

ALBANIAN LIFE

50p



Quarterly Journal of the Albanian Society

No. 24

No.1, 1983

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ALBANIA'S STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE

by Martin Smith

(The following is the text of the address given by the President of the Albanian Society in the Roxie Cinema, London, in November 1982)

Above the entrance to the splendid new National Historical Museum on Skanderbeg Square, Tirana, opened in November 1981, is a huge mosaic illustrating three stages in Albanian history - the period up to 1939, the struggle for liberation, and the construction of socialism. Today we who are friends and well-wishers of Albania are gathered together to celebrate primarily the 70th. anniversary of the declaration of Albania's independence on 28th. November, 1912, but the mosaic in Tirana is a reminder, if one was needed, that Albania's independence was not fully and permanently secured in 1912. The people, which had struggled for so long, so courageously and against so many odds to win freedom and independence, had to endure many more threats and trials and had to make many more sacrifices, particularly during the Italian fascist and German nazi occupations in World War II, before liberation was achieved on 29th. November, 1944 - 38 years ago. Even after liberation, the new socialist state faced many threats to its security and independence, and regrettably the situation today remains one in which Albania has enemies as well as friends and must be vigilant. The battle for independence, one might say, continues - though now it is a battle to maintain independence rather than a battle to gain it, and it is a battle which the Albanian people, under the leadership of their Party and Government, will not lose.

In this brief address I shall not concentrate solely on the happenings of 1912 and the events immediately preceding and following the declaration of independence, though I shall give some emphasis to these. Instead, I shall take as my main theme the patriotism, courage and independent and indomitable spirit of the Albanian people through the ages - qualities which have enabled them not only to preserve their national identity, language, customs and culture during centuries of foreign occupations and invasions, but also to engage in obstinate and often heroic resistance to their oppressors or would-be oppressors and eventually to achieve and defend the goal which must often have seemed so elusive and distant.

Some years ago a Bulgarian historian, of boundless imagination and ignorance, seriously argued (see ALBANIAN LIFE, November 1970, pp. 50-52) that the Albanians were mediaeval immigrants from Scotland. Just think of all the evidence for the suggested link! - the names "Albania" and "Albany"; the kilt; the preference for a mountain habitat; the fact that St. Andrew's Day immediately follows Albania's two independence days! In fact, the researches of archaeologists, historians, philologists, ethnographers and other experts have conclusively proved that the Albanians are the direct descendants of the Illyrians - an important ancient people, whose civilisation in the western part of the Balkan peninsula can be traced back to the end of the third millennium B.C.

Greek colonies were established in Albania in the seventh and sixth centuries B.C., and the third and second centuries B.C. brought the Romans. However, the country never became anything like fully hellenized or romanized, and Illyrian resistance to the Roman occupation was vigorous and prolonged. After the Roman Empire had split in two at the end of the fourth century A.D., Albania became part of the East-

ern (Byzantine) Empire. During the following centuries the country experienced a series of invasions. The invaders included Visigoths, Huns, Ostrogoths, Avers, Slavs, Bulgarians, Normans and Serbs. Then, in the last years of the fourteenth century and the first years of the fifteenth century, came the Turks. But despite all these invasions and occupations, the Illyrians (or Albanians, as we may now call them) retained their ethnic identity and their language, and they were to continue to do so throughout the long period of Ottoman rule. In Albania, as in my adopted homeland of Wales, resistance to foreign pressure and influences was assisted by the mountainous nature of the country, but this should not be seen as the most important factor; for this we must look rather to the character and spirit of the people. In this connexion it is to be noted that the Albanians' extraordinary capacity for survival is demonstrated not only by the inhabitants of areas within or near the frontiers of Albania, but also by emigrants: from the late fourteenth century onward there were migrations of Albanians to southern Italy, Sicily and Greece, and these people have preserved to a remarkable degree their Albanian identity, language and customs, as I was able to see for myself in 1979 when I visited several Albanian communities in Sicily and Calabria.

During the Ottoman occupation the Albanian people frequently rose in rebellion. The most notable rebel leader was of course Skanderbeg, a feudal chieftain who in 1443 deserted from the Turkish army which he had served with distinction as a general, and took possession of the fortress of Kruja. For twenty-five years, until his death in 1468, he led a heroic revolt against the Turks, several times defeating Turkish armies far larger than his own. Ten years after his death the Turks gained possession of the last fortresses remaining in Albanian control, and many Albanians were

compelled to emigrate. The revolt, viewed in isolation, is seen as having ended in failure and defeat, but in fact it made a powerful, enduring contribution to Albania's struggle for nationhood and independence. Although Turkish rule was to continue for 444 years after Skanderbeg's death, the Turks never succeeded in completely subduing Albania. Inspired by the example of Skanderbeg, whom they adopted as their national hero, the Albanians revolted against their oppressors in every century of the Turkish occupation.

In the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century, taking advantage of the weakening of the Ottoman Empire's central administration, Albanian feudal lords made their pashaliks largely independent of Constantinople - the Bushatli family in the north and Ali Pasha in the south. With Ali Pasha there is a famous British connexion, for in 1809 the Albanian ruler was visited at Tepelena by John Cam Hobhouse (later Lord Broughton) and Byron. Hobhouse has left us a vivid account of his and his companion's visit, and Byron refers to the same visit in the Second Canto of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. Of Childe Harold he writes:

"And onwards did his further journey take
To greet Albania's chief, whose dread command
Is lawless law; for with a bloody hand
He sways a nation, turbulent and bold".

Byron and Hobhouse were given a hospitable welcome by Ali Pasha. But it was Ali Pasha's subjects who made the most favourable impression on Byron:

"Fierce are Albania's children, yet they lack
Not virtues, were those virtues more mature.
Where is the foe that ever saw their back?
Who can so well the toil of war endure?
Their native fastnesses not more secure
Than they in doubtful time of troublous need:
Their wrath how deadly! but their friendship sure,
When Gratitude or Valour bids them bleed,
Unshaken rushing on where'er their chief may lead".

(By the way, Byron admired not least Albanian women, whose beauty, he says in his notes, is unsurpassed - far superior to that of Greek women. Coming from Byron, this opinion may be taken as authoritative!)

The quasi-autonomous pashaliks of Ali Pasha and the Bushatlis were overthrown by the Turks in 1822 and 1831 respectively. But opposition to Turkish rule continued and indeed intensified. There were further uprisings, and the 1840s marked the beginning of the period of National Renaissance - a period in which demands for recognition of Albanian cultural and educational rights were accompanied by demands for political freedom and national independence. Prominent leaders of this cultural and patriotic movement included the Frashëri brothers, Abdyl, Naim and Sami - a remarkably energetic, versatile and talented trio.

A very important milestone in the development of the Albanian national movement was reached in June 1878, when a meeting of nationalist leaders was held at Prizren, now in Yugoslavia, three days before the opening of the Congress of Berlin. The purpose of the Congress of Berlin, attended by the great powers, was to revise the provisions of the Treaty of San Stefano concluded in March 1878 following Russia's victory over Turkey. One of the provisions of the Treaty of San Stefano had been the cession of Albanian territory to Montenegro, Serbia and Bulgaria, and the Albanian patriots meeting at Prizren were determined to defend the territorial integrity of Albania; they were determined also to throw off the Turkish yoke as soon as possible. The League of Prizren failed to persuade the great powers that an Albanian problem existed: so far as they were concerned, Albania remained part of Turkey; and the Congress of Berlin approved the cession of Albanian territory to Montenegro. However, the League of Prizren occupies a very significant place in Albanian history for two reasons: first, it brought the Albanian

question to the attention of the international community; secondly, it aroused and intensified the national and patriotic sentiments of the Albanian people and organised military and political action with the aim of defending Albania's territorial integrity and achieving autonomy. Turkey, though approving of the League's defence of Albania's territorial integrity because Albania was part of its empire, for the very same reason opposed the movement for independence. Accordingly the League, which proclaimed itself the provisional government in January 1881, was suppressed by the Turks in the same year. But there was to be no turning back now: the movement towards independence had gathered so much momentum that it could not be stopped. In the years following the suppression of the League of Prizren there were armed uprisings; there was vigorous political activity in support of Albanian independence; and the Albanian language was used more and more in the fields of culture and education: books, periodicals and newspapers in the Albanian language were published at home and abroad, and Albanian schools were opened.

The revolution of the Young Turks, which the Albanians assisted, raised hopes of more democracy and liberty, but these hopes turned out to be completely unfounded. After the revolution in 1908 the Young Turks reneged on the promises which they had earlier made, and endeavoured to suppress the Albanian national movement. The Albanian people refused to accept the chauvinistic policies of the Young Turks, and there were armed rebellions in 1910, 1911 and 1912.

