

THE FLIGHT OF THE ALBANIANS

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THE PLIGHT OF THE ALBANIANS

IN YUGOSLAVIA

by Norberto Steinmayr

More than two million Albanians live in Yugoslavia, forming about 40% of the Albanian nation in the Balkans. Within the Yugoslav federation, the Albanians constitute the third largest ethnic entity after the Serbs and the Croats. They are, therefore, numerically superior to the Slovenes, the Macedonians, and the Montenegrins -- all of whom enjoy national status within Yugoslavia, having their own republics. The administrative division of Yugoslavia is based on the distinction between 'nations' and 'nationalities'; each the six 'nations' have their own republics, a right which is denied to the 'nationalities'. The two million strong Albanian population is denied republican status, being regarded as a 'nationality' -- a euphemism for 'national minority'. Some Albanians live in Macedonia and Montenegro, but the majority live, without autonomy, in the province of Kosova, within the republic of Serbia.

Such political discrimination is, of course, related to the fact that Kosova is lagging behind other Yugoslav regions economically, and the gap is increasing. Kosova is about half the size of Wales with a population of about 2 million people, 90% of whom are Albanians. Rich in mineral resources, Kosova has been used as a material base for Yugoslavia's economy. Its per capita income is the lowest in the country. In comparison with Kosova, for instance, per capita income in Slovenia is 7 times higher, and that in Croatia and Vojvodina 4 times higher. Unemployment in Kosova stood in 1988 at 60%. The province also maintains the highest percentage of emigration and illiteracy.

In dealing with the causes of the problem, certain questions should first be clarified. The Albanians in Yugoslavia inhabit an ethnically compact and continuous

area, which includes Kosova, western Macedonia and southern Montenegro. Scientific research in the fields of archaeology, ethnography, history, etc., has proved that the Albanians are autochthonous in their own territories of Yugoslavia; they did not immigrate there some time in the Middle Ages, nor has the numerical preponderance of Albanians in these regions resulted from demographic increase in the Albanian population. In resisting assimilation under the Ottoman occupation, the Albanians in these regions preserved their own language and customs. The vilayet of Kosova was the scene of several anti-Turkish revolts, and the growth of Albanian national consciousness became evident in the mid-19th century with the formation of the League of Prizren. Prominent figures in this movement, such as Isa Boletini, Hasan Prishtina and Bajram Curri, came from Kosova.

The independence of Albania in 1912 was followed by the partitioning of its territory and people. In 1913, at the Ambassadors' Conference in London, the great powers, arbitrarily and in defiance of any ethnic principle, annexed nearly half of the Albanian nation to the kingdoms of Serbia and Montenegro -- later the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, known officially as Yugoslavia from 1929. Thus what the great powers decided at the beginning of the century has remained in force until today.

During the inter-war period, the Serbian bourgeoisie, headed by the Serbian dynasty of the Karageorgeviches, occupied the dominant position in the new state and pursued a policy of Great-Serbian chauvinism towards other nationalities. This remains one of the blackest chapters for the Albanians in Yugoslavia, who became the victims of a policy of unconcealed discrimination, denationalisation and genocide. Thousands of Albanians were murdered, about 500,000 were forced to emigrate abroad, mainly to Turkey, land and property were confiscated from the

Albanians, entire villages were wiped out, while Serbian and Montenegrin colonists moved in. At that time Kosova was the only region in Yugoslavia which had more prisons and police stations than schools.

It was during the anti-fascist liberation struggle that a just solution seemed to have been found for those Albanian territories which had been annexed to Yugoslavia. Nonetheless, the problem of Kosova represented a difficult and complex matter. In 1941 Kosova was united to Albania by the Italian fascists, and so became 'liberated' from the Serbian yoke. However, in the general context of the anti-fascist struggle in the Balkans, and in view of the fact that the Communist Party of Yugoslavia had been built and operated on a federal basis, the population of Kosova and the other Albanian regions of Yugoslavia was mobilised under the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. 53,000 partisans from Kosova fought in the National Liberation Armies. Besides, the clear determination of the Albanians in Yugoslavia to solve their national question could give rise to no misunderstandings. At the beginning of 1944, the First Conference of the National Liberation Council for Kosova unanimously resolved at Bujan that

" . . . the Albanian population . . . today, as always, wishes to be united with Albania. . . . The Albanian people, too, will have the possibility of deciding their own future through the right of self-determination up to secession".

But already, at the end of November 1943 in Jajce, the second session of the Yugoslav Anti-fascist Council of National Liberation, with not one Albanian representative out of 142 delegates and in flagrant violation of the proclaimed principles of equality and self-determination, decided to include the Albanians of Kosova, Montenegro and Macedonia as a national minority within the 'new federal Yugoslavia'. This decision

marks the beginning of the unjust and chauvinist 'solution' which was imposed on the Albanians in post-war Yugoslavia. This 'solution' was just as arbitrary and unjust as the decision of the great powers to partition the Albanian nation thirty years before.

