

ALBANIAN LIFE

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EDITORIAL

Many letters have been received from readers over the last year noting improvements in ALBANIAN LIFE. We are constantly trying to improve both the content and the format of the journal, recognising that it is an important medium for spreading information about all aspects of life in Albania. However, we lack commercial distribution and so rely entirely on members of the Albanian Society to help increase our circulation.

That is why we are asking all readers of ALBANIAN LIFE to take one or two extra copies to sell to friends or to place in newsagents and bookshops (available on sale or return, with $\frac{1}{3}$ commission). Please write today telling us how many copies you would like.

Finally, if you have any ideas for further improving ALBANIAN LIFE, contributions, letters for publication, etc., please do not hesitate to write to us.

The Editorial Committee

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Extra copies may be obtained from:

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there before when viewing the present exhibition. Albania is such a beautiful country, with scenery of such untamed strength and grandeur, that it is difficult to duplicate it anywhere in Europe.

Though Edward Lear's work is, of course, known to specialists in Tirana, Albania has no equivalent Victorian heritage to draw upon. Four and a half centuries of Ottoman overlordship imposed a cultural vacuum in which this type of art could not develop. Earliest Albanian painting was confined largely to icons, including some magnificent examples, and decorative design. Of course, the country was by far from being an artistic wilderness, even in Ottoman times, but visual art flourished mainly in the fields of textiles, some of which are exceptionally fine, carving, metalwork and architecture.

A point worth noting about the exhibition is, therefore, that where painting was concerned Albania started out in 1944 virtually with a clean slate - a situation unparalleled in modern European art. Even the older generation sought out fresh modes of expression and, while the 1950s saw some limited contact with art institutes in eastern Europe, during the 1960s and 1970s the Albanians worked almost entirely by themselves and solved their artistic problems in their own way. Most of the twenty paintings in the exhibition are dated, and they range from 1975 to 1982, covering the period when this situation reached its culmination. In fact, apart from Abdurrahim Buza, only three of the present artists received any training abroad. Independence and self-sufficiency are the watchwords of Albanian society today, and the chance to see what impact this has had on artistic expression is an important occasion. Indeed, it has often been claimed that Albania is the only country in the world today where the art of socialist realism truly flourishes, a viewpoint underscored particularly by the album "Klasa Punëtores ne Artet Figurative" (The Working Class in the Figurative Arts)(1977), which will be available at the exhibition. The subject matter of some of the paintings illustrated may be difficult for people not well-acquainted with this type of art, but it would be carping to deny the technical skill of the painters. The independent spirit of present-day Albanian artists is based on a proper education and sound training, not the obscurantism of the past, and hence must be viewed as an interesting facet of contemporary world art.

THE ALBANIAN BEAR

BY Fotaq Lamani



A bear cub in the Munella Forest
(Kukës district)

The brown bear (*Ursus arctos*) is found, even in the narrow territory of our country in which it is found, in many varieties, distinguished by the length and colour of the fur and by the shape of the skull. In the Korça district, in the Northern Alps and on Mount Korab

large bears are found which are distinguished by their long thin limbs, by their long head and high forehead, and by their long snout. In contrast, the bears found to the south of Mount Tomorr and in the Skrapar, Përmet and Gjirokastra districts are in general smaller. with shorter, thicker limbs, broader head and more flattened snout, while their colour is more grey than brown. According to craniometric data, less than 40% of our bears have long, thin skulls, while the remaining 60% have broad, flattened skulls.

Apart from these distinctions from one district to another, the Albanian bear is significantly smaller than the average bear in the world as a whole. This is probably the result of the higher vegetable content of the diet on which it feeds: it is observed to eat meat only when no other food is readily available. However, old bears, which are not able to move continually around in search of food, often attack sheep, goats and cattle, and in case of necessity they do not hesitate to eat carrion. The young bear feeds on the seeds and fruits of the forest, and is particularly fond of the honey of wild bees, found in the hollows of trees.

During the winter the bear goes into hibernation in its lair, which it builds in the deeper part of the forest, usually within the hollow of an old tree. During this cold period it is nourished by the reserves of fat in its body.

The bear, the largest mammal in our country, gives the impression of being a sluggish animal; in fact, it is very quick and agile, can swim well, and is nimble at climbing trees, especially when young. It has a good sense of smell

and hearing, but its sense of sight and taste is weak.

In Albania the bear is a protected animal, and its hunting is prohibited.

CARTOONS



Election Promises



- What is it? A plane?
- No. Prices!

by Bardhyl Fico



A Property-owning Democracy



Equal Obligations
within the Family

by Dhimitraq Ligori

THE WORLD AS SEEN FROM TIRANA

THE POWER INDUSTRY IN ALBANIA

by Agron Çuedari

(Deputy Minister of the Power Industry)



A sub-station on the Light of the Party hydro-electric power station

The People's Socialist Republic of Albania is rich in sources of energy.

Before Liberation, some of these sources of energy were exploited by capitalist companies. Oil extracted in Albania was processed in Italy and a small quantity of it was sold back to the country at high prices. There were a few small thermal power stations, but the total annual production of these was equal only to one day's export of electric power today. Even these few power projects were almost totally destroyed during the war, while

all geological records were either taken away or destroyed.

In pre-Liberation Albania agriculture accounted for 92.4% of national income, industry for only 4.5%, and in 1938 only 1% of national income went to investment. In other words, the productive forces were extremely backward, and this backwardness had its roots in the feudal-capitalist mode of production.

After Liberation, therefore, special attention had to be paid, in the context of the economic development of the country, to the development of the power industry, to which priority was given.

BIBLIOGRAPHY SUPPLEMENT

The following titles of books on, or touching upon, Albania have been sent in by readers as additions to the bibliographies published in ALBANIAN LIFE Nos. 22 and 23, 1982):

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|------|
| BEAUFORT, Emily A.: | "The Eastern Shores of the Adriatic in 1863" | 1864 |
| CHEKREZI, Constantin A.: | "English-Albanian Dictionary" | 1923 |
| LANDOR, Arnold W. S.: | "Everywhere" | 1924 |
| MASSOCK, Richard: | "Italy from Within" | 1943 |
| McKINLEY, Earl B.: | "A Geography of Disease" | 1935 |
| NOAKES, Vivien: | "Edward Lear: The Life of a Wanderer" | 1968 |
| SHARP, William: | Letter of January 1903, in: Sharp, Elizabeth A.: "William Sharp: A Memoir" | 1910 |
| SHELLEY, Mary W.: | "The Evil Eye", in: "The Keep-sake" | 1830 |
| TEMPERLEY, Harold W. V. (Ed.): | "A History of the Peace Conference of Paris", Volume 4 | 1921 |
| TOZER, Henry F.: | "Researches in the Highlands of Turkey" | 1869 |
| TURRILL, William B.: | "The Plant Life of the Balkan Peninsula" | 1929 |

Our thanks go to the readers who have kindly supplied these additional titles.

"LA TRAVIATA"

In March a new production of Verdi's opera "La Traviata" based on the play "The Lady of the Camelias" by Alexandre Dumas the Younger, was presented at the Opera and Ballet Theatre, Tirana. The opera was directed by Dhimitër Pecani and the orchestra was conducted by Ermir Krantja.

PJETËR BUDI

by Dilaver Kurti



The bust of Budi in Ballsh

Pjetër Budi was born in Guri i Bardhë in Mat district in 1566. He tells us that he was educated in the country by some well-known scholars of the time. At the age of 21 he became a priest and for twelve consecutive years (1587-1599) served in Kosova. Later he worked for a further 17 years in Prokopje and Shkup.

The time in which Budi worked was pregnant with the struggle for the liberation of the

country from the Ottoman yoke, and it was in this framework that, at the age of 50, he took up the standard that had been held by Buzuku in the field of the Albanian language.

In 1616 he set out for Rome, where he began to publish Albanian books: "The Christian Doctrine" in 1618, "The Roman Ritual" and "The Mirror of the Confession" in 1621 - all the product of long and intensive study. During his stay in Rome he prepared two other books, but these were never published because the Pope objected to their political content.

