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CONTENTS

Albania and the United Nations, by Norberto Steinmayr	1
The Man who Came Home, a short story by Gentiane Naipi	6
The Epic of the Battle of Kosova : 1389 by Fatos Arapi	9
Tirana, by Frank Carter	14
Two Poems: The Return of the Girls, by Besnik Mustafaj	31
The Telephone, by Dritero Agolli	31
The Albanians in Calabria, by Madame Grandin	32
The Xhubletë, by Andromaqi Gjergji	37
The Klos-Bulqiza Conveyor, by Engjëll Hoxha	39
Albanian News	40
New Magazines Available	46
Albanian Society Meetings	47
Notice of Lecture	48

ALBANIA and the UNITED NATIONS

by Norberto Steinmayr

One of the major international events of 1945 was the United Nations Conference on International Organisation (UNCIO), which convened in San Francisco on 25 April and ended on 26 June with the signing of the Charter of the United Nations (UN). All the fifty states present at the UNCIO, with the inclusion of Poland, were to constitute the original members of the UN. In spite of its request for admission, Albania had not been invited to the San Francisco Conference. As a consequence, it was initially excluded from the UN, like the nine enemy states, and some states which had been neutral in the Second World War, which had not been represented at the UNICO. In view of their active role in the anti-fascist coalition during the war, the Albanians welcomed the creation of the UN, strongly reiterating their right to membership. Nevertheless, political and diplomatic obstacles created by the Western Powers, the USA in particular, prevented Albania from becoming a member of the UN during the first post-war decade. Non-recognition of the Albanian government, Albania's refusal to honour unconditionally the pre-1939 American-Albanian treaties, its alleged responsibility for the Corfu Channel Incident of 22 October 1946, and its alleged interference in Greek internal affairs - these were only some of the arguments put forward by Washington and London for excluding Albania from the UN.

In the general context of the "cold war", the Western Powers attempted to oppose Albania's representation not only in the UN, but in other international organisations and conferences, such as the UN Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, the Mediterranean Zone Mine Clearance Board, the Paris Peace Conference, etc. Moreover, during the late 40s and early 50s political opposition began to be combined with

SHQIPTARË DITËRIKË E 1984 VËRE MTMARIA

unsuccessful American-British attempts to undermine and overthrow militarily the "Hoxha régime" in Albania. (For a factual account of these operations see: Bill Bland: "The 1950 'Invasion' of Albania" in Albanian Life, No. 30 (1984) and Nicholas Bethell: The Great Betrayal). During this difficult period of time, Albania's right to admission to the UN continued to be resolutely defended by the Soviet Union and its allies. At last, on 14 December 1955, Albania was admitted to membership of the UN: in the Security Council the vote on its admission was 8:0, with 3 abstentions, while in the General Assembly 48:3, with 5 abstentions.

Albania's admission to the UN put an end to what that country regarded as a 10-year-long injustice. Fundi i një padrejtësie (The End of an Injustice) is, in fact, the title of a recently published book on the subject by the Albanian historian Paskal Milo. On the basis of official documents, the author deals with the causes and circumstances which had kept his country outside the UN for ten years and with Albania's efforts towards being admitted to the organisation.

Assessing the role of the UN in the international arena, Albania has pointed to a major discrepancy between the principles sanctioned in the UN Charter and the failure of the organisation to implement them. In particular, the spirit of the UN Charter and the interests of the peoples have been constantly under threat, especially from the superpowers, the USA and the USSR, in their efforts to manipulate the UN for their own hegemonic purposes. According to the Albanians, the role of the superpowers has virtually paralysed this international organisation and its regular functioning, in that the exclusive right of veto by the big powers has now become synonymous with their arbitrariness and arrogance in the UN. Hence, the intervention of the UN in Korea, Congo, Cyprus and Lebanon is regarded in Tirana as being in opposition to

the principles of the Charter, and the monopolisation of international problems by a restricted number of powers as wrong and unjust. On various occasions, therefore, Albania has demanded that the UN should prevent the development of situations in which a few big powers decide policies beforehand and present the UN with a fait accompli.

Proceeding from the above analyses, socialist Albania has made its modest contribution in the UN for more than thirty years. Never has Albania separated the defence of international peace and security, of the freedom and independence of the peoples from its open exposure of the diplomatic and behind-the-scenes intrigues of the superpowers inside or outside the UN. Consistent in its opposition to imperialism, neo-colonialism, military alliances such as NATO and the Warsaw Treaty, and the armaments race, Albania upholds the view that all states should have equal rights in international relations regardless of their geographical size or their economic and military power. Hence, in its activity in the UN, Albania has exposed the aggressions committed against Vietnam, Czecho-slovakia, Afghanistan, Grenada, Libya, the Middle East and Latin America, while supporting the struggle of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America for freedom, independence and social progress. This internationalist stand of Albania for the defence of the interests of its own people and of other peoples has won sympathy and appreciation not only among progressive circles throughout the world, but also among the 159 member states of the UN irrespective of their socio-political differences with socialism.

Small as it is, Albania does enjoy international reputation and prestige also as a result of its activity in the UN. Albania's non-integration into any military or economic alliance, the entirely independent policy it pursues, its rejection of foreign bases,

credits, loans or any other type of obligation from anyone, its political stability - these are all factors which make Albania's a consistent and objective voice

" . . . in a world where the dependence on and subjugation of many states to the big imperialist powers restrict and distort any independent thought or action".

(Enver Hoxha: Report submitted to the 8th Congress of the PLA, p. 196).

In his speech at the opening of the 41st session of the UN General Assembly at the end of September 1986, Albanian Foreign Minister Reis Malile stressed, first of all, the dangers arising from the superpowers' arms race and the "star wars" programme. In connection with US and Soviet efforts to attain military superiority over each other, Malile also condemned as demagogic the recent propaganda aimed at giving credibility to, and arousing hope in, the superpowers' diplomacy of meetings, talks, proposals and counter-proposals. Albania is for real disarmament and against any "strategic balance" allegedly ensuring world peace. The European continent, in particular, concentrates probably more conventional and nuclear arms than anywhere else in the world; hence only the removal of American and Soviet bases and weapons, and the dismantling of the NATO and Warsaw Pact military blocs, can guarantee peace in this continent.

Speaking about the situation in the Middle East, Malile reiterated Albania's support to the Palestinian people in their struggle for a national state. The Mediterranean Sea has become, according to Malile, a dangerous ground of contention between the superpowers with an increased number of their navies there; the Mediterranean peoples alone can turn the Mediterranean into a sea of peace. For its part, Albania continues to make its contribution to peace by not granting any

facilities at its ports to foreign warships.

On a regional scale, Albania has sought true and mutual cooperation and friendship with its neighbours through the extension of bilateral exchanges in various fields. Furthermore, Malile emphasised Albania's support to the struggle of the Afghan patriots against the Soviet occupiers, to the efforts of the Korean people to reunify their country, to the resistance of Nicaragua in the undeclared American war against it and to the liberation struggles of the Namibian, South African and other African peoples against the racist régime of Botha, against colonialism and neo-colonialism in their continent. Albania strongly condemns terrorism, regardless of whatever pretext on which it is carried out. Likewise, it condemns the elevation of terrorism to state policy, as it is being practised by the two superpowers which, either directly with their own aircraft, tanks, warships or troops, or indirectly, disregard any norm of international law. In this connection, Malile referred to the American raid on Libya, to the killing of women and children in the Palestinian camps with the collusion of Israel, to the attacks by the Soviet air force against the Afghan people, and to the American financing of the Somoza bands against Nicaragua.

It can fairly be stated that the voice of Albania in the United Nations echoes the sentiments of many small states.

