen [{Illyrerne}](#).

Det illyriske kongerige blev indlemmet i *det romerske imperium* omkring 230 f.Kr., først som protektorat, på Augustus' tid som provinsen *Illyricum*. Den romerske periode varede temmelig længe, ca. 500 år. Der er en del spor fra den tid, nogle er imaterielle (som mange ord i det albanske sprog), nogle er materielle - fx er der rester af *Via Egnatia*, romervejen fra Durrës, forbi Elbasan, via Makedonien og Grækenland til Konstantinopel, det nuværende Istanbul [{Via Egnatia-2}](#).

Efter romertiden fulgte *folkevandringstiden*. Blandt dem der kom til Balkan var *sláverne* (6' årh. efter Kristus) der i 1100-tallet løsrev sig fra det byzantinske kejserrige, etablerede deres egen kirke - den ortodokse - og noget senere, omkring år 1300 etablerede et serbisk rige. Riget holdt ikke særlig længe, men brød sammen af indre og ydre årsager. En skelsættende begivenhed var *Slaget på Solsortesletten* (Kosovo Polje) i sommeren 1389 der stod mellem den serbiske kejser, Lazar, og hans forbundsfæller - hvoriblandt formentlig én eller flere af de albanske fyrster - og Osmanerne med *deres* forbundsfæller, hvoriblandt nogle af de serbiske fyrster

{[Solsortesletten](#)}. Osmannerne havde i 1389 været på Balkan en vis tid, sandsynligvis hidkaldt af ét af de byzantinske partier i Konstantinopel, men satte sig efterhånden grundigt fast og erobrede magten over området.

Tilsyneladende bar *Osmannerne* sig i den første lange tid klogt ad; man skaffede sig allierede, man tillod de lokale herskere at fungere videre, man gav plads for den lokale religion, man brugte økonomiske påvirkningsmidler, men om nødvendigt brugte man også militær magt for at sikre sine interesser og for at nedkæmpe den militære modstand der rejste sig fra tid til anden.

For at sikre sig at vasallerne - nogle af de lokale fyrster - optrådte loyalt benyttede man sig - som det også er set tidligere i historien - af et gidselsystem. Fyrsterne måtte sende familiemedlemmer, typisk nogle af deres børn, til det osmanniske hof hvor de i mange tilfælde blev respekteret og evt. »indoktrineret« og integreret {[Devshirme](#)}.

Skanderbeg {[Sk:beg](#)}

Skanderbeg er én af de mest centrale skikkelser i den albanske historie. Det meste af hvad man ved om Skanderbeg stammer fra en biografi der blev skrevet omkring 40 år efter hans død af den albanskfødte munk eller præst Marinus Barletti (eller Barletius) {[Barletius](#)}.

Engang i midten af 1900-tallet skrev den albansk-amerikanske præst Fan Noli en biografi over Skanderbeg, der bl.a. udmærker sig ved at referere eller optrykke en stor del af det kildemateriale der findes om Skanderbeg {[Noli](#)}.

Skanderbeg hed oprindeligt Gjergj Kastrioti. Han var yngste søn af Djon Kastrioti [John Kastrioti] der var fyrste over et mindre område i den nordlige del af det nuværende Albanien. Skanderbeg havde nogle ældre brødre og også flere søstre. Hvornår Skanderbeg blev født vides ikke præcist, måske var det i 1403, måske var det et par år senere, fx i 1405. Den Albanske Regering »står« på 1405, hvilket betyder at det i 2005 er 600 år siden han blev født.

En fyrste besad et landområde med bønder og hyrder; ofte var fyrsten leder af den mægtigste klan i området. Han var både politisk og militær leder. Fyrsten fik en vis betaling, formentlig især i naturalier, fra bønderne og hyrderne. På Skanderbegs tid blev der taget initiativer til - i de respektive fyrstedømmer - at samordne den mundtlige sædvaneret (Kanún), således i Dukagjin-området. Først på et langt senere tidspunkt blev sædvaneretten skrevet ned.

Skanderbeg's far stod - som de andre albanske prinser - i en vanskelig situation og måtte manøvrere for at opnå så høj en grad af uafhængighed som muligt i forhold til de konkurrerende magter, fx den ungarske Konge, bystaten Venezia, Kongen af Napoli og den osmanniske Sultan i Adrianopel (det nuværende Edirne, senere i Konstantinopel). I en vis periode var hans far vasal af Sultanen - og i konsekvens heraf blev Gjergj tilknyttet Sultanen. Sandsynligvis skete dette først da han var næsten voksen. Det siges om faderen at han skiftede religion efter behov; han skal således have haft en romersk-katolsk periode og en muslimsk, der givetvis var mere »tydelig« end ligefrem åndeligt intens.

Gjerg Kastrioti opholdt sig (muligvis) hos Sultanen i nogle år, blev islamiseret, havde succes og opnåede rang af general (-beg). Hans osmanniske navn - Skanderbeg - betyder ca.: General Alexander. Skanderbeg var, formoder jeg, leder af en albansk hærafdeling der især bestod af let

rytteri og muligvis også af nogle infanterigrupper.

Der er rygter om at Sultanen lod Skanderbeg's brødre dræbe med gift, men dette er sandsynligvis forkert. Fan Noli oplyser at brødrene var i live længe efter et tidspunkt hvor de efter overleveringen skulle være blevet dræbt.

På et tidspunkt sprang Skanderbeg fra; han deserterede - med sine soldater - fra en osmannisk kampagne mod ungarerne og vendte hjem til Albanien, hvor han stillede sig i spidsen for et oprør mod Sultanen. Ved samme lejlighed afsvor han den islamiske tro og blev igen god romersk-katolsk kristen. Man ved ikke præcist hvad årsagen var til at han og hans folk sprang fra; men den vigtigste grund var formentlig at Skanderbeg så en mulighed for at genvinde den selvstændighed som hans far - der var død kort før - tidligere havde haft.

I de følgende år (dvs. fra 1444 og til sin død i 1468) *manøvrerede* Skanderbeg. Han bekæmpede med stor dygtighed de osmanniske hære der blev sendt imod ham, ligesom det lykkedes ham at holde Venezianerne stangen. Det lykkedes ham at etablere en alliance med de andre albanske fyrster, men alliancen blev ikke særlig fasttømret; der var flere tilfælde af alvorlige uoverensstemmelser, og på et senere tidspunkt faldt den på det nærmeste fra hinanden. Nogle af fyrsterne allierede sig med Venezianerne, nogle med Osmanerne.



Foto fra Kruja. Skanderbeg's borg i Kruja er en rekonstruktion.

Én af Skanderbeg's dygtigste generaler, Moses, sprang på et tidspunkt fra, tilsluttede sig Sultanen og gik i krig mod Skanderbeg, men Skanderbeg overvandt ham - og gengav ham hans tidligere position. Moses tjente derefter Skanderbeg i flere år indtil han blev overvundet af Sultanen og henrettet sammen med andre fremstående personer. Det siges at han og de andre blev flået levende.

Én af de dygtigste hærførere som Sultanen sendte imod Skanderbeg var selv Albaner - Balaban Pasha, og i de følgende ca. 4 hundrede år var der adskillige Albanere der var i Osmannisk tjeneste, hvoraf nogle af dem opnåede overoverdentlich høje positioner som storvesirer,

hærførere og guvernører forskellige steder i kejserriget.

For at kunne bevare sin position måtte Skanderbeg finde stærke og formuende magter at alliere sig med. Én af dem var Paven i Rom, en anden Kongen af Napoli, først Alfonso, senere Ferdinand, og sidst men ikke mindst bystaten Venezia.

Med Venezia var det noget op og ned, forholdet til Paven og Kongen af Napoli var derimod mere fast og vedvarende positivt. Alliancen med Kongen af Napoli førte til at Skanderbeg sendte Albanske hjælpetropper til Syditalien for at støtte Kongen i hans magtkampe - og i en periode rejste han selv derover for at sætte sig i spidsen for sine tropper.



Paven sætter sig i spidsen for korstoget på Balkan men det blev ikke til noget da Paven døde.

Skanderbeg var en overmåde dygtig strateg og hærfører. Han vandt de fleste af kampene med Osmannerne, først og fremmest fordi han benyttede sine lette ryttere til lynhurtige overfald, hit-'n-run, både når Osmannerne var på march og når de belejrede Albanske fæstninger. Hans dygtighed gjorde ham frygtet hos Osmannerne (og Venezianerne) og var en væsentlig grund til at Paven (sidst Pius II Piccolomini) ønskede at han skulle være den militære leder af et egentligt

korstog mod Sultanen.

Korstoget kollapsede, dels fordi Paven døde i Ancona, netop da det skulle påbegyndes, dels fordi flere af dem der skulle finansiere korstoget eller stille med tropper og forsyninger var meget modvillige eller negative; dette gjaldt bl.a. venezianerne.

Skanderbeg døde i 1468, og det lykkedes hans kone og søn at holde hans position i nogle år derefter, men til sidst måtte man opgive. Hans efterkommere - og mange andre Albanere - udvandrede, især til Calabrien og Sicilien, hvor der stadig er flere albanske landsbyer.



Rozafat-borgen [Rozafa-borgen; Rozafat Castle] ved Shkodra. Foto: Charlotte Bøgh, 1993.

Rozafat - borgen ved Shkodra

Rozafat er en stor borg der blev bygget engang i Middelalderen på en højt hævet limstensklippe ved Shkodra. Der går et sagn om at der blev muret en kvinde ind under bygningen af borgen fordi bygmestrene ikke kunne hold tand for tunge. Albaniens-forskeren, Dr Robert Elsie, har udgivet en samling albanske folkefortællinger på Engelsk, hvor man også kan finde historien om Rozafat {[Folkefortællinger](#)}. Den begynder således i dansk oversættelse:

En dag kom en gammel mand forbi. *»Jeg ønsker jer held med jert arbejde«*, sagde han til de tre brødre.

»Vi ønsker også dig held Gamle, men det går os ikke godt. Hvad vi bygger om dagen, falder sammen om natten. Véd du hvad man skal gøre for at murene kan blive stående?«.

»Ja, det gør jeg«, svarede den Gamle. *»Men jeg ville begå en synd om jeg fortalte jer det«*.

»Lad os dele din synd, for vi vil bygge borgen«.

Den Gamle tænkte en stund. Så spurgte han: *»Er I gift? Har I alle koner?«*

»Ja - vel er vi gift«, svarede brødrene. »Hver af os har en kone. Fortæl os hvad vi skal gøre«.

»Hvis I virkelig vil bygge borgen, så må hver og én af jer sværge ikke at fortælle jeres koner hvad jeg nu vil fortælle jer«.

Da brødrene havde sværget, sagde den Gamle: »Dén af jeres koner der bringer maden op til jer i morgen, skal I mure ind i borgens mure. Kun på dén måde kan I sikre at murene vil stå - og stå i al evighed«.

Således talte den Gamle - og gik væk.

Shkodra og Rozafat blev hen over midten af 1700-tallet sæde for **Mehmed Bey Bushati**, der opkastede sig som pasha over området. Han, og senere også hans søn - den Sorte Bushati, **Kara Mahmud Bushati** - gjorde sig herrer over Albanien ned til Shukmbini Floden og også over Kosóva. De forsøgte også at erobre Montenegro. I 1778 lykkedes det Osmannerne at få dræbt Mehmed Bey Bushati med gift.

Der var perioder hvor Kara Mahmud Bushati stod på god fod med Osmannerne og bestred høje poster i det osmanniske rige. På et tidspunkt, mens Osmannerne var i krig med østrigerne, fik han tilbud om at blive visir - hvad han afslog. Sultanen fandt det så klogest at foretage et opgør med ham og omdirigerede nogle tropper, der var engageret i krigen med østrigerne, mod ham der retirerede til Rozafat i august 1787. Det lykkedes Kara Mahmud at klare belejringen og at gøre så stærke udfald at Osmannerne blev tvunget til at trække sig tilbage. Kara Mahmud forsøgte at få politisk støtte hos østrigerne, men blev svigtet af dem - og af flere af sine egne der hellere så en forsoning med Konstantinopel, hvad det også kom til i første omgang.

Konflikten brød imidlertid snart ud igen, nogle af Kara Mahmud's forbundsfæller svigtede ham og hans yngste bror flygtede til Konstantinopel. Konflikten drejede sig væsentligst om politisk uafhængighed, selv om der muligvis også var økonomiske aspekter - for Kara Mahmud syntes at være interesseret i at udvide handelen mod vest og at styrke den albanske økonomi, hvad der kunne rejse problemer for dén handel som Konstantinopel kontrollerede. Sultanen sendte igen i 1793 en hær imod ham, men Kara Mahmud gentog kunststykket fra 1787 - forskansede sig i Rozafat, foretog et udfald og jog Osmannerne bort. Senere allierede han sig med franskmændene for i forståelse med dem at undertvinge sig Montenegro. Dette mislykkedes - og Kara Mahmud faldt i baghold og blev dræbt i 1796.

Hans bror, Ibrahim pasha Bushati, efterfulgte ham og kom overens med Osmannerne; han døde i 1810. Bushati'erne gik påny deres egne veje, men blev undertvunget i 1831 af Mehmet Reshid Pasha. Herefter blev pasha-dømmet, pashalik'et, opløst, og vilayet'erne Shkodra og Kosovo blev dannet i dettes sted. Et senere oprør mislykkedes.



Osmannerne byggede - som romerne før dem - mange broer og veje i Albanien. Flere af broerne er bevarede som denne uden for Shkodra. På broen ses bl.a. Lis Jespersen. Foto: Charlotte Bøgh, 1998.

Ali Pasha af Tepelena

Ali Pasha fra Tepelena var en fremtrædende Balkanfyrste i slutningen af 1700-tallet og i den første del af 1800-tallet. Hans eftermæle er blakket. Han havde - som Skanderbeg - været allieret med Osmannerne, men gik sine egne veje så snart det kunne lade sig gøre. Dén uafhængighed han søgte var ikke national, men personlig; han stræbte efter et personligt herredømme og en politisk uafhængighed, og han ville sætte sin magt igennem i Epirus - dvs. den sydlige del af det nuværende Albanien og den nordlige del af Grækenland.

Blandt dem der mødte Ali Pasha var Lord Byron {[Byron](#)}.



Den danske arkæolog **Peter Oluf Brøndsted** besøgte Ali Pasha i 1812 og nedskrev nogle samtaler med ham. Jacob Isager har udgivet dem i 1999 under titlen: »*Interviews with Ali Pacha of Joanina In the Autumn of 1812, with some particulars of Epirus and the Albanians of the present day*«. Aarhus Universitetsforlag beskriver bogen således:

»P.O. Brøndsted (1780-1842) rejste fra 1810 til 1813 i Grækenland, hvor han bl.a. mødte Lord Byron. Et andet interessant bekendtskab, han gjorde, var med den tyrkiske sultans guvernør i Nordvestgrækenland. Denne guvernør, Ali Pacha, var albaner af fødsel, og han udviste stor uafhængighed af sultanen. Han kom til at spille en stor rolle i den græske kamp for uafhængighed og blev henrettet af sultanens soldater i 1822.«

P.O. Brøndsted er bl.a. beskrevet i »*Dansk Biografisk Lexikon*« 1887-1905, bd. III, s. 208 ff (se Runeberg's gengivelse: <http://runeberg.org/dbl/3/0210.html> ff. Om Brøndsteds besøg hos Ali Pasha står der:

»Sidst paa Aaret [1812] var han i Epirus, hvor han tilbragte nogen Tid hos «den genialske Tyran» Ali Pascha af Janina. Han kunde ikke andet end føle Afsky for denne Mands listige og grusomme Regimente og saa tillige i hans Indflydelse den stærkeste Hindring for, at Grækenland kunde vinde Frihed og Selvtændighed; men han mente dog, at hans Despoti i alt Fald var at foretrække for den tyrkiske Regerings, og Alis Personlighed har gjort et stærkt Indtryk paa ham.«

Billedet er et udsnit af Louis Dupré's billede fra 1819.

Johannes Østrup beskrev Ali Pasha således i »*Salmonsens Konversations Leksikon*« (2. udgave, Kbhvn. 1915):

»Ali Pasha, Hersker i Albanien (1741-1822). A., som hørte til en gl. Høvdingeslægt, var ved sin Faders Død 1754 i stor Nød; men den snilde og kraftige Mand, som ikke skyede noget Middel for at vinde Magt og Rigdom, genvandt ikke blot sin Faders Stilling, men udbredte efterhaanden sit Herredømme over hele Albanien og blev Pasha i Janina. Selv blottet for religiøs Tro gjorde han ingen Forskel mellem Kristne og Muhammedanere og undertrykte Albanesernes Fejder og Røverier. 1803 undertvang han Sulioterne, som havde forsvaret sig i fl. Aar med stor Tapperhed. Han traadte i Forbindelse med Franskmændene og udvirkede ved deres Indflydelse i Konstantinopel, at hans Sønner blev Pashaer i Grækenland. Selv udstrakte han sin Magt over Thessalien og det sydlige Makedonien og var i Virkeligheden uafhængig, skønt han betalte Tribut til Sultanen. For ogsaa at befri sig fra denne indlod han sig i Underhandlinger med Grækerne, da de tænkte paa at løsrive sig fra Tyrkernes Herredømme. 1820 sendte Sultanen, som især var begærlig efter A.'s store Skatte, en Hær imod ham; mange Albanesere faldt fra ham, og han maatte indeslutte sig i Janina, hvor han længe forsvarede sig. 1822 lykkedes det endelig Churshid Pasha at faa ham i sin Magt og rydde ham af Vejen. Hans Hoved udstilledes i Seraillet, hans Sønner blev dræbte, hans Døtre solgte.«

På rejse i Albanien i 1800-tallet og den første del af 1900-tallet

I midten af 1800-tallet besøgte den engelske forfatter og maler **Edward Lear** Albanien. Lear er i dag mest bekendt for sine mange *limericks* {[Lear](#)}, men han var også en fremragende tegner og har skrevet mange rejseskildringer der stadig er læseværdige fordi de er uden omsvøb og meget konkrete. Lear kom godt omkring i Albanien; han var både i Shkodra i det nordlige og langs kysten i det sydlige. Han kunne have indlogeret sig hos de lokale dignitarer, men foretrak at bo som en simpel rejsende i det lokale gæstgiveri, en *han*.

Et halvt århundrede senere kom en anden englænder på besøg, **Edith Durham**, som er kendt blandt sociologer og etnografer. Hun rejste lige så primitivt som Edward Lear og skrev bagefter sin berømte bog »*High Albania*« {[Durham](#)} hvor hun fortæller om de lokale skikke, om klanerne og fejderne og om de 'albanske jomfruer', kvinder der levede et liv næsten som mænd. Edith Durham var - på en måde - en 'engelsk jomfru' der gjorde hvad kvinder sjældent kunne på dén tid: Hun rejste omkring kun ledsaget af en fører der ikke altid kendte de steder de skulle besøge, men som kunne sproget. Hun var lige så omhyggelig som Edward Lear med at få noteret detaljerne; undertiden tegnede hun, undertiden fotograferede hun.

Edith Durham havde kristen baggrund og stillede sig derfor - til at begynde med - ret positivt over for landsbypræsterne og de ortodokse klostre i Kosovo. Men efterhånden opdagede hun at serberne optrådte aggressivt og undertrykkende over for albanere og tog tydeligt afstand fra serbiske overgreb.



Den unge Edward Lear - tegnet af Wilhelm Marstrand.



Edith Durham's tegning af en albansk bebyggelse i bjergene. Som man kan ane, kunne man lukke sig inde i tilfælde af angreb, og det kunne være nødvendigt for der var på dén tid mange slægtsfejder og blodhævn (også i dag udkæmpes der slægtsfejder, ligesom der er en del eksempler på hævn drab). [{Fejder}](#). Fotografiet forestiller en albansk dreng fra de nordlige bjerge.

Slægtsfejder, blodhævn og mægling. Sami Bey Frashëri: »Æresordet«

Spørger man en avislæsende dansker om hvad der er karakteristisk ved albanere, vil han tit svare at det er *ballade*. Enten ballade i Kosóva eller ballade i Makedonien. [En almindelig dansker ville ikke sige *Kosóva*, men det serbisk-internationale *Kosovo*].

»Hvor kommer balladen fra?«, kunne man spørge.

»Albanerne. Albanerne er et mærkeligt folkfærd«, kunne svaret lyde. »Albanerne lever med det ene ben i Middelalderen og det andet i nutiden. Den ene dag er de blandet ind i voldsom kriminalitet, den næste er de ved at udkæmpe en slægtsfejde«.

Taler man med nogen der har været i Kosóva, Makedonien og Albanien vil svaret være langt mere nuanceret. Nogle vil fremhæve venligheden og gæstfriheden, andre vil tale om at nutiden findes på små »øer« i et »gammelt hav« - men alle vil bekræfte at **»familie« og »forbindelser« har en helt anden og langt stærkere betydning end her i de nordlige og kølige lande.**

Vil man forsøge sig med »business« i Albanien kommer man ingen steder, hvis man ikke har forbindelser. Bliver man blandet ind i løsningen af militære og politiske konflikter, som fx i Kosóva, opdager man hurtigt at man ikke kommer nogen steder, hvis man ikke får fat i de »rigtige«, dem der har »forbindelser« langt ud i samfundet.

Selv om tingene har ændret sig radikalt i de senere år, er der mange spor af fortiden. Nogle af sporene er meget tydelige som de ortodokse kirker og klostre i Kosova og minareterne i Albanien, Kosóva og Makedonien. Men nogle af sporene er immaterielle og ikke umiddelbart synlige - som slægtsskabsbåndene og familieforholdene. Jo længere man kommer væk fra byerne og jo længere man går tilbage i historien, desto større betydning har disse bånd.

Der er mange problemer med disse bånd, men der er også meget positivt at sige om dem. Familie og slægt har i tidens løb været et socialt, økonomisk og kulturelt sikkerhedsnet - som

imidlertid bedst egnede sig til små samfund i en »gammel« verden der var præget af patriarkalisme, sædvaner og en snæver horisont - og hvor der ikke var nogen stat, endsige en stat der kunne sætte sig igennem og håndhæve en lovgivning der var besluttet i et magtcentrum langt væk fra bjerglandsbyerne.

Forskellene til trods, er der mange ligheder mellem livet på landet i den danske Middelalder og livet i de albanske bjerge helt op til 2' Verdenskrig ... og måske længere endnu.

»Hvor kommer du fra?«, spurgte en albansk bjergbonde for næsten 10 år siden.

Danskeren, han spurgte og som han mødte på vejen uden for landsbyen - det var Mads Lund fra SiD - kunne akkurat så mange ord at han kunne gøre sig forståelig, i det mindste på det sproglige plan: »Fra Danmark. Et land der ligger langt mod nord, hvor der ikke er bjerge - og hvor der kan være både koldt og blæsende«.

»Fra Danmark? Det forstår jeg ikke«, svarede bonden - »jeg mener: hvilken **dal** kommer du fra?«

Det må have været som at se Holberg's komedie »*Erasmus Montanus*« for sig, men som ren virkelighed. Til forklaring må siges at Hoxha-tidens geografi- og historieundervisning ikke var kendt for sin sandfærdighed, og det samme gjaldt mediernes dækning af forholdene i andre lande. {[ML](#)}.

Patriarkalisme, sædvanerne og den snævre horisont gav på én gang styrke og sikkerhed, men er - i nutiden - alvorlige forhindringer for en økonomisk, social og kulturel modernisering og videreudvikling.

Giver man en albaner et job eller en tjans, får man meget mere med. Meget af det er ren fornøjelse - men noget af det er både dyrt og problematisk. Har en albaner fået et job, er det - i vid udstrækning - et livsvilkår for ham (eller hende) at han hjælper slægtninge, venner og bekendte til fadet - eller at han betaler sin gæld til den *patron* der måske har skaffet ham jobbet.

Korruption, altså at man skal betale for helt »usaglige« ydelser, skal - med en albansk optik - ikke altid betragtes som lummer kriminalitet, men undertiden som dén olie der får tingene til at virke. En sådan albansk optik bygger på århundreders sædvane, men må - når man taler om den globale økonomi - betragtes som meget kortsigtet.

Det kan godt være at man får en pålidelig og meget venlig medarbejder hvis man benytter sig af de sædvanlige metoder, men sandsynligheden for at denne pålidelige og venlige medarbejder slet ikke kan sin metiér er meget stor, desto mere naturligvis når det drejer sig om jobs der kræver særlige og moderne faglige kvalifikationer.

Tæt sammenvævet med de tætte familie- og slægtsskabsbånd var **sædvaneretten**. Den var udviklet gennem århundreder i det daglige samkvem og ved mange drøftelser mellem landsbyens ældste. Der er en høj grad af konsistens og logik i denne sædvaneret, men denne logik og konsistens har ikke været der fra en fjern begyndelse, men har formentlig udviklet sig over tid i takt med at man har skullet løse vanskelige problemer gennem lang tids diskussion og overvejelse og ikke mindst gennem inddragning og fortolkning af forskellige fortilfælde.

I nogle henseender er sædvaneretten formentlig blevet mere sofistikeret eller har undergået betydningsfulde ændringer (som da den romersk-katolske kirke begyndte at gøre sig gældende

blandt albanerne), i andre er den ved langt »slid« blevet forenklet og strømlinet.



Shtjefën Gjeçov.