The material of Budi's published works occupies about 1,000 pages of prose and poetry. Although much of it consists of translation, he inserted many views of his own based on his support of the Albanian struggle for national independence. The original part of his work, such as the long pastoral letter, constitutes the first known original prose in the Albanian language. Among the 2,964 verses, too, there is much original material.

Budi's political views emerge clearly in his famous report of September 5th., 1621 to Cardinal Gecadino, in which he presents himself as a spokesman for his country, saying that he has come to Rome to present the demands of his people and of the leaders of the insurrectionary movement. In this report he describes the geographical boundaries of Albania, its economic and political situation, the character of the insurrectionary movement and its strategy

and tactics. He expresses the view that the time is ripe for the struggle because the Turks are occupied with the war against the Poles.

Budi returned to his homeland in 1622 full of optimism, to become Bishop of Zadrima. Seeing, however, that the Vatican, Spain and especially Venice were opposed to the Albanian demands, he began a new undertaking. In 1622 he convoked an assembly in Zadrima, the full decisions of which we do not know. However, a contemporary source informs us that Budi

" . . has decreed that henceforth bishops and abbots in those parts of Albania would be acceptable only if they were natives, and has made all the priests sign this".

By this decision Budi came out in open opposition to the Vatican.

Shortly afterwards - about December 25th. of the same year, 1622 - Budi was drowned in the River Drin. The circumstances of his death remain a mystery, but it was generally believed that his death was not accidental but had been engineered by his enemies.

Budi's works served the national cause even after his death. "The Christian Doctrine" was republished in 1636, 1664 and 1678, and this and his other works became textbooks in the religious schools that were opened.

In 1966, to commemorate the 400th. anniversary of his death, a bust of Budi was erected in his birthplace of Guri i Bardhë, and another in the town of Burrel. The schools in Guri i Bardhë and in a ward of Burrel were given his name. In 1982 the house in which he was born in Guri i Bardhë was restored.

LONDON BRANCH MEETING

On August 7th. the London Branch of the Albanian Society held a meeting on the 9th. Congress of the Women's Union of Albania. The meeting was addressed by a speaker from the Women's Union of Britain, which sent a delegation to Albania for the Congress, and also included a screening of a video of the last Congress.

MUSIC IN ALBANIA

by Dave Smith



A young trio at the May Concerts in Tirana

The wealth and variety of music in Albania is astonishing, considering that the country has just over 2½ million people inhabiting an area slightly larger (and even more mountainous) than Wales. Singing appears to be a national sport even more popular than football - hardly surprising, perhaps, since a visit to a kindergarten revealed that even young children are able to perform songs and recite poetry with both a remarkable confidence and a surprising lack of self-consciousness.

The three- to five-piece bands that play in bars, restaurants and hotels (there are no juke-boxes) often include a virtuoso instrumentalist, usually a clarinetist or a violinist: technical dexterity, full-blooded tone quality intricate ornamentation, and frequent glissandi (and sometimes bewildering rhythmic groupings) all contribute to the cheerful rhapsodic nature of their performance. This sort of band, known as a saze, also includes instruments

such as piano accordion, guitar (possibly electric). and drum-kit, and is typical of urban popular music, forms of which developed during the 500-year Turkish occupation. Despite certain oriental features, it sounds just as peculiarly Albanian (rather than all-purpose Balkan) as the strikingly different rural folk music. This itself displays considerable regional differences, particularly the vocal music, which tends towards a hard-edged, nasal homophony in the north and a complex, drone-based, ancient-sounding polyphony in the south, where probably more types of part-singing have developed than in any other region of Europe. Instrumental folk ensembles frequently feature long-necked lutes and shepherds' pipes. Lutes often accompany songs, but instruments such as pipes (fyell and kavall) and the small double clarinet (zumare) can sometimes be heard to best advantage when they are played alone; customarily employing circular breathing, soloists on these instruments improvise "pieces" based on frequent and varied repetition of simple motifs. A counterpart in urban music (and one of its highlights) is the kaba,

"... an instrumental improvisation of vast territorial extent;... as with the Blues in the USA, every performance of the kaba is achingly familiar yet always fresh and different". (2)

Bands that are used to performing for tourists will often play Western tunes as well, complete with Albanian-style expression and ornamentation; they seem to have a peculiar affinity for tangos and soulful popular numbers - "Petite Fleur" and "House of the Rising Sun" are particular favourites.

Albanian folk music, then, is a strong cultural force which is very much alive and well. The folk music archive of the Institute of People's Culture in Tirana holds about 21,000 folk melodies. "This may seem a large collection", the assistant director told me, "but it is small in comparison to what we must have". There are frequent national and regional contests and festivals, of which the most celebrated is the National Folklore Festival, held in Gjirokastra, a picturesque city renowned for its unique architecture. This festival is held every five years, most recently in October 1978.

Thanks to the pioneering work of the late A. L. Lloyd, Albanian folk music is not completely unknown in Britain.

But what of the music produced by Albanian composers? John Jansson's performance of Ćesk Zadeja's "Toccata" at the Albanian Society's memorial meeting for A. L. Lloyd in January was possibly the first British performance of any Albanian composition. But however little known these composers may be to the rest of the world, they seem well-publicised and widely appreciated within their own country. Armed with a radio-cassette machine and a daily newspaper, I was able to record a fairly representative sample of orchestral, choral and operatic music, though solo piano and chamber music proved more difficult to locate.

A general guide-book informed me that Albanian composers base themselves on the folklore of the country and avoid

". . . abstract and decadent trends. Their aesthetic aim is 'national in form and socialist in substance', as the basic principle of socialist realism". (3)

I expected to hear music that was heavily dependent on nationalist composers of the 19th. and early 20th. centuries and Soviet socialist realist composers of the Stalin era. These expectations were fuelled by the knowledge that the conditions created by the Turkish occupation, the ravages of two world wars and the inter-war repressive dictatorship of King Zog made it impossible for composers to flourish. In the immediate post-war years, they virtually had to start from scratch. Consequently the first Albanian operetta, "Agimi" (The Dawn) by Kristo Kono, appeared as late as 1953, the first opera, "Mrika" by Preng Jakova, in 1958, and the first ballet "Halili dhe Hajrija" (Halil and Hajrija) by Tish Daia, in 1963.

My first reactions to much of what I heard were mixed. Many pieces were attractively tuneful, spirited, and cheerful, and all were tonal (in the broadest sense). But often I was left feeling rather bewildered by what seemed to be a strange attitude to harmonic progression, or a rate of change of ideas considerably faster than, say, Poulenc's - Sokol Shupo's "Rhapsody for Piano and Orchestra" was a particularly inscrutable example. Perhaps the most disorientating thing was that it was often difficult to relate these works to Western models. I heard only one piece - Lorenç Antoni's "Pjesë per malësorët" (Piece for Highlanders) - that could be accused of a particularly strong indebtedness (to Dvořák); the expected whiffs of Bartók

and Prokofiev were rare, though a vaguely Russian-sounding orchestral palette was in evidence at times.

The main radio station, Radio Tirana, often presents programmes consisting entirely of rhapsodies, symphonic poems, suites, ballet music or even overtures. One composer whose music was broadcast frequently and instantly appealed to me was Aleksandër Peçi (born 1951). His attractive "Rhapsody for Violin and Orchestra" (1977) is typical: subtitled "Valle e jone, valle e popullit" (Our dance, dance of the people", it reflects the composer's contact with the folk music of the south, particularly that of Përmet, a town near the Greek border, the music of which is noted for its lyrical warmth and lively character. Peçi's "Rhapsody" contrasts these two types of material - he introduces an authentic lyrical folk-tune at one point - before launching into a brief but astonishing cadenza, related to the particular variety of kaba found in Përmet and featuring a stylised "wailing" figure and retuning of the violin's G string.