THE MAN WHO CAME HOME

A short story by Gentianë Naipi

The café in the Palace of Culture was quite full, and I could see no vacant table. There was, however, an empty seat at a table near the door, at which only a man was sitting, sipping a cup of Turkish coffee.

"Më falni?", I said, pointing to the empty chair. It was one of the three Albanian phrases I had managed to learn from my phrase-book.

"Sure!", said the man in a pronounced American accent.

"You are American?", I said, when the waitress had taken my order for a "kafe ekspres".

"I was", he replied; "now I live here".

I pricked up my ears. When I had told my editor I was going to Albania for my holiday, he had said: "That's interesting! Keep your eyes skinned for a good story!" I sensed that a story might lie here.

"What on earth made you leave America to come here?", I asked.

"Oh, my family was Albanian:", he answered; "my grandfather emigrated to Boston. At that time there was no work here, and he was one of many".

"Still", I queried, "you were born there?" - he nodded - "why leave the States?"

"Oh, it's a long story", he said, as though he feared he might bore me.

"Please!", I said; "I'm interested".

"Well", he continued, "my wife was ill, and I had to mortgage the house to borrow money for the hospital. But my wife died".

"I'm sorry", I said.

"Then my firm closed down, and I couldn't pay back the loan. So I lost my home. I was unemployed for over a year, living in one room with my two kids. Things were bad. I have cousins here, so I decided to come 'back' to Albania".

"You must miss so many things here?", I asked.

He pondered for a moment. "I miss not having a washing-machine", he said; "that makes life more difficult, especially with two kids. There is no hire-purchase here. But next month I shall have enough put by in the savings bank to buy one".

"Is that all you miss?", I pressed him.

"Well", he replied, "I miss not having to have three bolts and a lock on my front door; I miss the auto fumes and the garbage in the streets; I miss the fear of getting mugged if I'm out at night; I miss having to worry whether I'll still have a job next year; I miss the fear of my kids being peddled drugs at school . . . But I guess I can live without those".

"But surely you must have had a big drop in your standard of living?"

"When I was working", he answered, "I could buy more things there than I can here. But if you're out of work . . . you don't live like the Colbys, you know. And here I know that next year life will be better, and next year better still. No, I'm very happy here. I feel I've come 'home'".

He looked at his watch.

"You must excuse me", he said; "I have to meet the kids; I'm taking them to a concert".

He got up from his seat, shook my hand and went out, saying:

"Have a nice day!".

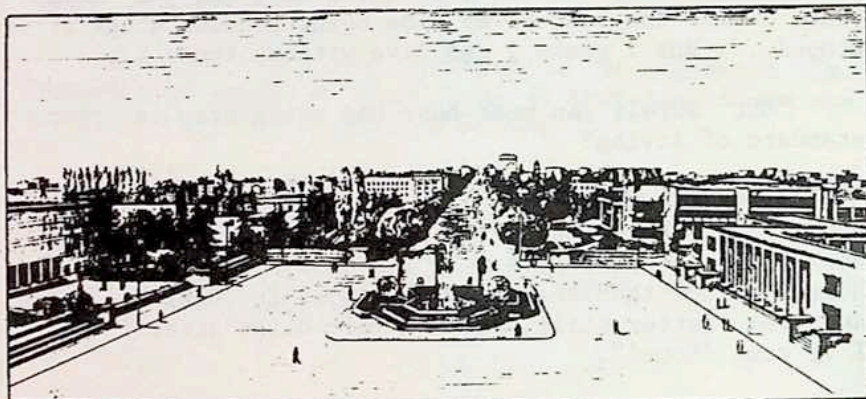
* * * * *

When I got back to London, I wrote up the story of the American who came "home" and handed it in.

The Foreign Editor called me into his office. He held up my story at arm's length in front of him, as though it were a soiled paper handkerchief.

"What the hell's up with you, Lake?", he said in his cigarette-hoarse voice; "you gone bloody Commie or something?"

And he dropped it in the waste-paper basket at his side.



Tirana

THE EPIC OF THE BATTLE OF KOSOVA : 1389

by Fatos Arapi

On 15 June 1389 there took place on the Plain of Kosova the battle between the army of the "Balkan Coalition" and the Ottoman army led personally by Sultan Murad I:

"To meet the danger, several Serbian, Bulgarian, Romanian and Albanian lords put aside for the moment their ancient quarrels and formed a coalition against the Turks under the leadership of the Serbian Prince Lazar. Among the Albanian nobles who took part in this coalition were Gjergj II Balsha, who broke the agreement he had concluded with the Turks, and Teodor II Muzaka, the ruler of Berat, Myzeqe and certain other small fiefs". (1)

Historical data tell us that Dhimitër Jonima also participated from the Albanians in this battle, (2) and Alain Ducellier tells us:

"At the time of the decisive battle of 1389, Greek authors mention, apart from the Albanians of the North, those of Himara, Epirus and the coastal zone, while the Turkish chronicle of Idriz Bitlis mentions the participation of Albanians from the Shkodra region, from where Prince Gjergj Balsha led 50,000 men in the battle; the same data are provided by the other Ottoman chroniclers, such as Ali and Hoxha Sadedin". (3)

One date must not be forgotten - the year 1385, when Tsar Stephen Dushan, who had gone to try to capture Constantinople, was dying in Salonika. His death began the decomposition of his empire in the Balkans and, with its decline, the way was opened for the free development of the Albanian principalities which arose on its ruins in the mid-14th century. These principal-

ities included those of the Topias and the Comneni, centred upon Vlora, and those of the Balshas, centred upon Shkodra. (4)

The various versions of the great Albanian poem on the Battle of Kosova show not only that the Albanians took a prominent part with regular formations in this battle, but also that it penetrated deeply into the historical and artistic consciousness of the Albanian people.

This folk poem presents the picture of a savage and pitiless struggle for existence. It has come down to us through five centuries of clashes and tragic setbacks, and it has brought to future generations a fierce national pride and love of freedom. During these centuries it has had to adapt itself to the most paradoxical historical conditions: whole sections have been lost, while other sections have been added like a tumour on its body - sometimes to sing hymns to Sultan Murad or Tsar Lazar, and sometimes to cover it with a mystical Islamic veil. But V. Chaikanovich, who first analysed it, pointed out its true core, that

" . . . the central figure in the Albanian epic is Milosh. . . . The Albanian epic is in its true content nothing but the song of Milosh". (5)

Milosh is not only the author of the assassination of Murad, the most heroic and significant exploit of the epoch; he is the immortal spirit of freedom. Everything in the poem hinges upon him. Even the Sultan and Tsar Lazar, who appear in the poem, remain peripheral characters. Whereas the Serbo-Croat epic on the same theme bears all the traces of the feudal social conditions of the time, and its heroes are in general great Serbian nobles, the only hero of the Albanian poem is Milosh Kopiliq and the poem expresses the aspirations of the peasantry. As far as we know, it is the only peasant epic on the Battle of Kosova, and the

folk singer draws from this battle that which belongs directly to the peoples:

"And Milosh raised the kandjar in his hand
and hurled it at the king,
who fell in death".

In all the Balkan epics of the Battle of Kosova, this is the only kandjar that we see raised and thrown. In the other songs the killing of Murad is mentioned, but only in the Albanian epic is it described as it occurred. In it we see not just the echoes, the mourning, far from the battlefield, but the battle itself. And this suggests that the song was created by those who had been participants in the war.