Den albanske sædvaneret, kanún (jf. det ny-danske ord: kánon) udvikledes på forskellig måde i de forskellige dele af Middelalderens og den Nyere Tids Albanien og var i det store og hele en mundtlig tradition. Noget tyder på at der i 1400-tallet blev gjort forskellige forsøg på at samle og »ordne« den, således tales der om en Skanderbeg'sk Kanún og en Dukagjin'sk. Der er ikke vidnesbyrd om at 1400-tallets kanún'er blev skrevet ned, men det er tænkeligt. I slutningen af 1800-tallet og i begyndelsen af 1900-tallet blev der gjort systematiske forsøg på en indsamling, nedskrivning og redigering. Én af de mest ihærdige personer i denne proces var den katolske munk, Shtjefën Gjeçov, der senere faldt i baghold og blev dræbt.

Sædvaneretten var ikke demokratisk i moderne betydning, men byggede ikke desto mindre på **lighedsgroundsætninger** der kan minde om dem man kan spore i middelalderlig dansk sædvaneret (og som på nogle punkter blev videreført i Enevældens *Danske Lov* fra 1683).

En bærende tanke er at **den juridiske agent** ikke er det enkelte individ, for man tænkte slet ikke individualistisk, men den enkelte familie eller slægt, som der påhviler et stort, men altså **kollektivt, ansvar**.

Konflikten kunne vedrøre græsningsrettigheder eller andre ejendomsforhold, men den kunne også vedrøre håndteringen af et ægteskabstilbud, en ophævelse af en trolovelse eller et ægteskabsbrud. Og endelig kunne den vedrøre andre angreb på æren.

Når man i nutiden hører om sådanne konflikter vil man ofte tænke på dem ud fra moderne tankemønstre, der i Danmark er blevet mere og mere individualistiske. Formålet med et dansk ægteskab er jo ikke at etablere eller styrke nogle familiemæssige relationer eller at styrke en særlig økonomisk eller lokalpolitisk »strategi«, men derimod at maksimere den individuelle lykke; tilsvarende gælder ofte når et dansk ægtepar bliver skilt.

Helt anderledes var det i det traditionelle Albanien. Derfor havde eventuelle uoverensstemmelser også en helt anden og meget bredere eller dybere familiemæssig betydning. Blev en trolovet pige vraget - ofte fordi brudgommens familie havde fundet en mere attraktiv mulighed - var det ikke så meget hendes personlige problem, som det var hendes

families problem; undertiden førte sådanne konflikter til at den krænkede familie følte sig tvunget til at sætte sig i **respekt**, eller rettere til at genvinde sin respekt eller **ære**. Dette kunne føre til en langvarig konflikt mellem de involverede familier med mange tab på begge sider.

Familierne ville imidlertid ikke se tabene som individuelle tab, langt mere som familiens eller slægtens kollektive tab. I en vis forstand kunne det være ligegyldigt hvem man dræbte, når blot der ville almindelig accept af at man havde dræbt én af de mulige »kandidater«, dvs. en våbenfør mand.

Udviklede en konflikt sig til en egentlig slægtsfejde, kunne det være overordentlig vanskeligt at standse den. De involverede familier blev nødt til at fortsætte den - dvs. snarest muligt at dræbe én fra modstanderens »parti« når der var blev dræbt én fra det egne »parti« - også hvis der ikke længere var nogen der havde en personlig erindring om den oprindelige konflikt.

En sådan konflikt havde dybe økonomiske og sociale konsekvenser. Våbenføre mænd måtte enten tage deres rolle på sig eller flygte eller gemme sig i en »beskyttet bolig«, typisk i et befæstet tårn. Til gengæld måtte kvinder, børn og tyende tage sig af driften, dvs. af at passe dyr og marker.

Under særlige omstændigheder kunne der indgås en **våbenstilstandsaf tale**, typisk når hele området blev inddraget i en mere omfattende konflikt - et angreb udefra eller tilsvarende.

Der findes tilfælde hvor en konflikt er ebbet ud, men det kan have haft meget alvorlige konsekvenser for dén part der ikke fortsatte konflikten, selv om den kunne. Undlod rette vedkommende at hævne et drab på et medlem af familien eller slægten, betød det at den pågældende - og dennes familie - blev »outcast«, dvs. en person og familie man ikke kunne respektere eller have samkvem med, i det mindst ikke uden samtidig at håne dem.

Der findes også tilfælde hvor en konflikt er blevet bragt til ophør ved brug af en mellemmand, en mægler.

Netop fordi en konflikt kunne have så dybtgående konsekvenser, er det nærliggende at forestille sig at man bestræbte sig for at undgå at sætte nye konflikter i gang. Der er givetvis tilfælde af at konflikter er påbegyndt fordi to »brushaner« har krænket hinanden og fremprovokeret en fejde, men det er nok mere sandsynligt at familiens ældste og mere besindige medlemmer har standset den, før den for alvor kom i gang.

Kom en konflikt på den anden side i gang, gav Kanún de retningslinier man skulle følge, og det er tænkeligt at man i det store og hele fulgte reglerne, i det mindste indtil nyere tid.

Sami Bey Frashëri's stykke - »Æresordet« - er skrevet omkring [1870-1875] og beskriver nogle centrale familietraditioner og sædvaneretlige forhold i Albanien, der dengang var en del af det tyrkiske rige. Et vigtigt tema er modsætningerne mellem godsejeren - og hans folk - og en bjerghyrde og hans familie. Det vigtigste tema er dog kærligheden mellem en fætter og hans kusine, der bliver realiseret trods mange og meget alvorlige forhindringer. Når konflikterne bliver så alvorlige - og får så mange triste konsekvenser - skyldes det at personerne er stærkt påvirket af deres æresopfattelse; det er på den anden side også en konsekvent realisering af denne opfattelse der fører til at stykkets grundlæggende konflikt bliver løst - og ikke fortsættes i en mangeårig slægtsfejde.

Når der i dag udbryder fejder, er det ikke altid fejder af traditionel karakter, men fejder der finder sted i miljøer der er involveret i kriminelle aktiviteter - smugling, trafficking, prostitution, narkotika- og våbenhandel. Her drejer fejderne sig formentlig om »markedsandele« og magt, ikke om familiens og slægtens ære.

I Albanien er der - med dansk og senere norsk bistand - etableret en **institution der forsøger at løse konflikter ved brug af mægling**. Mange af disse konflikter har ikke at gøre med slægtskabsfejder eller blodhævn, men nogle har.

Om slægtsfejder, blodhævn og mægling

Sami Bey Frashëri's skuespil [»Æresordet«](#)

Hvis du vil have et print af skuespillet, kan du hente en PDF-udgave forrest i HTM-filen. PDF-filen fylder 0,6 MB. PDF-filen kan læses af nyere udgaver af Adobe Reader, men det kan anbefales at hente den nyeste Reader (7' udgave); den kan findes via: <http://bjoerna.dk/vaerktoejer.htm#PDF>. Bruger du en tidligere Reader, kommer der muligvis en (betydningsløs) fejlmeddelelse

»*Kanuni i Lekë Dukagjinit / The Code of Lekë Dukagjini*« findes i en albansk-engelsk udgave fra Gjonlekaj Publishing Company, New York, USA, 1989. Den albanske tekst bygger på Shtjefën Gjeçov's materialesamling og er oversat og forsynet med en introduktion af Leonard Fox.

Margaret Hasluck: »*The Unwritten Law in Albania*«, Cambridge University Press, England, 1954.

Bjørn Andersen: »*Albanske Studier*« 1-2, se: <http://bjoerna.dk/albansk-historie/studier-2002.htm>, heri om Edward Lear's og Edith Durham's iagttagelser, om Anne Knudsen's disputats om slægtsfejder på Korsika og om Ismail Kadare's roman »*Ufuldendt april*«.

Hans Henrik Brydensholt: [»Establishing and Assisting Democratic Institutions. The Case of Albania«](#) [1st April 2005. Preliminary edition]

Konfliktmægling: <http://bjoerna.dk/dokumentation/mediation.htm>

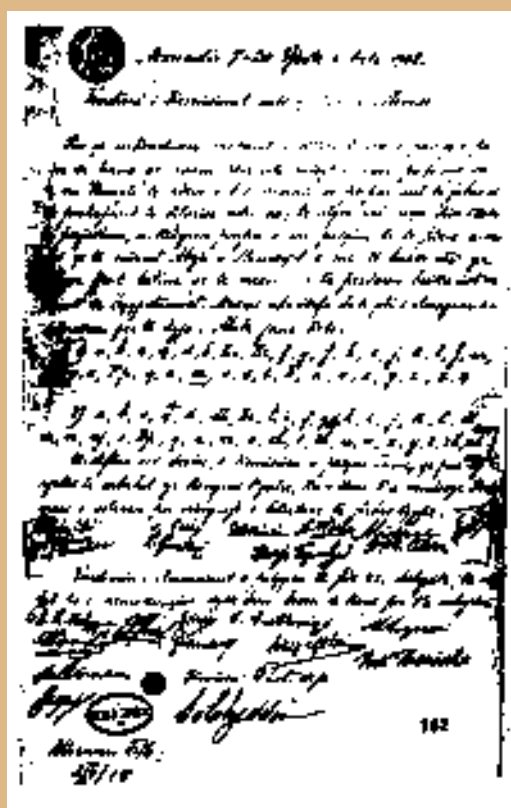
Det Albanske sprog. Et alfabet

Albansk er - i sin kerne - et meget gammelt sprog, og det udgør sin egen gruppe inden for den indoeuropæiske sprogæt. En meget stor del af ordforrådet er hentet fra omliggende sprog - men hvornår og ad hvilke veje der er sket indlån er svært at afgøre, da albansk alene var et talesprog frem til omkring 1900. Der er ganske vist bevaret enkelte albanske tekster fra 1500-tallet og frem, men langt de fleste albanere var analfabeter. De albanere der ikke var analfabeter udtrykte sig gerne på andre sprog som tyrkisk og græsk.

Blandt dem der har forsket i Albansk sprog er de danske sprogforskere Holger Pedersen (1867-1953), Kristian Sandfeld (1873-1942) og Gunnar Svane (f. 1927).

Holger Pedersen besøgte området omkring 1900 og indsamlede materiale. Han udgav digte og folkefortællinger og analyserede nogle sproghistoriske forhold. I 1924 gjorde han status i bogen [»Sprogvidenskaben i det Nittende Aarhundrede. Metoder og Resultater«](#), og heri skrev han:

Er det den samme befolkning, der har boet i landet under alle disse omskiftelser? Er Albaneserne efterkommere av Illyrierne eller av nogle av stammerne i Illyrien (hvad enten så dette navn var udtryk for en folkelig og sproglig enhed eller blot en politisk-geografisk betegnelse)? Det ligger nærmest at svare ja, naturligvis uden derved at udelukke en mer eller mindre væsentlig forskydning av folkegrænsen. Under alle omstændigheder har Albanesernes forfædre i oldtiden boet et sted på Balkan-halvøen, og vi kan kun bestyrkes i formodningen om Albanesernes illyriske herkomst, når vi ser, hvilken mægtig romersk indflydelse deres sprog har været underkastet. Latin må en gang have været dagligt brød for Albaneserne. Deres sprog er fuldt av latinske låneord; de har fra latin lånt ikke blot navne på ny indførte kulturbegreber eller tekniske, juridiske og politiske udtryk, men også ord, der hører til dagliglivets kreds (som 'himmel', 'hundrede', 'kind', 'at komme' o.s.v.). Disse låneord er optagne i en meget gammel tid og har gjort så mange albanesiske lydudviklinger med, at de slet ikke stikker av imod det ægte albanesiske ordforråd, og kun den øvede sprogforsker kan med sikkerhed skelne mellem de latinske og de hjemlige ord. I modsætning hertil har græsk, som det synes, ingen indflydelse udøvet i oldtiden eller i det højeste en ganske ubetydelig. Om Goternes herredømme har albanesiske ikke bevaret noget minde, og de mange låneord fra slavisk, italiensk, nygræsk og tyrkisk har i denne sammenhæng ingen interesse; de stammer fra tider, da man ikke kan nære tvivl om Albanesernes bopæle.



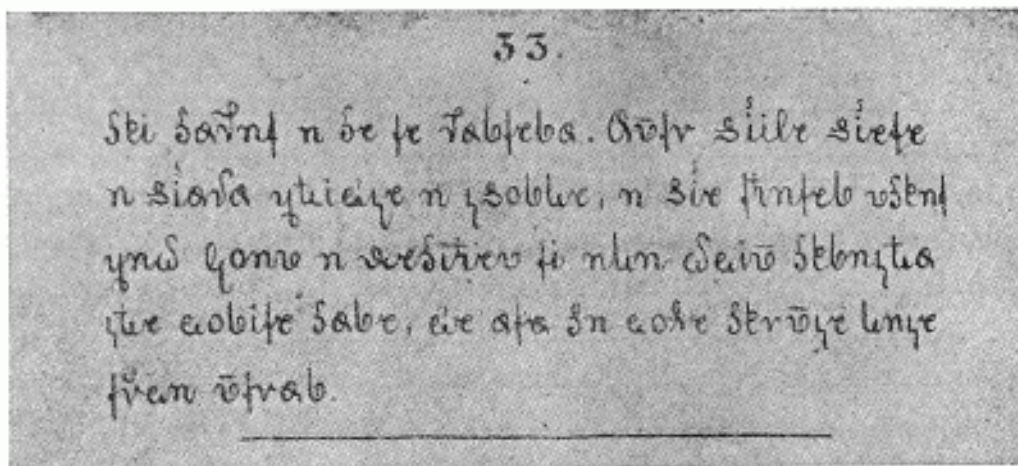
Resolutionen fra mødet i Monastir i 1908 [klik på billedet for at forstørre det]

I slutningen af 1800-tallet blev der taget forskellige initiativer der havde sprogpolitisk betydning. Forfatteren Sami Bey Frashëri - der har skrevet [»Æresordet«](#) - foreslog et nyt alfabet, men det

var ikke helt dét der blev opnået enighed om da en kreds af sproginteresserede mødtes i Monastir i 1908, se nærmere i Holger Pedersen's artikel.

Albanesisk retskrivning.

1) Fra virvarrets tid:



Brudstykke (efter Legrand, Bibliographie albanaise) av en i 1845 udkommen „aldeles ny stavebog“, et av de forsøg, der fra albanesisk side er gjort på at komme ud over stave-nøden ved at lave et helt nyt alfabet (her på nygræsk grundlag). I moderne omskrivning er teksten:

mbi malet e me te lartera. Ashtu gjithë gjete e
 over bjærgene de mest høje. Således alle væsnerne de
gjalla vdiqne e ngordhe, e gjë tjetër s mbet veç
 levende døde og kreperede, og væsen andet ikke blev undtagen
Noes e femijes ti edhe ç kish mbrenda nde korite
 Noah og familie hans og hvad han havde ind i arken
marë, qe ata me kohë mbushnë dhënë tyke shtuar.
 taget, hvilke med tiden opfyldte jorden under formerelse.

2) De to moderne albanesiske retskrivningssystemer.

Sami bejs alfabet.

Cum' e bardë kjo dite
 Per gjidë Cqipetaret,
 Do na sjellë nje drite,
 Qe s' e kishin te parët.
 Kjo drite do na bjere
 Te gjidha miresite,
 Be gjidë dot' i ngrerë
 Demet' e marrezite.

Det latinske alfabet.

Shum' e bardhë kjo dite
 Per gjithë Shqipetaret,
 Do na sjellë nje drite,
 Qe s'e kishin te parët.
 Kjo drite do na bjere
 Te gjitha miresite,
 Dhe gjithë dot' i ngrerë
 Demet' e marrezite.

Meget lykkelig (er) denne dag

for alle Albanesere,

(den) vil bringe os et lys,

som de tidligere (slægter) ikke havde.

Dette lys vil bringe os

alle velsignelser,

og (det) vil oprette alle

og (det) vil oprette alle
brøst og dårskaber.

Illustration fra Holger Pedersen's bog (1924). Som det kan ses ligger det valgte alfabet tættere på det latinske alfabet end Sami Bey Frashëri's.

α

Det osmanniske riges undergang

Når man læser Edward Lear's og Edith Durham's beskrivelser står det klart at »den almindelige albaner« og hans familie levede et traditionsrigt - og traditionsbundet - liv. Flertallet af albanerne var muslimer, men mod nord var der en del katolikker og mod syd en del ortodokse, men det ændrede ikke grundlæggende ved forholdene - nuancerede dem kun.

Den enkelte - og familien - stod ikke alene. Albaneren og familien var en del af en større helhed, landsbyen og klanen. I nogle områder var der stormænd, der optrådte som godsejere og som udpinte bønderne, i andre - fjernere - områder var det snarere de ældste der havde det afgørende ord.

Men der var albanere der efterhånden kom til at leve et andet liv, nemlig de der boede i byerne, ikke kun i det nuværende Albanien, Kosova {[Kosova](#)} og Makedonien, men også i de store byer andre steder i det osmanniske rige, fx i Istanbul eller Thessaloniki. Der er - i historiens løb - mange albanere der har fået uddannelse eller opnået høje positioner rundt omkring i det store rige.

Der var en del af disse »udlandsalbanere« der blev grebet af de nationale strømninger der udviklede sig i 1800-tallet og som blev en del af frigørelsesprocessen. Men den nationale frigørelsesproces begyndte meget sent i Albanien - sammenlignet med Grækenland og Serbien - og man kan konstatere at mens der udviklede sig en stærk frigørelsesbevægelse dér, var det slet ikke tilfældet i hverken Kosovo eller Albanien.

Det kan der være flere grunde til, men den mest fundamentale var formentlig at de albanske klaner - når alt kom til alt - ikke mente der var andre måder at leve på end den traditionelle. Der var oprør, ikke så meget mod det osmanniske styre som sådan - endsige mod Sultanen i Istanbul - men mod specifikke overgreb, en for hård skatteudskrivning, en for hårdhændet udskrivning af soldater, en groft undertrykkende provinsguvernør.

Den tyrkisk-russiske krig 1877-78 gav stødet til at albanske nationalister dannede **Prizren-ligaen** som oprindeligt stræbte efter at fastholde de albanske områder som en enhed inden for det osmanniske rige. Berliner kongressen - der skulle tage stilling til grænsedragningen efter krigen - førte til et selvstændigt Bulgarien, til en østrigsk besættelse af Bosnien-Hercegovina og til en fuldstændig løsrivelse af Serbien og Montenegro, men ikke til ændringer for albanerne.

Prizren-ligaen blev opløst af det osmanniske styre i 1881, da det fandt at dens formål ikke var i overensstemmelse med dets interesser, og flere af lederne blev fængslet. Nogle år efter blev ligaen dog genoplivet, og den nationale selvstændighedsbevægelse udviklede sig. Nogle gik siden sammen med ungtyrkerne der væltede det osmanniske rige i 1908 og lagde grunden til en reorganiseret og revitaliseret tyrkisk stat.



Serbiske tropper har fanget albanere - *arnauter* - i Makedonien. Billede fra én af Fritz Magnussen's reportager.

Den danske journalist **Franz von Jessen** rejste på Balkan, bl.a. i Albanien, Makedonien og Serbien, i første del af 1900-tallet, og oplevede på tæt hold både hvordan man levede det daglige liv, og hvordan Balkan-krigene hærgede, og hans kollega, forfatteren **Fritz Magnussen** fulgte den serbiske hær ind i Makedonien i 1912 [{Magnussen}](#).

Serberne måtte på et tidspunkt flygte til kysten og ned til Korfu og kunne konstatere at de - da de passerede det nordalbanske område - på ingen måde var vellidte, tværtimod blev de udsat for mange angreb og plyndringsforsøg fra lokale guerillagrupper og forskellige irregulære enheder.



Republikken udråbes af Ismail Qemal (Qemal Pasha) i Vlora 28.11.1912. Det viste sig snart at der ikke var enighed om hvad albanerne ville, Esad Pasha Toptani i Shkodra og klanlederne i de nordlige områder ville ét, Ismail Qemal og godsejerne mod syd noget andet - og i en periode var der derfor to regeringer der stredes om magten.

Eftersom serberne stod på sejrherrenes side i 1' Verdenskrig blev der - i fredsforhandlingerne - lyttet relativt meget til de serbiske synspunkter, og det var grunden til at **Kosova blev tillagt Serbien**, og at der ikke blev oprettet en forenet og større albansk stat efter krigen, men en mindre - og det endda kun fordi den amerikanske præsident, Wilson, insisterede på at der *skulle* oprettes en særlig albansk stat. Kosova havde været et selvstændigt guvernørrområde i det osmanniske rige, et *villayet*, men der havde været en vis trafik over bjergene mellem det nuværende Albanien og Kosova - og også sydover mellem Kosova og det nuværende Makedonien.



Blandt dem der var kommet til Vlora i november 1912 var den kosova albanske Isa Boletin, der ses i forgrunden.

Mellemløstiden

Tiden efter 1' Verdenskrig blev en overordentlig vanskelig periode. De nye stat stod på skrøbelig og usikker grund. Der var stærke politiske kræfter som holdt hinanden i skak i adskillige år, og der var betydelig uro, fx. nåede man i december 1921 at have 4 forskellige regeringer. Men en national kongres i Lushnja i januar 1920 havde dog skabt grundlag for at der overhovedet kunne dannes en regering og for at Albanien kunne blive medlem af Folkeforbundet.

Foruden de indre modsætninger var der et betydeligt pres fra de omliggende lande: Grækenland og Italien rejste begge territoriale krav på Albanien - og var endda nået til en vis gensidig forståelse herom som blev formuleret i en aftale - der blev støttet af englænderne - men som gik i vasken på grund af et amerikansk veto. Italien ønskede Vlora som en slags brohoved til Balkan og havde fra 1' Verdenskrig et militært korps stående her. Grækenland ønskede at realisere et gammelt ønske om at lægge Korça og Gjirokastra til det græske Epirus. Montenegro krævede desuden rum i det nordlige - inkl. Shkodra - og Serbien ville have sin del, skønt man allerede var blevet tilgodeset med at få tillagt Kosova.

Én af dem der fortsat søgte at trække i trådene og at skaffe sig indflydelse - muligvis i alliance med Serbien - var Esad Pasha Toptani, som imidlertid blev sat ud af spillet da studenten Avni Rustemi dræbte ham ved et attentat i Paris i sommeren 1920.

Dén person der kom til at spille den største politiske rolle i tiden frem til 2' Verdenskrig var **Ahmet Zogu** [Ahmet Zogolli] fra Mat-området. Han var allerede som ung blevet klanleder, og det lykkedes ham i de følgende år at manøvrere sig frem til en dominerende position - skønt han en kort tid var blevet udspillet af en socialistisk orienteret regering under ledelse af Fan Noli {[Noli](#)}. Med en solid magtbasis i Mat-området som baggrund - og muligvis støttet af serberne - lykkedes det ham at erobre magten og at vælte Noli's regering. Han blev først premierminister, senere præsident og til sidst udråbte han sig selv som konge under navnet Zog I.



Kong Zog.

Zog forsøgte at sætte en økonomisk udvikling i gang, men måtte indse at det forudsatte betydelig støtte udefra. For ikke at blive for afhængig af serberne, vendte han sig mod italienerne der etablerede virksomheder og også samarbejdede med albanerne om en udvikling af militæret. Han vidste uden tvivl at italienerne havde deres egne interesser at tage hensyn til, og at de ikke involverede sig for »deres brune øjnes skyld« - men fandt det ikke desto mindre nødvendigt at entrere til dén side.

Italienerne *havde* deres egne interesser at varetage. Stod det ikke klart før, blev det meget synligt i Påsken 1939 hvor Mussolini's tropper invaderede Albanien og besatte alle centrale steder - mens kong Zog flygtede til udlandet. I betragtning af at albanerne både før og siden har været i stand til at holde besættelsestropper stangen, kan det undre at *denne* okkupation forløb så forholdsvis enkelt. Det var der imidlertid flere grunde til. Der var nogle albanere der ønskede at blive en del af et stærkt Italien, det gjaldt givetvis en stor del af det albanske officerskorps.

Ikke alle var imidlertid tilfredse, og nogle af disse organiserede sig politisk og militært. Da Mussolini's stat brød sammen førte det til at de italienske tropper trak sig ud, men de blev straks efterfulgt af tyske. For så vidt gentog billedet sig, eftersom *nogle* albanere fandt det klogest eller i bedst overensstemmelse med deres egne interesser at samarbejde med tyskerne, men den politiske og militære modstand voksede imidlertid, og selv om det var svært lykkedes det at etablere en forenet front af kommunister og nationale kræfter der - med støtte fra jugoslaviske kommunister (og i nogen grad også med amerikansk og engelsk militær rådgivning) - kunne jage de tyske tropper ud af Albanien.

Den bedst organiserede og den mest beslutsomme del af modstandsbevægelsen var givetvis det albanske kommunistparti, som derfor fik meget stor indflydelse på den politiske dagsorden efter afslutningen af krigen. 11.1.1946 udråbte modstandsbevægelsen en ny uafhængig socialistisk republik. Når englænderne og amerikanerne affandt sig hermed var det fordi Albanien ikke betød så meget for dem i strategisk henseende, og fordi man lagde meget større vægt på og mange flere ressourcer ind på at skaffe sig kontrol over udviklingen i Grækenland og Italien.



Én af Hoxha-tidens utallige bunkere. Her på begravelsespladsen i udkanten af Tirana engang i november 2003. Meningen var at man skulle kunne forsvare sig i tilfælde af angreb udefra, og mange af bunkerne lå derfor sådan at man kunne bestryge et vigtigt område foran eller neden for bunkerne med maskingeværer eller geværer. Af tilsvarende grund blev der opmagasineret store mængder af lettere våben i depoter rundt omkring i landet. Tekst og foto: Bjørn Andersen, 2003.