The rebellion in 1912 affected all the Albanian-inhabited regions, and on 12th. August the rebels captured Skopje, the capital of the vilayet of Kosova. The new Turkish government - the government of the Young Turks had been compelled to resign - informed the rebel lead-

ers that it accepted most of their demands, though not their demand for autonomy. The Albanians signed an agreement with the Turks and, in so doing, might seem to have made a surprising and unpatriotic compromise; but in reality they were playing for time: they knew full well that neighbouring Balkan states had ambitions to annex and partition Albanian territory, and they needed to prepare resistance to the expected attacks. Their assessment of the situation was quite correct: in October 1912 the Balkan states (Montenegro, Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece) declared war on Turkey, and the armies of Montenegro, Serbia and Greece invaded Albanian territory. It was in this situation, with much of their country occupied by the armies of the Balkan alliance, that the Albanian patriots at home and abroad took action.

At the end of October Ismail Qemali, a staunch patriot and a wise and far-sighted politician and diplomat in his late 60s, left Istanbul, where he had been at the outbreak of the Balkan war. He made his way to Albania via Bucharest and Vienna. In Bucharest he addressed a meeting of Albanian exiles and obtained their approval for the holding of a national congress in Albania to proclaim independence and elect a provisional government. In Vienna he made contact with the government of Austria-Hungary and with the ambassadors of some of the great powers, including Britain. Ismail Qemali arrived in Durrës on 21st. November 1912. Durrës was still under Turkish control, and it was at Vlora, which had been liberated, that the national congress was convened exactly one week later. Ismail Qemali presided over the assembly and, after he had made a speech, the delegates, who came from all parts of Albania, unanimously proclaimed Albania's independence and entrusted Ismail Qemali with the formation of a provisional government. Accompanied by the delegates, Ismail Qemali then went out on the small balcony of the building

in which the congress was held to make a public proclamation of the assembly's decision and to raise the national flag.

The proclamation of independence was a courageous and most significant move but, needless to say, it did not solve all the problems confronting the Albanian patriots and people. The problems included the economic and social backwardness of the country, the opposition of feudal lords, and above all the chauvinistic and imperialistic ambitions and actions of other countries. The armies of Montenegro, Serbia and Greece were still on Albanian soil, and the great powers too were determined to interfere in Albania's affairs. At the Ambassadors' Conference in London (December 1912 - August 1913) the great powers, while recognising Albania's independence, drew the new state's frontiers in such a way as to exclude about half Albania's population and about half its territory; moreover, they decided to foist on the Albanian people a foreign prince as head of state, and on 7th. March, 1914, their chosen man, Prince Wilhelm zu Wied, a German aristocrat, arrived in Durrës.

Wied's government, which replaced that of Ismail Qemali, was reactionary. His reign lasted only six months, but his departure brought no early relief to Albania. During the First World War the state's sovereignty and independence continued to be violated: parts of its territory were invaded and occupied by Greeks, Italians, Austro-Hungarians, Serbs and Montenegrins, and in 1915 Britain, France, Russia and Italy signed the secret Treaty of London whereby, in a disgraceful reversal of the decision taken at the Ambassadors' Conference, they agreed to break up the state whose independence they had undertaken to guarantee, and to hand over most of its territory to Italy, Greece, Montenegro and Serbia, leaving central Albania as a tiny, autonomous state to be

represented by Italy in foreign affairs.

So, when the First World War ended, Albania faced a serious threat to its very existence. After the Bolshevik Revolution of October 1917, Lenin had made public the Treaty of London, so that the Albanians knew the plans which the imperialist powers had for their country. The Versailles Peace Conference of 1919 gave Albania no satisfaction, and so the Albanian patriots decided to convene a new national congress. It decided to dismiss the unpatriotic (pro-Italian) government in Durrës and replace it with a new national government in Tirana, which it chose as the new capital, and it demanded the withdrawal of foreign troops from Albania and emphasised the determination of the Albanian people to defend the independence and territorial integrity of their country. When, in June 1920, the Italians rejected an ultimatum to withdraw from Vlora and the surrounding region, the people rose and compelled them to quit.

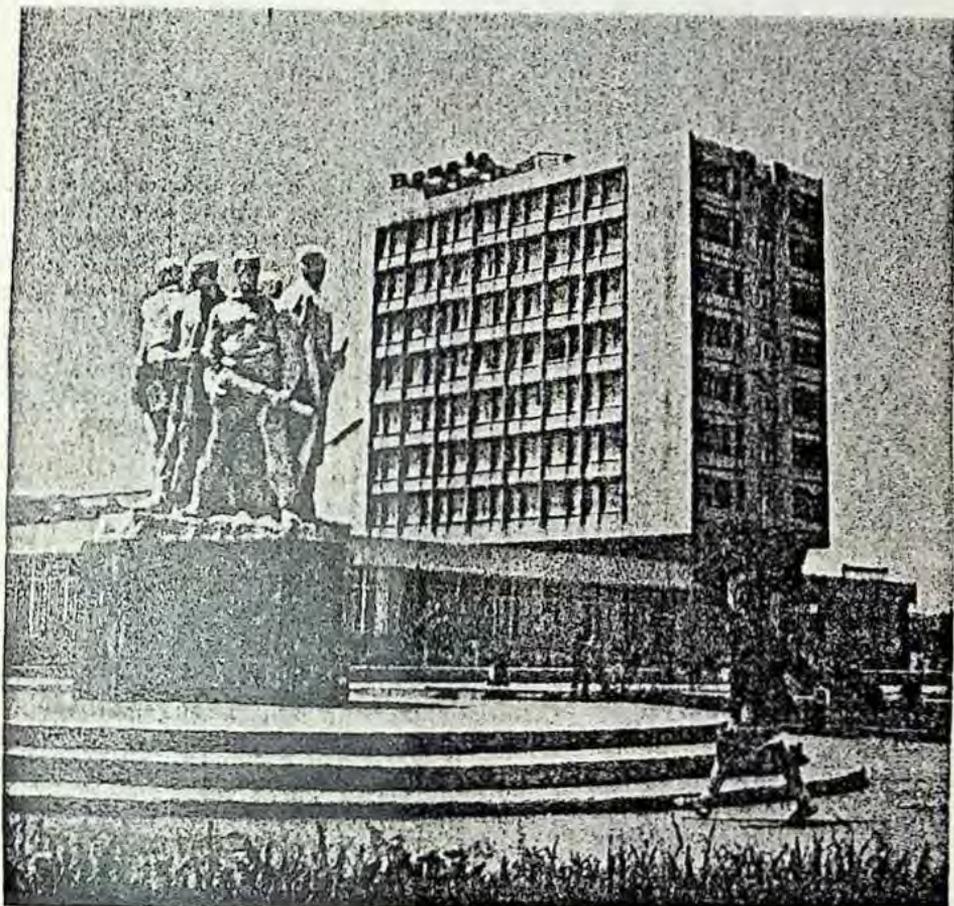
Once again the Albanian people, by their determination, courage and patriotism, had thwarted the plans of foreign imperialists. However, their victory on this occasion did not mean the end of foreign intervention in their country. The liberal government of Fan Noli, established in June 1924, was overthrown after only six months by Ahmet Zogu with the support of foreign mercenaries, and under Zog's dictatorial rule Albania was virtually an Italian colony. On 7th. April 1939 Italy invaded Albania, and Zog ignominiously fled, leaving his people to fight heroically, first against the Italian fascists, then against the German nazis. The struggle to liberate the country from enemy occupation was led by the Communist Party of Albania (renamed in 1948 the Party of Labour of Albania), founded at a secret meeting in Tirana in November 1941 with Enver Hoxha at its head.

Even after the liberation of Albania was completed (29th. November, 1944), the country,

as I mentioned earlier, had to face threats to its independence and security - threats from Greece, Yugoslavia, the United States of America and Britain. However, under the resolute leadership of the Party of Labour, headed by Enver Hoxha the Albanian people succeeded in thwarting all the aggressive plans and subversive plots of neighbouring countries and the imperialist nations. Armed now not only with courage, determination and patriotism, but also with a powerful new weapon, socialism, they firmly defended their country's independence and territorial integrity, while at the same time advancing rapidly and unswervingly down a road of remarkable economic, socio-political, educational and cultural development. This achievement is all the more extraordinary when one remembers that Albania has been treated with hostility by the capitalist and imperialist world, but also has been betrayed by its former friends - first Yugoslavia, then the Soviet Union, then China.