All this gives us the right to conclude that shortly after the tragic Battle of Kosova in 1389 a great poem which had as its hero Milosh Kopiliq was being sung in the Albanian language. The later additions to the poem have not improved it. In them, for example, Sultan Murad is described as a "good and lovable" adversary. Yet in spite of this and of the losses it has suffered, the song has not lost its core - its hero, its militant spirit, its love of liberty, its peasant character and the message it carries:

"They have cut off the head of Milosh.
And what has Milosh done?
He has placed his head beneath his arm
and journeyed straight
to Sallabanja.
A woman and a girl there stared at him;
the girl could not forbear to speak:
'Do you see, mother dear,
a headless walking man?'
And Milosh said to her:
'Would I could hide this sight
from your sweet eyes!'"

In the whole of the Balkan epic on the Battle of Kosova there is no comparable dramatic material. The tragedy in the Serbo-Croat epic takes the form of the treason of Vuk Brankovich, the suspicions of Lazar about Milosh Obilich, the murder of the nine Jugoviches and their father Jug Bogdani, the sad death of their mother, etc. The tragedy in the Albanian song is quite different. It is that of the principal hero, the bravest of the brave, wandering with his head beneath his arm. Milosh Kopiliq in the Albanian song seeks to save himself in order to continue the struggle . . .

The destinies of peoples are not the same. In spite of its grave consequences, the Battle of Kosova could not mean the same for the Albanians as for the Serbs. Folk singers, even where they have borrowed one from the other, have always followed the destinies of their own peoples. It is very natural that the central figure which embodied the destinies of Serbia should be Prince Lazar. It is similarly natural that the central heroic-tragic figure of this battle should be for the Albanians Milosh. The historical stage of Lazar ended in 1389 and that of Milosh began.

The defeat of the "Balkan Coalition" could not be said to be, for the Albanians, their final defeat. The Albanian folk song tells us that the Albanians continued to believe in the possibility of resistance and that the day would come when the Turk would be defeated:

"A girl said to her mother:
'Tell me, where shall we go?'
'We will go far from the Turk'.
'And when shall we return?'
'When the Turk has been defeated'.
'Then Kosova will belong to us!'.

After the Battle of Kosova, there were for the

Albanians the heroic battles for the defence of Kruja and Shkodra. And these struggles against the Turks, would continue for almost a century, creating the figure of Skanderbeg. As Enver Hoxha said:

"The Albanians have trod the path of history with sword in hand".

1. "Historia e Shqipërisë", Volume 1; Tirana; 1959; p. 241.
2. T. Murzaku: "Lufta e banorëve të tokave lindore", in "Konferenca e dytë e studimeve albanologjike", Volume 1; Tirana; 1969.
3. A. Ducellier: "Have the Albanians occupied Kosova?", in: "The Albanians and their Territories"; Tirana; 1995; p. 200-1.
4. T. Murzaku; op cit.
5. V. Chajkanovich: "Shënime rreth motiveve të këngës së parë shqiptare mbi Luftën e Kosovës", in: "Archiv za arbanasku starina, jezik i etnologji", Volume 1; Belgrade; 1923; p. 68-77.



The Fortress of Dukat after Restoration

TIRANA

by Frank W. Carter

(of the Department of Geography of University College,
and the School of Slavonic and East European Studies,
London)

The Ottoman Sultans became overlords of Albania in the 15th century and remained so until the Balkan Wars of 1912-13, when the country was declared an independent sovereign state.

According to legend, Tirana was founded in 1614 by the feudal ruler of the region, Sulejman Pasha Bargjini, from the nearby village of Mullet, 7 miles from the present site. It is understood that he was attracted by the beauty of the countryside of the Tirana plain and the position of the site, which was later to prove particularly favourable for the town's development. Sulejman Pasha Bargjini wished to establish a town which would embrace a typically Islamic conception of a settlement and reflected the mentality of a man imbued with the social and religious ideals of Islam. The foundation of Tirana, on a plain on a non-fortified site was a deliberate act to convey the Ottoman 'feeling of safety and security for the inhabitants of this area. Suleiman Pasha Mulleti, as he later became known, built a mosque on the site, and also a bath-house and bakery, followed by his own personal residence (saraj). The site began to develop into a town and by 1703 an anonymous census list recorded Tirana as having 400 houses and 3,000 inhabitants; contemporary travellers' accounts recorded surprise that "the town is open and has no fortifications".

The settlement is situated at the head of the open lowland basin of the Ishëm river, between the tributaries of the Tirana and Lana which emerge from the

limestone ridge of Mali i Dajtit (5,286 feet). The town lay near to the Lana, which is more a torrent at certain times of the year than a permanent river, at an altitude of 426 feet above sea-level. The surrounding region of the Tirana Plain contains fertile Tertiary sands and marls, together with alluvium deposited by the Ishëm river. The area has been inhabited since antiquity, although the toponym 'Tirana' was first noted in the 15th century; it was located in a valley of the nearby river Erzen which contained the famous Roman 'Via Egnatia' connecting the port of Dyrrachium (Durrës; Greek Epidamnos) 19 miles to the west with Scampa (Elbasan) 34 miles to the east, which in turn linked the Appennine peninsula with the Near East. The favourable position near a major routeway was later to benefit the growth of Tirana in its communications with the rest of the country, especially as it lay on a point between the coastal plains and the higher mountainous inland areas.

Accounts of Tirana in the second half of the 17th century referred to it as "şehir", a town or city, but also as "kasaba":, a small town or borough; this implies that it already played some role as an administrative centre for the surrounding region. Growth continued during the 18th century when specific Islamic buildings and monuments were constructed: the medrese (theological school), teqe, nazar, mosques, all elements which distinguished an Islamic urban centre from its rural surroundings. By 1803 Tirana had 4,000 inhabitants, while the English traveller Hughes described Tirana in the early 19th century as having a distinctively oriental character with its bazaars, irregular winding streets, flanked by small shops and supply stores, each with its own specialist products. Around the bazaars most of Tirana's commercial life took place, while beyond lay the main residential zone containing the feudal palace and rich merchant houses. In contrast, the poor district was far removed from, the town centre, situated to the south of the River

Lana. Another noticeable contrast was between the stone-built residences of the rich and the wooden/dried mud constructions of the poorer inhabitants.

Albania, like other territories under Ottoman control, remained severely retarded. One of the indicators of this backwardness was social; in the more mountainous parts of the country social organisation remained on a tribal basis, with each clan controlling a particular area, and order was mainly preserved through blood feuds. Within this milieu Tirana developed slowly; the Balkan traveller Konstantin Jireček described the place in 1910 as "a small town and centre of a docile plain", with a population of about 10,000. With the shedding of the Ottoman yoke in 1912, Albania emerged as a separate country after centuries of occupation. The following year her frontiers were officially drawn up, but even then it was mainly with the aim of satisfying the Great Powers, and first Vlorë in the south and then Durrës were made capital of the country. During the first world war Tirana was still only a provincial centre, although by 1910 its population had reached 16,000.

The Inter-War Years

Throughout the first world war there was no effective central government in Albania and various regions had been occupied by foreign armies. Italian and Greek ambitions were finally thwarted at Versailles, when Albanian autonomy was confirmed. Renewed interest in the country, especially in geographical literature, followed, and in 1920 at the Congress of Lushnjë, a programme of complete independence was unveiled, which included the elevation of Tirana to the country's capital on 11 February 1920. At that time the city had about 17,000 inhabitants. The selection of Tirana as capital was largely due to its central position between the Gëgs, the most warlike inhabitants with the purest

tribal organisation in the north of the country, and the Tosks. The latter had a more peaceful history, their organisation being centred around village life rather than by tribes. Tirana was perceived as a neutral area between these two Albanian peoples who speak different dialects, but another important factor was the proximity of the new capital to the major port of Durrës.