Albanien under Hoxha. Gentagne udskiftninger af »patroner«

I den første tid efter krigen var det på tale at Albanien skulle indgå som republik i det nye **Jugoslavien**. Mange af de ledende jugoslaver fandt det mest hensigtsmæssigt, og mange albanere mente at det var en nødvendighed for at sikre Albanien både militært, økonomisk og politisk.

Men da der i 1948 opstod et skisma mellem Sovjetunionen og Jugoslavien, mellem Stalin og Tito, måtte albanerne vælge side. Nogle albanere - med én af de fremtrædende kommunistiske ledere, Koçi Xoxe, i spidsen - foretrak en »jugoslavisk« løsning, mens andre med Enver Hoxha og Mehmet Shehu i spidsen - foretrak en »sovjetrussisk« løsning og de var stærke nok til at sætte netop dén løsning igennem og til at eliminere Xoxe-fløjen, hvilket ikke kun skete politisk, men også fysisk. Koçi Xoxe blev fængslet og henrettet meget kort efter.

CIA har givet adgang til visse dokumenter om forholdene i Albanien og Kosovo (Kosova) fra tiden efter 2' Verdenskrig og frem til 1990'erne. <http://miqesia.dk/erfaring/CIA-1952-10-20.pdf> er et eksempel på et sådant dokument. Heri drøftes forholdet mellem Jugoslavien og Albanien. Kunne Jugoslavien erobre Albanien hvis man ville? Var det klogere at lade være med at forsøge? Som man kan se af dokumentet er der mange »hvide pletter«, dvs. passager som man endnu ikke ønsker at frigive, skønt Østblokken er faldet sammen for en del år siden, og skønt ingen af de nævnte lande (Albanien, Jugoslavien, Grækenland og Italien) er hvad de dengang var. I indledningen bemærkes at de hidtidige forsøg på at vælte Hoxha-regimet ikke er lykkedes, for emigrant-enhederne har været for svage og den albanske sikkerhedstjeneste for stærk. Længere nede i rapporten finder man følgende bemærkelsesværdige passager:

»The Yugoslavs could overthrow the Hoxha regime if they utilized their own forces of large numbers of Kosovars (an Albanian minority in Yugoslavia) for operations in Albania.

[...]

However, the Yugoslav leaders probably estimate that identifiable intervention would adversely affect their present favorable relations with the Western Powers, would complicate Yugoslavia's relations with her non-Communist neighbors, and might provoke Soviet or Satellite retaliation.«

De følgende år blev Albanien omorganiseret i forståelse med **Sovjetunionen**. Der blev oprettet kooperative brug og statslandbrug. Der blev etableret industrivirksomheder og der blev etableret et nyt sundheds- og uddannelsessystem. Også militæret og politiet blev udbygget - og i løbet af forholdsvis få år stod det klart at kommunisterne sad stærkt på magten og at politisk og kulturel opposition ikke kunne accepteres. I dén tid var mange albanere på studieophold i østlandene, bl. a. i Moskva, og det albanske militær blev stærkt påvirket af sovjetrussiske militære doktriner. Man fik fly, kampvogne og ubåde fra Sovjetunionen og der blev etableret en ubådsbase i Vlora, hvilket gav Sovjetunionen mulighed for at være tilstede på en anden måde end ellers i både Adriaterhavet og Middelhavet.

Da man i Sovjetunionen påbegyndte opgøret med stalinismen omkring midten af 1950'erne, blev de albanske kommunister meget betænkelige. Om det - som de selv hævdede - skyldtes principielle politiske uoverensstemmelser eller om der også var andre bagtanker, kan være

svært at vide, men i begyndelsen af 1960'erne svingede kommunisterne væk fra Khrusjtjov, som man fandt var ved at indordne sig under USA, og over mod formand Mao Zedong i **Kina**.



Socialrealistiske vinkler? I november 1960 kom det til et kraftigt ideologisk opgør på et internationalt kommunistmøde i Moskva; det var omtrent på dette tidspunkt at albanerne forlod den sovjetrussiske linie og - for en tid - allierede sig med kineserne. På dette albanske maleri - af Guri Madhi - er det »antydnet« hvem der er venner og fjender. Khrusjtjov tager sig febrilsk til kravetøjet for at få luft, kineserne sidder roligt eftertænksomme, mens Enver Hoxha læser og påskriver. Khrusjtjov skrev: »[Da] vi begyndte at tage skridt imod en normalisering af forholdet til Jugoslavien [i 1954], var Albaniens holdning skadelig for os. Det albanske kommunistparti tog vores initiativ meget ilde op og hævdede, at man ikke kunne stole på jugoslaverne, og at de ikke var rigtige kommunister. Alt dette blev sagt nedladende, meget ondskabsfuldt og hadefuldt. Sådan var Enver Hoxha, han talte med stor heftighed, fortrak ansigtet og skar tænder. Albanien blev til sidst tvunget til at acceptere vore synspunkter. De havde intet valg. Vi så på Albaniens holdning i denne sag, som en storebror ser på en lillebror. Vi følte, at selvom de ikke forstod det nu, så ville de blive voksne en dag og forstå«. Nikita Khrusjtjov: »*Uofficielle erindringer*«, Munksgaard, København 1991, s. 136.

Khrusjtjov og den øvrige sovjetrussiske ledelse blev voldsomt irriterede på albanerne og iværksatte forskellige former for repressalier på det økonomiske område, så efter ganske kort tid var det indlysende at der ikke var nogen vej tilbage. Man måtte alliere sig tættere med kineserne - der i en vis forstand var behageligt langt væk, men som samtidig var rede til - i et vist omfang - at træde ind i stedet for russerne på det økonomiske område. Man støttede opbygningen af store vandkraftværker langs Drin i Nordalbanien, man etablerede en traktorfabrik i Tirana og man bistod med en videreudvikling af det albanske militær.

Alliancen mellem det store Kina og »det lille fyrtårn« i Europa - som mange betragtede Albanien som - varede kun omkring 15 år. I midten af 1970'erne krakelerede forholdet. Igen var grunden - ifølge den officielle albanske udlægning - at den store i parforholdet af strategiske grunde slog ind på en alt for USA-venlig kurs.



Under morbærtræet. Der blev taget mange billeder af Enver Hoxha. Hvert havde sit formål. Dette formentlig at vise at han var i god overensstemmelse med den ældre - og traditionelt levende - del af befolkningen.

Hver gang der skete et brud, først med jugoslaverne, så med russerne, så med kineserne, førte det til hurtige udrensninger i det albanske magtapparat. Hver gang var der nogle der blev fængslet - og adskillige blev henrettet, både i den politiske og i den militære ledelse.

Det er meget tænkeligt at denne fremgangsmåde - hvor logisk og machiavellisk den end var - samtidig førte til at mange albanere lærte at det var bedst at holde kæft og ikke at vise initiativ, hverken i politisk eller anden henseende.



Man gjorde meget på landbrugsområdet. Der blev dyrket hvede og majs, solsikker, tobak, oliven og æbler - ofte på terrasser og undertiden på meget vanskelige jorder. Der blev anlagt kunstvandingssystemer og der blev produceret traktorer. Frem for alt blev der lagt planer; på landbrugsområdet havde man store vanskeligheder med at nå de af og til temmelig optimistiske mål - og derfor faldt der ofte brænde ned over dem der var ansvarlige - eller *gjort* ansvarlige. I »den russiske periode« forestillede Khrusjtjov sig at Albanien skulle koncentrere sig om at producere korn og og forskellige andre landbrugsvarer til Sovjetunionen og andre lande i Comecon. Fotos: Bjørn Andersen, 1976.





Årene fra midten af 1970'erne og frem blev særligt vanskelige. Der var ikke længere en »rig onkel« der kunne holde hånden over Albanien eller støtte økonomisk. Man stod *fuldkommen* alene.



Et lille privat marked. »Det er da ikke noget at fotografere«, sagde tolken. »Det er jo kun nogle tomater og så'en«. Foto: Bjørn Andersen, 1976.

Hoxha-styret havde nok altid haft symptomer på **paranoia**, men i denne periode blev det særlig udtalt - hvad enten denne paranoia var skuespil eller ej. Et kendt eksempel herpå var da én af de virkeligt »tunge drenge«, Hoxha's nære allierede fra krigens tid og gennem alle de senere omskiftelser og omsving, premierminister **Mehmet Shehu** døde i december 1981. Hoxha-styret forklarede at han havde begået selvmord efter at være blevet afsløret som tredobbelt hemmelig

agent; blandt hans »virkelige arbejdsgivere« skulle have været så forskellige »størrelser« som Sovjetunionen, Jugoslavien og USA {[Shehu](#)}.

Sandheden var sandsynligvis helt anderledes. Shehu var *formentlig* nået til en opfattelse af at det var nødvendigt at skifte kurs, hvis ellers Albanien skulle udvikle sig økonomisk og socialt {[Formodning](#)}. Hans opfattelse var dermed i klar modstrid med de interesser som Enver Hoxha og kredsen omkring ham havde og med dén politik som de ønskede ført. Da det var tænkeligt at der var adskillige der tænkte som Shehu, fandt man det nødvendigt at dræbe ham selv, desuden at sværte ham til, at udrense flere af hans familiemedlemmer og bekendte, at henrette to af dem - og endda også at skjule hans lig. Det er først i de allerseneste år at hans søn har lokaliseret dét sted hvor han var blevet begravet.



Fem af en bunkers tilstandsformer: En forelsket mands gave til sin kone. Mål, prøvesten og beskyttelsesrum. Kirke efter diktaturets sammenbrud.

Klip fra Kujtim Çashku's film »*Kolonel Bunker*«.

Filmen »*Kolonel Bunker*«

Kujtim Çashku fortalte i 1996 den sælsomme historie om Muro Neto, der var oberst i den albanske hær. Lige før sin udnævnelse til general blev han gjort »vingeløs«, for det var déngang at alle militære grader og gradstegn blev fjernet. Nok skulle der stå officerer i spidsen for soldaterne, men de skulle ikke rage så meget ovenud at de kunne blive en trussel mod den øverste ledelse, og de måtte aldrig glemme at de var under stram politisk kommando. Ville de anfægte ledelsen var det med livet som indsats.

Obersten fik til opgave at lede bygningen af de 700.000 små og større betonbunkere der kom til at pryde det albanske landskab - og som betød at bygningen af boliger måtte udskydes. Han skulle tilmed sidde i én af disse bunkers, mens artilleriet skød mod ham, for at man kunne sikre sig at han kunne holde til dét han skulle, og at både han og bunkeren var støbt homogent.

Kunne man ikke bestå de prøver man blev underkastet, blev der foretaget kontant afregning på stedet.

Det er ét af filmens vigtigste temaer at albanerne måtte undertrykke deres følelser og virkelige synspunkter. Selv en så betroet kadre som oberst Bunker måtte rulle sig ind i bedeforhæng når han skulle tale fortroligt med sin kone, Ana - polsk pianist med chopinsk anslag.

Oberstens dobbeltliv blev afsløret; han blev endnu engang forpuppet - nu ikke i et uskyldigt forhæng, men i en kiste - og efter at være blevet gjort mør hér blev han indrulleret som arbejder i ét af Hoxha's minefængsler. Hvordan der var dér kan man læse i John Frølich's artikler om Fatos Lubonja {[Lubonja](#)}; de var fuldt på højde med hvad Stalin tidligere havde leveret.

Çashku's film er et grundigt og godt komponeret arbejde. Dens blanding af realisme og surrealisme symboliserer Hoxha-styrets paranoide karakter og viser at man ikke kunne leve et virkeligt liv hverken som overflademenneske eller som puppe. Albanernes vigtigste fjende déngang var ikke Jugoslaverne eller Italiere, men Hoxha-styrets mafiaagtige ledelse {[Kolonel Bunker](#)}.

Social kontrol. *Fletë rrufe*





Hoxha-styret brugte mange forskellige metoder til at kontrollere samfundet og borgerne. Var der nogen der skejdede ud, var én af metoderne at hænge dem ud på en *flete rrufë*, dvs på en plakat. Her er et eksempel fra Korça 1976. Plakaten hang bag en butiksrude - og der var lignende eksempler andetsteds i byen:

Partiet og kammerat Enver har sagt at spil er et negativt fænomen der ikke hører hjemme under socialismen. Men Kiço Avushka og Skender Furxhi har ikke kunnet styre sig; de har forladt deres arbejde i landbrugssektoren for at spille. Ikke alene har de opført sig dårligt, de har også påvirket andre unge mennesker. Måske har de ansvarlige ikke vist sig deres ansvar voksne? Har de ansvarlige kun interesseret sig for det rent tekniske og glemt deres moralske og politiske ansvar? Plakaten var underskrevet af 'Gruppen for Social Kontrol med Ungdommen'. Foto: Bjørn Andersen, 1976. Tak til Elmira Alija for hjælp til oversættelsen.

Tiden umiddelbart efter Hoxha 's død i 1985



»Pyramiden« i Tirana's centrum, lige ved Lana-floden og vis-a-vis den nye katolske katedral. »Pyramiden« blev oprindelig bygget som mausoleum og museum for Enver Hoxha, hans bunker *post mortem*. I dag bruges bygningen af forskellige medieforetagender, bl.a. TV-stationen *top-channel* - og desuden holdes der mange udstillinger dér, Hoxha selv er flyttet til en almindelig gravplads i udkanten af Tirana. »Pyramiden« blev tegnet af en gruppe arkitekter under ledelse af Hoxha's datter, Pranvera Hoxha, og hendes mand, Klement Koraneci. Pyramiden kan opfattes som et symbol på det stærke og stive kommunistiske hierarki i Hoxha-tiden der imidlertid krakelerede og faldt sammen - men tillige som et symbol på Berisha-tidens pyramideforetagender der også kollapsede, hvilket førte til at mange naive småsparere mistede deres midler. Foto: Bjørn Andersen, november 2003.

I 1985 var der et udvalg i Europa-Parlamentet der udarbejdede en betænkning om forholdet til Albanien {[1985-betænkning](#), som [PDF](#)}. Man anbefalede at man forholdt sig positivt til et øget handelsmæssigt samarbejde med Albanien, selv om - eller måske netop *fordi* - det albanske samfund havde en helt anden karakter end de vestlige samfund. I betænkningen gives et kort rids over den albanske historie siden 2' Verdenskrig, og et sted gav man følgende sammenfattende karakteristik, der - så vidt jeg kan vurdere - er meget rammende:

»Albaniens temmelig stormfulde brud med de efter hinanden følgende beskyttere og de ideologiske grunde, der fremførtes herfor, eller af den yderst strenge opfattelse af national uafhængighed, som blev gjort gældende, gjorde stort indtryk på offentligheden og de internationale observatører. Det er sandt, at hver beskytter blev afløst af en anden, fjernere og derfor ufarligere, eller i hvert fald mindre farlig. Den virkelige grund til omlægningerne af Albaniens udenrigspolitik bør nok søges i de albanske lederes beslutning om ikke at tillade, at deres magt blev bragt i fare af en eller anden ny politisk linje, fastlagt af lederne i beskytterlandet.«



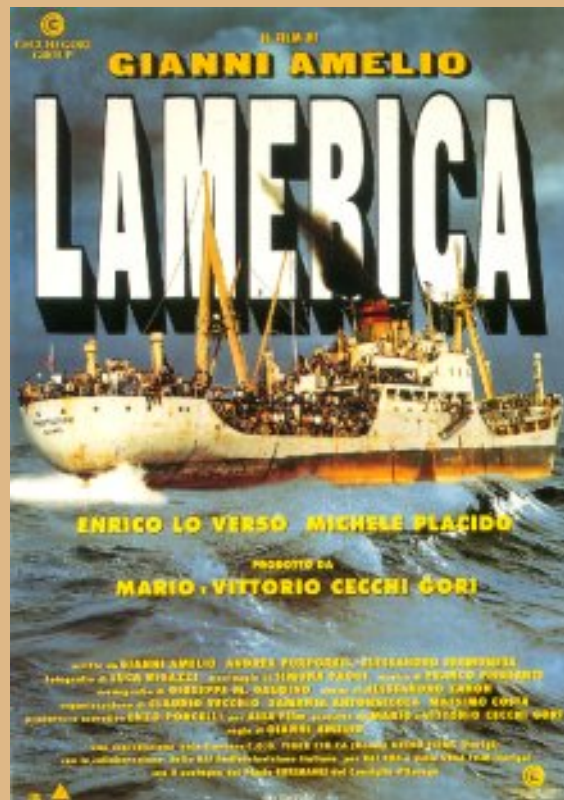
Enver Hoxha's kiste blev senere flyttet til gravpladsen uden for Tirana. Foto: Mads Lund, 1997.

Sammenbruddet. Den kasino-kapitalistiske periode. Nyt sammenbrud

Da de andre lande i Østblokken var »faldet«, faldt også styret i Albanien. De grundlæggende årsager var formentlig af økonomisk og social art, men drivkraften var ideologisk og politisk. Landet var - sådan oplevede langt de fleste det - fattigt og tilbagestående, der var ingen i udlandet der støttede økonomisk, man havde ingen eksport af betydning (og mange af de tidligere importlande var ikke længere interesserede eller betalingsdygtige), og der var også vanskeligheder med at afsætte indenlandsk producerede produkter i selve Albanien.

Den kommunistiske præsident, Ramiz Alia (som anså den nuværende premierminister, Fatos Nano, for at være en »coming man«), forsøgte sig ad manøvreringens og kompromissets vej,

men mislykkedes i den sidste ende og kørte fast. Samtidig var der mange - især i den yngre del af befolkningen - der stemte med fødderne og benyttede alle midler for at komme væk, først og fremmest til Italien - men meget gerne videre til USA.



Da det kommunistiske styre brød sammen var der tusindvis der forsøgte at komme til Italien og Amerika ... med og uden visum. Mange kom afsted på overfyldte plimsollere, men mange måtte vende tilbage igen efter at have siddet et stykke tid i en flygtningelejr i Italien. I årene derefter var der mange der prøvede at komme afsted med små motorbåde. I de allerseneste år er strømmen blevet begrænset - bl.a. fordi italiensk grænsepolti i flere år havde en station i Albanien. I begyndelsen af 2004 skete der en trist ulykke i Adriaterhavet og adskillige omkom, da deres båd sank. Ulykken viser at der stadig er en vis trafik, og at der altid vil være nogle der er parate til at »hjælpe« hvis de kan opnå en fortjeneste.

Under urolighederne i 1996/97 søgte præsident Berisha - til at begynde med - at indsætte politi og militær, men det måtte han opgive, særligt da militærets våbenlagre var blevet plyndret. Foto af militærkøretøj: Mads Lund, 1997.

Der udviklede sig to politiske hovedkræfter, den ene samlet omkring hjertelægen **Sali Berisha** - der stammer fra Tropoja i det nordlige Albanien - den anden om kommunisterne, der snart tog

navneforandring til Socialisterne og som også drejede kursen over i en euro-socialdemokratisk retning, under ledelse af økonomen **Fatos Nano**.

Perioden var karakteriseret af **uforsønlighed og bi-polaritet**. Når Demokraterne var ved magten, gjorde alt hvad de kunne for at holde Socialisterne væk (tilsvarende gjorde Socialisterne når *de* var ved fadet), og efter et stykke tid fængslede man endog Fatos Nano for svindel med udenlandske støttemidler. Senere forsøgte man at udelukke tidligere fremtrædende kommunister fra at få offentligt embede.

Demokraterne var ikke en homogen gruppe. Efterhånden opstod der sprækker i partiet, og nogle af de mest fremtrædende figurer - som Sali Berisha anså for at være farlige konkurrenter - blev udskilt eller gik selv. Blandt dem var Genc Pollo der nu er leder af et reformdemokratisk parti og økonomen Gramoz Pashko.

På grund af de grundlæggende og meget omfattende sociale problemer endte »den demokratiske periode« med et sammenbrud. Den umiddelbare anledning var at nogle store pyramideforetagender {[Pyramider](#)} brød sammen.

Ligesom andetsteds i Østeuropa var der geschæftige folk der etablerede pyramideforetagender som lovede en høj og hurtig forrentning af indskudte midler. De første der investerede fik vitterligt store gevinster og det trak en ekspansion med sig, og der var adskillige - der i virkeligheden manglede til dagen og vejen - der ikke turde andet end at gribe chancen. De omsatte alt hvad de kunne og investerede. Det gik godt i en kort periode, men dén slags foretagender kan kun holde hvad de lover, når markedet ekspanderer, dvs. når der kommer nye investorer. Når nyindbetalingerne stagnerer eller falder, kan man ikke længere finde midler til at honorere investorernes forventninger, og så vil der begynde en bevægelse den anden vej. Lige så hurtigt pyramideforetagenderne var skudt op, lige så hurtigt faldt de sammen igen.

Den demokratiske regering kunne ikke stille noget op, og der gik mange rygter om at der var højtplacerede politikere der var involveret i foretagenderne.

Sammenbruddet af pyramideforetagenderne og den udbredte utilfredshed førte til at mange gik på gaderne for at protestere mod styret og i næste omgang for at få det fjernet. Lovløsheden herskede og de mange lokale våbenlagre - fra Hoxha-styrets tid - blev plyndret. Nogle af disse våben blev smuglet ud af landet, formentlig særligt til Kosova, andre blev gemt i Albanien for at man kunne beskytte sig selv og sin familie. Hverken den albanske hær eller politi forsøgte at forhindre oprøret - som endte med at mange politiske fanger, hvoriblandt Fatos Nano, blev løsladt og at NATO sendte tropper til landet, primært fra Italien, men også fra Frankrig og Danmark {[Operation ALBA](#)}.

Urolighederne førte bl.a. med sig at det Dansk-Albanske AMU-center i Vlora blev plyndret, se nærmere i [artiklen om SiD's Albaniens-aktiviteter](#).

Magtskifte. Drabet på Azem Hajdari

Ved det efterfølgende valg kom Socialistpartiet til magten, og dén har man siddet på siden - til en vis grad i samarbejde med nogle af de små partier omkring midten. Der er i årene siden sket

en vældig udvikling. Der er i langt højere grad tale om »ordnede forhold«, men der er - som nævnt i indledningen - mange og meget dybe problemer, dels fordi økonomien er meget svag og fordi en meget stor del af det økonomiske liv sker i den grå eller sorte sektor, dels fordi der er omfattende organiseret kriminalitet, korrupsion og trafficking.



Azem Hajdari.

Året efter skete der et opsigtsvækkende attentat uden for Demokraternes Partihovedkvarter i Tirana's centrum. Én af de mest fremtrædende demokratiske politikere, **Azem Hajdari**, og hans livvagt blev skudt ned og dræbt. Der gik mange rygter om hvem drabsmanden kunne være og der var spekulationer om hvor vidt Berisha var involveret, for forholdet mellem ham og Hajdari var ikke altid lige positivt. Det ser imidlertid ud til at Hajdari blev dræbt som led i en fejde der havde sine rødder på hans hjemegn, Tropoja-området i det nordlige Albanien. Drabet blev anledning til forskellige tumulter, fortrinsvis i Tirana, og den daværende premierminister Fatos Nano stak af til udlandet, hvad han er blevet bebrejdet flere gange siden, måske ikke så meget offentligt, som i det skjulte. Tumulterne blev bragt til ophør og regeringen genoptog sit arbejde, men nu under ledelse af **Pandeli Majko**.

Ligesom der har været store interne modsætninger i det demokratiske parti har der været modsætninger i det socialistiske. Flere fløje har kæmpet med hinanden, og nogle har søgt at »komme til fadet«. Pandeli Majko søgte at blive partiformand, men kom uoverens med **Ilir Meta** og måtte træde tilside. På et senere tidspunkt blev han forsvarsminister, og han synes at trives med at have netop dén position.

Senere var det Ilir Meta der blev skubbet til side, for han kom uoverens med **Fatos Nano** der på det tidspunkt var partiformand, og som i dén position skaffede sig større og større indflydelse. Nano var ikke medlem af regeringen, hvilket hang sammen med at han dengang ønskede at blive præsident - men dét mislykkedes fordi Berisha ikke ville acceptere ham, og fordi de »Internationale« af dén grund ønskede en anden kandidat, én der ville være bredt respekteret.

Efter adskillige »udladninger« mellem Nano og Meta blev der indgået våbenhvile. Fatos Nano overtog posten som premierminister, mens Ilir Meta blev vice-premierminister og udenrigsminister. Våbenhvilen holdt imidlertid ikke længe, så kom Meta og Nano igen uoverens,

og Meta måtte fortrække - og til sidst melde sig helt ud af partiet, da han indså at han og hans gruppe af forbundsfæller ikke kunne få et ben til jorden. Nano havde indgået aftaler med de forskellige dele af partiet, hvilket dels eliminerede Meta's indflydelse, dels gav ham selv mulighed for at bevare sin position som partiformand og premierminister.

Nano har en solid basis i partiet og har demonstreret en udtalt politisk vilje og manøvrerevne, og det er baggrunden for at han kunne etablere alliancen med de forskellige dele af partiet (og i øvrigt også med andre politiske samarbejdspartnere). Hverken Meta eller Majko har nogen særlig stærk basis, og det er grunden til deres perifere placeringer. Majko har valgt at samarbejde med Nano (som også synes at respektere ham), mens Meta valgte at gå på kollisionskurs, hvad der førte til at han tabte og står i risiko for ikke at have nogen politisk indflydelse af betydning i flere år fremover. Om han - og hans forbundsfæller - vil opnå genvalg ved parlamentsvalget til sommer er svært at sige [skrevet februar 2005].

Et forsøg på en sammenfatning

Siden 2' Verdenskrig har det været karakteristisk at den politiske ledelse har forsøgt at *manøvrere*, dvs. at opnå uafhængighed, politisk og økonomisk styrke ved at bevæge sig mellem skiftende samarbejdspartnere. Den forholdsvis kortvarige periode hvor man forsøgte at stå helt på egne ben (nemlig fra man afbrød forbindelserne til Kina) endte med systemets sammenbrud. De væsentligste grunde skyldtes indre problemer og modsætninger, men sammenbruddet blev fremskyndet af udviklingen i de andre Østlande.