This is a good example of a work that openly displays its folk music connections without sounding like a sophisticated arrangement. While it is unmistakably of the 20th. century, it is light years away from, say, Bartók or Enescu, being pretty consonant and full of typically Romantic gestures. The clarity and immediate attractiveness reappeared in other works by Peçi for solo instrument and orchestra, particularly the "Cello Fantasia" (1979). The "Variations for Horn" (1975) is a less memorable piece (I've never heard a horn player use so much vibrato), but the suite for piano and orchestra entitled "Kadro heroizmit" (Pictures of Heroism) is more dissonant and highly charged and contains flourishes reminiscent of Prokofiev. "Pjesë për flaut" (Piece for Flute), accompanied by an almost Latin American-sounding folk orchestra, is unashamedly "light" in character and reflects the fact that Peçi, like most other Albanian composers, is equally at ease writing film music, a stirring revolutionary song, or even "light music". (4)

Not all composers make such clear reference to folk music as Peçi. Several seem to favour highly impassioned minor-key tensions, which are effective in disguising folk sources, or so it would appear. One piece that uses such techniques is "Rhapsody No. 1 for Orchestra" (1973) by Feim Ibrahimî (b. 1937); a useful little book on Albanian composers, which I managed to pick up, assured me that this work

"... directly evokes authentic folk rhapsodies" (5)

Much as I admired the work for its emotional drama and struggle, I couldn't detect a very strong folk connection. Most Western listeners, I imagine, would happily sit through the symphonic poems "Atdheu" (Motherland) (1974) by Shpëtim Kushta (b. 1946) and "Borova" by Thoma Gaqi (b. 1948) without being aware of any folk reference whatsoever. Solemnity and epic-heroics permeate the first of these, while "Borova" (named after a village the inhabitants of which were massacred by the Nazis) is suitably imbued with tragedy and a reflection of the courage of the people who struggled against the invaders.

The orchestration of these symphonic poems is predominantly dark-coloured, a feature common to much Albanian music. Peçi's music is more transparently textured than most, but that of Tish Daia (b. 1926) is the most individual sounding. Daia's "Rhapsody for Flute and Orchestra" (1981) is a short but effective essay in highly ornamented, lyrical-pastoral, low-register flute writing, which passes quickly and effortlessly into impassioned orchestral tutti. The string writing is particularly imaginative, ranging from beefy arpeggio figures (reminiscent of Janaček) in the tutti to quiet glassy-textured accompaniment in the early stages of the work. Effective string writing is also a feature of an excerpt I heard from a much earlier work "Halili dhe Hajrija" (1961-2). The events portrayed in this, the first Albanian ballet, occurred in the 18th. century, when Turkish oppression encountered the resistance of the highland warriors. Musically the piece furnishes further evidence of Daia's ability to cope with rapid contrast without creating the feeling that the composer is presenting too much information - in fact, Daia's ideas seem to flow at a more relaxed rate than those of most of his compatriots.

"Halili dhe Hajrija" was performed 150 times between 1963 and 1973, which is some measure of its popularity. Encouraged by its success, several other ballets appeared in the 1960s, such as "Delina" by Çesk Zadeja (b. 1927), "Fatosi partizan" (The Boy Partisan) by Kozma Laro, and "Cuca e maleve" (The Girl from the Mountains) by Nikolla Zoraqi (b. 1929). Scene 2 of Act 2 of Zoraqi's ballet, which was one of the most impressive things I heard during my stay, seems to indicate that the composer's forte is the broadly lyrical and the feverishly passionate; the extraordinarily jolly "Uvertura festive" (Festival Overture)

(1969) is barely recognisable as a work by the same composer. I also managed to buy a piano reduction of Zoraqi's "Third Violin Concerto", which looks fiendishly difficult but, judging by Ibrahim Mali's dazzling performance of Peçi's Rhapsody, there are violinists able to cope with it.

One of the most prolific composers appears to be Tonin Harapi (b. 1928), whose work seems fairly diatonic in comparison with that of most of his countrymen. His suite "Vullnetarët" (The Volunteers)(1965) is a vocal suite dedicated to the youth of the country, whose voluntary work on such projects as the construction of the railways is well known; it is a cheerful and energetic three-movement choral piece, which pays tribute to this topical phenomenon. Harapi seems less attracted to the kind of impassioned utterance common to the works of Ibrahim, Zoraqi and Kushta, even in dramatic works such as his opera "Zgjimi" (The Awakening) (1974). His relatively lightweight "Second Rhapsody for Piano and Orchestra" (a work that makes obvious allusions to folk music) seems to bear this out.

I should have liked to hear more of the operatic achievements of Albania's senior composers Preng Jakova (1919-69) and Kristo Kono (b. 1907), both of whom are accredited People's Artists (the others are Tish Daia, Çesk Zadeja and Avni Mula, while several more are Artists of Merit). Kono's opera "Lulja e kujtimit" (The Flower of Remembrance) (1958) has a marvellously rousing martial finale, which sounds like the result of a collaboration between Verdi and Eisler.

I was disappointed in the small piano pieces I occasionally came across. The brief "Toccata" of Çesk Zadeja seems less effective in terms of the piano than does his "Symphonic Suite" in terms of the orchestra. The toccata-type piece, often involving fast semi-quavers in alternate hands, is a popular choice since there is a natural counterpart in the fast virtuoso playing of the çifteli, a two-string lute.

The position of Albania in the world of composition is quite a peculiar one. Here is a body of music in which the element of communication is of paramount importance. Quite frankly, it was refreshing to hear a large amount of recently composed tonal music, little of which struck me as being trite or ill-considered. Composers have flourished for barely 40 years in Albania, and yet their music ignores

almost all the fashionable tendencies in Western music from Schoenberg and Stravinsky onwards (though Albanian higher musical education includes study of such phenomena). Their reasons for this lie in a popular political stance, which maintains that

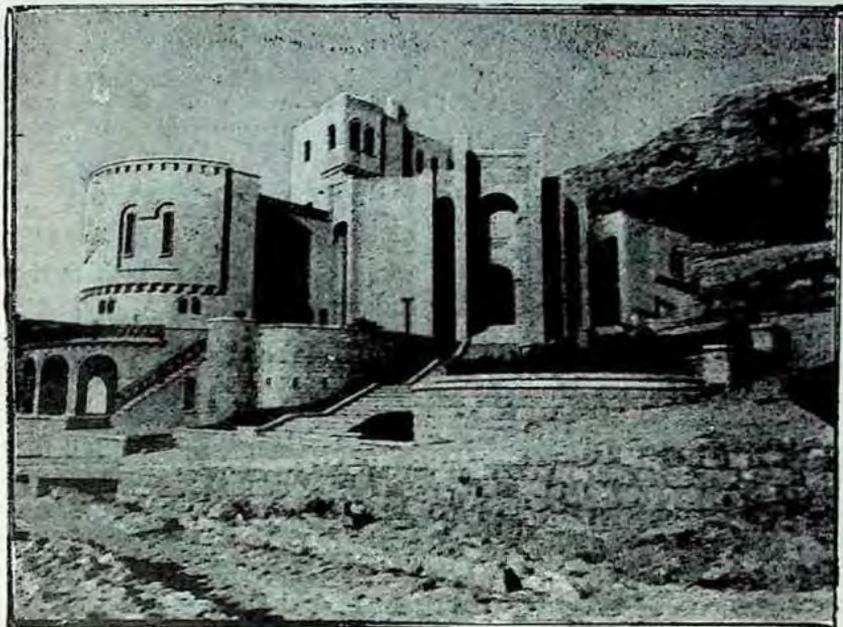
" . . . the efforts of the present-day reactionary aesthetes to advertise a 'universal' art serve the interest of the imperialist bourgeoisie, which has always striven to denigrate or to eliminate the cultural traditions of smaller nations and the national spirit in art and culture, to facilitate its cultural aggression and the subjugation of nations. . . . Starting from impressionism and expressionism (and continuing) to the present dodecaphonic, serial and punctualistic music . . . they all try to justify themselves under the cloak of 'innovation', the 'search for the new' at all costs, while breaking down every connection with the best progressive traditions of the peoples and, above all, seeking to divert attention from the essential problems of the content, from the major questions that are concerning mankind today, the working class, the youth, the peoples of the world who are fighting for their liberation and their social rights". (6)

Notes

1. A record that features solos from different instruments is "Folklore instrumental albanais" (Vendemiaire VDE 114, AD 37). Two other records that I can recommend are "L'Albanie folklorique" (Disques Cellier 010) and "Folk Music Of Albania", collected and edited by A. L. Lloyd (Topic 12T 154).
2. A. L. Lloyd: Sleeve notes to "Folk Music of Albania".
3. "An Outline of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania" (Tirana, 1976), p. 167.
4. "Light music", which sometimes features rock-style syncopation or drumming, is perhaps the nearest Albanian equivalent to pop music; it is nevertheless easy to relate to folk music - at times so much so that it is difficult to detect where one stops and the other begins.
5. Spiro Kalemi: "Arritjet e artit tonë muzikor" (Achievements of our Musical Art); Tirana; 1982; p. 152.