By 1924, Tirana had a population of 18,000 inhabitants, but was still smaller than some other Albanian cities, such as Korça and Shkodra, and only the same size as Elbasan. Nearly 75% of the city's total population were Moslems, and the remainder were divided equally between Roman Catholic and Orthodox, the city being the seat of a Greek bishop for many years. During the inter-war period the former sleepy town was to be transformed into a city befitting its new administrative role. Between 1928 and 1938 it became the main residence of King Zog, who two years earlier had signed the Italo-Albanian pact (22 November 1926) which placed the country under strong Italian influence, a factor intensified during the economic crisis of 1929-1935.

Italian architects were to transform the city. Much of the central area was completely rebuilt, the only central public building to escape being the Haxhi Ethem Bey mosque dating from 1796-97. The surviving old parts consisted of low buildings, mostly of mud, and a bazaar. Italian planning had added a couple of hotels, a few prosperous houses such as the King's palace, the Yugoslav and Italian legations, a street or two of poorly constructed villas, and public buildings in and around the central square. This monumental centre was called the Piazza Skanderbeg, named after a famous 15th century Albanian patriot. From it led the Boulevard Zog, where important persons had villas surrounded by high walls. The bazaar district contained a somewhat primitive cinema, whilst beyond the Lana river there

was a large gypsy quarter, noted for basket and rope making, horse trading and fortune telling.

Much of the domestic state budget went on public buildings during Zog's reign. In fact, of the 11 million Albanian gold francs budgeted between 1928-1938, 75% went on the construction of public and residential edifices in the capital; about 8 million Albanian gold francs were divided among military expenditures, such as barracks (3.3 million), residences for His Royal Majesty (2.2 million) and ministerial palaces (2.8 million). Other public buildings were scarce, although the Rockefeller Foundation helped to build the Institute of Hygiene in Tirana in 1938. In 1939, of the 10 state-run hospitals in Albania, the largest was in the capital, with 300 beds and the only X-ray ward in the country. It served the capital's resident population of 25,079 on the eve of the second world war, together with that of the surrounding region.

A quisling pro-Italian government was installed following the Italian invasion of 7 April 1939 and Albania became virtually an Italian colony. The Italians attempted to modernize the capital by asphaltting all the main streets and constructing more buildings for public use and tourism, including the luxurious "Dajti" hotel in the city centre, and a modern road from Tirana to Durrës. In September 1943 the Italian occupying forces were replaced by the German army, and economic conditions in the capital, as elsewhere in the country, worsened considerably. On 17 November 1944 Communist forces entered Tirana, still a city of less than 50,000 inhabitants, and the Communist Party, led by Enver Hoxha, took over the governing of the country.

Post Second World War Developments

In 1944 Tirana was the capital of a largely undeveloped country. Agriculture was primitive, and manufacturing industry virtually non-existent, with cars more or less unknown. There were no railways, the road network was in a poor condition and there was only a rather limited electricity supply in a few urban centres. Over 80% of the Albanian population were illiterate. There is no doubt that, after the second world war, Albania experienced rapid growth, which has affected all aspects of its society, and in this Tirana played a leading role.

Economic development during the post-war period has been dramatic; economic planning based on the Stalinist directive variety was inaugurated after the war, and the first Five Year Plan began in 1951. Maximum economic growth has been based on two major goals: first, population increase, and second, self-sufficiency. Annual population growth has been about four times higher than the European average, and since the eve of the second world war Albania's total population has nearly trebled. In agriculture, intensive effort has been made to drain marshes, irrigate land, desalinate coastal farmland and terrace hillsides, which has meant a 250% increase in the area under cultivation over the past 40 years. At present over a quarter of the country is under cultivation, which is quite remarkable given its difficult terrain, with three-quarters of Albania's total area classified as mountainous. Furthermore, the collectivized/ nationalized system has reversed the pre-war emphasis on maize over wheat in an attempt fully to exploit bread grain production.

Industry has seen remarkable progress through the centralized planning system. There has been much growth and diversification of industrial production and the country now manufactures its own mining equipment,

tractors, ceramics, bicycles and published materials, and has a critical maintenance sector to manufacture spare parts. Similarly, communications have improved, following construction of the first railway line between Tirana and Durrës in 1947; in January 1985 a line to the Yugoslav border was completed in the north which, although initially only for freight, became of international importance when Albania joined the European rail network for the first time in August 1986, with links to Titograd in Montenegro.

Such economic detail serves as a background to a closer study of Tirana during the post-war era in which it has become firmly established as Albania's major city and capital. The immediate post-war years found the capital little changed from the days of Italian occupation, with the built-up area centred around the main square with its ministerial buildings and other public edifices, and at a further distance hotels, religious centres, banks, hospitals, a health institute, the main market and a cinema. To the west of this built-up area, large areas of the outer suburbs were utilised for military purposes with camps, barracks, an airfield and major routes to Durrës and Shkodra.

Tirana was the first city to be transformed after the war, largely due to the expansion of industry and a growing bureaucracy. In 1948 the railway link between the capital and the country's major port of Durrës was completed. Although piped drinking water and electricity had existed in Tirana before the war, top priority was given to developing and expanding the city's waterworks. A 6 mile pipe was constructed to tap the waters of the nearby Mali me Gropa mountains (5,700 feet), and in the same area the first post-war hydro-electric power (HEP) station was built in 1951 (the "V. I. Lenin") with a 5,000 KW capacity. Also during this first two-year period of economic development, industry

was introduced into the peripheral areas of the capital. Most significant was the large Cotton Textile Combine (21,000 spindles) with an annual production capacity of 69 million feet of cloth. Together with this complex, a workers' village colony was constructed, with housing for 5,000 employees and their families; begun in March 1949, it was completed in November 1951.

By the early 1950s, therefore, Tirana was developing its own system of industrial linkage, which utilised not only domestic raw materials but also imports from other parts of the socialist world. The capital was also developing into the country's most important industrial centre in this period, with the establishment of the "Enver Hoxha" metal working factory, a building materials complex, a leather shoe factory, a match factory and various enterprises for food processing. Other industrial units followed during subsequent Five Year Plans; the First (1951-1955) saw the construction of a new woollen textiles factory, the Second (1956-1960) a large food processing combine (the "A. Kelmendi") and two other plants, one for glass, the other producing velvet. The Third (1961-1965) and Fourth (1966-1970) Five Year Plans emphasized increased capacity among the building material industries, which in Tirana led to the establishment of the largest furniture-making factory in the country (the "Misto Mame"). At the beginning of the Fourth Five Year Plan in 1966 a tool-making plant ("Traktori") was established on the site of the former "Enver Hoxha" metal working factory. Coal deposits from the nearby Priska and Kerraba mines and HEP provided the main energy sources for industry and domestic use.

By the end of the 1960s Tirana could boast a planned industrial estate in a new zone 3 miles to the west of the old city, ostensibly to avoid the worst effects of air, water and noise pollution, and within

easy access of the Tirana-Durrës road and rail connections. The State Urban Planning Office had successfully established a textile factory (with an annual production of 66 million feet of cloth) and a large food processing combine containing several factories for beer production (1.8 million gallons), confectionery (3,900 tons/year), alcoholic drinks, baby foods, bread and pickled foods. Other industrial branches represented included machine shops, coal briquette manufacturing, cement, ceramics, wood, printing and glass. In 1967, 40% of Albania's engineering industry was located in Tirana, much of it concerned with the repair of machine spare parts, various tools/equipment manufacture and some consumer goods.

Such activity had boosted the city's population; over the first 15 post-war years it grew from a mere 60,000 inhabitants in 1945 to 136,000 in 1960, an 127.5% increase. Besides a high natural increase, Tirana also grew as a result of rural-to-urban migration, not only from the surrounding mountain areas, but also other parts of the country and towns peripheral to Tirana, most people finding employment in industry and the governmental system. By 1960, the capital contained over 8% of Albania's total population, placing a strain on accommodation and tertiary services.