As we celebrate the 70th. anniversary of Albania's independence and the 38th. anniversary of its liberation from war-time occupation, I am sure that we would wish to congratulate the Albanian people, who, in Enver Hoxha's words, "have hacked a way through history, sword in hand", not only on gaining, regaining and maintaining freedom and independence, but also on their magnificent achievements since 1944. We are confident that they will continue to make rapid progress in every field. We hope that countries still hostile to Albania will quickly come to realise that it threatens no one, and we call upon the government in Belgrade to stop suppressing the rights of the Albanian population in Yugoslavia and to grant Kosova the status of a republic within the Yugoslav federation. We also call upon the British government to return forthwith the Albanian gold held in London since 1945 and so enable relations between Britain and Albania to be normalised.

Finally, as we celebrate the 25th. anniversary of the founding of the Albanian Society, we pledge ourselves to promote with vigour the Society's aim of promoting friendship and understanding between the British and Albanian peoples.



The Centre of Shkodra

THE GIRL FROM KOSOVA

A poem by Xhevahir Spahiu

Some years ago
they put on trial
a simple highland girl.

Through the bars of her cell
she asked:
"Why?"
And they answered:
"Because . . . "

In court she asked once more:
"Why?"
And they told her again:
"Because . . . "

But the wigs in the smoke-filled room
quivered in surprise
when she said to them at last:
"I will tell you why".

And she showed them her ragged garments
as if they were some treasure:
the short red jacket
and the long black dress.

"It is for these colours that you sentence me,
you from another land and another time!"

And her clothes unfurled in the court
like a flag of red and black.
And her heart beat beneath the flag
like an eagle beating its wings . . .

A WOMAN'S HEART

A short story by Kiço Blushi

(Kiço Blushi was born in 1943. After completing his higher studies at the Faculty of History and Linguistics at the University of Tirana in 1966, he worked for a time in radio and television, and is now attached to the New Albania Film Studios. He has published several volumes of short stories, among which we may mention "The Engagement, the Television Set and the Old Man" (1971), "The Portrait" (1977) and "One Monday Morning" (1981); the novels "Death of a Night" (1971) and "The Last Cab" (1979); the plays "Everyone's Roof" and "Between Two People" (1971). He is also the author of several film scripts.)

The woman doctor went to the window. Outside, a light, almost imperceptible drizzle was falling. Only the open umbrellas of the passers-by and the sheen on the asphalt revealed its presence.

"Your name?", demanded the nurse.

"Elsa Teli", replied the mother on behalf of the patient, who was dressing behind a screen.

"Age?"

"Twenty-two".

Below, on the pavement, a man was walking up and down by the iron railings, the handle of a furled umbrella hanging from his wrist. He walked and smoked as though he were worried.

"That must be the husband", thought the doctor, taking an instinctive dislike to this man waiting anxiously in the rain; "you are the cause of the trouble, you fool! You can rot out there in the rain. Your wife's condition is your fault".

"How many months is she, doctor?", asked the mother,

"Three and a half", replied the woman doctor, as she turned and seated herself in her chair.

The young woman had dressed and remained standing, silent and a little frightened. The mother, with her back to the white-painted wall, waited for a miracle from the doctor. Seeing her thus, the doctor recalled the night when this mother had come to her home complaining, with streaming eyes, that her daughter's life was in danger: "She's an obstinate girl, doctor. She won't have an abortion". And she had begged the doctor to see her daughter the following day and convince her that this was the only possible course.

"Don't worry!", she had said; "this is a simple matter".

"But she won't listen to anyone".

"And her husband: what does he say?"

"Oh, he feels the same as I do. But she's as pig-headed as a mule. . . I'm terribly worried. She's our only child".

"What is your name?", the doctor asked coldly, feeling that a professional relationship had more influence on a patient than intimacy.

"Elsa", replied the young woman.

"How long have you been married?"

"Four years".

"Four years", the gynaecologist wrote down, looking at her patient's thin, pale face, from which two dark eyes fluttered as though they would fly away.

"You know you have a serious heart complaint?"

"Yes".

"You are under treatment for it?"

"Yes".

"Then you know that pregnancy and childbirth could be very dangerous for you?"

"Yes. They told me at the heart clinic when I got married".

"And what does the cardiologist say now?"

"That I should have the pregnancy terminated".

"Then would it not be foolish to reject this medical advice? You realise that we have only your welfare at heart?"

Instead of replying, Elsa shrugged her shoulders and lowered her eyes to avoid the doctor's gaze.

"I know", she said at last; "but . . ."

"She's a stupid girl!", said the mother sharply, in a tearful voice.

The doctor gestured with her hand, and the mother put her hand to her mouth as though to prevent herself from speaking again.

"Sit down!", ordered the doctor brusquely.

The young woman sat down in the chair in front of the doctor's desk. Her eyes were still rivetted on the tiled floor, motionless like the eyes of a doll. Her thin face bore a guilty expression, as though she were embarrassed at causing trouble.

"You must understand that the continuation of your pregnancy could lead to . . ."

She knew that it was unnecessary to pronounce the pitiless word "death" to make her meaning clear.

"I understand", said Elsa without raising her eyes.

"Is it perhaps that your husband is opposed to an abortion, and that you don't wish to go against . . .?"

"No, no", interrupted Elsa, raising her eyes for the first time - eyes which the doctor now saw were red and swollen. "Nestor doesn't want me to take any risks; he's in favour of an abortion. But this is my affair! I want to have the baby!"

"Yes?", said the gynaecologist, not understanding why the tone of her voice had softened. She sat huddled in her chair, as though to protect herself from cold.

"You're being very foolish, child. If you are really concerned for your life, you must come into hospital for an immediate abortion. You understand the reasons per-

fectly well. . . There's nothing to it. It's a very simple, safe operation. I expect you know that abortion is only permitted where there are medical grounds, but in your case . . ."

"No", replied Elsa firmly; "I refuse".

"Well, of course that is your right. But you're being very foolish. And the responsibility for the consequences must be yours".

"I understand", Elsa said in a faint voice; "I'm sorry to reject your advice".

"Then there's no point in continuing this consultation", said the doctor sharply.

The doctor threw her ball-pen on to the desk. She wanted to say something insulting, something which would bring this stupid girl to her senses, but strangely she found herself unable to say a word. She got up, went to the window and opened the curtains. The rain had left streaks over the panes. The man was still there, standing somewhat sheepishly with his back to an acacia. At that moment he raised his head and looked at the window.

"Desi", the doctor said to the nurse; "take my umbrella and go down and get that man waiting out there. Tell him I would like to speak to him".

"It's her husband", Elsa's mother hastened to say; "he's just as concerned as we are. He's told me . . ."

"I understand", interrupted the doctor; "run along, Desi".

"No", Elsa almost screamed; "don't bring him in!"

"I do not need your permission to talk to him".

"There's no point to it", cried Elsa, getting up quickly from her chair. The doctor noticed that she had clenched her fists to prevent her hands trembling. The slight swelling of her abdomen was just visible.

"What's going to become us!", Elsa's mother wailed, clutching her cheeks with her hands.

The doctor was convinced by this scene that the husband was to blame for the situation. "Men!", she

thought scornfully. They wanted a child at all costs in a vain attempt to achieve immortality, whatever they might swear about their heartfelt concern for the life of their wives.

Elsa seemed to sense what the doctor was thinking, for she said suddenly:

"No, doctor; it's not like that!"

After a few moments steps were heard in the corridor, and Desi opened the door to show in a man who stubbed out his cigarette between his fingers before entering. Great drops of water fell from his hair on to his tanned face, but he paid them no attention. He seemed embarrassed at finding himself in a women's hospital.

"Come in!", said the doctor.

He took a few steps and stopped in the middle of the room, slightly bewildered. The doctor determined to take advantage of his condition, and said without preamble:

"Do you love your wife, young man?"

She felt an irresistible urge to dominate him, this hypocrite who was the cause of all the trouble. As a woman's doctor, without a husband of her own, she had acquired a contempt for men, who were responsible for most of the misery with which she had to deal.

"Yes", he replied.

His umbrella was forming a small pool on the floor.

"Then why do you want to kill her?", said the gynaecologist sternly.

"It's not me", he stammered; "I should be happy if there was . . . But Elsa . . . He looked at his wife, who gave him a smile as if to reassure him.

The gynaecologist realised that she had gone too far. She noted that the young couple had exchanged a glance which indicated not only love, but a sharing of anxiety. They communicated in silence, as lovers can.

"Then if you really love her", the doctor went on, "you will persuade her to give up this madness".

"But I want only that . . . that Elsa should be safe",

he protested.

"I asked you not to bring Nestor into this matter", said Elsa; "there's no point to it. He hasn't pressed me. In fact, he feels I should have the abortion. But he agrees that it's for me to decide. Although both of us want a child".