Der har været (og er fortsat) mange grundlæggende problemer med at få det albanske demokrati til at fungere. Der er sket tydelige fremskridt, men det er svært at tro at fremskridtene er stabiliserede. Sammenbruddet i 1997 er trods alt ikke særlig længe siden, det er først i de allerseneste år at det er lykkedes at få de to store grupper til at samarbejde rent teknisk med at få demokratiet til at fungere, og først for et par år siden besluttede Demokraterne at deltage i det parlamentariske arbejde efter at de havde boykottet det gennem længere tid.

Når det har været så svært at få etableret et virksomt demokrati i Albanien har det flere årsager. Én er at man traditionelt har tænkt i helt andre baner end i parlamentarisk demokrati. Der har i fortiden, fx i landsbyforsamlingerne i bjergegnene, været praktiseret en vis form for klandemokrati, som dog var stærkt patriarkalsk og stærkt domineret af de ældste og af dem der havde største »styrke«, men det er ikke en form for demokrati der harmonerer godt med moderne parlamentarisk og politisk demokrati. Skillelinierne gik helt anderledes. Det er stadig sådan at mange almindelige albanere har langt større tiltro til de traditionelle bånd og forbindelser end til det moderne stats- og kommuneapparat.

Dertil kommer at Hoxha-styrets ledere sagde ét, men gjorde noget nær det modsatte. De sagde at de praktiserede et *virkeligt* demokrati til forskel fra dét skindemokrati der blev praktiseret i den Vestlige Verden, men i virkeligheden var praksis grundlæggende udemokratisk. Det var kun muligt at »avancere« hvis man i det grundlæggende accepterede det kommunistiske styre, så konsekvensen var at enhver der tænkte den mindste smule *anderledes* måtte lære at holde sin mund for at overleve.

Desuden kan man konstatere at dét billede som det kommunistiske styre gav af omverdenen var helt misvisende. Der var (og er) meget at kritisere i den Vestlige Verden, men den

almindelige albaner vidste ikke for alvor noget om hvordan tingene var i Den Vestlige Verden (i den sidste del af Hoxha-styret kunne man dog snyde sig til at se italiensk fjernsyn), fx var det et meget beskedent fåtal albanere der havde mulighed for at komme udenlands og se tingene med egne øjne, og derfor havde de helt urealistiske forestillinger om hvordan man skulle bære sig ad med at fungere i en situation der var styret efter den Vestlige Verdens og markedets vilkår.

Efter Hoxha-styrets sammenbrud har man forsøgt at »skyde sig ind« på den nye verdensorden, der domineres af USA og EU. Det nuværende styre forsøger en afbalanceret udenrigspolitik: man støtter USA, men véd at den økonomiske fremtid ligger i en integration i EU. Det ser imidlertid ud til at man ikke er helt parat til at gøre hvad der er nødvendigt for at blive optaget i EU. Derimod gøres der en del forsøg på at kortslutte processen, dvs. at bruge gode venner og bekendte i USA, Tyrkiet og Grækenland til at fremskynde en optagelse.

TILFØJELSER

Stor-Albanien?



Den albanske Ali Ahmeti fra Makedonien på besøg hos premierminister Fatos Nano i Tirana februar 2005. På væggen bagved hænger et maleri der forestiller Frashëri-brødrene på besøg i Wien. De og deres ledsagere betragter Skanderbeg's hjelm og sværd. Officielt foto.

Med jævne mellemrum bliver der - fx fra serbisk side - talt om at dét som albanerne *i virkeligheden* ønsker er at etablere et Stor-Albanien. Nogle gange *kan* det se sådan ud, for den albanske regering udtaler sig jævnlig om forholdene på Balkan, men primært for at lægge en dæmper på »oprørske elementer«. Om dette er et spil for galleriet eller om man mener det fuldt oprigtigt, er meget svært at sige; måske er det mere korrekt at sige at den albanske politik er et forsøg på at manøvrere og at optræde afbalanceret mellem de forskellige kræfter i henholdsvis Kosova og Makedonien.

På den ene side så den socialistiske regering i Albanien overordentlig positivt på UÇK's aktioner i Kosova, på den anden side ønsker man at stå sig godt med præsident Rugova og hans midterorienterede politik.

På den ene side så man meget positivt på dét oprør som Ali Ahmeti i Makedonien var én af lederne af, på den anden side ønsker man også at stå sig godt med en anden albansk gruppering der ledes af Arber Xhaferri, for ikke at tale om præsident Branko Crvenkovski.

Når jeg ikke tror at man ønsker at »gå efter« et Stor-Albanien har det i det væsentlige tre grunde:

Fremtiden ligger ikke i en forenet albansk stat, for den vil - alt andet lige - primært vil blive en forening af økonomiske, sociale og politiske problemer og modsætninger.

Fremtiden ligger snarere i en optagelse i NATO og især i EU, og her vil spørgsmålet om en nationalstat slet ikke have den samme betydning som tidligere. Dette er et synspunkt der er udtrykt ved mange lejligheder, ikke mindst af Fatos Nano. Man kan tilføje at med en optagelse af både Kosova, Albanien og Makedonien vil det samvirke der allerede findes i dag på det politiske og kulturelle plan kunne videreudvikles og få flere aspekter-

Endelig står det klart for de fleste albanske politikere (i Kosova, Albanien og Makedonien) at en promovering af et Stor-Albanien ville virke stærkt negativt på de politiske kræfter i USA og Europa man skal samarbejde med for at opnå en optagelse i NATO og EU. (Dette skal ikke forstås som et afgørende, kun som et supplerende argument).

Se i øvrigt: Bjørn Andersen: [»Kosóva's fremtid«](#)

Mother Teresa og de religiøse forhold i Albanien



Indvielsen af Mother Teresa-statuen ved Universitetet i Tirana. Foto: Bjørn Andersen, december 2004. På billedet ses bl.a. en fremtrædende Bektashi (tv, iført grøn klædning), statsminister Kjell-Magne Bondevik fra Norge, ærkebiskop Rrok Mirdita (ærkebispedømmet Tirana-Durrës), præsident Alfred Moisiu, generaldirektør Koïchiro Matsuura (UNESCO), præsident Crvenkovski (Makedonien), fader Arthur E. Liolin (med ansigtet mod statuen; fader Liolin tilhører den særlige albansk-katolske kirke i USA). Desuden kan man ane præsident Svetozar Marovic (Serbien-Montenegro) og præsident Stjepan Mesic (Kroatien). Allerbagest - bag præsident Moisiu - den franske ambassadør i Makedonien og én af sikkerhedsvagterne.

Det store flertal af albanerne er **muslimer**, men på en forholdsvis afslappet måde. I Tirana og oppe i nord er der en del **katolikker**, mod syd en del **ortodokse**.

Religiøs orientering i 1944	Anslået antal indbyggere	Anslået andel af befolkningen (pct.)
Muslimer	826.000	70
Heraf Sunni'er	[600.000]	[51]
Heraf Bektashi'er (retning af moderat observans)	[220.000]	[19]
Ortodokse	212.500	18
Romersk-katolske	142.000	12
I alt	1.180.500	100

Kilde: ALBANIA / a country study / Federal Research Division / Library of Congress / Edited by Raymond Zickel and Walter R. Iwaskiw / Research Completed April 1992 - se: <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/altoc.html> og (mere specifikt): [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+al0055\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+al0055)). Materialet vedrører situationen i 1944. Tallene er meget usikre. Der haves ikke tilsvarende, endsige pålidelige, tal for de følgende år.

Fra 1967 og frem til Hoxha-styrets sammenbrud var religionsudøvelse forbudt, moskéer og kirker blev lukket og evt. omdannet til andre formål. Hoxha-styret ville ikke acceptere konkurrence fra kirkerne, endsige fra Vatikanet i Rom.

»The state recognizes no religion whatever and supports atheist propaganda for the purpose of inculcating the scientific materialist world outlook in people.« ([Albaniens Forfatning fra 1976, artikel 37](#)).

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»The creation of any type of organization of a fascist, anti-democratic, religious, and anti-socialist character is prohibited.

Fascist, anti-democratic, religious, war-mongering, and anti-socialist activities and propaganda, as well as the incitement of national and racial hatred are prohibited.« ([Albaniens Forfatning fra 1976, artikel 55](#)).

Der er udbredt enighed om at der hverken før Hoxha-styret eller nu har været tilfælde af religiøse overgreb. Tværtimod er det indtrykket at de forskellige trosretninger i dag lever overordentlig fredsommeligt med hinanden og med staten {[USA-Human-Rights](#)}.

Mother Teresa er en central figur i det moderne Albanien, sådan var det i Hoxha-perioden, og sådan er det i endnu højere grad nu. Mange albanere er stolte over hende, og præsidenten og regeringen fejrer hende gerne; måske er dette ikke helt uden politiske bagtanker? Se nærmere om Mother Teresa på: <http://bjoerna.dk/albanien/Teresa.htm>

I 2003 og 2004 har der været afholdt to internationale konferencer i Tirana om religiøs og etnisk tolerance - se nærmere på: <http://bjoerna.dk/tolerance/> og <http://miqesia.dk/Summit-2004.htm>.

NOTER

1) Bjørn Andersen er cand.mag. i dansk og kultursociologi. Har siden 1999 udgivet det elektroniske ugebrev »*Sidste Nyt fra Albanien, Kosóva og Makedonien*« og bøger om Albaniens og Kosóva's historie, fx. »*Krudttønden i baghaven*« (1999), »*Fra Kosovo til Kosóva*« (1999) og »*Albanske Studier*« 1-2 (2002). Har endvidere udgivet »*Danske Lov 1683*« på CD (2003) og arbejder nu på en bog om Ludvig Holberg: »*Et åbent sind*«, der handler om hans filosofi og hans tanker om natur- og folkeret. Det næstfølgende projekt vil dreje sig om sædvaneret. Hjemmeside: <http://bjoerna.dk>

relationer) Der er et par - indirekte - »forbindelser« som ikke er helt uinteressante:

I) Normannerne slog sig ned i Syditalien i begyndelsen af 1000-tallet og grundlagde senere et kongedømme på Sicilien og i Neapel der spillede en rolle i Middelhavs- og Adriaterhavsområdet frem til ca. 1250. Som Hans Lyngby Jepsen beretter i *»Korset og nymånen. Normannerne i Syden«* (1986) nedstammede normannerne fra vikingerne. Han skriver s. 255: *»Nord og Syd [Italien] skilles af historien. Det mærkværdige er netop at forhenværende nordboer, mænd med oprindelse i Skandinavien, bidrog til den udvikling. De trak ikke Sicilien mod deres Europa, men lod øen frit drive i det hav der er Europas sydgrænse.«*

I slutningen af 1200-tallet deltes kongeriget; Neapel (Napoli) gik til Charles af Anjou; i 1443 blev Sicilien og Neapel genforenet under Alfonso 5 af Aragonien (benævnt Kongen af de to Sicilier 1443-1458). Han og hans søn, Ferdinand I, samarbejdede med Gjergj Kastrioti Skanderbeg fra Albanien. Fra omkring 1500 var Napoli-Sicilien et vicekongedømme under den spanske konge.

II) En meget senere »forbindelse« opstod i slutningen af 1600-tallet. Én af de fattigere holstenske hertuger, Georg Christian von Holstein (Georg Christian af Sønderborg), der tilhørte en særlig katolsk gren, havde meldt sig som officer under den østrigsk-ungarske kejser og var avanceret til generalmajor og næstkommanderende under general Piccolomini i et felttog mod tyrkerne i 1689/90. Felttoget fandt sted ikke så mange år efter at tyrkerne forgæves havde belejret Wien under ledelse af en tyrkisk-albansk general.

Felttoget gik ind i det nuværende Kosovo, men kørte hurtig fast. Piccolomini og mange af soldaterne omkom af pest, og resten blev jaget på flugt af tyrkiske tropper og formentlig også af albanske guerillaer. Tilbagetoget blev ledet af Georg Christian von Holstein og med ham fulgte mange serbere og den ortodokse patriark. Georg Christian von Holstein faldt i 1691 i et slag med tyrkerne.

Slesvig-Holsten) Hvilken statsretlig status Slesvig og Holsten havde har i lange tider givet anledning til hovedbrud, provokationer og konflikter. Begge områder var hertugdømmer; de Slesvigske Hertuger havde den danske Konge som overherre; de Holstenske den tyske Kejser. Formelt set var forholdene imidlertid langt mere udviklede.

I 1848 var der stærke kræfter i Hertugdømmerne der ønskede en forening, en optagelse i Det Tyske Forbund - og en fri forfatning. I København var der mange der også ønskede en fri forfatning, men for et forenet Danmark og Slesvig. Parolen var: *Danmark til Ejderen*. De forskellige uoverensstemmelser førte til oprøret i 1848 og til de forskellige krige i midten af 1800-tallet, kulminerende med krigen i 1864.

FN) Danmark er medlem af Sikkerhedsrådet fra 1.1.2005 til 31.12.2006. Udenrigsministeriet har etableret en særlig side om medlemsskabet: <http://www.sikkerhedsraadet.um.dk/da/Forside.htm>.

DK-i-Kosovo) Danmark er synlig på mange forskellige måder i Kosovo. Siden 1999 har vi deltaget i KFOR. Søren Jessen-Petersen har siden august 2004 været SRSG, dvs. været Kofi Annan's særlige repræsentant og dermed den øverste internationale tovholder; for nogle år tilbage var det Hans Hækkerup der havde samme bestilling. Peter Sørensen leder EU-kontoret i Prishtina. Endelig er Kai Vittrup fornylig blevet chef for den internationale politistyrke.

Dalgas) Hans søn, Ernesto Dalgas, gik ganske andre veje og skrev de ejendommelige bøger »*Lidelsens Vej*« og »*Dommedags Bog*«.

Tvangsrekruttering) Adskillige danske i den tyske del af Sønderjylland blev indrullet i den tyske hær - og mange omkom.

Handelsunderskud) I begyndelsen af 2005 skrev Albaniens Statistik:

»In September of 2004 export and import rise compared with the pervious month of 2004. Export increased from 3511 mln leks to 5372 mln leks (53%) and import increased from 18576 mln leks to 20504 mln leks (10%). During in this month, the humanitarian aid are 210 mln leks. Trade deficit for this month is 15132 mln leks signing an increase of 0.4 per cent comparing with the previous month. Trade with the EU countries is 70.7 per cent. The main trade partners for this month remains Italy and Greece. Export to Italy is 72 per cent and import 29.9 per cent. While the export to Greece is 12.2 per cent and import 19.7 per cent. Comparing the data of this month with the previous month for some main countries and group of products we have:

Export of "Leather and leather manufactures" increased from 32 mln leks to 113 mln leks (252%), "Wood manufactures and article of papers" increased from 92 mln leks to 190 mln leks (106%), "Textile and footwear" increased from 1854 mln leks to 3241 mln leks (74.8%), while export of "Minerals, fuels, electricity" , decreased from 139 mln leks to 131 mln leks (5.7%).

Export to Italy, Slovenia, Germany, Kosovo, etc. increased, while export to Sweden, Turkey, Greece, Macedonia, Romania, etc. decreased.

Import of "Leather and leather manufactures" increased from 181 mln leks to 480 mln leks (165%), "Textile and footwear" increased from 1647 mln leks to 2564 mln leks (55.7%), "Machinery, equipment, spare parts" increased from 3910 mln leks to 4393 mln leks (12.4%), while import of " Construction materials and metals " decreased from 2830 mln leks to 253 mln leks (10.6%).

Import from Russian, Italy, USA, Great Britain, Greece, Macedonia, etc. increased, while import from China, Spain, Turkey, Germany, etc. decreased.

Indicator of specialization is the difference between the percentage of export for each product to total and percentage of import for each product to total. This indicator is calculated for the group products of the nine sections of Harmonized System (HS). On first quarter of 2004 increase of this indicator is noted on the group "Textile and footwear".«

OECD) OECD har i 2004/2005 - i forståelse med regeringen - foretaget en undersøgelse af den uofficielle økonomi.

Korruption) Dette afsnit bygger på informationer fra internationale organisationer der arbejder i Albanien, fra venner og bekendte »downthere« og her i byen, på egne iagttagelser og på uformelle interviews i Tirana.

Via Egnatia-1) Se kort på: <http://www1.oecd.org/cem/online/infrastr03/RoadCorrVIII.pdf>

MEETING OF THE MINISTERS OF TRANSPORT OF CORRIDOR VIII COUNTRIES

Tirana 31 March, 2004

JOINT DECLARATION

Upon the invitation of the Minister of Transport and Telecommunications of the Republic of Albania, the Ministers of Transport of the countries that are signatories of the Memorandum of Understanding and the representative of the European Commission met in Tirana on 31 March 2004 with the aim of examining the current state of progress and to promote concrete initiatives for the development of the infrastructure and operation of the Corridor VIII.

Appreciating the progress achieved by the countries of Corridor VIII in the process of implementation of the Corridor infrastructure projects and transport reform in general,

Addressing the European Parliament and the European Commission to include Corridor VIII projects as major priorities for the European Union investment programmes for the near future,

Appreciating the efforts made by Italy during its EU Presidency, to give greater importance to Corridor VIII projects,

Expressing their conviction that the progress of the countries of the region towards EU integration to bring improvements to the regulatory and institutional framework will at the same time create the necessary conditions for a better operation of the Corridor VIII existing infrastructure,

The Ministers discussed the current state and the possibilities to accelerate the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding signed on 9 September 2002 in Bari and the construction of the Corridor VIII with the main focus upon transport infrastructure, in the light of the agreement reached by the Ministers of Transport of Corridor VIII, at the meeting held in Bari on 18 September 2003 as set out in the "Bari Declaration".

The Ministers stressed the need for closer collaboration and coordination of effort between the Corridor VIII countries in order to identify joint priority investment projects with the highest possible functional and economic efficiency.

The Ministers stressed the need to increase the role and the activity of the Corridor VIII Steering Committee and Secretariat with the main purpose of expediting the steps towards creating the necessary conditions for joint investment projects to be submitted and launched in the shortest time possible.

The Ministers urge donor organisations to support the interested countries in examining and providing solutions for the rapid elimination of the present bottlenecks and missing links along the Corridor VIII.

The Ministers emphasise the need for the creation of a suitable climate to attract private investments in the development of Corridor VIII infrastructure with the main focus placed on public private partnership type projects.

The Ministers appreciate the initiative of the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria to hold a meeting of the Prime Ministers of Corridor VIII in Bulgaria, devoted to the next steps towards the overall construction of Corridor VIII.

The Ministers express their appreciation for the initiative of the Albanian Government for organising and hosting this meeting in Tirana, and agree on the need to continue periodically with further political and technical collaboration.

Mr. Spartak POÇI, Minister of Transport and Telecommunication

Mr. Nikolay VASSILEV, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Transport and Communications

Mr. Pietro LUNARDI, Minister of Infrastructure and Transport

Mr. Agron BUXHAKU, Minister of Transport and Communications

Mr. Pantelis CARCABASSIS, Ambassador, Representing the Ministry of Transport and Telecommunications

Mr. Lutz SALZMANN, Ambassador European Commission Delegation, Tirana

Tirana, 31 March 2004

Fast mand) Dansk Politi vil etablere en fast »mand« i Tirana for at styrke indsatsen mod organiseret kriminalitet fra Albanien og andre Balkanlande, jf. følgende nyhedstelegram fra begyndelsen af januar 2005: »*De nordiske lande og i særdeleshed Danmark er et mere og mere centralt interesseområde for kriminelle serbiske og albanske netværk, som arbejder sammen med herboende folk fra Balkan. Vi forstærker fokus på dem og sender derfor en dansk politimand til Tirana,*« siger chefkriminalinspektør Troels Ørting Jørgensen, Rigspolitiet.

Illyrerne) Jf. John Wilkes: »*The Illyrians*«, 1' udgave 1992, mit eksemplar er en paperbackudgave fra 1995, udgivet af Blackwell , Oxford, England og Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA . Wilkes er tilbageholdende med at fastslå en direkte forbindelse.

Via Egnatia-2) Jan Bo Hansen fulgte *Via Egnatia* i 2002 og havde fire artikler herom i »weekendavisen« (2.7.-12.8.2002). Han skrev bl.a.: »*Vejen blev anlagt af den romerske proconsul, Gnaeus Egnatius, fra 146 f. Kr. til 120 f. Kr., og gennem mange århundreder var det den store forbindelsesvej mellem øst og vest, brugt af romerske hære og kolonisateurer, siden af østromere og af normanniske og osmanniske erobrere*«.

Solsortesletten) Man kan læse nærmere om slaget og tiden i Konstantin fra Kosteneec: »*Den serbiske Despot Stefan Lazarevics liv og levned*«, oversat og kommenteret af Gunnar Svane, udgivet af Selskabet til Historiske Kildeskrifters Oversættelse, Munksgaard, København 1975. 'Despot' betyder vel nærmest 'Konge' eller 'Storfyrste'.

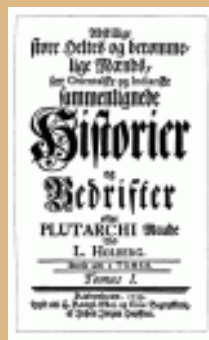
Devshirme) Devshirme- eller gidselsystemet er omdiskuteret i litteraturen. Sandsynligvis blev det benyttet i forskellige varianter. I nogle tilfælde var der nærmest tale om at gidslerne blev fjernet med magt og taget »i forvaring«, i andre tilfælde var der måske snarere tale om at vasallerne ønskede at deres sønner skulle uddannes og avancere ved det osmanniske hof. Om den osmanniske tid kan læses i Henning Mørk's bog: »*Balkan under Tyrkisk Herredømme 1350-1800*«, Aarhus Universitetsforlag 1998.

Sk: beg) Skanderbeg og Danmark. Jeg er blevet spurgt om 'Skanderbeg' og 'Skanderborg' har noget at gøre med hinanden. Svaret er et klart nej. Det fremgår alene af at man brugte stednavnet 'Skanderborg' - fx i forbindelsen Skantorpborg - længe før Skanderbeg blev født og hans navn 'konstrueret'. Det består af segmenterne: *Skan(d)* + [evt. -*torp*] + det efterhængte *borg*. *Skan(d)* er sandsynligvis et mandsnavn, *torp* er betegnelsen for en udflytterbebyggelse og *borg* giver sig selv. Jeg er ikke klar over om *Skan(d)* kan være en afledning af *Skaane*. I så fald ville 'Skanderborg' betyde: Borgen ved Skantorp, som er dén bebyggelse som Skåningen anlagde. Navnet *Skanderbeg* stammer fra tyrkisk. Det består af segmenterne: *Iskender* eller *Skender* - der svarer til: Alexander - og det efterhængte *beg* der betegner en højtstående officer. Skanderbeg betyder ca: General Alexander.



Klik på billedet hvis du vil have det forstørret.

Arkæologen Peter Pentz har på Nationalmuseet »genfundet« en seglstampe der ifølge sin indskrift var Skanderbegs. Om den virkelig var dét har man ingen sikker viden om, men sandsynligvis er der tale om en stampe der er produceret i tiden efter Skanderbeg's død, muligvis engang i 1500-tallet. Engang i 1600-tallet blev det købt af en udsending for Christian IV for at indgå i hans kunstkammer. Se nærmere herom på: <http://miqesia.dk/arrangementer.htm#Pentz>.



Klik på billederne hvis du vil have dem forstørret.

Ludvig Holberg var meget optaget af Skanderbeg og skrev om ham i sine '*Heltehistorier*' (1739). Holberg's tekst kan findes på: <http://bjoerna.dk/albansk-historie/Holberg.htm>. Holberg vurderede Skanderbeg overordentlig højt fordi han på éngang var ydmyg og mådeholden og overordentlig effektiv som hærfører i sine talrige kampe med tyrkerne. Når netop Skanderbeg og krigene med tyrkerne fik Holberg's opmærksomhed, skyldtes det givetvis at tyrkerne på hans tid stadig måtte anses for at være en mægtig modstander. Så sent som i 1683 havde tyrkerne belejret Wien, omend det var forgæves; senere fulgte en krig i Kosovo og yderligere kampe.

Barletius) Den klassiske filolog, professor Minna Skaftø Jensen, har analyseret Barletius' biografi, se nærmere på: <http://miqesia.dk/Barletius.htm>.

Noli) Jf. Fan Noli: »*George Castrioti Scanderbeg*«, International Universities Press, New York, 1947. Fan Noli var biskop for den særlige Albanske Kirke i USA (den Albanske Kirke er i familie med den Græsk-Ortodokse Kirke). Han blev født 6.1.1882 i Tepe - dengang en Albansk landsby i nærheden af Adrianopel, det nuværende Edirne - men kom til USA i 1906 hvor han slog sig ned. Han blev uddannet i Harvard og Boston i litteratur, musik og historie og opnåede en ph.d.-grad. Han blev præsteviet i 1906 og blev biskop i 1923. Fra 1920 til 1924 repræsenterede han Albanien i Folkeforbundet og blev derefter - i en kort periode på ½ år - leder af en venstredrejet albansk regering. Hans regering blev skubbet til

side af Ahmed Zogu, der i en måneds tid var premierminister, hvorefter han blev præsident og senere konge. Efter nogen tid vendte Fan Noli tilbage til USA hvor han genoptog sit embede som biskop og sin skribentvirksomhed.