6. Simon Gjoni: "The Modernist Distortions in Contemporary Bourgeois-Revisionist Music", in: "Albania Today"; 1977, No. 1; p. 48-52.

(This article first appeared in CONTACT)



The new Skanderbeg Museum in Kruja
opened on November 1st., 1982

"TWELFTH NIGHT"

Recently the People's Theatre in Tirana staged a new production of Shakespeare's comedy "Twelfth Night", directed by Piro Mani, with Roza Anagnosti as Viola, Pavlina Mani as Olivia, Yllka Mujë as Maria, Robert Ndrenika as Malvolio and Vasillaq Vangjeli as the Clown.



I was interested to read in ALBANIAN LIFE (No. 2, 1983) a review of "Albania - A Travel Guide" by Philip Ward, as I had read this book a couple of weeks previously.

Whilst this is an attractively produced package, designed to grab the curious browser's attention, with many photographs and a comprehensive index, I feel that your reviewer was far too kind to the book. I cannot remember feeling so continuously incensed with an author for a good many years.

An obviously experienced and prolific travel writer, Philip Ward decided, rightly, that there was a gap in the market for his book. That appears to be the reason for publishing it: there is little sympathy for the country and its people evident.

It is written with a smugness and bigotry usually associated with leader writers in "The Telegraph". How the publishers can get away with asserting in their introduction that the author is "unbiased by political and religious partisanship" is almost beyond belief!

A French-Canadian writer of my acquaintance was paid well to produce a guide-book to Lisbon without ever setting foot in that city. Whilst it is evident that some of Mr. Ward's book is based on first-hand knowledge, it would have been a better book had he been able to remove his "little Englander" blinkers.

Should any reader of ALBANIAN LIFE desire to read this book before journeying to Albania, I would suggest that they check their local library rather than waste money on purchasing it as I, unfortunately, did.

Ramsey Margolis,
London N19

CAMPAIGN FOR DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ALBANIA

Meeting in: COMMITTEE ROOM No. 5.
 HOUSE OF COMMONS,
 London SW1
 WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2nd. at 7.30 p.m.

Speaker : Bill Bland
 (Secretary of the Albanian Society,
 Deputy Secretary of CDRA)

Subject: "A TANGLED WEB"
 (British and American Relations
 with Albania from 1912)

Over the last two years Bill Bland - along with another member of the Albanian Society, Ian Price - has been researching the official records relating to Anglo-American relations with Albania from the time of Independence, as these records are to be found in the Public Record Office, London; in the National Archives, Washington; and in the UNRRA Archives in New York. A considerable number of these records, particularly those in the United States, have been researched for the first time, and some of them have shocked even the hardened researchers involved.

Tonight Bill Bland will give the first public account of this history, which proves to be even more sordid than had hitherto been suspected.

The material is to be published in due course in a book, the provisional title of which is "A Tangled Web".

EXHIBITION OF CONTEMPORARY ALBANIAN PAINTINGS

19-30 September, 1983
 (Monday to Friday: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.)
 at The Art Corner, 90. Jermyn St., London SW1
 Admission free. (See separate leaflet)

'POPPIES ON THE WALLS'



THE ALBANIAN SOCIETY will present

on SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24th.
at 2. 30 p.m.
in the ROXIE CINEMA,
76, WARDOUR STREET,
LONDON W.1.

the British premiere of the Albanian feature film

"POPPIES ON THE WALLS"

Screenplay by:	Petraq Qafzezi, Dh. Anagnosti
Directed by:	Dhimitër Anagnosti
Director of Photography:	Pellumb Kallifa
Art Director:	Namik Prizreni
Editor:	Marika Vila
Sound engineer:	Saliko Hoxha
Music composed by:	Kujtim Laro
Performed by:	The Orchestra of the Opera and Ballet Theatre, conducted by Rifat Teqja

As in all Albania, the Italian fascist occupation is felt also in the prison-like orphanage. The children resent being made to erase anti-fascist slogans in the streets. The headmaster and his deputy are brutal and corrupt, and the situation in the orphanage reaches a climax when one of the orphans is shot by a patrol. The children begin to resist . . .

Preceded by: "THOSE WHO DWELL BY THE IONIAN SEA"
(in colour)
and a talk on "THE ALBANIAN CINEMA"

Literature stall

Admission: £1. 50

ADVANCE NOTICE

TO COMMEMORATE

THE 71st. ANNIVERSARY OF ALBANIAN INDEPENDENCE
THE 39th. ANNIVERSARY OF ALBANIAN LIBERATION

THE ALBANIAN SOCIETY will hold a meeting on

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26th. at 3 p.m.
in the BISHOPSGATE INSTITUTE,
230, Bishopsgate,
London EC2

The programme will include:

Albanian songs by the PROGRESSIVE CULTURAL ASSOCIATION

an account - by Professor MARTIN SMITH, President
of the Albanian Society of his visit to Albania
this autumn as the guest of the Albanian Academy
of Sciences (illustrated with colour slides)

Thoma Gaqi's symphonic poem "Borova", arranged for
piano, and played, by DAVE SMITH

* * * * *

The above meeting will be preceded at 2. 30 p.m.
by a brief General Meeting of the Albanian Society.

Nominations for the positions of President and
Secretary/Treasurer, and of membership of the Committee,
should be sent to

The Secretary,
The Albanian Society,
26, Cambridge Road,
Ilford,
Essex, IG3 8LU

to reach him not later than September 29th., 1983

The London Branch are organising a social afterwards
at the same venue. Members coming from outside London may
wish to make arrangements accordingly. Some overnight accom-
modation is available. London members who can offer accom-
modation, and members from outside London wanting accomm-
odation, should get in touch with the Secretary as soon as
possible.

THE EMIGRANT

A poem by Agim Gjakova

(Ever since the Turkish occupation of Albania began in the 15th. century, and right up until the outbreak of the Second World War, foreign oppression and poverty forced thousands upon thousands of Albanians to leave their motherland to seek a new life abroad).

You sleep a dreamless sleep
until the dawn
breaks without hope.
You chain-smoke "Players".
Emigrant!

You are a man
who has no roots -
friendless and alone.
You neither laugh nor cry,
you are a wanderer
but half alive.
Emigrant!

Once welcomed,
they have abandoned you.
You knock on doors,
a piece of paper in your hand.
"On your way,
immigrant!"

You walk the steets
with lowered head
and aching feet.
Even the summer is cold.
The police watch your shadow
with suspicion.
Emigrant!

There is no place for you
even in the graveyard.
Emigrant!

THE MAN WHO LEFT TIPS

A short story by Vangjush Saro

In our little town many people come and go. Some come on business, some to visit relatives, others simply to explore the old castle on the hill. Often, therefore, strange faces are to be seen in the street. Some quickly fade from memory; others will never be forgotten.

Recently, for example, there came to our town an odd man. He was good-looking and very well-dressed. He spoke Albanian fluently, but with a pronounced foreign accent. What was his name? Why had he come? No one recalls. He is remembered only for one curious eccentricity: his habit of leaving tips.