"Ah!", said the doctor; "'both of us want a child'! That's what I thought".

"Is there anything else?", asked Elsa, moving towards the door.

The doctor did not reply at once. She was now convinced that no one was going to persuade this young pregnant woman to be sensible. Yet Elsa's obstinacy was clearly not due to shallowness of mind. Now that her husband was at her side, she had become stronger, more confident.

"No", declared the doctor curtly; "there's nothing more I can say".

"Come, Tori", Elsa called to her husband. She took him gently by the arm and propelled him to the door.

As they were going out, she turned and said:

"Thank you for your time, doctor".

"Yes, thank you", murmured Nestor.

"Goodbye", said the doctor without looking up.

The young couple left the room, but the mother remained by the open door.

"Doctor!", cried the mother in a despairing voice.

"You've seen for yourself", replied the gynaecologist; "there's nothing more I can do".

"But there must be some way to save her!", pleaded the woman, tears running down her cheeks.

"It's best that you say nothing more to alarm her. Fear can only make her chances less".

The doctor shook her hand. The interview was over.

When they had gone, the nurse spoke for the first time:

"She's a brave young woman".

The doctor had gone to the window and did not reply. She had an odd desire to see once more these two foolish young people, perhaps sharing the same umbrella, walking away down the boulevard.

But there was a knock at the door.

"Come in!", said Desi.

The door opened once more to reveal the frail figure of Elsa.

"May I come in? I didn't want to bother you another day, and I wanted . . ."

"Of course!", said the doctor, smiling to herself. She waited for the usual words: "I'm sorry! I've been thinking. You're right, of course! When can I come in to hospital?"

But the words were different:

"I forgot to ask you about the baby. You and me, we're both a bit hot-headed. We were so concerned about my health, I forgot to ask about the baby".

The doctor reddened slightly, and sat down at her desk. She felt the nurse smiling behind her.

"That is not my speciality", she said.

"No, I realise that", said Elsa, "but I wanted to know if my heart condition was hereditary. Would it be likely to be passed on to the child?"

"No", said the gynaecologist, "there's no danger of that".

Elsa gave a broad smile.

"Thank you so much", she said brightly, and almost ran from the room, like a student rushing to the cinema for fear that she might be too late to claim her seat.

The doctor went once more to the window and looked out silently at the glowering sky, the rain and the young couple who had left her white office with its faint smell of iodoform.

THE BUSHAT COOPERATIVE FARM

by Steve Day

(Steve Day was a member of the Society's delegation which visited Albania in May 1982 as the guests of the Albanian Committee for Cultural and Friendly Relations with Foreign Countries)

A few kilometres from Shkodra, in the north of Albania, is the Bushat Higher Type Cooperative Farm. It embraces fifteen villages and fifteen thousand people in an area of six hundred hectares. One fine spring morning in May we arrived at the administrative headquarters in the village of Bushat to meet the President of the cooperative, Shevqet Zeneli - evidently a man of the soil without any bureaucratic airs and graces; he told us the history of the farm and answered our many questions. He informed us that he was elected for a two-year period at meetings of all the cooperativists, who also elect the directorate. There were 100 experts - economists, engineers, agronomists, etc. - and another 150 of intermediate level of training, to ensure a thoroughly modern scientific approach. This had been reflected in an increase in yields from all sectors: wheat had gone up from 7 quintals per hectare to 38, maize from 8 to 70, rice from 15 to 450. Apart from these staples, vegetables and fruits are produced, and cows, pigs and poultry reared.

Before Liberation there were only four elementary schools in the 15 villages; now there are eight, as well as an agricultural technical school with 300 full-time students and another 200 on evening courses.

Each village now has a maternity centre, with midwife and nurses, and there are also six health centres, with 65 doctors, dentists, nurses, etc. An ambulance is available to take any serious cases to the nearby Shkodra hospital.

We then visited the home of a retired couple, Shaban Celepia and his wife Mine, who welcomed us to their house in the usual Albanian way - serving us Turkish coffee and sweets. We were very keen to find out about the old days before socialism, although Shaban preferred to tell us about the earthquake which destroyed the village in 1979.

"I was working in the garden when the earthquake started", he said. "My first thought was to see if anyone had been killed, because the house had been completely demolished. But soon all the family were gathered around the ruins - all safe! Within a few hours the first help arrived, and we all had tents for shelter that night. Over the next few days building materials arrived, together with specialists and volunteers from all over Albania to help us rebuild. My old house had only three rooms; now I have four!"

Listening to his story, I could not help reflecting on the ruined houses I had seen in Yugoslavia, still not rebuilt after three years, or the situation in Sicily, where people are still living in tents years after the devastation there.

Then the old man began to tell us about his life before Liberation.

"I worked for the landowner and barely got enough to keep body and soul together. The landowner had the land and spent his days sitting down, while we worked all day. . . He did nothing, and I had to give him everything he demanded. I had some animals and he had the right to half of all the produce from them. If it wasn't possible to send him his half, it was a very serious problem. . . I was compelled to do everything he asked. I was at his beck and call. . . But all landowners were the same!"

We asked Mine what her life was like in the old days.

"We women had to work on the landlord's land", she told us, "and were like beasts of burden carrying everything. And we had to do the housework as well. Nowadays all the family work, and we divide everything we get".

Shaban concluded our talk by telling us:

"I am a pensioner now, and I live quite well. It's thanks to the Party and the Government that this is so. . . And life is improving with every passing day".

Listening to this old couple talking simply about the dramatic changes in the quality of their lives, I was reminded of the old peasant on a cooperative farm near Korça whom I had met the year before. There were a group of us from various countries sitting in his house sipping his home-made raki while he told us about his life.

"The difference between our life before Liberation and now", he said with tears in his eyes, "is like the difference between a night without moon or stars and a day when the sun shines brightly".

Sitting outside the Celepias's neat bungalow, with vines growing up around the porch, it was hard to envisage the old days, even with the help of the various museums we had seen, which carefully document the life of the past.

Now it was time to return to Shkodra and continue our visits, and so we waved goodbye to Shaban, Mine, their family and friends, and Shevqet, the President of the Bushat cooperative.



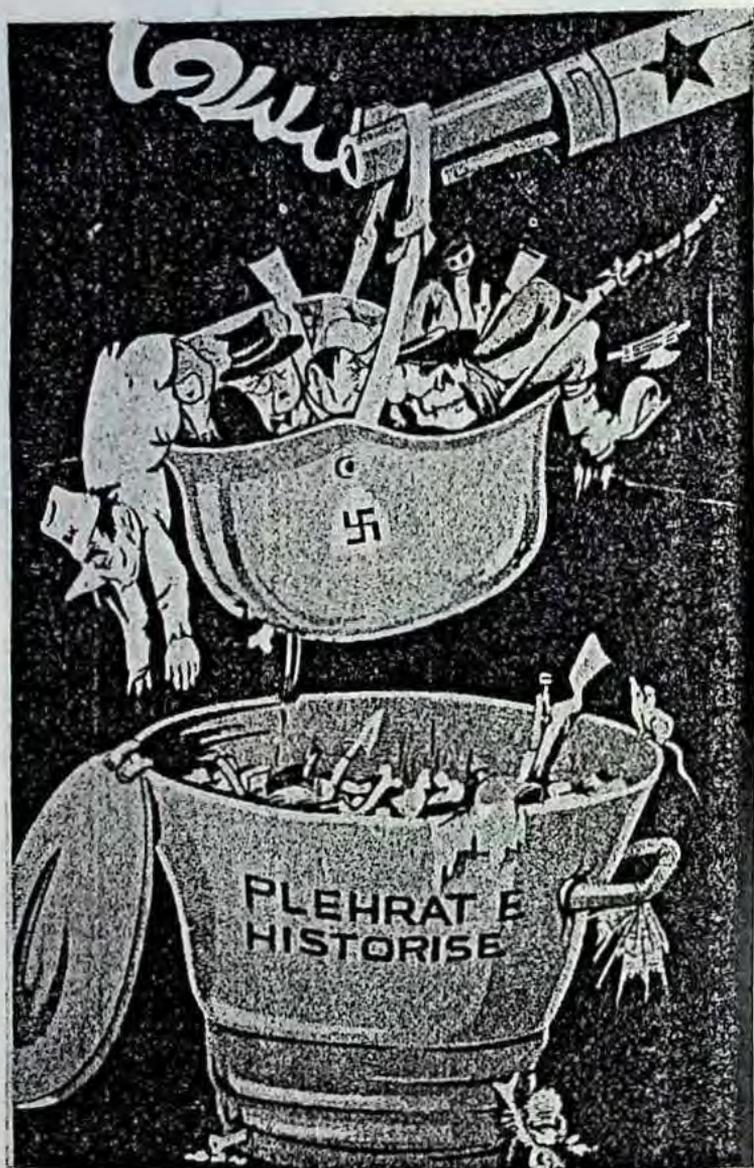
Enver Hoxha, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Party of Labour, talking to cooperative farmers