Folkefortællinger) Se nærmere på Robert Elsie's side: <http://www.elsie.de/pub/b23.html>. Bogen om folkefortællingerne kan downloades som zip-fil fra: http://www.elsie.de/pub/download_b/B2001AlbFolktalesLegends.zip. Se også Elsie's artikel om Kadare's gengivelse af Rozafat-fortællingen på: http://www.elsie.de/pub/download_r/R1997KadareBridge.pdf. En præsentation af Robert Elsie kan findes på: <http://www.elsie.de/>.

Byron) Se evt. min bog »Krudttønden i baghaven«, s. 62-67.

Lear) Se fx Marco Graziosi's Lear-site: <http://www.nonsenselit.org/Lear/index.html>. Blandt rejsebøgerne er én fra Korsika, én fra Syditalien og én fra Albanien og Grækenland. Man kan læse nærmere om Edward Lear i mine bøger: »*Albanske Studier*« bd. 1-2, se: <http://bjoerna.dk/albansk-historie/studier-2002.htm>. Lear malede fremragende fugle- og blomsterbilleder. Også hans landskabstegninger er gode.

Durham) Bogen kan læses på internettet: <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/durham/albania/albania.html>. Man kan læse nærmere om Edith Durham i »*Albanske Studier*« bd. 1-2, se: <http://bjoerna.dk/albansk-historie/studier-2002.htm>.

Fejder) Se [afsnittet om slægtsfejder og blodhævn](#).

ML) Mads Lund var i Albanien for SiD (der senere er fusioneret med KAD og blevet til 3F). Mads fortæller at mødet fandt sted i Påsken 1998 i Valbona-dalen i det nordligste Albanien. Valbona ligger ikke så langt fra Bajram Curri.

Kosova) Når jeg i denne artikel (fortrinsvis) bruger den albanske skrivemåde *Kosova* - der udtales *Kosóva* - frem for den ofte brugte *Kosovo*, som er serbisk, skyldes det at befolkningsflertallet - i det mindste nuomstunder - er albansk. Muligvis har flertallet engang været serbisk, muligvis albansk, men det ved man ikke sikkert. Mange Kosovo-serbere flygtede i 1689 da de østrigsk-ungarske tropper blev drevet tilbage - se i øvrigt {[relationer](#)} - og det tyder på at serberne udgjorde en minoritet såvel før, men naturligvis især efter flugten. Hvad enten der engang var serbisk flertal eller ej er det et faktum at der er mange ortodokse kirker og klostre i Kosovo/Kosova, og at Kosovo i 1300-tallet blevet styret af en serbisk fyrste.

Magnussen) Fritz Magnussen's krigsberetning kan læses på: <http://bjoerna.dk/albansk-historie/1912.htm>. Beretningen er fundet frem af Palle Rossen der også har skrevet en indledning.

Shehu) Enver Hoxha udtalte sig i 1982 således om sin gamle forbundsfælle:

»Det var netop på partiets og folkets enhed, at også Mehmet Shehu, en af det socialistiske Albaniens farligste forrædere og fjender, brækkede halsen. Han var mange gange blevet kritiseret af partiet for sine alvorlige fejltagelser, men det var lykkedes ham

at dække over sig. De dokumenter, der er blevet fundet, samt en ubestridelig bevisbyrde beviser, at han fra før krigens tid havde arbejdet for den amerikanske efterretningstjeneste. Under krigen og efter befrielsen kæmpede og arbejdede Mehmet Shehu i Albanien som lejesoldat i fremmedes sold og efter deres ordrer. Allerede fra han var i den 1. Brigade, blev han hyret af den jugoslaviske efterretningstjeneste (OZNA, i dag UDB) og senere af det sovjetiske KGB, og han tjente nidkært dem alle. Han og den gruppe af komplotmagere, der var knyttet til ham, og som nu befinder sig i myndighedernes hænder og er ved at blive udforsket, handlede på ordrer og direktiv fra udenlandske spionagecentre, specielt CIA og UDB. De arbejdede på at knuse partiet og folkets statsmagt og sætte Albanien under fremmed åg. Mehmet Shehu og hans forbundsfæller var forberedt på at begå alvorlige forbrydelser for at gennemføre de undergravende gangsterplaner, som blev udarbejdet af deres herrer i Washington, Beograd og andetsteds. Mehmet Shehu havde af det jugoslaviske UDB fået ordre til at myrde centralkomiteens førstesekretær og andre parti- og statsledere samt til at tage terroristiske metoder i anvendelse for at knuse alle dem, der ville stå op mod dette store forræderi. Hvis de ikke var i stand til at gennemføre deres kriminelle hensigter, så hænger dette sammen med deres store frygt for folket og partiet og disses stålfaste enhed, som ikke tillader nogen fjende, hvor snu og djævelsk han end er, at manøvrere. Mehmet Shehu var aldrig i stand til at forandre eller forvrænge partiets linie, for hvis han forsøgte at gøre det, ville han straks blive afsløret. Da Mehmet Shehu blev fanget mellem på den ene side ordrer fra UDB, som jorden brændte under i Kosova, og på den anden side frygten for partiets og folkets enhed, så han intet andet alternativ end selvmordets skændige vej.«

Fra Enver Hoxha: »*Tale til vælgerne i Tirana 10.11.1982*«. Udgivet af Venskabsforeningen Danmark-Albanien, 1983.

En nærliggende konklusion kunne være at det enten var lykkedes Shehu og forbundsfæller at »snøre« Hoxha og den øvrige ledelse gennem mere end 40 år - eller også at det er Hoxha der nu - i 1982 - forsøgte at »snøre« sin tilhørere og læsere.

Formodning) Om denne formodning er korrekt eller ej, ved jeg ikke. Jeg bygger den især på dén måde som Hoxha-styret forklarede dødsfaldet på, men også på at Hoxha og kredsen om ham i årenes løb havde fremtrådt tydeligt dogmatisk - samtidig med at de pragmatisk skiftede kurs, den ene gang efter den anden. Mehmet Shehu var en aktiv part i dette spil, men spillede en noget mere anonym og tilbageholdende rolle end Hoxha og mange andre i hans nærhed.

Hvis nogen skulle vide »noget« eller som har en god idé, hører jeg gerne.

Lubonja) Se: [John Frølich: »Fatos Lubonja's dagbog«](#) og [»17 år i monsterets gab. Den albanske forfatter Fatos Lubonja blev politisk fange som ung og tilbragte 17 år i fængsler og fangelejre«](#).

Kolonel Bunker) Tadrart Film der distribuerer »*Kolonel Bunker*« skriver:

Enver Hodja a dirigé l'Albanie pendant près de quarante ans. Après avoir rompu avec Belgrade pour se rapprocher de l'URSS, puis frayer avec la Chine et abandonné Moscou, pour s'enfermer définitivement, Enver Hodja a commis purge sur purge. Dictateur suprême, c'était l'un des dirigeants du bloc communiste le plus totalitaire et intransigent. L'Albanie a vécu sous son joug une "paranoïa" quotidienne... Le système Enver Hodja a survécu sept années après sa mort. Après une "mini révolution", l'Albanie a élu un président et s'est -après presque un demi-siècle- ouvert au monde. L'Albanie est un pays ravagé, défiguré par des

"bunkers", symboles de ce pays sous le joug d'un dictateur fou.

Le colonel Muro Neto, héros du film, a été le jouet de Enver Hodja qui l'avait chargé de protéger le pays contre l'ennemi omniprésent. Ce Kolonel Bunker est le personnage symbole de ce pays.

1950-1960 en Pologne

Muro Neto suit de brillantes études militaires, il rencontre Ana Jakubowska, une passionnée de piano. Il en tombe amoureux, ils se marient . En 1960, ils viennent vivre en Albanie, pays de Muro Neto.

1961 en Albanie

Choisir de vivre en Albanie, c'est rompre à jamais avec l'extérieur. Ana Jakubowska décide de rester avec son mari dans ce pays et coupe toute relations avec sa famille en Pologne.

1974 en Albanie

Muro Neto est chargé de défendre le pays contre un ennemi invisible. En qualité de grand stratège militaire, il décide que la "bunkérisation" est la seule parade à une attaque surprise. Muro Neto érige près de 800.000 bunkers ; la population est soumise à des alertes d'attaques soudaines et irraisonnées. La paranoïa grandit. Muro Neto a disparu pour laisser place au Colonel Bunker. Monstre de l'appareil communiste, le Colonel Bunker détruit tout sur son passage, ferme les yeux sur les procès et les exécutions sommaires. Il se sent investi d'une mission de défenseur suprême du pays.

Sa femme, impuissante, assiste à la montée de la folie paranoïaque de son mari.

Elle se réfugie dans son amour pour Chopin et dans la religion déclarée illégale par Herver Hodja.

Cast : Agim Qirjaqi, Anna Nehrebecka, Viktor Zhusti, Cun Lajci, Kadri Roshi, Xhevat Nimani, Malaj Petrit, Alma Rambj, Maurice Nash

A film by : Kujtim Cashku

Production : 3B Productions (France), Alba Film Studio (Albanie), Studio Filmmowe Dove (Pologne)

Distribution : Tadrart Films

In theater: October 6th 1999

www.tadrart.com/en/films/kolonel_bunker/

Awards

1998:

VENISE: Cict - Unesco Award "Enrico Fulchignoni" 1997:

OSCARS: Official Albanian Entry

IZMIR: Special Jury Prize

SAINT ETIENNE: Grand Prize

1996:

BASTIA: Critic's Prize

MONTREAL: Official compétition

1985-betænkning) Se: <http://miqesia.dk/erfaring/Europa-Parlamentet-Albanien-1985.htm>.

Pyramider) Se nærmere i [Christopher Jarvis: »The Rise and Fall of Albania's Pyramid Schemes«](#) i: IMF's »Finance & Development«, March 2000, s. 46-49.

Operation ALBA) Se herom i Søren Knudsen's artikel: »*Den danske indsats i »Operation ALBA«*«: http://miqesia.dk/erfaring/soeren_knudsen_1997.htm.

USA-Human-Rights) Se evt. [officiel Amerikansk Human Rights-rapport](#).

Kontakt webmaster: webmaster@miqesia.dk. Du er meget velkommen til at sende informationer og forslag til hvad der skal være på siden. Send evt. bekendte et tip om *Miqësia*'s hjemmeside: miqesia.dk

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De Europæiske Fællesskaber om relationerne til Albanien [1985]

Kontaktadresse: post@miqësia.dk

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De europæiske Fællesskaber

EUROPA-PARLAMENTET

MØDEDOKUMENTER

Udgave på dansk 1985-86

9. oktober 1985 SERIE A DOKUMENT A 2-114/85

BETÆNKNING

udarbejdet for udvalget om eksterne økonomiske forbindelser om de økonomiske og handelsmæssige forbindelser mellem EØF og Albanien

Ordfører: Ioannis TZOUNIS

På mødet den 13. november 1984 henviste Europa-Parlamentet forslag til beslutning af FORD om Fællesskabets handelsforbindelser med Albanien (dok. 2-927/84) i overensstemmelse med artikel 47 i forretningsordenen til udvalget om eksterne økonomiske forbindelser.

På mødet den 21. november 1984 vedtog udvalget at udarbejde betænkning og valgte TZOUNIS til ordfører.

Udvalget behandlede udkastet til betænkning på møder den 19. december 1984, den 31. januar 1985, den 26. marts 1985, den 20. maj 1985 og den 25.-26. september 1985. Det vedtog den 26. september 1985 beslutningsforslaget som helhed enstemmigt.

I afstemningen deltog: Dame Shelagh Roberts, formand; Hindley, næstformand; Tzounis, ordfører; Beazley (for Kilby), Blumenfeld (for van Aerssen), de Camaret, Costanzo, Mallet (for Muehlen), Moorhouse, Tove Nielsen (for de Winter), Rossetti (for Galluzzi), van Rooy, Seeler, Toussaint, Wiczorek-Zeul, Zahorka og Zarges.

Betænkningen indgivet den 30. september 1985.

Fristen for at stille ændringsforslag til denne betænkning er angivet i forslaget til dagsorden for den mødeperiode, hvor den skal behandles.

FORSLAG TIL BESLUTNING

om de økonomiske og handelsmæssige forbindelser mellem EØF og Albanien

Europa-Parlamentet,

- der henviser til forslag til beslutning af Ford om Fællesskabets handelsforbindelser med Albanien (dok. 2-927/84),

- der henviser til betænkning fra udvalget om eksterne økonomiske forbindelser (dok. A 2-114/85),

A. der konstaterer, de handelsmæssige og økonomiske forbindelser mellem Det europæiske Fællesskab og Albanien er særdeles begrænsede, men har mulighed for at kunne udvikles,

B. der er overbevist om, at en udvikling af disse forbindelser i et særdeles følsomt område af direkte betydning for Fællesskabet ville være til gensidig fordel for Fællesskabet og Albanien og være medvirkende til en stabilisering af situationen i denne del af Balkan,

C. der erkender Albaniens politiske og diplomatiske særstilling,

D. der henviser til muligheden for, at der vil ske en udvikling i dette land,

E. der mener, at en forbedring og en udvikling af de økonomiske og handelsmæssige forbindelser forudsætter en gunstig atmosfære,

1. ønsker, at det i fremtiden bliver muligt at forbedre og udvikle de økonomiske og handelsmæssige forbindelser med Albanien;

2. registrerer med interesse, at Albanien søger nye handelsforbindelser med nogle fællesskabslande;

3. mener, at ethvert forsøg Albanien måtte gøre i den retning, bør støttes af Fællesskabet;

4. håber, at man vil finde metoder og fremgangsmåder, der kan fremme det økonomiske og handelsmæssige samarbejde mellem de to parter;

5. mener, at Det europæiske Fællesskab kan spille en positiv og betydningsfuld rolle med hensyn til udviklingen i Albanien;

6. understreger, at det ville bidrage til at skabe en gunstigere atmosfære for udviklingen af samarbejdet med Fællesskabet, hvis Albanien respekterede menneskerettighederne generelt og specielt det talstærke græske mindretals rettigheder, hvis eksistens er

internationalt anerkendt, samt de øvrige mindretals rettigheder, der lever på albansk område;

7. bemærker, at handlinger som dem, der for nylig resulterede i, at fællesskabsborgere blev dræbt af albanske grænsevagter ikke fremmer forbindelserne med Albanien;

8. pålægger sin formand at sende denne beslutning og udvalgets betænkning til Rådet, Kommissionen og medlemsstaternes regeringer.

BEGRUNDELSE

INDLEDNING

De handelsmæssige og økonomiske forbindelser med Albanien har kun begrænset betydning for Fællesskabet. I 1983 udgjorde de kun 0,03% af importen og 0,03% af eksporten. Importen repræsenterede kun 89.281.000 ECU og eksporten 99.170.000 ECU. Disse tal taler for sig selv. Derfor refererer betænkningens titel også i højere grad til de fremtidige muligheder end til de nuværende forhold, og indholdet vedrører især baggrunden for den eksisterende situation.

Fra begyndelsen bør understreges, at ethvert forsøg på at undersøge Albanien udenrigshandel og økonomi som så er forbundet med en meget stor vanskelighed: landets myndigheder er yderst tilbageholdende med at give oplysninger. Til og med 1965 udkom en officiel statistisk årbog. Indtil 1959 manglede den imidlertid enhver henvisning til international handel. Efter 1965 begyndte bogen at udkomme hvert andet år og indeholdt endnu mindre om økonomiske forbindelser med udlandet. I 1972 udkom den for sidste gang. Siden da er der kun ved to lejligheder fra de albanske myndigheders side givet oplysninger om landets udenrigshandel: i 1974 i publikationen "30 års socialistisk Albanien" og i 1979 i publikationen "35 års socialistisk Albanien". Den sidste var endnu ringere end den første. Sidenhen er der med mellemrum fremkommet visse oplysninger, som karakteriseres af manglen på tal. Derfor har vi kun et ret uklart billede af situationen. Albanien er faktisk det mest lukkede land i Europa, selv om det har diplomatisk forbindelse med ca. 100 lande, af hvilke 17 har ambassade i Tirana.

Albanien ligger på Balkan ud til Middelhavet og er 28.748 km² stort. Landets grænse til Jugoslavien og Grækenland er af en længde på 577 km og dets kyststrækning 472 km. I Otrantostrædet er afstanden til Italien kun 75 km. Landets strategiske betydning kan ikke betvivles, hverken som brohoved til Balkan eller som base i Middelhavet. Tidligere har landet gentagne gange spillet begge disse roller. 76,6% af landet er højland og gennemsnitsbeliggenheden over havet er ca. 700 m, omkring det dobbelte af gennemsnittet i Europa.

En smal strimmel langs kysten er det eneste lavland i Albanien. Ca. 40% af landet er dækket af skov. Der eksisterer rige forekomster af krom (mod nordøst nær den jugoslaviske grænse), olie (i områderne Veratio [Berat] og Fieri), jernnikkel (fra Pogradec til dalen ved øvre Shkumbin), kobber (i området ved Mirditia), brunkul (Tirana, Korçe, Tepelene), asfalt og naturgas (Aulon og Fieri). Det betragtelige antal floder er blevet udnyttet til elektricitetsfremstilling.

Befolkningstallet er for indværende næsten 3 mio og stiger med den største hastighed i Europa. Det anslås, at i år 2000 vil der være 4 mio albanere. Befolkningen er den yngste

på vort kontinent (gennemsnitsalderen er 25,7 år). 2/3 af befolkningen bor stadig på landet, et enestående fænomen i Europa. Sondringen af gekere nord for Shkumbin-floden og toskier syd for og bibeholdelsen af disses særegne dialekter eksisterer stadig på trods af regeringens indgriben. Så længe albanerne havde religionsfrihed (indtil 1967), var flertallet muhamedanere. Der var dog også kristne (ca. 30%), de fleste ortodokse, men også en del katolikker. Et talrigt græsk mindretal, der traditionelt har boet i det nordlige Ipirus, som ligger ved grænsen til Grækenland, er stadig udsat for systematisk undertrykkelse (i 1911 anslog de tyrkiske myndigheder tallet til 113.000. I overensstemmelse med det græske konsulat var der før krigen 200-250.000. På grund af manglende oplysninger er det nuværende tal svært at præcisere. De albanske myndigheder anerkender kun 30-40.000 personer, og indskrænker enerådigt mindretallet til kun at eksistere i 2 amter, Gjirokaster og Sarande, selv om det er kendt, at der findes betydelige græske mindretal i andre områder af Albanien).

Albanien var det sidste land på Balkan, der blev befriet fra tyrkerne. Som det mest tilbagestående land i Europa, socialt og økonomisk underudviklet, skete den nationale udvikling langsomt, og landet var ude af stand til at forsvare sin uafhængighed, da fascisternes angreb i april 1939.

Siden slutningen af 2. verdenskrig har den absolutte magt i landet ligget hos et enkelt parti, det albanske kommunistiske parti (i 1948 skiftede det navn til Albanien's arbejderparti), som på sin side var fuldstændig behersket af det samme menneske i mere end fyrré år. Regimets ideologi var stalinismen, og man har indtil i dag fulgt stalinistisk praksis, og har lagt en særlig stalinistisk mentalitet for dagen med hensyn til spørgsmålet om menneskerettigheder, som vort Parlament forståeligt nok er meget følsom overfor. Landet har ført en udenrigspolitik, der har resulteret i den nuværende helt specielle diplomatiske situation.

Magten i Albanien var i mange år i hænderne på en person, som ikke lever mere. I et land hvor det politiske system, den politiske tradition og den geografiske beliggenhed, som Albanien har, er det ikke udelukket, at arvefølgen efter den afdøde leder vil byde på overraskelser, trods den hidtidige normale udvikling. Selv om det er menneskeligt at ønske en positiv udvikling, må eventuelle pludselige kriser ikke udelukkes. Fællesskabet bør opmærksomt følge situationens udvikling og på fornuftig vis udforme en politik, som vil modvirke enhver forstyrrelse af freden og balancen på Balkan.

Albanien er stadig Europas fattigste land. Verdensbanken anslog i 1981 pr. capita-indkomsten til 820 US\$. Den økonomiske udvikling har efter krigen været præget af en række 5-års-planer, som siden 1951 har været meget centralistiske og strenge. Industrialiseringen af landet har været tillagt særlig betydning. Samtidig er det systematisk blevet tilstræbt ikke at rokke ved den demografiske befolkningsfordeling mellem land og by. Siden 1970 har landet været elektrificeret. Hvad landbruget angår, blev jorden i første omgang fordelt mellem landbrugere, men i anden omgang opnåedes der fuldstændig kollektivering. Selvforsyning med visse varer har været tilstræbt. Den traditionelle majsdyrkning erstattedes af korndyrkning, og det ser ud til, at disse forsøg har ført til positive resultater. Med udvidelsen af de opdyrkede områder, selv i bjergområder, vil forøget landbrugsproduktion imidlertid skabe fremtidige problemer, som landets regering forsøger at imødegå med strukturelle forholdsregler: udvidelse af de statslige bedrifter i modsætning til kooperativerne, formindskelse af de personlige jordlodder fra de hidtidige 3.000 m² til 300 m² osv.

Det anslås, at 61% af den arbejdsdygtige befolkning i 1980 var beskæftiget inden for landbruget, 25% i industrien og 14% i servicesektoren. Af den albanske økonomis udvikling kan den konklusion drages, at partidogmer ofte lå til grund for fremgangsmåderne, og at det albanske folks levestandard påvirkedes negativt af valg, som havde politisk motiv og ideologisk baggrund. Det ser endvidere ud til, at den økonomiske vækst i de senere år er blevet formindsket.

I. EKSTERNE ØKONOMISKE FORBINDELSER OG DEN ALBANSKE UDENRIGSPOLITIK

Især hvad angår Albaniens eksterne økonomiske forbindelser er én iagttagelse af grundlæggende betydning: Siden indførelsen af det kommunistiske styre og indtil 1978, da det kom til et brud mellem Albanien og Kina, var udenrigshandelen direkte afhængig af den udenrigspolitik, der førtes af landets ledelse, som systematisk søgte at opnå en fuldstændig tilnærmelse - fastlåsning var måske et mere præcist ord - af det lille Albanien til et større kommunistisk land, fra hvilket det forventede politisk, diplomatisk, strategisk og økonomisk støtte såvel indadtil som udadtil.

Albaniens temmelig stormfulde brud med de efter hinanden følgende beskyttere og de ideologiske grunde, der fremførtes herfor, eller af den yderst strenge opfattelse af national uafhængighed, som blev gjort gældende, gjorde stort indtryk på offentligheden og de internationale observatører. Det er sandt, at hver beskytter blev afløst af en anden, fjernere og derfor ufarligere, eller i hvert fald mindre farlig. Den virkelige grund til omlægningerne af Albaniens udenrigspolitik bør nok søges i de albanske lederes beslutning om ikke at tillade, at deres magt blev bragt i fare af en eller anden ny politisk linje, fastlagt af lederne i beskytterlandet.

Under alle omstændigheder resulterede Albaniens fuldstændige afhængighed af tre på hinanden følgende beskyttere, Jugoslavien (1944-1948), Sovjetunionen (1948-1961) og Kina (1961-1978) bl.a. i, at den til enhver tid beskyttende magt i særdeles høj grad monopoliserede den albanske udenrigshandel.

Brud med et beskytterland resulterede hver gang i afbrydelse af de økonomiske forbindelser med alvorlige følger for Albaniens økonomiske udvikling (afbrudte udviklingsprogrammer, tekniske rådgiveres hjemrejse, kreditstop). Udenrigshandelen med den tidligere beskytter reduceredes til nul. Tre gange blev præcist det samme handlingsforløb gentaget. Sammen med andre negative følger resulterede bruddene i, at Albanien kom til at stå over for en pludselig udskiftning af den så at sige eneste partner. Vi kan derfor tale om en "politisk" udenrigshandel, eller i det mindste om udenrigshandel, der er enorm følsom over for udenrigspolitik.

Efter 1978 sker en betydningsfuld ændring. Albanien synes ikke at ønske flere beskyttere. Dette kan muligvis forklares med, at ledelsen anser sin position for tilstrækkelig stærk, og landets økonomiske situation på et niveau, der gør, at landet kan handle, som var det autonomt. Endvidere er der ikke flere mulige beskyttere tilbage i den kommunistiske blok. Udenrigshandelen foregår mere afbalanceret og er mere alsidig orienteret end tidligere. Valget af handelspartnere foregår politisk objektivt.

Det vil være gavnligt at undersøge disse to faser i Albaniens eksterne økonomiske forbindelser nærmere.

1. Perioden med eksklusive økonomiske partnere (1944-1978)

A. Forbindelserne med Jugoslavien (1944-1948)

Ved anden verdenskrigs afslutning var den albanske regering, der havde ambitioner om en dybtgående økonomisk og social ændring, på den ene side klar over sin politiske afmagt, og på den anden side klar over de uendelig mange problemer, det fattige og krigshærgede Albanien stod over for. Nødvendigheden af hjælp udefra var tydelig, og ganske naturligt valgtes nabolandet Jugoslavien, især naturligt i betragtning af det jugoslaviske kommunistpartis aktive rolle ved oprettelsen af det albanske søsterparti og i betragtning af, at Sovjetunionen gav sin velsignelse hertil. De problemer, de to lande havde indbyrdes i mellemkrigstiden (grænsestridigheder, Jugoslaviens tendens til at blande sig i interne albanske spørgsmål) blev skubbet til side.