He arrived one Saturday evening. As he left the bus, he took out a lek from his pocket and handed it to the driver. "A very smooth trip!", he said.

The driver looked at the coin in surprise, then handed it back. "It's my job", he said; "I'm glad you enjoyed it".

The man went into the Dawn Cafe. The service was quick, and the coffee hot and strong. When he went out, he left fifteen qindarkës on the corner of the table.

The next day, when it came to midday, he returned to the same cafe for lunch, and the same young waitress came to take his order.

"Good morning!", she said brightly; "you forgot something yesterday".

The man looked through his pockets. His wallet, his passport - all were there.

"I don't think so", he said.

"Oh, yes", said the waitress, and placed fifteen qindarkës on the table.

That afternoon he left our town once more.

As he bought his ticket at the bus station, he remarked to the girl behind the desk:

"You Albanians are much richer than I had thought".

BOOK REVIEWS:1. Enver Hoxha: "THE TITOITES"

Reviewed by Steve Calder

"The Titoites", the latest volume of memoirs by Enver Hoxha, is a gripping, vivid and factual account, with concrete proofs, of the plots of the titoites - the leaders of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia formerly headed by Tito, who also recruited a number of Albanians into their plots. The aim of these plots was to swallow up Albania within Yugoslavia and eliminate socialism in Albania. They include the treason - for so it was - of Mehmet Shehu and his collaborators. The book details the courageous, determined and protracted stand of the Party of Labour of Albania and the Albanian people against these plots, as well as the persistent attempts by Tito and his followers to remove Enver Hoxha from the leadership of the Albanian Party and destroy it.

The ten chapters of "The Titoites", beginning with the period when the Communist Party of Albania was founded in 1941, cover the events up to the autumn of 1982, when an abortive attempt was made to land mercenaries in Albania. It is a story of unending plotting by Tito and Co. against socialist Albania, the PLA and the Albanian people.

The propaganda from Belgrade has always maintained that the CPY created the CPA, inspired and supported the national liberation war against fascism and nazism. Let us look at Enver Hoxha's exposure of this propaganda.

Enver Hoxha explains that the first contact with the leadership of the CPY came with a letter in December 1942 containing "instructions and advice". It advised: "purge the Party of factionalist elements; establish links with different groups to form the National Liberation Front". The CPA had accomplished these tasks long before. That the Albanians did not revere such "instructions" antagonised Tito's envoys, and they began to accuse the Albanian Party of making all kinds of "mistakes".

About this time too began two more threads which run through the relations between the parties and states: the proposal for a "Balkan Federation" and the question of Kosova and other Yugoslav territories where people of Albanian nationality live.

In March 1943 the Yugoslav Vukmanovic-Tempo "popped up" in Albania, speaking of the need for a "Balkan Staff" for the national liberation war in the Balkans. The aim of this staff, as the Albanians were to realise later, was to impose the dictates of Yugoslavia. Tempo also began recruiting his agents from among those who were then in the leadership of the Party and the war - chief among these being Koci Xoxe. This course was continued by Dusan Mugosa.

The Second Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPA - known as the Berat Plenum from its location - held in November 1944, marked the climax of the intervention by the titoites in the affairs of Albania and its Party. The role of Tempo, who left Albania in 1943, was taken over by Velimir Stojnic, who arrived in Albania in August 1944. The war had now reached its climax - in May 1944 the order had been given for a general offensive for the complete liberation of Albania. Nako Spiru, Koci Xoxe, Sejfulla Maleshova and Pandi Kristo (of the Central Committee of the Albanian Party) were now involved in the titoite plot to split the Central Committee, condemn the main leadership and the policies of the Party, and subjugate it - and through this, Albania - to the titoites. Stojnic and his agents also acted as agents for the British, attempting to bring about a "re-union" between the NLF and the Albanian quislings.

So, on the eve of Liberation, and particularly after it, Yugoslav intervention became fiercer, more flagrant and more arrogant. The Yugoslav-Albania Economic Convention of 1946 was used to try and turn Albania into a seventh republic of Yugoslavia. From across Albania reports began to multiply of deliberately planned damage by the Yugoslav specialists, and the Albanians became convinced that they were dealing with people who were not friends. The titoites, recounts Enver Hoxha, proposed a "Coordination Commission" which would prepare the way for the ultimate annexation of Albania into a "Greater Yugoslavia".

When these plans failed, the titoites tried, through Koci Xoxe, to persuade the Albanian government to allow Yugoslav troops to be stationed in Albania to "protect it from imminent danger".

The titoites hoped to crown their plotting with the Eighth Plenum of the CC of the PLA, where Koci Xoxe was to denounce the "anti-Yugoslav clique" in the Party.

After the Eighth Plenum the PLA received a letter from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which showed that they had reached the same conclusions about Tito. Thus began the process of exposing the titoites.

At the Eleventh Plenum Koci Xoxe attempted a self-criticism, but the titoite plot and his part in it was now out in the open. The First Congress of the Party condemned him, demanded his expulsion from the Party along with other plotters, and that he be handed over to the courts, by which he was condemned to death.

The question of Kosova is well covered in "The Titoites". The PLA held that the question of the borders should be solved after national liberation on the principle of the self-determination of nations. But the CPY held a Great Serb chauvinist stand. It sought the "solution" of oppressing and exploiting the Albanians of Kosova. Enver Hoxha explains:

"Tito's secret plan was not that Kosova should be united with Albania, but that Albania should be united with Kosova and, together with it, be gobbled up by Titoite Yugoslavia".

The situation became, especially after Tito, very serious, with tanks and police persecution, and is still very serious. The majority of the population of Kosova is struggling for democratic rights and republican status within the Yugoslav Federation, and this struggle is being bloodily suppressed.

It was in this context that the Yugoslavs sent their order to Mehmet Shehu to kill Enver Hoxha. The former's part in the criminal plots was not uncovered in his life time because he remained behind the scenes, as Enver Hoxha relates. With the failure of this plot and Shehu's suicide,

". . . the UDB and the CIA were left biting their fingers",

as Enver Hoxha expresses it.

"The foreign news agencies related the fact as we had given it, that Mehmet Shehu 'committed suicide in a nervous crisis'. Here and there some comment secretly paid for by the Yugoslavs was made' . . .

(according to the version which the UDB had planned)".

So this was the true meaning of the wild west scenario that found its way into the British press!

Mehmet Shehu was a multiple agent, showing how the Yugoslav, British, American and Soviet secret services work in concert in their attempts to change the sound situation in Albania and overthrow the state power which is in the hands of the people. However, the PLA and the people have stood firm and have not been diverted from the cause of safeguarding their independence, their freedom and their rights.

It is clear from the pages of "The Titoites" that the attempts to subvert the independence of the PSRA through plots, blackmail and the like are not going to stop. Neither - Enver Hoxha avers - will the Albanians go to sleep on this question. The Albanian people and their Party will continue to struggle to maintain their independence and to defend the socialist revolution.

With regard to the ideology of the titoites, Enver Hoxha concludes:

"The great historic merit belongs to the Party of Labour of Albania that of all the parties in power it is the only one which not only was not deceived and never at any moment ceased the struggle against Yugoslav revisionism, but also made a profound and all-round analysis of Titoism, or, more accurately, carried out a thorough autopsy on it".

"The Titoites" shows the spectacular achievements of Socialist Albania. which provides a great inspiration to democratic and progressive people everywhere. It is also a work of high literary quality. I would urge all readers of ALBANIAN LIFE to read and study this important work.

* * * * *

2. "PENAL LAW IN ALBANIA" (edited by Aranit Cela)

Reviewed by W. B. Bland

This book - a textbook for Albanian law students and lawyers - gives a lucid and extremely interesting account of the principles of penal law which operate in the People's Socialist Republic of Albania.