International events in the late 1950s and early 1960s were to have some effect on Tirana's economic development. The rift between Albania and the Soviet Union resulted in a severe brake on economic development. Between 1960 and 1965 the Albanian budget increased by only 30%, compared with 133% in 1955-1960. Supply shortages halted projects, including hotel construction in Tirana, and although Chinese financial and technical aid was forthcoming after some time, it was not sufficient to fulfil all Albania's immediate

requirements. Problems began to appear in the city's production complexes, although evidence suggests that projects for building irrigation channels using local rural population, mineral exploitation and new machine workshops continued in and around Tirana during the late 1960s.

Nevertheless, Tirana's role in the country's industrial production began to decline in the next decade, with a dispersal of some branches, such as chemicals and metallurgy, to other towns, including Elbasan, Fier, Berat (textiles) and Vlora (food production). Even so, in 1970 40.4% of Tirana's total population was still actively employed, largely in industry.

The high ranking of education and culture can be partly explained by the existence of a new university (founded 16 November 1957) which had six faculties, 45 chairs and 15 speciality subjects, with 3,613 students attending full or part time (and correspondence) courses, taught by 200 staff and research assistants. By 1983 this had risen to 9,000 students and 800 academic staff. The city now also had a marble-faced Palace of Culture, containing 240 halls and rooms, among the largest the Opera and Ballet Theatre, with a revolving stage and seating capacity for 1,000 people. There are also two conference halls, a large exhibition hall, a concert hall, drama, variety and puppet theatres, rehearsal rooms, and a restaurant. The Palace of Culture also houses the National Library, which has a valuable collection of manuscripts and more than 800,000 books relating to Albania. There are several museums (archaeological/ethnographic; natural sciences; Party; Lenin-Stalin; and an art gallery. Other higher educational institutes exist for agriculture, the arts and physical culture, and the new 15-storey Hotel Tirana was opened in 1979 with 350 beds.

The diversity of industrial production in Tirana

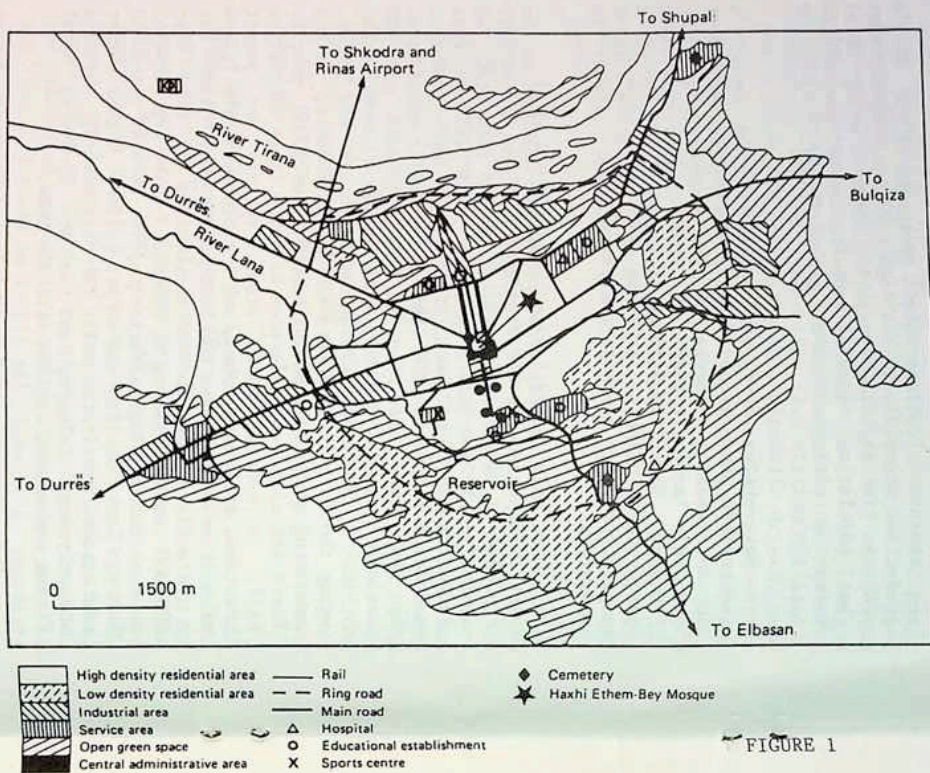


FIGURE 1



The Centre of Tirana in 1938

was clearly evident by 1971, with light industry, engineering and food processing dominating the output structure.

A large proportion of employment in light industry was accounted for by textile manufacture, while engineering was mainly concerned with maintenance workshops and food processing plants, concentrated in the new industrial estate.

During the 1970s Albania received sizeable credits from China, along with Chinese expertise and machinery. This lasted until 1978 when all this was withdrawn. The impact was similar to the Soviet withdrawal nearly two decades earlier, but to a lesser extent. Since 1978, Albania has lacked any firm allies, although there have been increasing commercial links with neighbouring countries such as Italy, Yugoslavia and Greece.

Albania's population continues to grow (it is now just over 3 million), yet the government has stemmed the rural-to-urban migration flow. This has reduced pressure on the urban building programme, and has been fortified by the revised Albanian Constitution of 1976, which declared: "The state aims to reduce differences that exist between town and country" (Article 22). Similarly, less investment is needed for public transport. Even so, in the mid-1970s employees commuted daily up to 12 miles distance from Tirana. Industrial dispersal and construction of new towns also helped reverse the rural-to-urban migration movement so that, after peaking in 1970, Tirana's share of the country's total population has declined from 8.36% to 7.25% in 1983.

Meanwhile, Tirana was developing an outward appearance more conducive to that of a socialist city. The city centre was made into the political/administrative/cultural area, housing the main Party

headquarters, Palace of Culture, newspaper offices, main museums, theatres, educational establishments, and public monuments (for example, the monument to Skanderbeg, 1403-1467, the scourge of early Turkish occupation).

In the 1970s the main residential quarters were located around this central area; these were of two distinct types, namely, the older houses with gardens, located close to the old bazaar, and new tenement blocks in neighbourhood units on the periphery of the old city. Here 25,000 new apartments were constructed between 1945 and 1974, partly to accommodate the trebling of city residents from 60,000 to 180,000 inhabitants over this period. The city periphery contains most of the industrial establishments and main railway station while, 12 miles to the north-west of the city, the main airport is located at Rinas on the Ishëm plain.

The 1980s have seen further development of the city. Today about 80% of the inhabitants live in new state-built apartments. There has been some growth in the service sector. The total number of schoolchildren and students is now many times greater than in 1938; over 13,000 university/college qualified people, of whom 5,300 are women, are now employed in educational and cultural establishments. The city enjoyed an active cultural life, with two symphony orchestras, 18 cultural centres and 11 libraries. The health of Tirana's citizens is catered for by nine hospitals, 66 polyclinics and ambulance stations, 29 chemists, 144 advisory centres for mothers and children, and one doctor per 300 inhabitants. The capital is also a "green" city, with 30 square yards of open space per person, with numerous parks on the urban fringe. The city also has two main sports stadia (the "Dinamo" and "Qemal Stafa"), together with many sports fields and gymnasia.

Future Prospects

Indications of how Albania's capital will look towards the end of the century have been revealed by studies from the Institute of Urbanism and Architecture (Figure 1). These envisage a central core around Skanderbeg Square, with its public buildings and administrative offices. Some small areas of greenery will be preserved in the densely inhabited inner residential area, together with sports centres, some educational establishments and hospitals. However, buildings not designated as "cultural monuments" will be demolished, a fate suffered already by some of the inter-war Italian architectural edifices and some of the mosques. Their place has been and will continue to be taken by buildings more fitting the appearance of a socialist city, as witnessed by the recent construction of the National Historical Museum.