Efter 1944 kom et snævert økonomisk samarbejde i stand mellem de to lande. Det besluttedes, at deres økonomiske programmer skulle koordineres, lek'en ligestilles med dinaren, de to lande bliver gjort til et fælles toldområde, og de gensidige toldafgifter afskaffes. Der foreslås oprettelse af fælles virksomheder med henblik på udnyttelse af råvarer, udenrigshandelen og andre områder. Den økonomiske støtte, Jugoslavien gav Albanien i denne periode, anslås til 33 mio US\$. Fra jugoslavisk side påstås det, at dets finansielle støtte i 1947 repræsenterede 57% af Albaniens indtægter og 48% året efter. Den albanske udenrigshandels udvikling i denne periode kan tilskrives Jugoslaviens rolle:

albansk import, som i 1946 kun repræsenterede 2,05 mio US\$, steg året efter brat til 30,27 mio US\$, hvorimod eksporten, der i 1946 repræsenterede 1,91 mio US\$, kun nåede op på 4,75 mio US\$ i 1947. Det ville ikke være muligt at dække et sådant underskud uden jugoslavisk hjælp

Lige så karakteristisk er det fald, der følger efter forværringen af og siden hen afbrydelsen af forbindelserne med Jugoslavien: importen daler (kun 18,18 mio US\$) i 1948 og falder året efter helt ned til 12,89 mio US\$. Eksporten viser stadig en stigning i 1948 (8,33 mio US\$), men også den falder til 5,82 i 1949.

De begivenheder, som medvirkede til at Jugoslavien fjernede sig fra den sovjetiske lejr, er kendte. Albanien fulgte ikke Jugoslavien, magtkampen blev ikke vundet af Tito-tilhængerne, Enver Hoxha forblev ved magten, Albanien støttede sig udelukkende til Sovjetunionen, forbindelserne til Jugoslavien blev afbrudt, og samhandelen ophørte. Det alliancefrie Jugoslaviens beliggenhed mellem Albanien og den sovjetiske blok hjalp imidlertid den albanske regering i 1961, da den besluttede at indtage et andet standpunkt end Khrustjovs Rusland.

B. Forbindelserne med Sovjetunionen (1948-1961)

Sovjetunionen og dets tilhængere indtog fuldstændig Jugoslaviens plads på det økonomiske og handelsmæssige område. Fra 1948 til 1961 havde disse lande næsten monopol på Albaniens udenrigshandel. I denne periode udgjorde Albaniens handel med COMECON-landene en meget høj procentdel. I 1950 var den 99,94%. I 1952 99,70%. I 1955 99,29%. Disse tal er karakteristiske. I perioden 1950-1961 ligger tallet kun 2 gange under 90%, i årene 1956 (87,71%) og 1957 (86,90%), sikkert på grund af de usikre forhold under afstaliniseringsperioden og urolighederne i Ungarn og Polen, og naturligvis i 1960 (88,68%) og 1961 (75,59%) umiddelbart før bruddet.

Størsteparten af handelen foregår naturligvis med Sovjetunionen. Ofte er andelen over 50%, som i 1951 (57,95%) i 1953 (51,96%), 1958 (54,11%), 1960 (53,89%). I 1961 er tallet nede på 36,05%, sidste år af den albansk-sovjetiske venskabsperiode (det bør huskes, at de to lande afbrød de diplomatiske forbindelser 3. december 1961, og at Albanien trak sig ud af Warszawa-pagten i 1968 efter den russiske invasion af Tjekkoslaviet. Albanien fortsatte som medlem af COMECON, medlemskabet blev dog stillet i bero, da Albanien ikke betalte sit bidrag). Året efter ophørte handelen med Sovjetunionen. De østeuropæiske lande deler resten af handelsandelen, først og fremmest det industrialiserede Tjekkoslaviet. Det er interessant, at handelsforbindelserne med disse lande fortsatte, selv efter afbrydelsen af de diplomatiske, økonomiske og handelsmæssige forbindelser med Sovjetunionen, som uden tvivl gav dette sin velsignelse. Derfor var andelen af Albanien's handel med COMECON-landene bortset fra USSR, i 1962 38,09% og fortsatte på dette relativt høje niveau.

I venskabsperioden med Sovjetunionen sås et betragteligt underskud på Albanien's udenrigshandel. Problemet blev løst ved hjælp af betydelig økonomisk støtte fra Rusland, en støtte der anslås til ca. 156 mio US\$ for perioden 1947-1961, og desuden ca. 100 mio US\$ i militær og teknisk støtte. De øvrige østeuropæiske lande hjalp også til: de bidrog med ca. 133 mio US\$.

Begivenhederne i Sovjetunionen forud for afbrydelsen af forbindelserne med Albanien, og måden hvorpå bruddet fandt sted, havde alvorlige følger for den albanske økonomi og handel. Den politiske ledelse i Albanien undlod at afstalinisere, og der var intet, der hindrede den i atter at skabe den samme slags forbindelsesnet, denne gang med Kina.

C. Forbindelserne med Kina (1961-1978)

Fra starten havde dette land været blandt Albanien's mindre bemærkelsesværdige handelspartnere. I 1955 udgjorde dets andel 2,27%. I 1960 nåede andelen op på 6,98%. Året efter 18,41%. Men efter det albansk-sovjetiske brud steg den brat, og var i 1962 50,03%. Året efter udgjorde den 54,73%. Øjensynlig forblev andelen på nogenlunde dette niveau i de år, venskabet mellem Albanien og Kina varede.

Det blev nu Kina, der finansierede den albanske økonomi og underskuddet på landets udenrigshandel. Informationerne om støttens størrelse er modstridende. Kineserne selv taler om 5 mio US\$ for perioden 1957-1978. Fra vestlig side fastholdtes det imidlertid, at den kinesiske støtte fra 1959 til 1975 højst var på 838 mio US\$.

For tredje gang førte den albanske udenrigspolitik til en ensidig udenrigshandel. Det var dog den sidste, men også den længste periode, måske fordi det fjerntliggende Kina i mindre grad kunne true tingenes tilstand i Albanien. Visse ændringer på den politiske arena i Kina resulterede imidlertid i en frygt for at disse ændringer eventuelt kunne spredes, hvilket igen førte til afslutning på det albansk-kinesiske venskab - atter under påskud af ideologisk renhed.

2. Perioden med en mangesidig albansk udenrigshandel (1978-?)

I 1978 havde den albanske ledelse fået mere selvtillid; landets økonomi havde mindre brug for støtte, omkostningerne ved de tre på hinanden følgende brud med Albanien's tre eksklusive partnere ansås for så betragtelige (det må dog understreges, at Albanien på sin side til en vis grad synes at have modvirket disse skader ved ikke at betale sin gæld til de

forhenværende beskyttere), at man ikke søgte efter en fjerde. Udenrigshandlen blev mindre politisk og ideologisk, og der gjordes forsøg på at opnå en vis balance i valget af handelspartnere. På den anden side krævede afbrydelsen af økonomisk støtte, at der på systematisk vis gjordes forsøg på at formindske handelsunderskuddet.

A. Forbindelserne med Fællesskabet

Handelen med Det europæiske Fællesskabs lande var til gavn for disse ændringer. En sådan handel eksisterede ikke i 50'erne. Kina var ikke i stand til at erstatte visse varer fra Sovjetunionen, og dette medvirkede til opsvinget. Situationen forbedredes desuden yderligere efter bruddet med Kina.

Ideologisk var Albanien holdning til Fællesskabet naturligvis absolut negativ. Det er karakteristisk at i skrivelsen af 29. juli 1978 fra Albanien arbejderpartis centralkomite og den albanske regering til de tilsvarende kinesiske myndigheder (med hvilken de to landes "skilsmisse" blev officiel) anklagede Albanien Kina for at "forsøge at støtte Fællesmarkedet og den europæiske union, som er organisationer, der blev oprettet med henblik på fortsat at holde det europæiske proletariat i kapitalistisk trældom, og for at undertrykke og udnytte de andre folkeslag". Trods dette udviklede handelsforbindelserne mellem Albanien og EØF sig rent faktisk positivt. Til betænkningen er vedføjet relevante tabeller, som giver et klart billede af Fællesskabets handel med Albanien i de senere år, både globalt og pr. medlemsland, omfanget og arten af handelen, samt viser, at balancen som oftest er positiv for Fællesskabet. (I perioden 1974-1984 var den negativ i årene 1979, 1980, 1981) [tabellerne er udeladt i denne udgave; BA]

Der bør dog skelnes mellem forskellige medlemslande. Af historiske årsager har Italien vist særlig interesse for forbindelserne med Albanien. Betydningsfulde aftaler er blevet underskrevet, og ministermøder har fundet sted. Særlig betydningsfuld var beslutningen om oprettelsen af en færgeforbindelse mellem

Triest og Durres (et skib på 5.000 brt med en transportkapacitet på 30 last vogne, 200 privatbiler og 750 passagerer, med afgang hver tiende dag). Af EØF-medlemslandene er Italien nu Albanien vigtigste handelspartner og på verdensplan er det nummer to efter Jugoslavien.

Grækenlands forhold til Albanien er af en særlig karakter. Først i maj 1971, under det græske diktatur, oprettedes diplomatiske forbindelser. Rent juridisk er landene imidlertid stadig i krigstilstand. Spørgsmålet om grækerne i Nordpirus står stadig åbent. Alligevel er en række aftaler blevet indgået, samhandelen er vokset i betydelig grad, det nationale græske flyselskab har flyveforbindelser til Tirana, landevejsforbindelsen mellem de to lande er forbedret, men kun yderst lidt trafikeret (fra 1. januar 1985 blev grænseovergangen ved Kakavia genåbnet), og Albanien sælger elektricitet til Grækenland. En for nylig indgået aftale forudsiger færgeforbindelse mellem Korfu og Sarande.

Et andet fællesskabsland med betydelige handelsforbindelser til Albanien, er Den tyske Forbundsrepublik, til trods for at de diplomatiske forbindelser ikke er genoptaget, fordi Albanien altid har krævet krigsskadeerstatning.

Handelsforbindelserne mellem Det forenede Kongerige og Albanien er derimod ganske ubetydelige. Genoprettelsen af de diplomatiske forbindelser forhindres af den tvist, der har

været mellem de to lande siden episoden i Korfustrædet. Det forenede Kongerige kræver en skadeserstatning (ca. 840.000 pund), som det blev tilkendt af den internationale domstol i Haag, for to engelske torpedojageres minesprængning i 1946, og endvidere nægter Det forenede Kongerige at tilbagelevere 2.450 kg guld, som har tilhørt den albanske nationalbank.

Rent objektivt må det anses for rimeligt og naturligt at Det europæiske Fællesskab og Albanien er handelspartnere. Fællesskabets geografiske beliggenhed, dets økonomiske muligheder og dets teknologiske udvikling gør det til en særdeles egnet handelspartner, der ikke stiller Albanien politiske betingelser.

B. Forbindelserne med Jugoslavien

Et interessant bevis på den nye albanske mentalitet på udenrigshandelsområdet er Jugoslaviens genindtræden som Albaniens vigtigste handelspartner. Det er allerede nævnt, at samhandelen var ophørt fuldstændigt efter bruddet i 1948. Skærpelsen og styrkelsen af den ideologiske strid mellem den albanske ledelse og general Titos regime udelukkede i lang tid genoptagelsen af de to landes samhandel. Efter mange års stagnering er den atter gradvist nået op på et højt niveau (ca. 130 mio US\$ i 1983).

Siden 1981 har en ny krise i Kosovo skabt alvorlig splid mellem de to lande (det er velkendt, at denne autonome jugoslaviske provins har et stort antal albanske indbyggere. Der udbrød voldsomme uroligheder i foråret 1981).

Denne situation havde også negative indvirkninger på de økonomiske forbindelser mellem Albanien og Jugoslavien. Det ser ud til at den var medvirkende til den forsinkelse, der opstod i forbindelse med konstruktionen af en 54 km jernbanelinje fra Titograd til Shkoder, der skulle forbinde de to landes jernbanenet. Albanien havde længe anmodet om denne jernbanelinje. Det har endvidere været vanskeligt for albanske lastbiler at køre gennem jugoslavisk territorium. Det er dog tydeligt, at ingen af parterne forsøger at tilspidse situationen, man ønsker ikke at ofre samhandelen på grund af politiske uoverensstemmelser. Frygten for at jugoslaverne vil vanskeliggøre Albaniens kontakt med den øvrige verden og lægge hindringer i vejen for handelsforbindelserne med andre lande, vil måske tilskynde albanerne til nærmere forbindelser med Vesteuropa.

C. Forbindelserne med Tyrkiet

På det seneste spores en vis genoplivelse af forbindelserne med Tyrkiet: gen sidige ministerbesøg, underskrivelse af en handelsaftale i 1982, som blev fornyet året efter, og en luftfartsaftale i 1984. Den påtænkte rute er dog ikke åbnet endnu.

D. Forbindelserne med USA og Kina

Et andet eksempel på, at Albanien udenrigshandel er upolitisk er den efter albanske forhold ikke ubetydelige samhandel med USA, der beløber sig til flere mio US\$, og dette på trods af manglende diplomatiske forbindelser, som Albanien på særdeles tydelig vis konstant har understreget sin modvilje mod at oprette.

Endvidere synes det ideologiske og politiske brud med Kina ikke at have forhindret økonomiske forbindelser med dette land. I foråret 1983 besøgte en kinesisk handelsdelegation Tirana.

Siden 1978 er antallet af albanske handelspartnere mangedoblet, og valget af disse sker ikke som før kun på baggrund af politiske og ideologiske kriterier. Denne udvikling har allerede gavnet Fællesskabet og kan muligvis udnyttes bedre i fremtiden.

II. ALBANIENS EKSTERNE ØKONOMISKE FORBINDELSER - SVAGHEDER OG MULIGHEDER

Efter undersøgelsen af det mest karakteristiske ved den albanske handel, det vil sige at den indtil 1978 var vendt i kun en retning ad gangen og altid fulgte de meget pludselige vendinger, den albanske udenrigspolitik tog, er det nødvendigt at undersøge visse andre karakteristika. Der synes at eksistere visse særegenheder, som spiller en rolle for fremtidsudsigterne. Endvidere er det nyttigt at give en kortfattet oversigt over udbuddet af albanske produkter og de behov, som må dækkes via import.

1. Svagheder

At have økonomiske forbindelser med Albanien synes ikke at være så ligetil. Det er forbundet med alvorlige vanskeligheder, som lægger hindringer i vejen for udviklingen, hindringer, som de der ønsker samhandel med Albanien bør tage ad notam, hindringer som albanerne også selv må fjerne, hvis de ønsker at udvikle disse forbindelser.

A. Lovgivningsmæssige problemer

De lovgivningsmæssige rammer, inden for hvilke Albaniens eksterne økonomiske forbindelser kan udfolde sig, er særdeles ugunstige, ugunstigere end i andre lande, der har et lignende politisk og økonomisk system.

Den albanske grundlov, der i artikel 47, stk. 1, siger, at "udenrigshandelen er et statsmonopol" kundgør i artikel 28 følgende:

"Overførsel af og oprettelse af udenlandske økonomiske og kreditgivende virksomheder samt andre institutioner eller virksomheder, som oprettes sammen med borgerlige revisionistiske kapitalistiske monopoler og lande, savel som lån fra disse, er forbudt i den albanske socialistiske folkerepublik".

Hvis artiklen fortsat kommer til at gælde og gennemføres, som den står, vil den være en effektiv bremse for Albaniens samarbejde med andre lande og for landets økonomiske udvikling.

I det syvende femårsprogram (1981-1985) er der for første gang et særligt afsnit om udenrigshandelen. I 1977 oprettedes et særligt ministerium for udenrigshandel. Statsorganisationer med navne, der genspejler deres kompetenceområde, såsom AGROEKSPORT, ALBIMPORT, INDUSTRIALEKSPORT, METALIMPORT, MINERAL EKSPORT, TRANSSHQIP beskæftiger sig med forskellige grene af landets udenrigshandel. Periodiske udrensninger blandt det politiske og administrative personale har været en hindring for denne mekanismes gnidningsløse funktion. Et karakteristisk eksempel på de følger, den slags forholdsregler kan få for udenrigshandelen, er, at samtidig med udrensningen i 1975 af handelsministeren, industriministeren og formanden for statens planlægningskommission, en udrensning, der også bredte sig til andre niveauer af statsapparatet, skete der et betydeligt fald i Albaniens samhandel med de højtudviklede lande med fri økonomi.

B. Økonomiske problemer

Albanien står over for et meget enkelt, men også næsten uløseligt økonomisk problem med hensyn til de eksterne økonomiske forbindelser, og løsningen er ikke fundet endnu. Måske kan det ikke løses. For at udvikle forbindelserne må importen øges. Men betalingen for denne forudsætter en eksportforøgelse. Forøget eksport kræver imidlertid forøget produktivitet, altså flere kapitalgoder, hvilket det ikke er muligt at fremskaffe, eftersom låntagning er forbudt, og i betragtning af, at disse kapitalgoder ikke produceres i Albanien.

C. Infrastrukturproblemer

Udviklingen af Albanien internationale handel er snævert forbundet med en udvikling af transportnettet. På dette område er Albanien langt tilbage.

Vejnettet er middelmådigt og kun en tredjedel af de ca. 6.000 km af dette vejnet er asfalteret. Jernbanenet er kun ca. 400 km. Problemet med dets tilslutning til det internationale jernbanenet er særdeles vanskeligt.

Lufttransport til og fra Albanien foretages af østeuropæiske flyselskaber og det græske flyselskab. Albanien indgik for nylig en civil luftfartsaftale med Tyrkiet, men indtil nu er flyforbindelse med dette land ikke oprettet. Betingelserne disse flyselskaber pålægges er meget uøkonomiske, f.eks. må Olympic Airways, der en gang om ugen flyver fra Ioannina til Tirana, ikke overflyve den græsk-albanske grænse. For at beflyve ruten er det nødvendigt først at flyve næsten til Brindisi, og derpå foretage indflyvningen til Albanien ved Durres.

Landets vigtigste havn er Durres, som ligger 220 km fra Bari og 150 km fra Brindisi.

Den årlige havnekapacitet er på over 2 mio tons varer. Den albanske handelsflåde dækker ganske vist 30% af søtransporten til og fra landet, men består af kun 20 skibe med et displacement på i alt 56.127 tons.

Hvad angår trafik og transport er der med sikkerhed meget at tage fat på i Albanien fremover.

2. Muligheder

Mulighederne for forbedring er begrænset af faktorer, der enten ikke kan ændres, eller kun kan ændres ganske langsomt. Albanien størrelse og befolkning giver ikke håb om, at landet engang vil blive til en vigtig handelspartner for Fællesskabet. Den nuværende situation giver ingen forventning om, at de økonomiske og handelsmæssige forbindelser vil kunne udvides væsentligt i den nærmeste fremtid. Visse beslutninger og valg fra albansk side vil dog kunne give meget positive resultater.

Under alle omstændigheder er den stadige stigning i Albanien handel et opmuntrende element. Albanske kilder oplyser, at i 1960 var udenrigshandelen 6 gange større end i 1938, i 1970 13 gange, i 1975 23,5 og i 1980 35,8 gange større.

A. Eksport

Oplysningerne om eksportstrukturen er utilstrækkelige og forældede. Omkring 1968 var

strukturen ifølge albansk kilde følgende: olieprodukter 24%, mineraler 31%, fødevarerindustriprodukter 15%, landbrugsprodukter 20,5%, håndværksprodukter 1,5%. En anden albansk kilde anfører, at i 1980 var 70% af eksportprodukterne forarbejdede.

Krom er det vigtigste albanske produkt. Landet er blandt de mest betydningsfulde kromproducenter og -eksportører. Muligvis den tredjestørste producent og næststørste eksportør. Det siges, at produktionen i 1980 nåede op på 955.000 tons, og det tyder på, at 80% blev eksporteret til vestlige lande. Denne del af udenrigshandelen indbringer en stor del af den fremmede valuta (44% i 1979). Hvis produktionen skal forøges, må mineraludvindingen hele tiden foregå i endnu dybere liggende jordlag, hvilket kræver et særligt teknisk udstyr.

Endvidere er olien (som er tung) og dennes biprodukter vigtige albanske eksportprodukter (i 1979 var de de næstvigtigste). Her vil en forøgelse af produktionen dog kræve, at der erhverves moderne teknisk udstyr, samtidig med at de eksisterende installationer må gøres tidssvarende.

Også andre albanske industriprodukter er af betydning, især beklædningsgenstande. Derudover eksporteres nikkel og kobber, som er af høj kvalitet. Tomater, citrusfrugter og tobak er de vigtigste landbrugsprodukter. Salget af strøm til Jugoslavien og Grækenland er af en vis betydning (henholdsvis 392 mio kwh og 96 mio kwh i 1979).

Mulighederne for en betydelig forøgelse af eksporten af disse produkter er næppe sandsynlig inden for den nærmeste fremtid.

B. Import

Den meget begrænsede andel, forarbejdede forbrugsgoder udgør af den albanske import, er et karakteristisk element: kun 10% i 1968. De vigtigste importvarer (især fra Vesten) er jern, stål, mekanisk og teknisk udstyr af enhver art (det er allerede blevet fastslået, at de albanske mangler på dette område er særdeles store, og det er en grundlæggende forudsætning for udviklingen af landets økonomi at de bliver dækket), transportmidler, brændstoffer, kemiske produkter, byggematerialer.

Det må understreges, at Albanien i vid udstrækning forsøger at få kontant betaling i stærk valuta for sin eksport, og at afregne sin import ved hjælp af clearing.

C. Turisme

Albaniens muligheder som turistland er store og bør omtales. Landet har en mangeartet og smuk natur, arkæologiske seværdigheder, samt byer som Gjirokaster og Verati [Berat], der kan betegnes som museumsbyer, idet de har bibeholdt deres traditionelle arkitektur. Turistinfrastruktur eksisterer nærmest ikke, og det er usikkert, om de albanske myndigheder indtil nu har ønsket at fremme tilstedeværelsen af mange udlændinge i deres land.

KONKLUSION

1. De økonomiske og handelsmæssige forbindelser mellem Fællesskabet og Albanien er for indeværende særdeles begrænsede. For Fællesskabet har de kun perifer betydning, men for Albanien er de klart af stor vigtighed.

2. I lang tid (indtil 1978) skyldtes en stor del af den økonomiske fremgang i Albanien den hjælp, som blev givet af de tre på hinanden følgende beaktyttermagter. Denne hjælp standsede uden at blive erstattet fra anden side. Det nuværende tekniske udstyr må udskiftes. Naturligvis er yderligere investering nødvendig for bibeholdelsen af tilfredsstillende udviklingstakt.

3. Derfor, selv om der selvfølgelig rent faktisk ikke er uendelige udviklingsmuligheder for de økonomiske forbindelser med Fællesskabet, ville det dog være muligt i væsentlig grad at forbedre disse, hvis den albanske regering tog de nødvendige forholdsregler i denne retning. Fællesskabet bør opmuntre enhver tilkendegivelse af denne art.

A. Albaniens geografiske beliggenhed, politiske og diplomatiske særprægethed og Enver Hoxha's nylige død, som er medvirkende til at skabe usikkerhed om udviklingen i dette land, en udvikling, som kan have alvorlige følger for Balkan og Middelhavsområdet, er noget Fællesskabet gør ret i at tillægge større opmærksomhed.

5. Menneskerettighederne i Albanien og det græske mindretal i Nordpirus' skæbne er spørgsmål, man til enhver tid bør være opmærksom på inden for rammerne af Fællesskabets forbindelser med Albanien.

6. Udviklingen af økonomiske og handelsmæssige forbindelser med Albanien fremmes ikke af handlinger som dem, der for nylig resulterede i, at fællesskabsborgere blev dræbt af albanske grænsevagter.

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FINANCE DEVELOPMENT

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[March 2000, Volume 37, Number 1](#)**The Rise and Fall of Albania's Pyramid Schemes**[Christopher Jarvis](#)

During 1996-97, Albania was convulsed by the dramatic rise and collapse of several huge financial pyramid schemes. This article discusses the crisis and the steps other countries can take to prevent similar disasters.

The pyramid scheme phenomenon in Albania is important because its scale relative to the size of the economy was unprecedented, and because the political and social consequences of the collapse of the pyramid schemes were profound. At their peak, the nominal value of the pyramid schemes' liabilities amounted to almost half of the country's GDP. Many Albanians—about two-thirds of the population—invested in them. When the schemes collapsed, there was uncontained rioting, the government fell, and the country descended into anarchy and a near civil war in which some 2,000 people were killed. Albania's experience has significant implications for other countries in which conditions are similar to those that led to the schemes' rise in Albania, and others can learn from the way the Albanian authorities handled—and mishandled—the crisis.

Why the pyramid schemes grew

The wide appeal of Albania's schemes can be attributed to several factors, including Albanians' unfamiliarity with financial markets; the deficiencies of the country's formal financial system, which encouraged the development of an informal market and, within this market, of the pyramid schemes; and failures of governance.

When Albania started the transition from central planning to a market economy, it was the poorest and most isolated and backward country in Europe. For centuries, Albania had been largely unknown and inaccessible, and, from 1945 to 1985, its isolation was compounded by the rigid communist dictatorship of Enver Hoxha, which eliminated almost all forms of private property and virtually cut the country off from outside influences and information. When transition began in 1991, the country had been reduced to desperate poverty, and the vast majority of its population was unfamiliar with market institutions and practices.

Although Albania's transition to a market economy was rapid and quite successful, financial sector reform was very limited. Albania's formal financial system was rudimentary. There were few private banks. The three state banks, which held 90 percent of deposits, offered positive real interest rates but had growing portfolios of bad loans, prompting the Bank of Albania to impose tight credit ceilings on them. With the banks unable to satisfy private sector demand for credit, an informal credit market based on family ties and financed by remittances grew. The informal lending companies were initially regarded as benign and even as making an important economic contribution. Operating alongside them, however, were deposit-taking companies that invested on their own account instead of making loans. These companies were the ones that turned into pyramid schemes.