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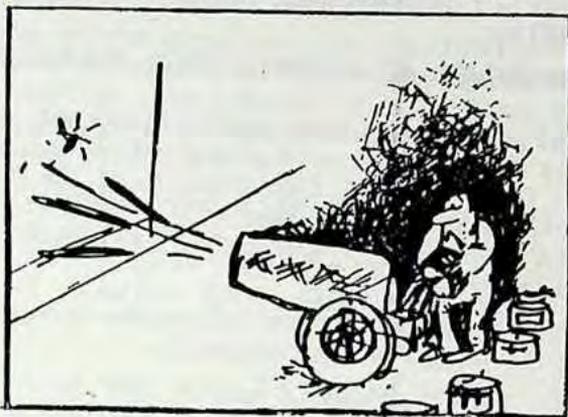
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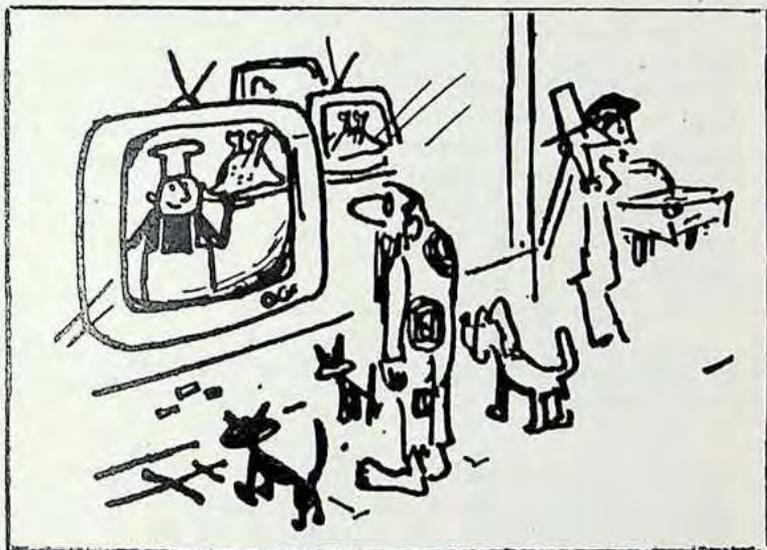


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EDITORIAL:

APPROACHES TO ALBANIA FROM "EAST" AND "WEST"

Following private criticisms of Soviet policy by the Party of Labour of Albania, at the 22nd. Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in October 1961, First Secretary Nikita Khrushchov publicly attacked the Albanian leaders as

"... agents of imperialism who had sold themselves for thirty pieces of silver",

and in the following month the Soviet Union broke off diplomatic relations with Albania.

Since the ousting of Khrushchov in 1964, however, the Soviet Union has made periodical approaches to Tirana proposing the "restoration of friendly relations" between the two countries.

On November 29th., 1982, for example, "Pravda" (Truth), the organ of the Central Committee of the CPSU, published an article congratulating the PLA and the Albanian people on their successful struggle for liberation and the construction of a socialist society. The breach with Albania of twenty years earlier is presented in this article in a fatuously false manner:

"In the early 1960s the leadership (of Albania - Ed.) set about strengthening its political, economic and cultural links with other socialist countries to the detriment of its relations with the Soviet Union".

This, of course, is a garbled reference to the fact that, following the rupture of relations with the Soviet Union, Albania moved into close relations with the People's Republic of China. The PLA does not regard China as being - or as having ever been - a socialist country, although at this time the Chinese leaders were publicly

criticising Soviet policies from what appeared to be a Marxist-Leninist standpoint.

The article above reports the revival of the Soviet-Albania Friendship Association in Moscow and the impending appearance of a series of publications dealing with Albanian history, language and ethnography.

Although the Albanian government has made it clear on many occasions that they are not prepared to establish relations with the Soviet Union so long as it remains what they call "an imperialist superpower", it is clear from British and American official records that neither London nor Washington have ever believed that Albania could maintain a position of genuine independence, holding that sooner or later it must fall under the domination of one or other power.

There can be little doubt that one of the factors lying behind press reports of American approaches to Albania in recent years has been the concern that these Soviet approaches might at some time be taken up.

On April 4th., 1973, for instance, US Deputy Secretary of State Kenneth Rush said in an address at the Naval Academy in Annapolis that

". . . if Albania wished to resume relations it would find the US Government prepared to respond".

And on December 26th., 1982 the "New York Times" carried an article by David Binder which declared:

"For the third time in nine years the United States is preparing to make an overture toward taking up relations with the Communist Government of Albania.

According to senior Administration officials, the plan now under consideration is to propose soon, together with Britain and France, negotiations on the return of more than \$36 million in gold to Albania in exchange for its agreement to settle claims with the three allies. . .

It was noted in the State Department that the new Soviet leadership under Yuri V. Andropov addressed

unusually warm greetings to the Tirana Government on Nov. 29, the 38th. anniversary of the Liberation of Albania from Fascist occupation, as well as an invitation to resume ties that were broken in 1961.

The Administration strategists have come to regard the Balkan region as increasingly an arena of competition between the Soviet Union and the United States".

The "claims" referred to above are principally a US claim of

"... about \$10 million for properties belonging to American citizens and nationalised by the Albanian Government",

and the British claim in respect of the "Corfu Incident" of 1946.

Recently the Czechoslovak government secured the long overdue return of its looted gold by accepting such a deal as that proposed above. It is, however, highly unlikely that the Albanian Government would consider such a deal for a moment.

As a background to these American overtures, one must note the recent assertions by Enver Hoxha, First Secretary of the CC of the PLA, that a group of leading figures in the country, headed by Mehmet Shehu, Prime Minister until his suicide was announced in December 1981, were working as agents of the US Central Intelligence Agency.

The PSR of Albania has relations with many countries, and has expressed its willingness to establish relations with most countries where these do not already exist, provided these relations are on the basis of equality. It excludes the United States of America and the Soviet Union on the grounds that these two states are aggressive, imperialist superpowers with which relations of equality are not possible.

ALBANIAN : AN INDO-EUROPEAN LANGUAGE

by Shaban Demiraj

The Albanian language, descended from Illyrian, forms part of the Indo-European family of languages. This term denotes those genetically related languages which have been spoken from ancient times in territories which stretch from India to Europe. This family (which is clearly distinguished from other lingual families, such as those of the Semitic languages, of the Finno-Ugrian languages, etc.) comprises a series of living and dead languages which have many affinities between them. The further we go back into the past, the more obvious are the affinities between these languages. But in the course of the centuries some of these Indo-European languages have disappeared: such, for example, are Hittite, which was spoken in Asia Minor, and Tocharian, which was spoken in Eastern Turkestan; in the present century important written materials in these two languages have been discovered. Others have undergone great changes and, as a result, have deviated one from another, developing into distinct languages or lingual groups. Thus, Albanian, Greek and Armenian each form separate languages, while on the other hand we speak of the Slavonic group of languages (Russian, Polish, Czech, Serbo-Croat, Bulgarian, etc.); the Romance group of languages (Italian, French, Spanish, Romanian, etc.); and the Germanic group of languages (German, English, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, etc.).

Nevertheless, despite all the great changes which they have undergone in their historical development, the various Indo-European languages have retained certain common features which distinguish them from other lingual families.

One of the living Indo-European languages is the Albanian language, which has survived the blows of the centuries. This fact shows clearly that our ancestors defended it generation after generation as a precious thing, inherited from their own ancestors. And, defending it, they were able to save it from assimilation by

the languages of the various powers which occupied our territory over the centuries.

The Albanian language has long attracted the attention of linguists. But the scholar who first established that it belonged to the Indo-European family of languages was the German philologist Franz Bopp: in his well-known treatise of 1854 "On Albanian and its Relationships", he reached the conclusion that Albanian belonged to the Indo-European family, but

" . . in its fundamental elements it has no close relation with any of its sister Indo-European languages on our continent".

This description of Albanian is sound, and later researches have made ever clearer the Indo-European character of Albanian. The subject also attracted the attention of the Austrian Albanologist Gustav Meyer who, in his study "The Place of Albanian in the Family of Indo-European Languages", expressed the view that

" . . Albanian has a closer link with the northern Indo-European languages than with the southern".