A penal act is defined as an action (or sometimes a failure to act) which is considered so harmful to society that it is held to be a criminal offence, the author of which merits some kind of punishment. Those actions which constitute criminal offences are listed in the Penal Code, and Article 56 of the Constitution lays down that no one can be sentenced for a penal act without having been found guilty by a court of a breach of the Penal Code. However, not every breach of the Penal Code constitutes a criminal offence; it must have been committed culpably, that is, either wilfully or through negligence. And to commit a breach of the Penal Code culpably, the perpetrator must possess criminal responsibility - to be over the age of fourteen and mentally normal.

When, and only when, a court has found a person guilty of a criminal offence, it is obliged to sentence that person to the penal measure prescribed for that offence in the Penal Code. The aims of penal measures are defined as:

1. reformation, that is, to educate the offender to be a good citizen of the socialist state;
2. specific deterrence, that is, to deter the offender from committing further offences;
3. general deterrence, that is, to deter others from committing offences; and
4. prevention, that is, to prevent, temporarily or permanently, the offender from committing further offences.

Of these aims, education to become useful to society is defined as primary. But, of course, such education is a feature of Albanian life - in school, in mass organisations, in the media, etc. In the case of a criminal, therefore, these normal educational influences have clearly failed to be effective, and the combination of education with a measure of punishment is regarded as necessary to open the mind of the criminal to a more intensive educational programme. Since receptivity to such education is an individual matter, the Penal Code does not lay down fixed penalties, but a range of such penal measures for each offence; before passing sentence, the court is required to investigate the character, history, outlook and psychology of the individual offender, with the aim of sentencing him /her to the optimum penal measure felt likely to be most effective in the case concerned.

This penal measure may take the form of:

1. an official reprimand by a court official at the person's place of work or residence;

2. a fine;

3. reeducation through labour, in which the person lives and works normally; this is based on the view that the best social education is useful work among the working class; the management and the trade union of the enterprise are informed of the person's conviction and asked to devote special attention to his/her education; during the term of the sentence, the worker forfeits to the state a designated portion (not exceeding 25%) of his/her pay;

4. deprivation of liberty, where the reeducation through labour is carried out in confinement in a special centre or, in the most serious cases, in prison; and

5. death.

The death penalty is defined in the Penal Code as a "temporary and extraordinary" measure, necessitated by the present position of Albania as a socialist state encircled by hostile capitalist states. The death sentence differs from other penal measures in that it contains no element of education or reformation; it is therefore obligatory for no crime, and is employed only in the case of a very serious felony where the court considers the offender to be beyond any possibility of reformation. The death sentence cannot be given to a person under the age of eighteen or to a pregnant woman.

The book emphasises that it is essential that the punishment administered should not seem harsh or unjust, otherwise the subject will feel justified resentment which will hold back the primary, educational aim of the penal measure. Where a criminal is isolated from society, special measures are insisted upon to keep the prisoner in spiritual contact with his family and the outside world: the prisoner has the right to participate in elections (unless specifically deprived of this right by a supplementary penal measure), to send and receive letters, to marry or institute divorce proceedings, and he/she retains full parental rights. The regulations strictly prohibit any abuse or humiliation of the prisoner, who has the right to address any complaint to the Attorney-General's Office, which is required to investigate any such complaint.

There is, of course, a great deal more in the textbook concerned. But enough has been said to make clear its value

in outlining the scientific and humanitarian principles of Albanian penology and in dispelling the propaganda which one so often reads about it.

* * * * *

"The Titoites" has just been republished in Britain by the Workers' Publishing House. This edition is available at £3 (including postage) from the Albanian Society or from

Workers' Publications Centre,
172, Wandsworth Road,
London SW8

An abridged English translation of "Penal Law in Albania" is available from the Albanian Society at 50p. including postage.

Cash with order, please.



Skanderbeg Square, Tirana, at night

ALBANIAN SOCIETY ACTIVITY IN SOUTH WALES

The Welsh Branch of the Albanian Society organised a series of meetings in South Wales during the early summer - at Pyle Community Centre on May 15th., at Bridgend Recreation Centre on May 27th. and at Maesteg Leisure Centre on July 1st. At each of these meetings Welsh Secretary Ron Gregory spoke on Albania past and present.

On May 15th. a larger meeting was held in the Senior Common Room Library at University College, Swansea, with John Sabine, of the college, in the chair. Albanian Society Secretary Bill Bland spoke on British relations with Albania, and colour slides and videos were screened.

On June 11th. the Society was represented for the first time with a stall at the Miners' Gala in Cardiff. The stall was manned by Ron Gregory, who gave out information leaflets and answered many questions about Albania.

NEW PERIODICALS AVAILABLE

- | | <u>Price (inc. postage)</u> |
|--|-----------------------------|
| "ALBANIA TODAY", No. 6, 1982 | 50p. |
| (includes Enver Hoxha's November speech to the electors; Foreign Minister Reis Malile's speech to the UN General Assembly on Albania's foreign policy; Prime Minister Adil Çarçani's address to the People's Assembly; and Foto Çami's speech at the November celebrations). | |
| "ALBANIA TODAY", No. 1, 1983 | 50p. |
| (includes articles on the power industry; socialism in the countryside; the formation of the Albanian language; the modern Albanian novel). | |
| "NEW ALBANIA", No. 2, 1983 | 50p. |
| (includes articles on Marx on Albania; the textile industry; Ismail Qemali; Eugene Delacroix on the Albanians; fishing in Albania; briar pipes; Gjirokastra; housing). | |

ECONOMIC SCIENCE IN ALBANIA

by Priamo Bollano

The triumph of the people's revolution, the establishment of workers' power and the construction of socialism opened up new perspectives and new horizons in the development of economic science. Indeed, in the second half of the 20th. century Albanian economic thought emerged as the leading science for the development of a socialist society and found itself engaged in fierce polemics with the modern revisionists of various hues. In this task Albanian economic thought has remained faithful to the principles of Marxism-Leninism, and on this basis has developed to meet and solve the new problems which constantly appeared and will continue to appear. It defended the view that genuine socialism is distinguished by social ownership of the means of production, by the liquidation of the exploitation of man by man, by the centrally planned and proportionate development of the economy, by distribution in proportion to the quantity and quality of the work performed, etc.

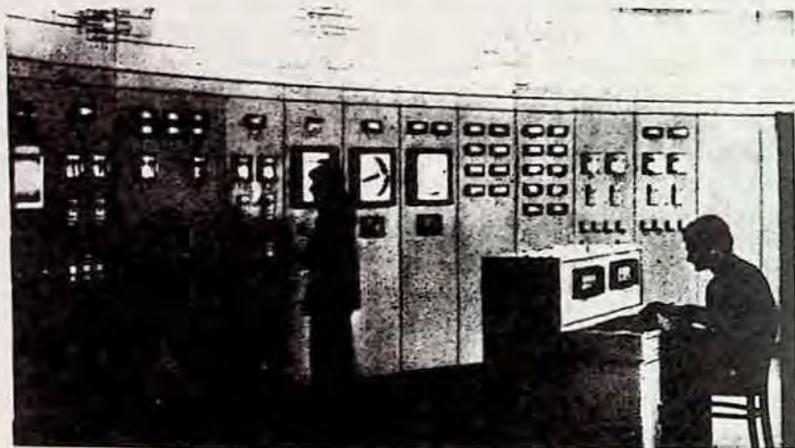
The socialist industrialisation of Albania was put forward as an objective necessity, both to overcome the great backwardness of the country and to advance the life of the nation. From the outset Albanian economic thought applied the concept of the simultaneous development of light and heavy industry, but with priority to the latter and, in particular, to its extracting and processing branches. The application of this concept was bound to bring Albanian economic thought face to face with anti-Marxist views - views with which it has sharply clashed. One of these latter views has been that of according priority to light industry on the basis of the lower demands for fundamental investment required, the more rapid return on investment, the higher profitability, the short-term (but only short-term) more rapid advance in the production of consumer goods. Similarly, Albanian economic science has had to resist the "theories" and direct pressure of the great powers who sought to establish colonial relations with Albania, to keep it as a supplier of food and raw materials and as a market for manufactured goods.