There were also governance problems, both in the financial sector and more generally. The regulatory framework was inadequate, and it was not clear who had responsibility for supervising the informal market. Even after the approval of a banking act in February 1996 that appeared to give the Bank of Albania the power to close illegal deposit-taking institutions, the central bank could not obtain the government's support. Indeed, the government was supportive of the companies: senior government officials frequently appeared at company functions, and, in November 1996, even as the pyramid schemes began to crumble, the prime minister and the speaker of the parliament accepted medals in honor of the anniversary of one of the companies. During the 1996 elections, several of the companies made campaign contributions to the ruling Democratic Party. There were allegations that many government officials benefited personally from the companies.

How the schemes operated

In a typical pyramid scheme, a fund or company attracts investors by offering them very high returns; these returns are paid to the first investors out of the funds received from those who invest later. The scheme is insolvent—liabilities exceed assets—from the day it opens for business. However, it flourishes initially, as news about the high returns spreads and more investors are drawn in. Encouraged by the high payouts, and in some cases by showcase investments and ostentatious spending by the operators, still more people are drawn in, and the scheme grows until the interest and principal due to the early investors exceeds the money paid in by new investors. To attract new investors, a scheme may raise interest rates, but the larger interest payments soon force it to raise rates again. Eventually, the high rates begin to arouse suspicion or the scheme finds itself unable to make interest payments. When investors try to get their money out, they discover the truth about the scheme, whose demise is swift—and usually accompanied by acts of outright theft by the operators, if they are not caught first.

Some of the Albanian companies meet this definition exactly: they were pure pyramid schemes, with no real assets. Other cases are more ambiguous. Some of the largest of the companies—in particular VEFA, Gjallica, and Kamberi—had substantial real investments. They were also widely believed to be engaged in criminal activities—including violating United Nations sanctions by smuggling goods into the former Yugoslavia—that were thought to be the source of the high returns they paid. And they had been in business for a long time, in some cases since 1992. However, even if they had not been pyramid schemes from the outset, at some point, probably during early 1996, these companies too became pyramid schemes. When they collapsed, it was clear that their liabilities massively exceeded their assets.

Mania: the events of 1996

Two events set the stage for the pyramid-scheme mania of late 1996. First, at the end of 1995, United Nations sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia were suspended, eliminating an important source of income (smuggling) for the companies. In January 1996, the leading companies increased their interest rates from 4-5 percent a month to 6 percent a month, or almost 100 percent annually in real terms. (Annual inflation in Albania was 5 percent in 1995 and 17 percent in 1996.) Second, the uncertainty created by approaching parliamentary elections, which were to be held in May, prompted the companies to raise their rates again, this time to 8 percent a month, or a real annual rate of well over 100 percent. During the same period, new schemes entered the market, offering even higher rates. In early 1996, two new pyramid schemes—Xhafferri and Populli—were created, and an already existing scheme that had no real investments—Sude—stepped up its activities, offering interest rates of 12-19 percent a month.

The proliferation of schemes had baleful effects. First, more depositors were drawn in. Although VEFA had the largest liabilities, it had only 85,000 depositors. Xhafferri and Populli between them attracted nearly 2 *million*

depositors—in a country with a population of 3.5 million—within a few months. Second, the investment funds felt pressured to compete and began to offer higher interest rates on deposits. In July, Kamberi raised its monthly interest rate to 10 percent. In September, Populli began offering more than 30 percent a month. In November, Xhafferi offered to treble depositors' money in three months; Sude responded with an offer to double principal in two months. By November, the face value of the schemes' liabilities totaled \$1.2 billion. Albanians sold their houses to invest in the schemes; farmers sold their livestock. The mood is vividly captured by a resident who said that, in the fall of 1996, Tirana smelled and sounded like a slaughterhouse, as farmers drove their animals to market to invest the proceeds in the pyramid schemes.

Throughout the year, the government was a passive spectator to the unfolding crisis. Although the enormity of the problem became clear when the Bank of Albania discovered that VEFA's deposits in the banking system were equivalent to \$120 million (5 percent of GDP), and despite repeated warnings from the IMF and the World Bank, the finance ministry did not warn the public about the schemes until October. Even then, however, it drew a false and misleading distinction between companies with real investments, which were believed to be solvent, and "pure pyramid schemes." When it was suggested that some companies might be surviving by laundering money, President Sali Berisha came to their defense. Press and public reaction was mostly negative: the IMF was accused of trying to close down Albania's most successful firms. In November, in response to outside pressure, the government set up a committee to investigate the schemes. The committee never met. On November 19, Sude defaulted on its payments, and the collapse began.

Collapse

Sude's collapse shook the public's confidence in all of the companies and new deposits dried up. An attempt by VEFA, Kamberi, Silva, and Cenaj to convince depositors of their soundness by lowering monthly interest rates to 5 percent failed. In January 1997, Sude and Gjallica declared bankruptcy, triggering riots. The other schemes soon also ceased to make payments. The government belatedly took some useful steps. First, it refused to compensate depositors for their losses, which made achieving economic stabilization after the crisis much easier than it would otherwise have been. Second, it began to move against some of the companies. In January 1997, it froze the bank accounts of Xhafferi and Populli, which amounted to \$250 million (10 percent of GDP). The Bank of Albania, on its own initiative, began to limit daily withdrawals from bank accounts to prevent other schemes from emptying their accounts. In February, parliament passed a law banning pyramid schemes (but not defining them). However, the government continued to differentiate between companies with real investments and pure pyramid schemes and did not move against the largest companies.

By March 1997, Albania was in chaos. The government had lost control of the south. Many in the army and police force had deserted, and 1 million weapons had been looted from the armories. Evacuation of foreign nationals and mass emigration of Albanians began. The government was forced to resign. President Berisha agreed to hold new parliamentary elections before the end of June, and an interim coalition government was appointed.

The interim government inherited a desperate situation. Some 2,000 people had been killed in the violence that followed the pyramid schemes' collapse. Large parts of the country were no longer within the government's control. Government revenues collapsed as customs posts and tax offices were burned. By the end of June, the lek had depreciated against the dollar by 40 percent; prices increased by 28 percent in the first half of 1997. Many industries temporarily ceased production, and trade was interrupted. Meanwhile, the major pyramid schemes continued to hang on to their assets, proclaim their solvency, and resist closure.

Winding up the schemes

Despite the many obstacles it faced, the interim government, aided by the international community, made impressive progress in restoring order and stabilizing the economy. Winding up the pyramid schemes proved to be more difficult. The government encountered resistance from both the operators and the outgoing parliamentarians, many of whom were reported to have invested in the schemes. Thus, it was not until July that the newly elected parliament passed a law, drafted with assistance from the IMF and the World Bank, mandating the appointment of foreign administrators from international accounting firms to liquidate the schemes.

The administrators appointed under the new law were required to report regularly to the government but otherwise had complete independence. They were given broad powers to carry on the companies' businesses, pay their debts, sell their assets, fire staff and managers, seize the assets of individuals connected with the schemes, and hire experts to trace assets abroad. However, by November 1997, when the administrators took up their duties, the schemes' liquid assets had shrunk considerably. The schemes' owners challenged the new law in the courts and tried to intimidate the administrators with threats of violence. It took several months to dislodge the owners, partly because the administrators needed their cooperation in finding the companies' assets. The administrators did not gain full control of all of the companies until March 1998. Owners who had not fled were jailed, and whatever assets remained were prepared for sale. But much had been lost already.

Effect on the economy

Few studies have been done on the macroeconomic effect of pyramid schemes on the scale of those in Albania, which, fortunately, are extremely rare. The closest analogy to such schemes is the asset bubble, whose economic impact is due to changes in perceived wealth. As a bubble expands, people believe themselves to be better off than they actually are, and their demand for goods and money increases, leading to a deterioration in a country's external current account as well as increased output or accelerated inflation or both. If the bubble attracts foreign investors, capital inflows might be sufficient to fund the current account deficit. After the bubble bursts, perceived wealth falls dramatically. Demand for goods and money, as well as output and inflation rates, can be expected to decrease, while the current account balance is likely to improve.

Some of these effects were observed in Albania but appear to have been limited and short lived. Although the current account of the balance of payments (excluding official transfers) deteriorated by about 2 percent of GDP in 1996, to 9.1 percent of GDP, because of a 35 percent increase in imports, this consumption boom seems not to have been the main factor driving inflation. The impact of the schemes' rise on output, which grew at nearly the same rate—9 percent—in 1996 as in the previous three years, is also unclear.

The collapse of the schemes seems to have had a major short-term economic impact, but the most damaging effects came from the civil disorder it precipitated. Output fell by about 7 percent in 1997, with most of the decline being due to interruptions in production during the civil disorder. The increase in the inflation rate to more than 40 percent in 1997 can be attributed almost entirely to the depreciation of the lek and the sharp rise in the fiscal deficit caused by the loss of government revenues during the period of civil disorder. Recorded imports fell by more than 25 percent, reflecting not only the loss of savings but also the disruptions in trade and increased smuggling. Capital inflows declined but did not turn into net outflows.

The long-term effects of the pyramid scheme phenomenon are likely to be limited, reflecting not only the resilience of the Albanian economy but also—and, perhaps, most important—the government's adjustment efforts and its refusal to bail out depositors. Prices and wages are extremely flexible in Albania; as a result, the government was able to cut real public sector wages substantially in 1997 (by leaving nominal wages unchanged), and the economy

suffered no loss of competitiveness when the lek appreciated. The new government's willingness to tackle the budget deficit and undertake long-overdue structural reforms was also crucial. However, the social effects were profound. In addition to the loss of life, thousands of people were impoverished either by their unwise investments in the pyramid schemes or by the destruction of their property in the ensuing violence. Less tangible, but also significant, are the effects on confidence in Albania. The resilience of the Albanian people is considerable and has been more severely tested in the past. But the pyramid scheme phenomenon was a sobering setback.

How to deal with pyramid schemes

Albania's experience contains some important lessons for other countries. There are steps governments can take to make the growth of pyramid schemes less likely. These include establishing a well-functioning formal financial system, setting up a regulatory framework that covers informal as well as formal markets and has clear lines of responsibility for supervision and action, and tackling general governance problems. Although preventing pyramid schemes is not the most important reason for establishing good governance, the Albanian experience is a powerful reminder of the social costs of unchecked criminality.

When pyramid schemes emerge, they should be dealt with swiftly and firmly. Companies believed to be operating pyramid schemes should be investigated. By definition, the liabilities of pyramid schemes exceed their assets, and the schemes fund payments to investors out of new investment inflows. To determine whether a company is operating a pyramid scheme, it is necessary to find out if it has real investments and if these investments are likely to be sufficient to cover its liabilities. The investigation can be conducted by the police, a government ministry, or the central bank. The key point is that the investigators should be able to recognize financial fraud and also to assess the value of company assets. If such expertise does not exist in the country, then the investigation can be conducted by outsiders; the IMF and the World Bank should be prepared to help governments find qualified outsiders, if necessary, either from other governments or from large international accounting firms with expertise in this area.

The investigation should be swift. If a company is found to be operating a pyramid scheme, it should be closed immediately. Allowing schemes to continue will result only in more inflows of deposits and greater losses. Governments can close these companies for a variety of legal reasons: the companies may be taking unlicensed deposits or operating businesses without licenses; they may be evading taxes; or they may be liable for prosecution for straightforward fraud.

If there is a strong presumption that companies are pyramid schemes, the government should freeze and, if necessary, seize their assets during the investigation. Once an investigation of a pyramid scheme has begun, the operators will try to steal as much of the assets as possible before the truth comes out. This cannot be entirely prevented, but freezing any assets held in the formal financial sector and seizing other assets that can be easily disposed of may save depositors a great deal of money.

Once a scheme is closed, all assets should be seized and turned over to administrators, who could be government accountants or, if these officials do not have sufficient independence or expertise, accountants from an international firm with an insolvency practice. Legislation may be needed to void contracts made by the companies in the last several months (to prevent theft by transfer to associated parties) to give administrators full control over the assets of the companies and protect them from legal challenges.

The government should make it clear from the outset that it will not compensate depositors for their losses. If this is not done, the fiscal costs are likely to be ruinous, and the moral hazard considerable.

Finally, the IMF and the World Bank should be aware of the possibilities of pyramid schemes emerging when the conditions for their growth are present and should be vigilant in warning governments about them. When they can, the IMF and the World Bank should insist on action.

This article is based on Christopher Jarvis, 1999, "The Rise and Fall of the Pyramid Schemes in Albania," IMF Working Paper 99/98 (International Monetary Fund: Washington).

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Books

About this Book

In this spellbinding novel, written in Albania and smuggled into France a few pages at a time in the 1980s, Kadare denounces with rare force the machinery of the dictatorial regime, drawing us back to the ancient roots of Western civilization and tyranny.

The partner to **The Successor**, **Agamemnon's Daughter** is an impeccably crafted, psychologically incisive tale of a disappointed lover's odyssey through a single day and his gradual realization of how the utter cruelty of dictatorship can express itself even in matters of the heart.

The day begins as the unnamed narrator waits in vain for his lover Suzana, daughter of "The Successor," even though he knows that she will have to sacrifice their love for her father's success. As he moves through the crowded streets on the great socialist holiday, May 1st, the narrator recalls episodes of his life that illustrate the vast system of absurdity, paranoia, and cruelty that was Albania under dictator Enver Hoxha.

Finally, as he watches Suzana in her decorated viewing box, the narrator realizes what her sacrifice truly means. Like that of Agamemnon's daughter Iphigenia, which loosed the bloody nine years of the Trojan War, Suzana's will serve to open a new floodgate of persecution and purging, from which no one will be safe.

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This book also showcases two stories by this European master of fiction, "The Blinding Order," a parable about the uses of terror set in the Ottoman Empire, and "The Great Wall," a chilling duet between a Chinese official and a soldier in the invading army of the great Central Asian conqueror of the 14th century, Tamerlane.

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About this Author

Ismail Kadare is Albania's best-known poet and novelist. His first novel, **The General of the Dead Army**, made his name in Albania. After 1986, under the Communist regime, Kadare's work was smuggled out of Albania by his French publisher, Éditions Fayard, and stored in safe keeping for later publication. Translations of his many novels have been published in more than forty countries. In June 2005, Kadare was named the winner of the inaugural Man Booker International Prize for his lifelong achievements in fiction.

Both **The Successor** and **Agamemnon's Daughter** are translated from the French by David Bellos.

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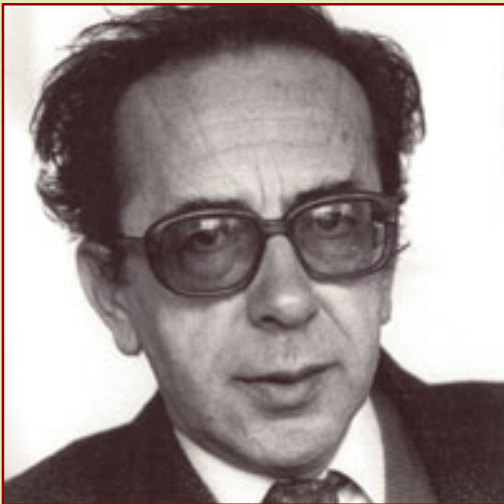
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🇬🇧 Albanian authors in translation

Robert Elsie

◄ **Modern Authors from Albania** (late 20th - 21st centuries)



Ismail KADARE.

Biography

Poetry

Prose

Ismail KADARE

POETRY

Poetry

Poetry,
How did you find your way to me?
My mother does not know Albanian well,
She writes letters like Aragon, without commas and periods,
My father roamed the seas in his youth,
But you have come,
Walking down the pavement of my quiet city of stone,
And knocked timidly at the door of my three-storey house,

At Number 16.

There are many things I have loved and hated in life,
For many a problem I have been an 'open city',
But anyway...
Like a young man returning home late at night,
Exhausted and broken by his nocturnal wanderings,
Here too am I, returning to you,
Worn out after another escapade.

And you,
Not holding my infidelity against me,
Stroke my hair tenderly,
My last stop,
Poetry.

(Yalta 1959)

[*Poezia*, from the volume *Vjersha dhe poema zë zgjedhura*, Tirana: Naim Frashëri 1966, p. 27, translated from the Albanian by Robert Elsie, and first published in English in *An elusive eagle soars, anthology of modern Albanian poetry*, London: Forest Books 1993, p. 76]

Childhood

My childhood - ink-stained fingers,
Bells in the morning,
The muezzin at dusk,
Collections of cigar boxes and old stamps,
Trading one Ceylon

For two Luxembourg.
Thus they passed,
Childhood days,
Chasing after a rag ball, raising dust and cries,
A rag ball,
Made of grey Albanian rags.

(1958)

[*Fëminia*, from the volume *Shekulli im*, Tirana: Naim Frashëri 1961, translated from the Albanian by Robert Elsie, and first published in English in *An elusive eagle soars, anthology of modern Albanian poetry*, London: Forest Books 1993, p. 77]

And when my memory

And when my fading memory,
Like the after-midnight trams,
Stops only at the main stations,
I will not forget you.

I will remember
That quiet evening, endless in your eyes,
The stifled sob upon my shoulder,
Like snow that cannot be brushed off.

The separation came
And I departed, far from you.
Nothing unusual,
But some night

Someone's fingers will weave themselves into your hair,
My distant fingers, stretching across the miles.

[*Edhe kur kujtesa*, from the volume *Shekulli im*, Tirana: Naim Frashëri 1961, translated from the Albanian by Robert Elsie, and first published in English in *An elusive eagle soars, anthology of modern Albanian poetry*, London: Forest Books 1993, p. 78]

Longing for Albania

I was filled with longing for Albania
Tonight as I returned home on the trolley,
The smoke of a *Partizani* cigarette in the hand of a Russian
Curled bluish, twirled upwards
As if whispering to me, its compatriot,
In the language of the Albanians.

I long to stroll through the streets of Tiranë in the evening,
Where I used to get into mischief,
And through the streets where I never got into mischief.
Those old wooden doorways know me,
They will still hold a grudge against me
And will snub their noses at me,
But I won't mind
Because I am filled with longing.
I long to stroll through the lanes full of dry leaves,
Dry leaves, autumn leaves,
For which comparisons can so easily be found.

I was filled with longing for Albania,

For that great, wide and deep sky,
For the azure course of the Adriatic waves,
For clouds at sunset ablaze like castles,
For the Albanian Alps with their white hair and green beards,
For the nylon nights fluttering in the breeze,
For the mists, like red Indians, on the prowl at dawn,
For the locomotives and the horses
That huff and puff, dripping in sweat,
For the cypresses, the herds and graves
I was filled with longing.
I was filled with longing
For the Albanians.

I was filled with longing and swiftly journey there,
Flying over the mists, as over desires.
How far and how beloved you are, my country.
The airport will tremble with the droning,
The mists will hang in suspense over the chasms.
Surely those who invented the jet engine
Must have been far from their country once.

(Moscow 1960)

[*Malli i Shqipërisë*, from the volume *Shekulli im*, Tirana: Naim Frashëri 1961, translated from the Albanian by Robert Elsie, and first published in English in *An elusive eagle soars, anthology of modern Albanian poetry*, London: Forest Books 1993, p. 79]

The cataracts

The cataracts cascade downwards
Like spirited white horses,
Their manes full of foam and a rainbow of hues.

But suddenly, at the edge of the gorge,
They fall on their forelegs,
They break, oh, their white legs,

And die at the foot of the rocks.
Now in their lifeless eyes
The frozen sky reflects.

[*Kataraktet*, from the volume *Vjersha dhe poema zë zgjedhura*, Tirana: Naim Frashëri 1966, p. 30, translated from the Albanian by Robert Elsie, and first published in English in *An elusive eagle soars, anthology of modern Albanian poetry*, London: Forest Books 1993, p. 81]

The old cinema

Old cinema,
Abandoned cinema
Where no films, not even reruns, have been shown for a long time,
Where the audiences no longer make a clatter with their seats,
Where peanuts are no longer sold
At intermission.

The stained screen,
The broken speakers,
The empty seats like lines unwritten.
Pensive and full of nostalgia

I stare from the doorway
At this poem of seats, long and abandoned.

Childhood cinema,
Tumbledown cinema,
I've seen so many countries,
I've seen so many auditoriums,
But none of them have I entered with such joy
As you,
Shabby old cinema,
Wonderful and precious to me!

Nowhere have I felt better,
Not in luxurious halls of shining velvet,
With a couple of blondes at my side.
To you I come
In the company of a gypsy or two.

Coins, coins,
Money collected with difficulty,
Jingling merrily at the ticket-booth,
The posters by the mosque
And by the Bazaar Cafe
Drawn by Qani the doorman himself.

One poster said:
'Soviet film',
Another for the same film said:
'Czech film',
But no one really cared,
We forgave you everything,
Dear old

Cinema.

On that bit of screen
We saw a bit of the whole world,
For the first time.
On six square metres
The world had no limits,
The world was splendid
Even though the screen was patched up.

We too were patched up,
Patched up was the Republic,
Time, elbows, States were patched up,
But the glossiest of screens
Had never seen
A sparkle like the one
In our eyes.

Old cinema,
Abandoned cinema,
Seats where childhood days
Sat in rows.
Childhood days,
Always chattering,
Like a row of birds
On a telephone wire.

Old cinema,
Abandoned cinema,
Heavy, long and sunken seats.
As old as I get,
Wherever I go,

Like a porter I'll carry them
With me, those seats.

[*Kinemaja e vjetër*, from the volume *Vjersha dhe poema zë zgjedhura*, Tirana: Naim Frashëri 1966, p. 35, translated from the Albanian by Robert Elsie, and first published in English in *An elusive eagle soars, anthology of modern Albanian poetry*, London: Forest Books 1993, p. 82]

Train timetables

I love those train timetables at little railway stations,
Standing on the wet platform and contemplating the infinity of the tracks.
The distant howl of a locomotive. What, what?
(No one understands the nebulous language of steam engines)

Passenger trains. Tank cars. Freight cars full of ore
Endlessly pass by.
Thus pass the days of your life through the station of your being,
Filled with voices, noise, signals
And the heavy ore of memory.

[*Këto orare trenash*, from the volume *Përse mendohen këto male*, Tirana: Naim Frashëri 1964, translated from the Albanian by Robert Elsie, and first published in English in *An elusive eagle soars, anthology of modern Albanian poetry*, London: Forest Books 1993, p. 84]

Requiem for Mayakovski

I ate at the same table with his assassins
At the writers' vacation house
in Dubulti, in Yalta.

They smiled and talked of socialist realism,
While his blood
spattered their car windows,
Their jackets, armchairs, salaries
And the ruddy face of the critic Yermilov.

They thumped their chests and talked of socialist realism
In the presidium chamber of red velvet
under the emblem with a star,
While the Russian winter
froze him,
Stretched out upon the black earth,
only to be thawed out in April.

Obscure forces dressed in socialist garb,
A pack of lousy critics, speculators, careerists,
Took up the attack with the age-old refrain of the mediocre:
"You were great, but we got you."

There stands his bronze statue in Mayakovski Square,
It rose and glumly observed the years to come.
Behind the crowd of his assassins, whom he knew,
He saw the first clouds of the counter-revolution darken the sky.

[*Rekuiem për Majakovskin*, from the volume *Koha*, Tirana: Naim Frashëri
1976, translated from the Albanian by Robert Elsie, and first published in
English in *An elusive eagle soars, anthology of modern Albanian poetry*,
London: Forest Books 1993, p. 85]

What are these mountains thinking about

1

What are these lofty mountains thinking about
As the sun sets in the distance beyond the highway?
A mountaineer sets out at the fall of night,
His long rifle
Casting a hundred-mile-long shadow on the ground.

The shadow of the rifle hurries
Over mountains, plains, villages;
The shadow of its barrels hastens through the dusk.
I too set forth along the hillside
With a thought in my mind
Somewhere.

The shadow of the thought and the shadow of the rifle
Cross and collide in the twilight.

2

This is how you have always set out, Albania,
On your long legs
And with a long rifle.
You wandered without knowing where to go,
Onwards toward the morning full of clouds and mist,
Grey and ponderous, as though born of night.

3

Cloudbursts ate away at the land
And bared the bases of the cliffs.
Thus, the centuries have gnawed away at your body
Until your very sinew and ribs were exposed.

Sinew, sinew and ribs,
Only boulders, rocks and mountains,
Little flat land,
Oh, how very little flat land
The centuries left you!
The centuries gnawed at you like hounds
Wherever they could get at you.

When you met them
They attacked you,
The teeth of time
Dug into your thighs,
But you did not turn back,
You did not yield.

4

You never removed the long rifle
From your shoulders,
From shoulders covered in wounds,
From shoulders of skin and bone.

You ate bread in brine,
Brine and maize every night,
And you saved a little fat,
Oh, that little bit of fat

For friends and for the long rifle,
To grease the long rifle.

Women give birth to babies,
But a rifle gives birth to bullets,
And the two have been equally sacred
To the Albanian:
The bullets and the babies.

The child will tomorrow take to the plough
And the rifle will protect him at night.
Time fired bullets over the shoulders of Albania
Like rice thrown over the shoulders of a bride.

5

The pealing of bells
Rung by night
Resounded over the mountain slopes.
What were the bells saying,
What were the priests murmuring
To their high churches
In their foreign tongues?
Latin logic, in long sentences,
Strove to bend the long rifle.

6

And there were poets
Poised on hand-carved furniture
From your forests
Who, inspired by you,

Wrote of varnished wood
And of nightingales
In the trees, ancestors of furniture,
Who had once sung.

They forgot
That in your forests,
From whence the furniture came,
There were many wolves
And few nightingales.