Around this inner residential area, it is proposed to continue the construction of low-density residences, interjected by open space with parks and woodland, while beyond that a more continuous green belt has been planned. The southern half of the city will remain free of industrial establishments and will be dominated by the local reservoir, located on rising ground and connected to one of the River Lana tributaries. The northern half of the city stretching up to the banks of the Tirana River will contain most of Tirana's economic activity. The main railway station may cater for increasing freight traffic with Albania's link-up with the rest of the European rail network. Industrial areas will be developed either side of the main railway station, together with industrial estates to the east, and further development of the enterprises already established in the west with their own branch line, mainly for freight trans-shipment to the port of Durrës. A new ring road is projected to link the more recent residential estates and industrial areas and ease the

daily commuting ritual. The shallow River Tirana, with its numerous islets and sand banks, will be exploited for recreational purposes, while beyond its northern bank a large woodland area has been set aside for further recreational needs.

Future planning decisions suggest that Tirana will preserve its "garden city" image. Overpopulation of the capital could pose a threat to this situation, and steps have already been put into motion to narrow the differences between urban and rural life. Access to electrification, improvements in agriculture, irrigation in the mountain areas, dams, terraces, embankments, greater mechanization, and new crops, have all been aimed at keeping people content in rural areas and discouraging rural-to-urban migration. The government has expended great effort in encouraging the capital's inhabitants and those of other large towns to desert urban life for that of the countryside. During the last Five Year Plan living conditions in villages were improved, with housing and property built to standards previously only associated with urban areas. All these measures should successfully forestall any threats of conurbation growth. The idea of a Tirana-Durrës urban agglomeration emerging in the near or more distant future seems remote.

(The above is abridged, with acknowledgements, from an article first published in CITIES, Volume 3, No. 4, November 1986, a magazine published by Butterworth Scientific Ltd., Guildford)



Tirana Today

THE RETURN OF THE GIRLS

A poem by Besnik Mustafaj

Coming back from the fields,
they sing and laugh,
teasing each other gently,
making each other blush.

Their parents surmise
that somewhere near
there are young men.

THE TELEPHONE

A poem by Dritero Agolli

I loathe my snarling telephone,
which interrupts my meals,
and rings its bell at 2 a.m.
to wake me from my sleep.

It grumbles, summons, swears at me
to drive me off my head,
its jarring voice goes on and on
and keeps me from my work.

Just once it was a friend to me,
when I fell down the stairs
and dragged myself to call for help
into its ugly ear.

But as I wait for Mira's call
it is my enemy;
it sits there, black and silent,
my dumb, malignant foe!

THE ALBANIANS OF CALABRIA

by Madame Grandin

(Madame Grandin is a lecturer in natural sciences at the College of Luri, Cape Corse, Corsica, and an active member of Scola Corsa, which has the aim of promoting the Corsican language)

The Origin of the Albanians of Calabria

The first immigration of Albanians into Calabria dates from 1448, following Turkish persecutions in the Balkans. Others followed, the last in 1744, but the most important was that of 1466.

The King of Naples, Ferdinand of Aragon, appealed to the Arberesh (as the Albanians in Italy call themselves) to resist the revolt of the barons of Calabria, supported by the House of Anjou. In compensation, they were granted land, but in scattered patches, thus preventing the community from attaining geographical unity.

Geographical Distribution

The total area of Calabria is 5,800 square miles, composed of:

- 42% mountain;
- 49% hill; and
- 9% plain.

Of the 409 communes, 386 are situated on hills or in the mountains, The Albanian villages are thus scattered over this hilly area: Civita, at 1,476 feet above sea-level; Frascineto at 1,594 feet; Lungre at 1,968 feet . . . From the village of Civita (founded about 1480 by Albanian émigrés coming probably from Epirus), one can admire the massif of Mount Pollino (7,375 feet), which is being made into a national park,

and the gorges of Raganello. The country is of great beauty.

The Economy

This is a region of small, essentially agricultural, enterprises, mainly olive-groves and vineyards. On the plain, however, we observed large estates worked by a female labour force straight out of Millet's The Gleaners

Industry is in decline. We may mention the salt mine at Lungro, the exploitation of which dates back to Roman times but which was closed in 1977. There is, however, a cannery and freezing works at Mongrassano.

At the present time, emigration to the North of Italy and abroad is important. The number of Albanians has fallen since 1950, as follows:

1806:	52,380
1886:	97,695
1951:	117,614
1977:	100,293

Education

At lower levels, the village of Civita may be taken as typical. Here the children of school age all speak Albanian as their mother-tongue, and are familiar with Albanian history and customs. At the school Albanian is taught for one hour a week, but all other lessons are conducted in Italian.

The Church of Sant'Adriano at San Demetrio Corone (population: 5,750) was constructed about 1100 by Orthodox monks, prior to the arrival of the Albanians. In 1732 the College of San Benedetto was founded, first as a seminary for the training of clergy, and was transferred 60 years later to Sant'Adriano. This college subsequently, in the Napoleonic period, became a lay - even Jacobin - centre, and obtained credits for

its extension. This college has a symbolic value because it was the first official recognition of the Albanian minority by the Church.

In 1734 an Albanian seminary was established in Palermo. It is noteworthy that many Albanian writers of the last century - Gabriel Dara, Jeronim de Rada, Zef Schiro - studied at these colleges.

The first Chair in Albanian language and literature was established at Naples in 1900, under Professor Zef Schiro. At present Albanian is taught at the Universities of Bari, Basilicata, Calabria, Padua, Palermo and Rome. The University of Calabria was founded in 1972 at Cosenza; it has 6,000 students and a teaching staff of 500. The research department of the University of Calabria has been working for six years on a linguistic atlas of the different Albanian dialects.

The Role of Religion

An important role in the Albanian community has been played by the Church, which, since the immigrants of 1468 came from southern Epirus and brought their religious traditions with them, follows the Greek rites. The liturgy is expressed in Greek and in Albanian, and the Church has always supported the maintenance of the Albanian language and culture.

Politics in Arbëria

Calabria is a deprived area of Italy, and the Albanians there appear doubly deprived.

There is, however, no uniform political viewpoint among the Arbëresh of Calabria, Nor, since they are geographically scattered, do they have the possibility of electing their own deputies.

Similarly, the municipal councils in the Albanian areas are of various political hues, but all claim to defend the right of the minority.

The Media

There are ten newspapers and magazines in the Albanian areas of Calabria, including the newspaper "Katundi Ynë" (Our Village), founded in 1970 and published regularly in spite of difficulties.

In the field of broadcasting, "Radio Skanderbeg" failed as a commercial venture, and continues only as a voluntary enterprise. No time is allotted to Albanian culture on either the state or the private television channels. However, under Article 12 of a Bill soon to be submitted to the Italian Parliament on minority rights, time must be allotted to minority cultures on state radio and television.

The State of the Language

80% of the Albanian population speak Albanian. In the countryside, it is still the mother tongue, as a result of the isolation of the villages. However, only some 3,000 people can read and write Albanian, so that transmission is almost exclusively oral.

Conclusion

The Albanian language in Italy is under threat. It seems, however, that only intellectuals are conscious of this danger. The man in the street, who still speaks Albanian, does not perceive that Italian, the dominant language, is in process of suffocating Albanian, thanks to the media and the means of communication. The linguistic situation in Arbëria, as Famiglietti emphasises, corresponds to the category "Bilingualism and Diglottism" of Fishman's classification. Albanian is

used only within the family and between Albanians, and oral transmission alone will not be sufficient to save the Albanian language in Italy. It is essential that the proposed law on minority cultures be enacted and applied.