In this latter group are included, of course, Greek and Latin.

The Indo-European character of the Albanian language is revealed in all its elements: in its vocabulary, in its phonetic system and in its grammatical structure. Naturally, the features which it has inherited from the ancient Indo-European phase have not remained unchanged over thousands of years. Through its historical development Albanian, like its sister languages, has lost some ancient Indo-European features and has acquired new ones which have been found desirable, the better to fulfil its function of communication. Let us illustrate this with an example. It is known that the ancient Indo-European languages developed the system of inflecting nouns by means of case terminations, and that this system was extended quite early to adjectives. As is known from its documented phase, Albanian has preserved the system of inflecting nouns in this way. However, in the case of non-particled adjectives this system has completely disappeared, while in the case of particled adjectives, which are an internal development, inflection

for case is carried out by means of changes in their prepositional particle. Thus we have NJĒ DJALĒ TRIM (a brave boy), I NJĒ DJALI TRIM (of a brave boy); NJĒ DJALĒ I MIRE (a good boy); I NJĒ DJALI TĒ MIRE (of a good boy).

This example is sufficient to show that the Albanian language, although it has developed some new features, has preserved others inherited from an early Indo-European phase. Both the new and the inherited characteristics have been fused in such a manner as to complement each other to form an organic whole.

Now let us examine some of the ancient features which Albanian has preserved. We begin with the vocabulary, which is the building material of the language. The vocabulary of a language is known to be that element of language which changes more quickly than the phonetic system or the grammatical structure. As a result, a large part of the words inherited from the early Indo-European phase have disappeared over the centuries. Nevertheless, our language has preserved no small part of these words. The etymological studies of Professor Eqrem Çabej have revealed that the number of these inherited words is greater than was once thought. It is believed that the number of words which Albanian has inherited from the early Indo-European phase is about 2,000. Naturally, this refers only to simple words and not to derivative words (formed by the addition of a prefix and/or suffix to a simple word) and compound words (formed by the fusion of two or more words).

If we look at these inherited words, it becomes clear that in general these are words in common use, that they have undergone changes and that these changes are in full agreement with the laws of the historical development of the phonetic system of Albanian.

Let us begin with the cardinal numbers which, as a rule, have been well-preserved in all Indo-European languages. In Albanian too the majority of these numbers derive from the inherited Indo-European fund. Exceptions are QIND (a hundred) and MIJĒ (a thousand), which have been borrowed from the Latin centum and mille. The inherited words are, for example, all the simple numerals up to ten - NJĒ (one), DY (two), TRE/TRI (three), KATĒR

(four), PESHĒ (five), GJASHTĒ (six), etc. - which may be compared with the Latin unus (one), duo (two), tres (three), quattuor (four), quinque (five), sex (six), etc., or with the ancient Greek en (one), dyo (two), treis/tria (three), tessara (four), pente (five), heks (six), etc.

Of course, changes are obvious - as for example in the case of the Albanian GJASHTĒ (six). This large change is explicable if we bear in mind the data of the historical phonetics of our language. The ancient S- has regularly become transformed into GJ- (we may compare the Albanian GJARPĒR (snake) with the Latin serpens), and the ancient -KS into -SH, while the termination -TĒ is a typical later Albanian suffix (as in SHTATĒ (seven), TETĒ (eight), NĒNTĒ (nine) and DHJETĒ (ten)).

We may also note that in the numerals from NJEMBĒ-DJETĒ (eleven) to NĒNTĒMBĒDHJETĒ (nineteen) there is a parallelism with other Indo-European languages, in that the smaller number is placed before the "ten" and the two linked by a connecting word signifying "on". We may compare the Romanian un-spre-zece (eleven), doi-spre-zece (twelve), etc. and the Russian odin-na-dtsat' (eleven), dve-na-dtstat' (twelve), etc.

Similarly, in the formation of ordinal numbers, the termination -TĒ (in I DYTĒ, second, I TRETĒ, third, etc.) may be compared with the Latin quartus (fourth), quintus (fifth), sextus (sixth), etc., with the Greek tritōs (third), tetartos (fourth), pemptos (fifth), hēktos (sixth), etc., with the German zweite (second), dritte (third), vierte (fourth), fünfte (fifth), sechste (sixth), etc., or with the Russian tretiy (third), chetviortiy (fourth), shestoy (sixth), etc.

Looking now at pronouns, let us take the personal pronoun of the second person singular TI (you - singular). This may be compared with the Latin tu, the Russian ti, the German du, the archaic English thou, etc.

In the case of nouns, we may compare the Albanian NATĒ (night) with the Latin nox/noctis, the Greek nyks/nyktis, the German nacht, etc.; DITĒ (day) with the Latin dies, the Russian den', etc.; DIMER (winter) with

the Latin hiems, the Greek cheima; UJK (wolf) with the Greek lykos, the Russian volk, etc.

And in the case of verbs we may compare the Albanian JAM (am), with the Latin sum, the Greek eimi, the English am, etc.; BIE (carry) with the Latin fero, the Greek phero, the ancient Indian baira, etc.

Space does not permit the mention of other inherited words of the Albanian language, but we must refer once again to the phonetic changes that now distinguish these Albanian words from the equivalent words in its sister languages. The -A- in NATE (night) is a transformed short -O- (which survives in the Latin nox/noctis), while the B- in BIE is a transformation of the earlier BH-; the ancient distinctions between long and short forms of a vowel have in general disappeared.

Finally a word must be said on the grammatical structure of Albanian.

A characteristic of Indo-European languages in their early phase was a system of three genders: masculine, feminine and neuter - a characteristic which the Albanian language also possessed. But with the passage of time, in the majority of Indo-European languages this system of three genders has been simplified to one or two genders, with the neuter gender in particular disappearing. This has occurred also in Albanian, in which the well-established neuter gender of earlier days survives only in gerunds such as TË FOLURIT (speaking) TË MENDUARIT (thinking), etc., and in a few dialect words such as UJET (the water), DJATHËT (the cheese), etc.

Another important characteristic of Indo-European languages in their early phase was a system of conjugating verbs with different terminations for the various persons and numbers. This system has been well preserved in Albanian, though naturally with phonetic developments. We may compare the endings of the Albanian DIMË (we know), DITË (you know) and DINË (they know) with the Latin endings of the first, second and third persons plural (-mus, -tis and -nt).

A further early feature of the verbal structure of Indo-European languages was suppletion, that is, the con-

jugation of a verb using two or more different stems. Many common Albanian verbs preserve this characteristic: JAM (I am), QESHË (I was); KAM (I have), PATA (I had); SHOH (I see), PASHË (I saw); BIE (I fall), RASHË (I fell); BIE (I bring), PRURA (I brought); JAP (I give), DHASHË (I gave); RRI (I sit), NDENJA (I sat); HA (I eat), HËNGRA (I ate); VIJ (I come), ERDHA (I came).

This may be compared with other Indo-European languages: in Latin: sum (I am), fui (I was); fero (I bring), tuli (I brought); in English: I am, I was; I go, I went; etc. The phenomenon of suppletion is especially often met with in the verbal systems of ancient Greek.

From all this it is clear that the Albanian language has preserved an essential part of the ancient Indo-European heritage in all its elements. Nevertheless, a series of difficult but important problems on the etymology of Albanian remain to be solved.

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THE STORM

A short story by Shefqet Musaraj

(Shefqet Musaraj was born in 1914 and began his writing career in association with the democratic movement of the 1930s. He joined the Communist Party and became a leading contributor to the illegal anti-fascist press during the War of National Liberation. His most famous work of this period is the satirical poem "The Epic of the Balli Kombëtar" (1944). He has since written short stories, poems and the long novel "Before the Dawn" (1965)).

On that cold winter's day in 1944 every house in the village was burned to the ground. Fighting had raged all day along the rocky pass to the west of the village, the only route by which the German forces could come. But towards afternoon the partisan unit which had lain in ambush had run out of ammunition and had warned the villagers to leave. Those who had rifles went to join the partisans, while the rest - mostly old people, children and the wounded - gathered up a little flour, a few pots and blankets, and moved off into the mountains to the east of the village; there, in caves and forest, they could hide from the enemy's guns.

Only the family in a low, thatched hut, buried in a small oak forest, some distance away from the other houses, had not been warned. The man responsible had forgotten it.

The woman had spent a sleepless night looking after her two-year-old child, who was ill with malaria. Now the child was quiet, and the woman had fallen asleep, her head resting on the chimney-piece. It was late in the afternoon when she opened her eyes. The snow, which had begun to fall at noon, was now coming down in great flakes; soon the roads and tracks would be covered in deep snow and would be impassable. The woman's thoughts turned to her elder son, who had joined the

village guerilla unit; it was a week since she had seen him, and she had begun to worry about his safety. The Germans were such monsters, she thought - worse than the Italians. If they found you even with a leaflet, let alone to have links with the partisans, they would burn you alive in your house.