7

Storms, fever, malaria ravaged your body,
The priests and the mullahs
Deafened you.
Like Saturn,
You devoured your children in blood feuds,
And on these feuds the minarets and bell towers
Bestowed their blessings.

8

And fierce enemies nipped at the borders,
Nipped at the pale, bare shoulders of our native land.
The land arose, tottering,
Its eyes glowing with hunger and fever
And, forgetting its hunger,
Set forth in the night to measure the borders,
With a foot rule?
With a yard stick?
No,

With the long rifle.

9

Your first contact with inventions,
With the new technology of civilization
Was with types and calibres of new weapons,
Which were tested against your withered, bullet-riddled breast.

After the fighting
There remained but the solitary graves of mountaineers,
Mounds of melancholy,
Monosyllabic names,
For a long time
Nothing but a heap of stone
And, instead of flowers at the head,
A monotonous song
Chanted by the tribe,
A monotonous song.

And beside the long limbs
The rifle fell away, the long rifle.
And after the long limbs
The short name fell away,
The letters dropping off
Like pine cones in the rain,
And after everything else
At last the song ceased,
The monotonous song of the tribe.

10

And once again Albania cowered in a hut
In her dark mythological nights
And on the strings of a lute strove to express something
Of her incomprehensible soul,
Of the inner voices
That echoed mutely from the depths of the epic earth.

She strove to express something
But what could three strings
Beneath five fingers trembling with hunger express?

It would have taken hundreds of miles of strings
And millions of fingers
To express the soul of Albania!

11

If one was slain on a hillside,
Another arose elsewhere,
As if out of the earth -
The gaunt Albanian,
And above his body,
Like an iron limb,
The long rifle
Rose black.

With the rifle in his hand,
He wandered through these regions,
Over mountains and plains.
The rifle made him taller,
Though it often made his life shorter.

12

Chewing on legends in the freezing night,
Famished, you ate your own songs,
Albania.

You were overcome by sleep,
Bent over the plough at twilight
Under the dark heavens
And you dreamt of so little joy
As no one had ever dreamt of before.

You dreamt
Of one more slice of bread,
Of one more spoonful of brine.
You dreamt of brine and bread
And of a little, so very little fat
To share with the rifle.

Your wedding was
Lightning in the midst of your misery,
Full of nerves, drums, quarrelling
And a little joy,
The little joy you dreamt of behind the plough

13

The nights gave birth to mornings,
Ponderous and grey;
The days cursed the nights,
The nights cursed the days.
Albania in her ruggedness
Gave birth to beautiful children,

Implanting in each child
A dream, a hope.
Tending her withered breasts,
Albania gave life,
She gave birth to soldiers,
Who later died in the sands of the Sahara,
Singing of the Bridge to the Kaaba.

14

The sons you sent to the cities of Europe,
Who knew foreign pleasures,
Returned
One by one,
To find a sorrowful land,
Clouds laden with yellow rain.
The monarchy, like a quarryman, smashed their dreams.
They arrived
With suitcases full of illusions
Under the shadow of minarets, of monasteries,
And rambled in autumnal delusions
Until the earth returned them to her bosom
And they rotted under the monotonous song of the rain.

15

Early fruits are expensive in price,
But early fruits are often destroyed by frost.
Albania placed them back into her bosom
"It is still too early," she said,
Observing the gloomy light of dawn.

16

And once again she bent over the plough
And sowed her bitter tears in long furrows.
Under a sombre sky of endless ignorance
She sowed her tears
For rainstorms and tempests to come.

17

Amen!
The priests and a few drowsy poets came forth
To declaim abstract genealogical glories,
But you trampled on traditional laws
With your bare feet and scratched their poetic figures.

As if you were some insane beauty,
The traitors spun you around to take advantage of you,
Shouting,
"No worry,
No matter if you have no food.
We are God's chosen people,"
While you scratched out an embossment under the stars,
Your embossment of scabby, filthy sores.

18

The poets wrote hymns to the fairies and nymphs,
Who were delousing themselves by the streams.
You could count the very ribs of the fairies, the nymphs,
Who, for a few coins, would proffer themselves in the bushes.

On occasion, the fairies and the nymphs managed
To abandon their epic alpine meadows
And descend one by one
Into the villages.
And, one by one, they ended up
In the brothels,
In the brothels that dotted
The weary mountain ridges,
Like wounds,
Like derision.

19

The nymphs departed,
Abandoning the myths,
And the myths began to empty.
The myths,
The last granary of the nation,
Returned to the abandoned churches.

For the myths, like people, were hungry,
And lived in great poverty,
Greater than any other,
In an age when the winds of boredom whistled
Over deserted mythical plains.

20

In the palace, King Zog gave nightly balls,
The princesses smiled,
The dancers waltzed.
In the quiet cells of frigid monasteries

The priests studied suffixes.

The orchestra played on
In Café Kursaal,
The elderly matrons powdered their noses,
While pregnant Albania
Miscarried the days
On bloodstained napkins of clouds.

21

And the mountain ranges were silent like horse caravans,
Oh, what caravans they were,
These mountain ranges!
They waited for hours,
For days,
For months,

For someone to lead them into the great battle,
For someone to lead them to a new world,
The mountain ranges waited with their heads in the clouds.

22

There were those who tried to tug at the mountains,
Like at the halters of horses
And led them a little way down the road,
But in the dark, they lost their way.

The formidable mountain ranges wandered in circles
Through the night and the fog,
Blind,

Terrified.

As if frightened by a tragic shrieking of old,
The heroic mountains neighed in their dreams.

23

And thus they turned in circles like a caravan in the desert,
Until they settled down, were calm once again,
Until twilight, the fortresses, hunger, the epic legends
Jumped on their backs again,
And with them
The brothels too.

But the calm was deceptive,
The long mountain caravans were waiting,
Waiting for a leader,
Albania was waiting
For the Communist Party.

24

What are these lofty mountains thinking about,
These enigmas of ridges stretching north and south?
I continue on my way
In the shadow of the long rifle,
That long rifle:
Your Archimedes' lever, Albania.

Through the sight of his rifle
The Albanian observed the horizons and the times,
The solitary whistling of his musket
Forced the centuries to duck.

This rifle barrel
On the Albanian's back
Has grown there like a long sharp bone
Transplanted to his spine by a difficult destiny,
An extension of his backbone,
This awesome iron limb,
A proud atavism of ancient times.

The fearless Albanian has crossed the centuries,
With destiny on his back,
Trudging in his ancient sandals
Across the ageless land holding the graves of our forefathers.

This land which has brought forth
More heroism than grain through the ages,
This land...
That is what these lofty mountains are thinking about,
As evening falls in the distance beyond the highway.

(1962-1964)

[*Përse mendohen këto male*, from the volume *Përse mendohen këto male*,
Tirana: Naim Frashëri 1964, translated from the Albanian by Robert Elsie, and
first published in English in *An elusive eagle soars, anthology of modern
Albanian poetry*, London: Forest Books 1993, p. 88-96]

The Red Pashas

1.

At midnight did the Politburo gather,
What's new at the northern border?
What's up at the southern border?
The sky is clouded, snowy winter.

Is the old ruling class on the move,
Is disaster in the making?
Have the heads of foreign missions
Been sending telegrams of alarm?

No, it's quiet at the borders,
No alarm comes from the missions,
Under the dictatorship of the proletariat
The once great castes will spend winter with bowed heads.

And production is normal, and the days
Pass routinely in December...
Why then unexpectedly
At midnight did the Politburo gather?

2.

States are not destroyed from the rooftops
Though the water seeps in somewhere,
They're destroyed from their foundations,
Socialist states are subject
To this principle, too.

Everything may seem fine at the top,
Socialist competition, song-singing,
Posters and our heroes of socialist labour,
On the First of May in the local paper.

Telegrams of congratulation, sunshine
At public meetings and in the verse of young writers,
But, down below,
Yes, in the foundations,
A black tumour grows slowly.

For our foes we have cannons, hymns and dances,
Let the foreign missions send the message,
With what do we fight bureaucracy?
Cannons are of no use,
And there are no consuls for spreading such news.

3.

Midst notes and phone calls, correspondence,
The scenes are always filled
To the hilt with those friendly smiles,
Bureaucrats are a different matter.

Not with Pelican ink they're covered,
That fine, eccentric bunch, ha, ha,
No, they are evil,
I see them with their hands
Bathed in blood up to the elbows.

I see them digging deeply
At the foundations of the revolution.
What are they doing?
Why are they overturning, throwing left and right,
The bodies of our socialist martyrs?

But take a look,

It appears they are washing the bodies,
They are trying swiftly to efface the bloodstains from the foundations,
And with the blood, efface what they have left behind themselves:
All our ideals and principles.
How are they to efface these traces of blood?
Oh, they know how easy it then is
To alter the course of the revolution, the dictatorship
Of the proletariat
In its essence.

Thus, they have fallen to their knees,
Ever scrubbing, washing the blood away,
But what has happened now?
Why have they halted
At that barren garden, at that empty yard?

Here is where the overthrown caste was buried,
The pashas, beys, and noble families,
They attack, turn the bodies over and begin
Without delay to strip them bare.

The bloodstained robes of the former rulers
They don quickly, with orders and medals.
Sporting these on their shoulders, in the night,
They set off towards morning like a cloudburst.

4.

And morning came,
Pale and frozen,
Under their cloaks with the orders and crowns,
They go off to work, to their ministries and offices,

Indeed, even to the Central Committee.

The Red Pashas, beys with party membership cards,
Baron-secretaries, petroleum mafia, all lined up,
A sombre procession, to the chanting of liturgy,
They bear the revolution's coffin to the grave...

5.

But externally, the scene looked different,
Smiles and the clenching of fists at public meetings,
Things went easily with Uncle Kamberi and the old men,
With words like "Enver," "the Party," "Self-criticism."

So it was during the daytime,
But at night
They returned to the foundations,
But the revolution was not like Rozafa's Castle,
Which rose in the daytime and crumbled at night.

6.

Enver Hoxha with his eagle eye
Was the first to have doubts about them.
He then descended to the foundations
Of the state, as in the great ballads of old.

He bore a red torch in his hand,
The very earth quivered,
The light of the fire fell upon them,
And he saw them effacing the blood of our martyrs
As they were dividing up the cloaks.

"What, you are here?"
They rose to their feet.
"Oh, Comrade Enver, hmm, long may you live!"
But he looked askance
With pain in each strand of his hair,
And roared like a mountain in winter.

He was not Christ, to drive them from power
With a whip and a club.
He raised the working class
To make Communism thrive.

7.

Just as once partisan patrols,
Teams of worker-supervisors now spread out:
"Let the ministries not be seized by cannon fire
Tomorrow,
Today we will take them under our control."

The dictatorship of the working class is not found simply in poetry
Or on the birthday of a veteran lathe worker.
Are you for socialism?
Then run and queue up,
Proclaim everywhere and above all
The control of the working class.

Fight bureaucracy day and night,
Keep the old ruling class underfoot
If you do not want the firing squad
To line them up against the wall tomorrow
On the Main Boulevard.

8.

Days passed.
The storm of events
Continued furiously for years and seasons,
Plenary sessions of the Party gathered, like
The revolution's soldiers
In a storm.

The working class marches with the party on epoch-making days
The people swarm behind the working class,
And should the Politburo again
Gather at noon or at midnight
They are at the ready.

[*Pashallarët e Kuq*, translated by Robert Elsie. This poem, modest from a literary point of view, was written ca. January 1974, half a year after the Fourth Plenary Session of the Central Committee (June 1973), which had caused considerable panic in intellectual circles in Albania. It was originally to have been published in the literary newspaper *Drita* (The Light) in 1975, but was banned at the last moment, and Kadare was severely taken to task for having written it. Long regarded as lost, "The Red Pashas," also known as "Meeting of the Politburo at Noon," has been the subject of much controversy and interpretation. Indeed a whole book was written about it, *Zhdukja e Pashallarëve të kuq të Kadaresë: anketim për një krim letrar* (The Disappearance of Kadare's The Red Pashas: Inquiry into a Literary Crime), Tirana 2002, by Maks Velo. In March 2002, the poem was finally discovered in a Tirana archive and is translated here for the first time]

◄ **Modern Authors from Albania** (late 20th - 21st centuries)

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Writer, translator, interpreter, specialist in Albanian studies



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Welcome to the website of Robert Elsie: writer, translator, interpreter and specialist in Albanian studies. Here you will find not only information about Robert Elsie, but in particular all the publications of the author: books, articles, book reviews and interviews from 1975 to the present day. The full text of many of these books and of most of the articles, book reviews and interviews can be downloaded as a PDF file.



The focal point of the scholarly interests of Robert Elsie over the last twenty years has been Albanian culture, literature and history. Most of his publications are thus in these fields. The related websites, linked to this one, are devoted to these special areas of literature and history.

The website "Albanian Authors in Translation" contains the largest selection of Albanian literature ever to appear in English translation. It comprises a wide range of authors from past and present, including writers from Albania, Kosova and the Albanian diaspora. Some of these translations have been published but most of them appear there for the first time.

The website "Texts and Documents of Albanian History" is a collection of texts which endeavours to throw light on a corner of Europe which is often ignored by historians and scholars. It is not designed as a history of Albania or of the

The Highland Lute: kur vargjet e Fishtës
flasin edhe anglisht

E mundimshja "Lahuta e Malcis"

Albanians, but is simply a compilation of historical texts - some important and some less important - from the eleventh to the twentieth century, which will add to an understanding of the history and development of Albania and its people. Many of these works have never appeared before in translation.

Have fun reading.

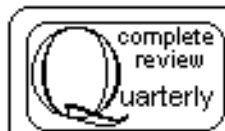
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The Englishing of Ismail Kadare

Notes of a retranslator

by
David Bellos

When I was asked ten years ago by Christopher MacLehose, the literary director of The Harvill Press, to take on the translation into English from the French translation of Ismail Kadare's *Dosja H*, I was initially dubious in the extreme. I knew no Albanian (and even now know only the tiniest scraps of that strange and difficult tongue). I also had principles ! Enough damage can be done in one language shift to make a double shift seem like a recipe, if not for disaster, then at least for pretty thin gruel. On the other hand, the book fascinated me; as I began to read more of Kadare in French I also realized that what was being put on my plate was a writer of the first importance, with an œuvre that was wide-ranging, coherent, intricately connected... and certainly worth bringing into English as well as could be done. But why not get it translated direct ? I asked MacLehose. He raised his long arms to the heavens. If you only knew... was his mysterious and unanswerable reply.

It so happened that at about that time I saw an episode of the BBC "Video Diaries" series set in Albania. It was a kind of video log in the first person by a country doctor, Ylli Hassani, a man so destitute that he did not even have a stethoscope for patients even more destitute than he. He had learned English exclusively from listening (illegally) to BBC radio broadcasts, and he turned out to be as well-informed about the fortunes and back-stories of Liverpool United as any authentic Scouser. At the end of the program it was revealed that as a way of recompensing the doctor for having made the documentary, the BBC had brought him to England to fulfill his wildest dream -- to go to a Liverpool versus Manchester United cup final. I rang the producers to find out if Hassani was still in the UK, and yes, he was. I contacted him and asked him if he would like to help me translate Kadare, by telling me when my version of the French departed a lot, or a little, from the Albanian original. He came to stay, we got on with the work for a day or two, and then he disappeared. I later learned that he had managed to get a proper visa and to enroll at a medical school to obtain recognized or at least recognizable qualifications, so that was the end of the two-handed idea.

Who else knew Albanian ? In Britain, remarkably few people: a sole member of the linguistics department of my university, a couple of people at the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London... But no-one that my publisher could find who

was a gifted and stylish literary translator, and also willing and free to do the job. (I have subsequently learned that there are some distinguished Englishmen proficient in Albanian -- Noel Malcolm, now of All Souls College, Oxford, and Julian Pettifer, at the BBC, but I'm not at all sure they would have wanted then, or would want now, to work for the rates of pay of a literary translator...)

I went to Paris to meet Kadare himself and to quiz him (in French) on the problems and mysteries of the text. At that time (1994) he was preparing the first volumes of the extraordinary bi-lingual *Complete Works* series that Fayard has now brought out as far Volume 12 (and continuing). He showed me how he was working, checking the French against the Albanian... and vice versa. Yes, he said, I do change the Albanian when I feel that the French is better. He was not at all worried about being translated from his French translations; in fact, he said, he really preferred it that way. I then learned one of the reasons why.

Isolated, isolationist, tyrannical and mad, Enver Hoxha's Albania never signed any copyright convention. (The post-communist Albanian Republic finally signed the Berne Convention on March 6, 1994). For the bulk of Kadare's writing life, therefore, none of his works in Albanian was protected by international copyright, and were thus simultaneously free (anyone could publish a translation, anywhere, just like that) and unavailable (no self-respecting publisher could buy the rights, since there were no rights to be bought). That's why it was simply easier to trade the French versions, which were of course © Librairie Arthème Fayard (or © Éditions Albin Michel, for the first works).

Because of the lack of copyright, the Albanians themselves had produced English-language versions of some of Kadare's works: there are editions of *The General of the Dead Army*, *The Castle* (a cut and censored version of the novel now (and originally) called *Les Tambours de la Pluie*), and of various of Kadare's "duty" works such as *An Autobiography of the People in Verse* translated into English by Albanian linguists working in Tirana (whose knowledge of the language had presumably been gained, like Ylli Hassani's, from BBC sports reports). I now have a couple of these Tirana editions: they are dreadful -- accurate, no doubt, but in a language now completely out of date, and in a style so wooden it would float. (One work was translated in the US by an American-Albanian, Arshi Pipa, but I need to learn more about this figure before making any comment on his career.)

Kadare has long been translated into German directly from Albanian, but for that there is a good reason: a German scholar virtually invented the discipline of Albanology, and there has long been a tradition of teaching Albanian in German universities. In Holland, too, Kadare is translated directly -- but then, Dutch authorities paid two experienced translators a good salary for two years simply to go and learn Albanian in order to do the job. Britain and America have neither those traditions, nor such support for translation.

In addition, Kadare's French texts are more than merely professional translations. The great, late Jusuf Vrioni, who has told his story in a wonderful memoir called *Mondes effacés. Souvenirs d'un Européen* (Paris: Jean-Claude Lattès, 2001) learned French in France before the Second World War. In 1945, like many exiles, he decided to return to help build a new Albania from the ashes of multiple occupation and civil war. He was promptly thrown in jail for being a member of the wrong class. During his long imprisonment, he started translating into French simply to keep his memory of civilization

alive, and to stop himself going mad. It was his translation into French of *The General of the Dead Army* that was taken out of the country and acquired by Albin Michel, and that translation led to the Italian edition, which led to the film (starring Mastroianni)... which all led to Kadare acquiring a kind of sacred status in his own land, as just about the only Albanian heard of outside the country, apart from Enver and Nexhime Hoxha.

Vrioni translated everything Kadare wrote; Kadare's French was good enough for him to be able to read and appreciate Vrioni's labors; there were also things that Vrioni could keep in the French that had to be cut or altered from the Albanian; and there were of course whole works appearing in French that never came out as books, or never came out at all, in the people's paradise of socialist Albania. I never met Vrioni: he came to France again only toward the very end of his life, to be greeted as a hero at the Assises de la traduction littéraire at Arles.

What I had translated, then, when I produced my English version of *The File on H*, was something more than a book by Ismail Kadare. It was a book by Kadare co-produced by one of the strangest but most effective translation pairs of all time. Vrioni's French is fluid, spare, slightly old-fashioned ... and not quite native. It has a poetry of its own, which I cannot compare to the original, of course, but which pleases and satisfies the author of the original. It may not be an obvious way to go about things, but translation is, on occasions, like politics, the art of the possible.

Many other English-language translators have done one or two Kadare novels, from French (Derek Coltman, Barbara Bray, Jon Rothschild, Emile Capouya) and from Albanian (Peter Constantine, John Hodgson). Their work is not to be discounted, but their multiplicity has to do in part with the contorted history of Albin Michel's and Fayard's sale of rights to English-language publishers. It is often difficult for French publishers to imagine just how hard it is for foreign fiction to get a hearing in the US and the UK, and they do not always chose well, or consistently, in signing deals. The late Emile Capouya, of New Amsterdam Books, persisted heroically in trying to get Kadare an audience in the US, but he lost a lot of money over his small publishing house; Saqi Books, in the UK, which specializes in the Orient (and includes Albania, I guess, because of the Ottoman background) teamed up with New Amsterdam for a while; but then Fayard decided to move Kadare to Morrow in the US, a quite different kind of firm which predictably dropped the author after one book, which sold pitiful quantities.

From the early 1990s, Harvill (originally, Collins Harvill, then The Harvill Press) picked up Kadare, reprinting titles from the Saqi backlist, and commissioning new translations year by year. Harvill is just about the only British house that specializes in foreign literature, and it found a partner in due course in Arcade, in New York. That is why the bulk of Kadare's work is now with those two houses, and is translated by people who have done many other titles for them (Barbara Bray, and myself). Alas, Harvill has now been forced into the sidelines and the torch has been passed to a Scottish independent, Canongate, as far as the UK is concerned, though in the US Arcade still holds it aloft.

Kadare's low profile in the English-speaking world is partly due to the fact that he speaks no English and is thus not available for speaking tours, lectures, radio and television interviews -- the kind of author-promotion which seems an essential ingredient for a prominent career as a writer nowadays. (Even an interview with the BBC last week in the

wake of the announcement of the Man Booker International Prize was cancelled on grounds that a voice-over translation would make "bad radio".) But as Kadare's stint at Bard College last fall, and his "performance" at Princeton in December demonstrate, it is possible, with proper preparation, to reach an English-language audience through simultaneous interpretation. It just costs a lot !

Jusuf Vrioni died in 2002, and a competition was held to find his successor. Four finalists were read "blind" by publisher's readers (Kadare did not even look at the submissions) and the unanimous verdict went -- not to a Frenchman, but to another and perhaps equally special Albanian, Tedi Papavrami, a concert violinist now based in Geneva. Papavrami's French is far more intricate than Vrioni's, I might say it is almost baroque, and I think the change of tone will be noticeable in *The Successor*, the next of Kadare's novels to appear in English (probably this fall). Kadare claims his own style in Albanian hasn't changed one bit, but he does not mind at all that his French work has been moved in the direction of greater linguistic complexity.

My own impression is that Kadare has long understood the constraints of writing "double" -- for his Albanian readers, on the one hand, and for a world audience, on the other. He doesn't think that anything he writes in prose is "untranslatable" -- on the contrary, he thinks that what he has to say will come through in pretty much any language. He could hardly be more different in his attitude to linguistic particularity than (for example) Milan Kundera, who insists that even his original punctuation in Czech be reproduced without alteration in English translation.

What I try to do in my twice-removed translations of Kadare from French is to respect the simplicity of the language, and at the same time to decorate it with those classical and Shakespearean associations that seem to me to hover over nearly all he writes. For Kadare is not, in any ordinary sense, a contemporary writer, that's to say a writer engaged with contemporary trends and fashions. He's a story-teller -- a bard -- a rhapsode, indeed, spinning yarns that are always slightly strange yet hauntingly familiar. One day, I hope, a literary translator with fluent Albanian will devote a lifetime to translating the entire oeuvre over again. In the meantime, I am honored to be able to do my little bit to make this remarkable writer accessible to English speakers the world over.

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David Bellos has taught at the universities of Oxford, Edinburgh, Southampton, Manchester, and, currently, Princeton. He has translated numerous works from the French, notably works by Georges Perec and Ismail Kadare, and is the author of two biographies, [Georges Perec. A Life in Words](#) and *Jacques Tati. His Life and Art*.

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Albania today

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THE LITERATURE OF SOCIALIST REALISM IS DEVELOPING IN STRUGGLE AGAINST THE BOURGEOIS AND REVISIONIST PRESSURE

by ISMAIL KADARE

The fight against the bourgeois and revisionist pressure is complete and effective when it becomes the concern of all, when all take part in it - the specialists of critical opinion and poets, artists who take up the theme of the blockade and those who hammer out the major themes of socialism, novelists and playwrights who engage in reflecting key moments of history and those who depict contemporary problems, etc.

AS IS KNOWN, THE PEOPLE'S SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA FINDS ITSELF IN A TWOFOLD ENCIRCLEMENT. THIS ENCIRCLEMENT EXTENDS TO ALL SPHERES, INCLUDING THAT OF CULTURE; CONSEQUENTLY, THE STRUGGLE WHICH THE ALBANIAN WRITERS AND ARTISTS ARE WAGING AGAINST ITS PRESSURE IS PART AND PARCEL OF THE OVERALL STRUGGLE WAGED BY THE ALBANIAN PEOPLE, LED BY THE PARTY OF LABOUR OF ALBANIA, TO SMASH THE ENCIRCLEMENT.

History has known many conflicts among different literary schools, trends and tendencies. But the struggle of realist socialist art against revisionist bourgeois art is not of the same nature. This is a struggle of a new type, part

ISMAIL KADARE — writer, deputy to the People's Assembly of the PSRA.

of the class struggle, a struggle of the revolution against counter-revolution, a life-and-death struggle of healthy art against the sick art of the bourgeoisie and revisionism, which stinks of death and decay.

The relentless struggle against bourgeois and revisionist pressure is an indispensable dimension of literature

and the arts in the socialist countries. The very development of realist socialist art presupposes this struggle, while the cessation of this struggle would put its very existence in jeopardy. This struggle is one of the forms of its existence. There is no way of having a realist socialist art without engaging in this struggle. There is no way your work can be close to the people, outside this struggle.

The 7th Congress of the PLA re-emphasized once again the necessity and importance of this clash. It has been and should become even more a permanent action of the revolutionary