(The above article is published with acknowledgements to the French-Albanian Friendship Society, from whose journal it has been translated and slightly abridged)



The "Albania Today" Exhibition
in Tirana

THE XHUBLETE

by Andromaqi Gjergji

The xhubletë is a woman's garment, the ethnographic traditions of which go back thousands of years. It is a pleated shirt which flares out into the shape of a bell. It is made up of narrow strips of woollen cloth, stitched together in a special way so that the skirt undulates on movement.



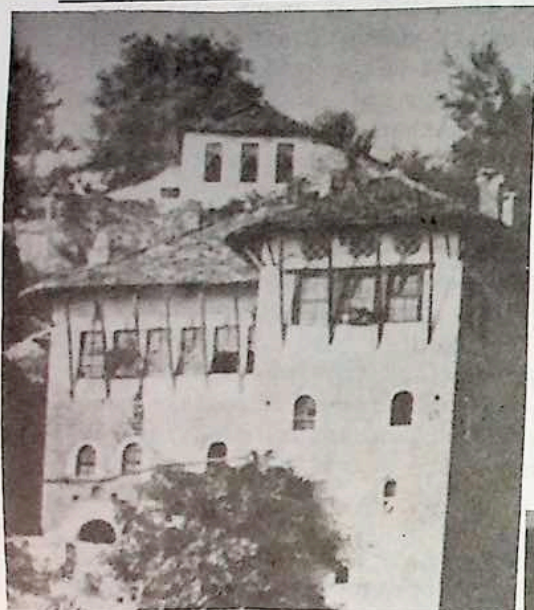
Above the xhubletë, the woman wears an ornamental bodice, a pair of woollen sleeves and a short jerkin to which the sleeves are attached. A highly ornamented belt is worn round the waist, and the legs are covered by richly embroidered stockings and slippers or moccasins. A loosely hanging white scarf is worn on the head.

In the past the xhubletë worn by girls was predominantly white, with a few black stripes and little decoration, while in that worn by women the prevailing colour was black, heavily ornamented with beads and spangles. An 18th century traveller, describing the costume, wrote:

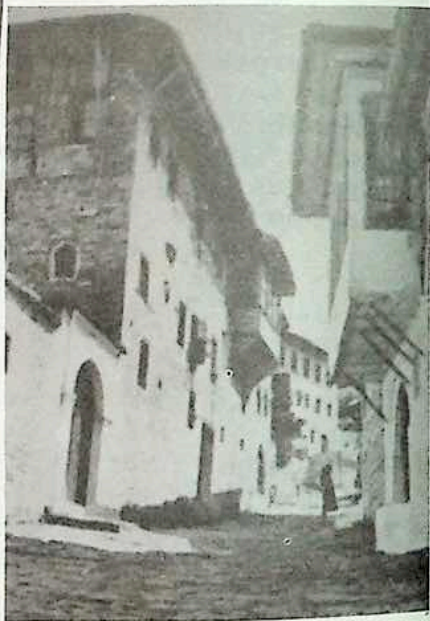
"Neither the peacock nor the rainbow is more richly coloured than the costumes of the Kelmend women".

The xhubletë was worn mainly in the region of Kelmend, but also in other parts of the northern highlands. Today it has generally been replaced by a simple black pleated skirt, but it is still worn on

ceremonial occasions, such as weddings or folk festivals. Archaeological research makes it clear that the xhubletë represents a very ancient type of Balkan dress, of which no trace appears to be left in other countries.



Gjirokastra



Berat

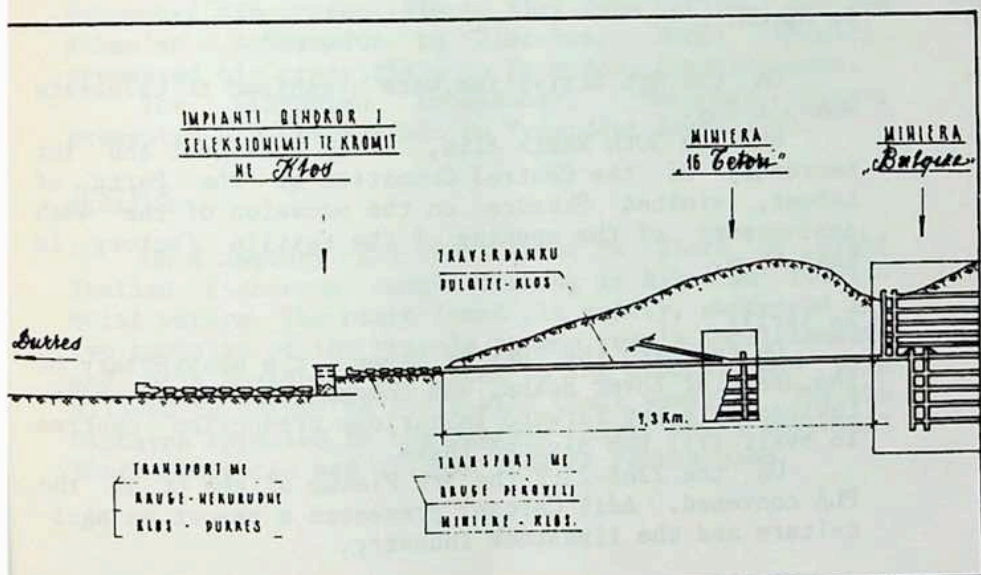
THE KLOS-BULQIZA CONVEYOR

by Engjëll Hoxha
(Director of the Institute of Mining Projects)

The projected Klos-Bulqiza underground conveyor will transport ore from the Todo Manço Chromium Mine at Bulqiza and the 16 October Chromium Mine at Qafa e Buallit directly from the galleries of the mines to the neighbourhood of Klos.

The project will ensure great savings on construction, machinery, equipment, electric power, labour, etc. When it comes into operation, the ore will no longer be brought to the surface from the 1,300 feet deep mines and then transported to Klos by lorry over a road which is often rendered dangerous in winter by ice and snow, but will pass directly to the selection plant at the railhead at Klos. The conveyor will also carry mineworkers between Klos and Bulqiza.

After processing, the selected ore will be loaded into wagons on the Milot-Klos railway.



ALBANIAN NEWS

(January-April 1987)

POLITICS

In January:

On the 11th activities were organised to celebrate the 41st anniversary of the proclamation of the Republic.

On the 20th the Albanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement rejecting a claim by the Yugoslav News Agency TANJUG that organisations in Yugoslavia demanding republican status for the Albanian minority there had "links with the intelligence service of Albania".

In February:

On the 1st elections took place for deputies to the People's Assembly. At the 1st session of the 11th legislature of the People's Assembly on the 19-20th, the new government and its programme were approved. (see previous issue of Albanian Life for details).

In March:

On the 8th activities were organised to celebrate Women's Day.

On the 30th Ramiz Alia, State President and 1st Secretary of the Central Committee of the Party of Labour, visited Shkodra on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the opening of the textile factory in that town.

In April:

On the 11th the "Day of Enver", the anniversary of the death of Enver Hoxha, was commemorated. Mass undertakings were put forward in various production centres to overfulfil the planned tasks.

On the 22nd-23rd the 3rd Plenum of the CC of the PLA convened. Adil Çarçani presented a report on agriculture and the livestock industry.

DIPLOMACY

In January:

The Greek Ambassador, Spyridon Dokianos, presented his credentials to President Ramiz Alia.

The Albanian Ambassador to Iceland, Shpëtim Çausi, presented his credentials to President Vigdis Finnbogadottir.