Inside the hut it was getting dark. It was very cold. The mother saw that the fire had gone out, and she went outside to get some wood from the pile in the yard. Suddenly she heard noises coming from the village - not the usual cattle-bells or mothers calling to their children. Her heart beat faster. She looked down towards the village, but could see nothing. There was no smoke coming from the chimneys. The street and square were deserted.

She shivered. Were the sounds real or was she imagining them?

But no, what she was hearing was no trick of the wind but shouts in a foreign tongue.

She almost shrieked in horror: "The Germans!"

Running back into the hut, she picked up the child, now fast asleep, wrapped it in her husband's old cape and, without bothering even to shut the door behind her, ran through the yard to the bushes near the house. She glanced right and left, but saw no one. Half running, half walking, she reached the river-bank, where the snow was thickest. Her bare legs sank knee-deep into the soft snow, which was still falling heavily. She grew so cold that she could scarcely move.

She was now some way from the village, but the shouts of the Germans and the sound of axes crashing into doors could still be plainly heard. She exerted all her strength to push her way through the snow. She was convinced that once she was across the river, she would be safe. She stepped into the icy water and struggled,

clutching the child in her arms, to the other side. She took the path which led to the forest.

The child had woken up now, and had begun to cry. The mother hushed her, and the child's cries grew quiet, as though she realised the danger: To her surprise the mother found that, despite the icy cold, she was covered in sweat. It was very dark in the forest, but the ground was dry and she could move more easily. To her left she heard the murmur of a stream, and she suddenly remembered that nearby, when she was a little girl, she had discovered a cave. She searched until she found it, squeezed through the narrow entrance and lay down in a corner with the child. After resting for a while, she collected some dry twigs from the floor of the cave and set fire to them with a box of matches she always carried in the pocket of her apron.

In the flickering light of the fire she looked round the cave - and gave a start of fright. In the opposite corner sat two wolf cubs which, seeing she was not their mother, began to whine. She realised with horror that the mother-wolf had left her cubs to look for food, and would surely return to them. She ran outside and found a log of wood; exerting all her strength she pulled it behind her into the entrance of the cave, so that it was blocked. She filled up the gaps remaining with stones and looked at the barricade with satisfaction. She felt sure that the wolf would now be unable to get back into the cave.

She had only just been in time! Within a few minutes the mother-wolf returned. It pawed at the stones and hurled itself against the log, howling with frustration. The cubs, scenting their mother and hearing her howls, began to whine piteously. The child, too, began to cry once more. Strangely, the mother found herself as moved by the whining of the little animals

as by the crying of her own child.

Finally the mother-wolf, worn out by its exertions, dropped to the ground and began to sob like a human being. The cubs crawled towards their mother, but then retreated, whining in fear, as they saw, in the dim light of the fire, the face of the woman.

At last she could stand it no longer. She went to the entrance of the cave and pulled out one of the rocks from around the trunk. Then she seized the two cubs, one after the other, and pushed them, in spite of their frantic struggles, through the gap she had made. "This is an animal", she thought; "if it kills, that is Nature! It isn't evil! But the Germans . . ."

The mother-wolf immediately pounced on its cubs, picked them both up in its mouth and rush-away into the woods as though overjoyed. The woman turned to her own child, fed her at her breast and lulled her to sleep. Then she lay down beside her, resting her head on a rock, and at once fell into a deep, dreamless sleep.

BOOK REVIEW :

"BEFORE THE DAWN", by Shevqet Musaraj

Reviewed by Steve Day

"Before the Dawn" is an interesting adjunct to the "History of the PLA" and other historical sources on the period of the National Liberation War. An epic novel, it brings to life that heroic period when the workers, peasants and progressive people of Albania rose up against first the Italian, then the German invaders, and defeated both.

The book exposes the role of the liberal bourgeoisie who, unable to embrace wholeheartedly the cause of the people, found themselves increasingly in the arms of the occupiers. One

such is Emira Velo, with whom the central character, Qemal Orhanaj, falls in love. Their different viewpoints drive them further and further apart, not without anguish on the part of Qemal, who tries hard to win Emira over to the NLF. However, when he is faced with the choice of his love for her or his love for the cause, he decides, probably to the dismay of bourgeois romantic readers, that the ideal of the NLF and the Party is stronger than personal considerations.

The book introduces us to the real heroes of Liberation - the children who distribute illegal leaflets under the very noses of the occupiers, the old folk who give food and shelter to the partisans, and of course the partisans themselves, young and old, many of whom gave their lives in the struggle.

Shevqet Musaraj, the author, was actively involved in the War of Liberation, and this is evident from reading his novel. He also wrote "The Epic of the Balli Kombëtar", which takes up the treacherous role of the feudal and bourgeois "nationalists" in another form.



ALBANIAN NEWS

(covering August - October 1982)

ATTEMPTED INVASION

On September 28th. the Ministry of Internal Affairs issued the following communique:

"On the night of September 25, 1982, a gang of emigre Albanian criminals, headed by the bandit Xhevdet Mustafa, landed on our coast. They were discovered at 6 a.m. and were liquidated within five hours by the security forces, units of the People's Army and the population of the area where the criminals landed. A considerable number of automatic rifles and pistols were captured, together with binoculars, a radio transmitter, US dollars, Italian lira and Albanian leks, camouflage equipment, changes of clothing, etc."

DEMOGRAPHY

On December 31st., 1981 the population of Albania reached 2,752,300 - 2.6 times the level of 1938. Children under 15 years form 37% of the population, the average age of which is 25.7 years.

POLITICS

The 8th. Congress of the Labour Youth Union of Albania took place in Tirana from October 4th. to 7th. The main report was delivered by First Secretary Lumturi Rexhi. Mehmet Elezi was elected First Secretary.

On October 22nd. a Plenum of the General Council of the Women's Union of Albania was held. President Vita Kapo reported on the work of women in the election campaign. Lumturi Rexhi was elected First Vice-President.

DIPLOMACY

In August diplomatic relations were established with Botswana.

In September the Turkish Ambassador, Selcuk Toker, and the Ambassador of Upper Volta, Gomtirbou Tiendrebeogu, presented their credentials to President Haxhi

Lleshi, the Albanian Ambassador to Yugoslavia, Lik Seiti, presented his credentials to President Peter Stambolic, the Albanian Ambassador to Italy, Bashkim Dino, presented his credentials to President Alessandro Pertini, the Albanian Ambassador to Greece, Ksenofon Nushi, presented his credentials to President Konstantinos Karamanlis, and the Albanian Ambassador to Sweden, Izedin Hajdini, presented his credentials to King Carl Gustaf.

In October diplomatic relations were established with Thailand.

INDUSTRY

An important industrial project to be set up under the 7th. Five Year Plan (1981-5) is a new chemical works at Durrës, which in particular will treble the output of chemical fertilisers.

AGRICULTURE

In August a complex for the rearing of lambs for meat was established at the Vurgu Agricultural Enterprise, in Saranda district. It has a capacity of 10,000 lambs and will produce 4,000 quintals of meat annually.

In September a new livestock complex was inaugurated at the Spitalla Agricultural Enterprise, Durrës district. It will rear 2,000 calves a year and produce 700 tons of veal and 6,000 tons of organic fertiliser annually.

Herdsman Vata Marku, Hero of Socialist Labour, of Shkodra district, has succeeded in obtaining 430 litres of milk per head from the herd of cattle under his care.

More than half the arable land in Albania is now under irrigation. In Shkodra district the proportion is 70%.

The Higher Institute of Agriculture, at Kamza, a few miles north of Tirana, has 5,000 students from all parts of the country, 50% of whom are women. It has five faculties, concerned with agronomy, veterinary science, agrarian economy, agricultural machinery,

and forestry. Its experimental garden covers 130 hectares while its library contains more than 100,000 books and maintains relations with 108 similar institutions in 30 foreign countries. The students carry out practical work on nearby cooperative farms.

A new poultry complex was inaugurated in October at Berat. It rears 20,000 chicks and will produce 5 million eggs annually.

POWER

Construction is proceeding on the third hydro-electric power station to be constructed on the River Drin, at Homan. This will be the largest yet built in Albania, and a single one of its turbines will produce 17 times as much electric power as all the hydro-electric power stations in the country in 1960.

Albania is one of the few countries in the world which has a positive balance in electric power. Its export of such power is now twice what it was in 1970.