Albanian experience has shown that any disproportion between the development of industry and that of agriculture is fraught with serious consequences of a political, economic and social nature, that it not only threatens the

essential alliance between the working class and the peasantry, but also endangers the political and economic independence of the country. Only the socialist development of agriculture on the basis of large-scale production could solve this problem - that is, the voluntary organization of the fragmented small-peasant plots into large-scale agricultural cooperatives. The cooperative farm is a socialist collective economy.

Albanian economic experience has also demonstrated that self-reliance on the part of the socialist country is an essential principle - essential if that country is to retain its right to independent socialist development. This does not, of course, mean a striving for autarchy: on the contrary, it means the expansion of trade relations with other countries, but on a basis of equality and mutual benefit.

That Albanian economic science has been able to solve the gross social problems of inflation, unemployment and economic crises is not, of course, because Albanian economists are in some way cleverer than those of the countries which are plagued by these social evils. It is because Albanian economic science is based on and applied to the socialist society which exists in Albania and, unfortunately, at present in no other country in the world.



The control room of the copper-smelting plant. Laç

ALBANIAN NEWS

(February - April 1983)

POLITICS

In February 23 Albanians were sentenced to terms of imprisonment in Prishtina, Yugoslavia, for "trying to overthrow the social order" in Yugoslavia. The charges in fact related to the campaign for republican status, to which the Yugoslav government has reacted very fiercely and has, according to its own figures, to date imprisoned more than 1,800 Albanians - whereas the true numbers are believed to be much higher.

In March many activities were held throughout Albania to mark the centenary of the death of Karl Marx. A scientific session was organised at the University of Tirana, talks were organised at workplaces and photo-exhibitions were held. It has been decided to erect a statue of Marx in Tirana, in a square which will be renamed Karl Marx Square.

Also in March the 30th. anniversary of the death of Joseph Stalin was marked by various activities, such as talks, film shows, etc. "Zëri i Popullit" and other newspapers carried articles about the life and work of Stalin. Albania is unique in the world in officially upholding the life and work of Stalin.

DIPLOMACY

In the period under review:

Diplomatic relations were established with Kenya.

Bashkim Dino, Albanian Ambassador to Malta, presented his credentials to President Agatha Barbara.

Gibson Zimba, Ambassador of Zambia, Benedikt Grondal, Ambassador of Iceland, and Gholamali Khajepour, Ambassador of Iran, presented their credentials to President Ramiz Alia.

AGRICULTURE

In order to fulfil the targets for increased food production, almost 12,000 hectares of land will be irrigated for the first time this year. At present about 53% of the arable land is irrigated, and this has proved vital in maintaining food supplies in time of drought.

FOREIGN VISITORS AND VISITS ABROAD

In February a government trade delegation, led by Minister of Foreign Trade Shane Korbeci, visited Italy and Algeria.

In March a delegation of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Corfu visited Albania.

Also in March Minister of Education and Culture Tefta Cami visited Algeria and Tunisia.

CULTURE

In February the 30th. anniversary of the opening of the Aleksandër Moisiu Theatre was celebrated in Durrës.

Preparations for the National Folk Festival at Gjirokastra in October are well advanced. The first stage took place last year, when 2,300 groups and 69,000 people took part. The festival is important in stimulating the development of the folk arts; thus, for example, in the first stage 8,350 of the 13,730 songs were new, as were 109 dances and 42 costumes. The second stage involves district festivals and took place between January and May, while the third stage, from June to September, involves the preparation of representative groups from each district to go to Gjirokastra for this world-famous event.

At the International Academy of Lutetia annual awards in Paris, the Albanian archaeological review "Illyria" was awarded the Gold Medal.

LATE NEWS

The 9th. Congress of the Women's Union of Albania was held from 1-3 June at Durrës, attended by 1,500 delegates from all parts of Albania and delegations from many foreign countries, including Britain.

Enver Hoxha, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Party of Labour of Albania, was given a rousing welcome by the delegates, who were very conscious of his well-known statement that the progress of socialism may be measured by the progress of women's emancipation. The progress towards full equality made by Albanian women since the days of semi-feudal pre-Liberation Albania has been dramatic and continues today with campaigns against outdated patriarchal ideas which still manifest themselves in certain quarters.

A large proportion of women are working full time, so that the question of sharing housework is extremely important, although labour-saving devices such as washing-machines are subsidised, as are meals in works canteens. The percentage of women in leading positions in enterprises, and in local and national government, is among the highest in the world, although the WUA and the PLA will not be satisfied until the proportion is 50% more or less.

The 9th. Congress of the WUA was both a celebration of victories achieved and a stimulus for the battles ahead, and as such was enthusiastic and colourful and in all a great success.

* * * * *

On June 9th. Prime Minister Adil Çarçani replied in the negative to a proposal from the Greek Prime Minister, Andreas Papandreou, for a conference of representatives of the Balkan states to consider the question of establishing a Balkan zone free of nuclear weapons. (This reply is the subject of the article which follows).

* * * * *

On June 24th. a bomb exploded outside the Albanian Embassy in Athens, damaging the building and two Embassy cars. The Albanian government registered a protest with the Greek government.

"The Boxer"

Sculpture by Odhise Paskali
(1938)



NUCLEAR FREE BALKANS? - NUCLEAR FREE WORLD!

by Steve Day

"Albania rejects proposal for nuclear-free zone in the Balkans"!

Thus the British press, with their usual "objectivity" summed up the Albanian reply to a proposal by Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou.

Friends of Albania may have been puzzled to read that bare statement. But the reply of Albanian Prime Minister Adil Çarçani makes the Albanian position quite clear.

Çarçani points out that Albania has no nuclear weapons, nor has it engaged in the armaments race in the field of conventional weapons. He declares that the Albanian people and government

". . . are for the complete halting of the production of nuclear weapons, and for the destruction of all existing nuclear weapons. We

support the idea that not only the Balkans, but the whole of Europe and of mankind be protected from nuclear weapons",

and asserts that every constructive step towards promoting peace in the Balkans would have the full support of Albania. However, he points out, in the view of the Albanian government the source of the dangerous situation which exists today in the world stems from the two super-powers - the United States of America and the Soviet Union, and that four of the six Balkan states (Greece, Turkey, Romania and Bulgaria) are members of one or other of the military blocs dominated by these super-powers, while a fifth (Yugoslavia) grants military facilities to both blocs.



"SUPER-POWER BUDGET"

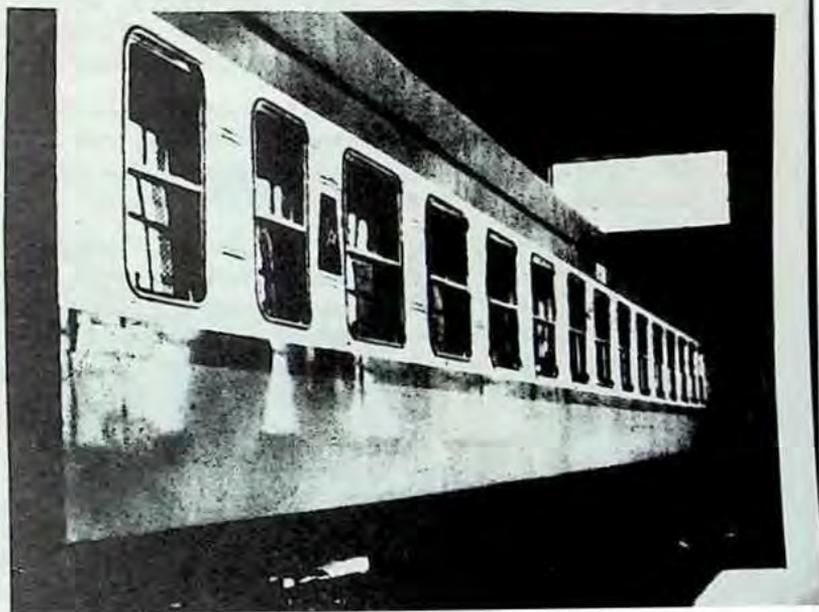
Cartoon by Ilir Pojani

In these circumstances, asserts Çarçani, a conference on freeing the Balkans from the threat of nuclear war could serve no practical purpose except to sow illusions among the peoples of the Balkans - an exercise in which the Albanian government would not be prepared to participate. For the creation of the premises for the holding of any useful Balkan conference, concrete steps would first have to be taken for the expulsion of foreign troops from the Balkan countries, for the liquidation of foreign bases and for the denunciation of NATO and the Warsaw Treaty.