In February:

The Dutch Ambassador, Albert Nooij, presented his credentials to President Ramiz Alia.

The Albanian Ambassador to Ethiopia, Alkyz Cerga, presented his credentials to President Haile Menegistu.

In March:

The Albanian Ambassador to Brazil, Piro Andoni, presented his credentials to President José Carney.

In April:

The Albanian Ambassador to Spain, Maxhun Peka, presented his credentials to King Juan Carlos, and the Albanian Ambassador to Zimbabwe, Mehdi Shaqiri, presented his credentials to President Canaan Banana.

The Ethiopian Ambassador, Makonnen Gizaw, presented his credentials to President Ramiz Alia.

JUSTICE

On 8 January the trial ended in Vlora of eight Italian fishermen caught fishing in Albanian territorial waters. The court found all guilty, sentenced the two captains of the vessels to one year's imprisonment, and gave suspended sentences to the others, who were allowed to return to Italy with their vessels. The two captains appealed to the Supreme Court, which suspended their sentences and allowed them to return home.

FOREIGN VISITORS

Among foreign visitors and delegations to Albania during the period under review were:

In March:

A delegation of the Turkish National Assembly, led by its President, Nedjmedin Karaduman.

In April:

The Turkish pianist Hylia Saidam on a concert tour.

A delegation of the General Trade Union Federation of Egypt, led by its President, Saad Ahmed.

The Director of the European Bureau of the World Health Organisation, Dr. Jo Ansvall.

The Minister of Information of the Democratic Saharan Arab Republic, Brahim Hakim.

A delegation of the Mudjahedeens of Algeria.

The Director-General of the State Oil Refineries of Greece, Prof. Kristos Verelis.

The amateur theatre group of the France-Albania Friendship Association.

FOREIGN VISITS

Among Albanians and Albanian delegations going abroad in the period under review were:

In January:

A trade delegation, led by Minister of Foreign Trade Shane Korbeci, to Greece.

A delegation of the Women's Union of Albania to the 4th Congress of the National Women's Union of Mali.

In February:

A trade delegation to Vietnam.

A delegation of the Enver Hoxha University of Tirana to Turkey.

In March:

A trade union delegation to Algeria.

The Albanian violinist Arben Spahiu to Austria.

In April:

The Director of the Institute of International Studies, Prof. Sofokli Lazri, to Mexico.

A delegation of the People's Assembly, led by Petro Dode, to Vietnam.

A trade delegation, led by Minister of Foreign Trade Shane Korbeci, to Austria.

Albania was represented at the 71st International Fair at Basle (Switzerland).

FOREIGN TRADE

In January:

Protocols on trade and tourist exchange for 1987 were signed with Greece.

A five-year trade agreement was signed with Argentina.

A protocol on tourist exchange was signed with Turkey.

In March:

A protocol on trade and payments for 1987 was signed with Vietnam.

A protocol on cultural exchanges for 1987-88 was signed with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

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SCIENCE

In January:

On the 19th a national conference on animal farming was organised in Tirana.

Talks on veterinary services were held by Albanian and Greek specialists in Gjirokastra.

In April:

Talks on veterinary services were held by Albanian and Yugoslav specialists in Pogradec.

Albania was awarded the Enrike Diaz Balasteros Prize for Food for 1987 in Mexico City.

CULTURE

In January:

The historical museum of Tropoja district was opened in Bajram Curri.

In March:

The plenum of the Albanian Writers' and Artists' Union convened in Tirana.

On the 7th the centenary of the opening of the first Albanian school, in Korça, was commemorated.

In April:

On the 13th the 40th anniversary of the creation of the Albanian cinema was celebrated in Tirana.

Among new books published during the period under review were:

E. Hoxha: "Works", Volume 52 (July 1973-June 1974)

E. Hoxha: "Works", Volume 53 (July-December 1974)

A. Isaku: "Fifty Poems"

S. Demiraj: "Historical Grammar of the Albanian Language"

Institute of Folk Culture: "Long Life to Enver Hoxha" (collection of songs).

- - : "Albanian Literature in the First Years of the New Life".



"Pioneer" - Portrait by Andromaqi Zengo

NEW MAGAZINES AVAILABLE

Price
(inc. postage)

NEW ALBANIA, No. 6, 1986

50p.

The 9th Congress; Albania in 1990; the Korça district; the new Milot-Klos railway; the Higher Agricultural Institute; the fishing industry; the innovators; the xhubletë; the new National Information Network; rock drawings; the Partizani football team; the 2nd Folk Culture Exhibition.

NEW ALBANIA, No. 1, 1987

50p.

Ramiz Alia's election speech; Vlora; exports; the Banja hydro-electric power station; new projects; the vehicle repair works; the exhibition of Australian stamps; anthropological research; mussel cultivation; the Institute of Maize and Rice Research; the coastline; the Jordan Misja Art School; the 25th Radio-Television Song Festival; terra-cotta figurines; Albanian archaeology.

ALBANIA TODAY, No. 1, 1987

50p

Ramiz Alia's election speech; proletarian internationalism; growth rates in the 8th Five Year Plan; unemployment under capitalism.

ALBANIA TODAY, No. 2, 1987

50p

The new National Assembly; the first Albanian school; the development of the productive forces; rising material and cultural standards; education; patriotism.

ALBANIAN SOCIETY MEETINGS

On February 25th Ron Gregory, Secretary of the South Wales Branch, gave an illustrated talk on Albania as the guest of the Bridgend Camera Club.

On April 5th the Midlands Branch of the Society held a meeting in Birmingham at which John Puntis spoke on the history of Anglo-American relations with Albania, and the colour videos "Albanian Art in the Middle Ages" and "May Day 1986" were screened.

On April 12th and April 19th the South Wales Branch held meetings in Bridgend and Pyle respectively at which Ron Gregory gave illustrated talks on Albania.

On May 1st the Midlands Branch held a stall at the May Day rally in Birmingham, and the South Wales Branch at the May Day Festival in Llantrisant.

On May 13th Ron Gregory, Secretary of the South Wales Branch gave an illustrated talk on Albania to the Bridgend Ladies' Club.

On May 28th Ron Gregory, Secretary of the South Wales Branch gave an illustrated talk on the stamps of Albania to the Barry Stamp Club.

On June 14th the London & South-east England Branch held a meeting in London at which Bill Bland and Steve Day spoke on the travels of Edward Lear and Edith Durham in Albania. The talks were illustrated by slides and by readings from the travellers' works by Philip Madoc and Theresa Streatfeild.

NOTICE of LECTURE

On Thursday, 29 October at 6. 30 p.m. the British-Italian Society will present a lecture by Norberto Steinmayr on

ANGLO-ITALIAN RELATIONS WITH ALBANIA (1912-87)

at The Soroptimist Headquarters, 63, Bayswater Road, London W2 (very near and just to the west of Lancaster Gate Underground Station)

No admission charge will be made.

ADVANCE NOTICE

The November meeting of the Society will take place on the afternoon of Sunday, November 29th.



"The American Struggle against Terrorism"
Cartoon by Kosta Raka

ALBANIAN LIFE is published three times a year by:

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26, Cambridge Road,
Ilford,
Essex,
IG3 8LU.



Fighter of the Battle of Mashkullora, 1908

THE ALBANIAN SOCIETY

will present

on SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11th at 3 p.m.

in the ground-floor hall of
TOLMERS SQUARE COMMUNITY CENTRE,

Hampstead Road, London NW1

Underground stations: Euston Square or Warren Street

ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS WITH ALBANIA

1912-1944

by Bill Bland

1945-1986

by Norberto Steinmayr

There will also be a brief report on the visit of the
Society's delegation to Albania in July.

Bookstall

Refreshments