MINING

In September a new alabaster mine was opened in Saranda district.

During the current Five Year Plan (1981-5) 50 new mines will be opened for the extraction of various minerals.

CONSTRUCTION

In August work began on the construction of the Fier-Vlora railway line. At the same time work is proceeding on the building of the Shkodra-Han i Hotit line, which will link Albania's railways for the first time with the European rail network.

In September a new postal/telecommunications centre was opened for Vlora district. Albania now has a post office for every 4,660 inhabitants.

In September work began on the construction of an irrigation project in northern Albania, based on the artificial lake at the Vau i Dejës power station. It will increase the area under irrigation by 3,400 hectares, and improve irrigation over a further 7,400 hectares.

DISTRIBUTION

Albania now has a shop for every 280 inhabitants.

FOREIGN TRADE

In September Albania participated in the international fairs at Izmir (Turkey), Bari (Italy) and Salonika (Greece), and in October at that at Teheran (Iran).

In September trade agreements for 1983 were signed with Bulgaria and Poland, and in October with Czechoslovakia, Austria, Cuba and Romania.

SCIENCE

In September an agreement on Technical-Scientific Cooperation was signed with Vietnam.

EDUCATION

For the 1982-3 school year, the Text-book Publishing House in Tirana will make available 315 text-books, of which 50 are either new or revised. A further 166 text-books will be available for the University of Tirana.

In the new school year, which began in September, 730,000 pupils and students will attend educational institutions of various levels. More than 13,000 will attend higher educational institutions.

In the areas of southern Albania inhabited by the Greek-speaking minority, education will be available in the Greek language for both children and adults. There is a special teachers' training college in Gjirokastra for the training of Greek-speaking teachers. In addition to school text books, numerous books are published each year in the Greek language. There is a daily newspaper in this language, as well as broadcasts from both Radio Tirana and Radio Gjirokastra. In 1982 three volumes of folk songs of the Greek minority came off the press.

HEALTH

In September a new obstetric-gynaecological hospital was opened in Berat, and a similar hospital in Elbasan in October.

In 1938 the number of pharmacies in Albania was 78, employing a staff of 95. Today there are 460 pharmacies

in the country, of which 90% are situated in villages.

Some 40 traditional remedies have, after testing, been approved by the Institute of Folk Medicine and made available through the health service.

The Ministry of Health publishes the magazine "Health", which provides information for the public on hygiene, child health, first aid, etc.

Today there are, compared with 1938, 76 times the number of health institutions, 6 times the number of hospitals and 5 times the number of health centres. Over 85% of the health institutions are situated in the villages.

FOREIGN VISITS

Among visits abroad by Albanians and Albanian delegations during the period under review were:

In September: the Dibra Artistic Ensemble of Peshkop, to Turkey.

FOREIGN VISITORS

Among visitors to Albania during the period under review were:

In August:

A delegation of the Chamber of Trade and Industry of Salonika, headed by its Chairman, Vasilios Petridhis

A delegation of the Communist Party of Sweden (Marxist-Leninist), led by its First Secretary, Rris Klausen.

Hasan Abdel Moneim, Vice-President of the Egypt-Albania Friendship Association.

In September:

The Arberësh poet Vorea Ujko

The Egyptian composer Hedhat Assem

A delegation of the Sweden-Albania Friendship Association, headed by its Chairman, Hans Rockberg
Prof. Nazif Kujucuglu, of the University of Istanbul

The French engineer Pierre Azou

In October:

- A delegation of the Communist Youth Union of Denmark (Marxist-Leninist), headed by its First Secretary, Jurgen Petersen
- A delegation of the University Students' Federation of Ecuador, led by Antonio Torres
- A delegation of the Communist Youth Union of Canada (Marxist-Leninist), led by its First Secretary, Lui
- A delegation of the Communist Youth Union of Spain (Marxist-Leninist), led by Herhe Alkudia
- A delegation of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Union of Portugal, led by Pedro Soares
- A delegation of the TANU Youth Organisation of Tanzania, led by its President, Mohamed Khatib
- A delegation of the Communist Youth Union of Britain, led by its Secretary, Roy Marshall
- A delegation of the Communist Youth (Marxist-Leninist) of Colombia, led by Humberto Rodrigues
- A delegation of the Communist Youth of Togo (Marxist-Leninist), led by Koffi Andre
- A delegation of the Flavio Suero Student Front of the Dominican Republic, led by Achilles Castro
- A delegation of the Anti-Fascist and Anti-Imperialist Youth Union of France, led by its President, Jean Lui
- A delegation of the Communist Youth of Upper Volta, (Marxist-Leninist), led by Uedreogo
- A delegation of the Communist Youth (Marxist-Leninist) of Sweden
- A delegation of the Communist Youth of Dahomey, led by Kuami Andre
- A delegation of the Communist Youth of Germany, led by its First Secretary, Jurgen Tobegen

A delegation of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), led by its General Secretary, David Williams

A delegation of the Turkish Ministry of Youth and Sports, led by the Vice-Minister, Ismail Gunger

CULTURE

Literature

Among new books published during the period under review are:

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|-------------|-----------------------------------------|
| B. Brecht: | "Critical Studies" |
| E. Hoxha: | "Works", Volume 37 (May-July 1968) |
| J. Kemal: | "The Pillar" |
| A. Gramsci: | "Writings on Culture and Literature" |
| V. Hugo: | "Les Miserables" |
| T. Reka: | "Kurosivo" |
| Homer: | "The Odyssey" (for children) |
| - | "The History of the PLA" (2nd. Edition) |
| V. Ujko: | "Arbreresh Songs" |
| - | "Studies in Folk Medicine" |
| - | "Folk Lyrics", Volume 3 |
| - | "An Anthology of Kosovar Verse" |

Theatre

In September the Tirana Variety Theatre presented "Under the Whip of Satire", a selection of the satire of Fan Noli and the People's Theatre, Tirana, presented a new production of Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night", directed by Piro Mani.

Cinema

Among new feature films released during the period under review are:

- "November 1912"
- "The Second November"
- "The Legend of a Heart"
- "Ismail Qemali"

At the 12th. International Children's Film Festival in Salerno (Italy), the Albanian feature film "Our Comrade Tili" was awarded a special prize.

Ballet

In September the Opera and Ballet Theatre in Tirana presented the premiere of the ballet "Before the Storm", based on Jakov Xoxe's novel "The Dead River"

Art

In September the photo-exhibition "From the Life of Vietnam" opened in the Palace of Culture, Tirana, together - in the same building - with an exhibition of 200 paintings and 800 drawings by the artist Abdurrahim Buza.

SPORT

The 38th. cycling "Tour of Albania", in 12 stages over 1,300 kilometres, ended on September 22nd. First place was won by the Vllaznia team (Shkodra).

In the National Swimming Championship, held in Durrës in September, 10 national records were broken. The men's championship was won by Lokomotiva (Durrës), the women's by Flamurtari (Vlora).

In a European Cup football match at Belfast in September 17 November (Albania) was defeated by Lindfield (N. Ireland) 2:1. However, since the Albanian team had won the first match 1:0, it qualified for the next round.

In October the Dinamo team won the National Free Wrestling Championship, held in Korça and Vlora.

In an international football match in Tirana in September, Dinamo (Albania) drew 0:0 with Aberdeen (Scotland).

In September the National Table Tennis Championship (women) in Elbasan was won by Majlinda Sora of Partizani club.

THE ALBANIAN SOCIETY :

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

EDINBURGH :

Friday, March 25th. at 7. 30 p.m.
Filmhouse Hall, 88, Lothian Road.

GLASGOW :

Saturday, March 26th. at 2. 30 p.m.
West Room, McLellan Galleries,
270, Sauchiehall Street

At both meetings a video will be screened
of the Albanian feature film "OLD WOUNDS"

LONDON :

Saturday, April 9th., at 2. 30 p.m.
Lyndhurst Hall, Warden Road
(off Grafton Road). NW5
(nearest Underground : Kentish Town)

A taped recital of MUSIC
by modern Albanian composers
and

TREASON!

A talk on the plots against Albania's
independence, with special reference to
the case of Mehmet Shehu.

LONDON :

Saturday, September 24th. at 2. 30 p.m.
Roxie Cinema, Wardour Street, W1

Premiere in Britain of the Albanian feature
film: "POPPIES ON THE WALLS"



The Gallery of Figurative Arts, Tirana

The illustration on the front cover is of the drawing
"THE METALLURGIST" by Ç. Ceka

ALBANIAN LIFE is published quarterly by:

THE ALBANIAN SOCIETY,
26, Cambridge Road,
Ilford,
Essex, IG3 8LU