Çarçani concludes his letter by expressing the wish for the development of friendly relations between Albania and Greece, while at the same time pointing out that this is being hindered by the continued existence of the 40-year "state of war" held by the Greek government to exist with Albania.

Thus, we find that the Albanian government, far from turning its back on the problem of nuclear war, holds a principled position and puts forward a constructive, moral solution. Whether the existing governments of the other Balkan states will take up this solution is another question.

The first railway coach to be built in Albania



THE BAZAAR OF KORÇA

by Piro Thomo



One of the old restored inns
around the Korça bazaar

In the past, most artisan products were made and sold, and agricultural produce was exchanged in the bazaar of a town. People came to the bazaar from all the surrounding districts to exchange not only goods, but information and gossip. The history of a town cannot be understood without knowing about its market.

Korça still has a bazaar, in the south-western corner of the town, separated from the residential quarters. We know from historical documents that it existed, in the same place as today, at least from the end of the 15th. century. It included artisans' workshops, which numbered 20 by the end of the 17th. century. The folklorist Thimi Mitko, writing of this branch of the economy, noted that

". . . the women make felt, cambric, horse-blankets, rugs and carpets, stockings, ribbons, raki, soap, etc. The stockings and blankets of Korça are famous and are sold in large quantities in Constantinople".

Alongside this productive activity, there went on in the bazaar the large-scale exchange of agricultural produce. The fertile land of the district supplied not only the town, but also other areas. On the trading routes which linked the various centres of the country, and the latter with those abroad, Korça was clearly a key point, and the town's trade grew steadily.

It is difficult to be sure of the original appearance of the bazaar. Chronicles tell of three great fires which razed it to the ground - in 1822, 1858 and 1879. From the frequency of such fires it seems clear that the buildings

were constructed of wood. Korça's bazaar was distinguished by its regular construction, being formed of a network of narrow streets, along which stood two-storeyed blocks of workshops, and by a clear functional division. Its principal elements were the open trading places, the shop buildings and the inns. An important feature was the clock tower, built in 1784, situated near the Mosque of Iliaz Mirahori; this clock tower was destroyed in the 1960 earthquake.

In the centre of the trading area was the open space known as the Great Bazaar, where artisan products and most agricultural produce was traded. Separated from this, by the side of the river, was the Little Bazaar, where grain was bought and sold.

At one time there were as many as 16 inns around the bazaar. Of these 9 are preserved - either in their original state or restored. In these inns, around an inner central courtyard stood two-storeyed buildings, the upper storey of which served as sleeping-quarters for guests. These rooms opened on to a gallery which looked down on to the courtyard.

The Korça bazaar occupies a special place among such complexes in Albanian towns. Because of its historical and architectural value, it has been placed under the protection of the state as a "museum zone". Reconstruction work is proceeding actively within this zone, and the aim is that eventually it will be integrated into the present-day life of the town.



A children's tricycle
race in the
Qemal Stafa Stadium,
Tirana

AN ALBANIAN RECIPE :

BAKLLAVAS

by Kalam Cane

Bakllavas are traditional Albanian sweets.

To make 20 portions, the following ingredients are required:

For the dough:	1,000 gm. plain flour
	6 gm. salt
	5 egg yolks
	350 gm. water
For the filling:	450 gm. butter
	300 gm. peeled almonds
For the syrup:	1,200 gm. caster sugar
	875 gm. water
	$\frac{1}{2}$ gm. vanilla
	1 lemon

Sift the flour on to a baking board, make a hole in the middle and place in this the salt and egg yolks. Then add the water and knead into a stiff dough.

Cover the dough with a cloth and leave for several minutes. Then divide it into small pieces and roll these into thin layers the size of the baking-pan in which the bakllavas are to be cooked, and lay them on a slightly damp white cloth.

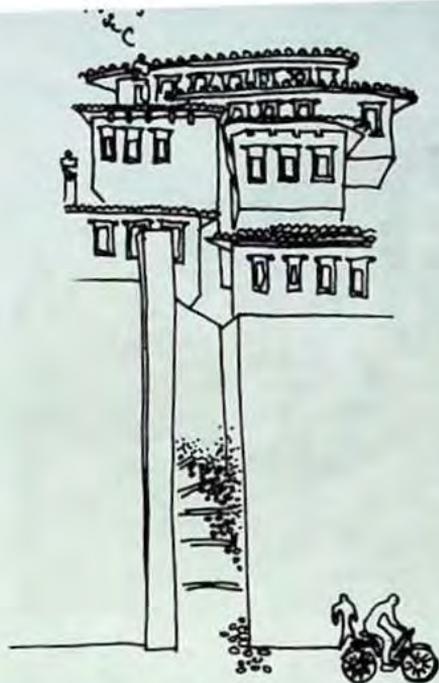
Soften the butter and cover the baking-pan with it. Then lay on this the layers of dough one on top of the other, with a layer of butter between each.

Chop up the almonds and lay them over the dough. Add the remaining butter, cut into diamond-shapes and cook in a moderate oven.

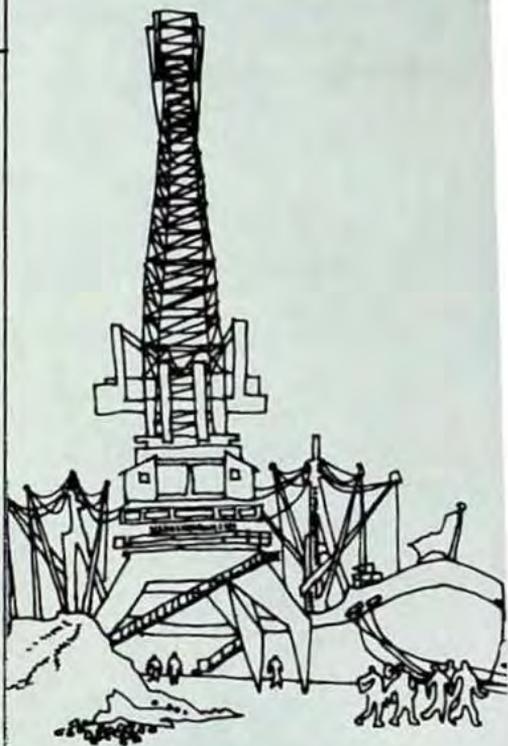
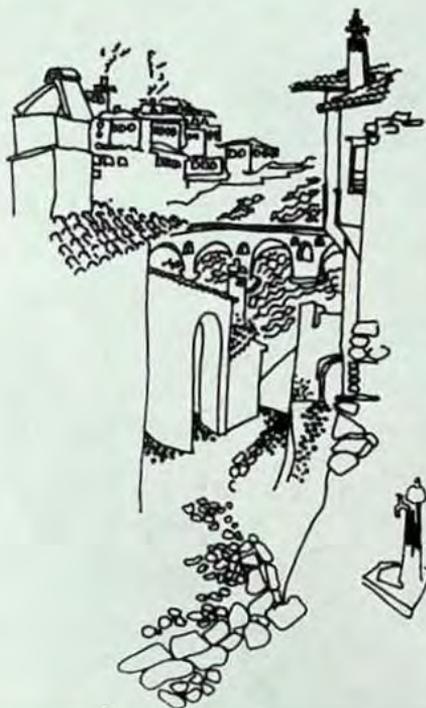
Prepare the syrup by boiling the water with the sugar; when it is boiling, squeeze in the juice of the lemon, some of its grated peel and the vanilla.

Pour the syrup over the bakllavas as soon as they have been removed from the oven, while they are still hot.

Serve cold.



Drawings by
Zemir Mati





A typical house in Gjirokastra

The photograph on the front cover is
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