In fact, the Albanians continued to occupy a subordinate position in the new federation as well. Kosova was reduced to the position of a mere appendage to the republic of Serbia. Particularly during the first two decades after the war, the Serbian-dominated security police, headed by Rankovich, imposed a reign of terror upon the Albanians and resorted to mass murder. This police persecution was intensified after the Tito-Cominform split of 1948, when Kosova was turned into a centre for subversion against the People's Republic of Albania, while thousands of Albanians were forced to leave Yugoslavia for Turkey.

With the fall of Rankovich in 1966, the killing and persecution were partly confirmed by Yugoslav official sources. Tito himself admitted:

"Dogmatic elements . . . had held a stranglehold over Kosova. The interests of the Albanian nationality had been neglected and arbitrary and impermissible bureaucratic actions had been taken against them".

In 1968, in parallel with discussions on decentralised reforms in Yugoslavia, some public meetings and popular demonstrations in Kosova, which were violently repressed, demanded republican status for Kosova within the federation. The request for a Kosova Republic was quickly rejected by the Yugoslav leadership.

At the same time, however, after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and Albania's formal withdrawal from the Warsaw Treaty, there were

improvements in Yugoslav-Albanian relations and in the situation of the people of Kosova. While remaining under the tutelage of Serbia, Kosova was given increased representation in the organs of the federation; more Albanians were admitted to the administration; more Albanian schools were opened; the Albanian University of Prishtina was set up; the right to display the Albanian flag was permitted; Albanian was made an official language alongside Serbo-Croat; and Kosova adopted the use of the standardised Albanian literary language. In addition, cultural agreements were officially concluded between Kosova and Albania, providing for the exchange of various publications, films, exhibitions, sports teams, etc., as well as joint studies in such fields as archaeology, ethnography and linguistics. In the ten years between 1971 and 1981 240 university teachers were sent from Albania to Kosova.

But despite this step forward in Albanian education and culture in Yugoslavia during the 70s, the Albanians of Kosova, Macedonia and Montenegro continued to be denied basic political rights. Their national oppression, aggravated by the economic backwardness of Kosova and its exploitation by the other republics, stimulated the Albanians of Yugoslavia to stage powerful demonstrations in the spring of 1981, demanding equality, justice and greater freedom. As a result, a new wave of Great-Serbian chauvinism erupted all over the Albanian regions of Yugoslavia. To crush the demonstrations, 60,000 soldiers were despatched to Kosova, where a full state of emergency was declared for the first time in Yugoslavia since the end of the war. Hundreds of Albanians were killed, wounded and imprisoned, causing international outrage. The demonstrators were denounced as 'Albanian irredentists', 'counter-revolutionaries', 'enemies endangering the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia'. Many teachers were dismissed, the cultural agreements with Albania were annulled and relations between the

two countries rapidly deteriorated. The principal demand, which was rejected out of hand, was neither for secession from the federation nor union with Albania, but for republican status for Kosova within Yugoslavia. However, Belgrade argued that, because the Yugoslav Constitution gave to the republics (but not to the provinces) the right to self-determination including secession, the establishment of a Kosova Republic would open the door to the incorporation of Kosova within Albania.

From 1981 to 1988, the situation in Kosova and the other Albanian regions of Macedonia and Montenegro was kept under control mainly through repression. Now and then special police and military units reinforced the military presence there and, in the meantime, prison sentences were passed on thousands of Albanians, charged on all sorts of pretexts. Since 1981 the ranks of the Albanian intelligentsia have been decimated by the expulsion of thousands of teachers and students from the schools and the university; workers have been made unemployed and Albanian politicians forced to resign. According to official data, between 1981 and 1988, in Kosova alone 584,000 people were brought before the courts and police organs on charges of a political nature.

At an official level, in order to cover up the national oppression of the Albanians in Yugoslavia, the Serbian leadership has tried to present the problem of Kosova as one of the migration from the province over the last seven years of some 30,000 Serbs, allegedly as a result of persecution by Albanians. In fact, both Serbs and Montenegrins have left Kosova, but mainly because of the grave economic situation there, that is, for the same reason that thousands upon thousands of Albanians have been leaving the province. During the last 15 years, some 250,000 Albanians have abandoned their homeland: 100,000 have settled in the Federal Republic of Germany, 60,000 in Switzerland, 15,000 in

Belgium, 25,000 in other western countries and 50,000 in the northern regions of Yugoslavia.

Yugoslavia has entered 1989 facing its greatest economic and political crisis. The rate of inflation, at over 400%, is the highest in Europe. The standard of living has fallen by nearly 40% since 1982. The country owes almost \$23 billion to western creditors and the International Monetary Fund, which has recently imposed austerity measures upon Yugoslavia in return for rescheduling its national debt and granting new loans. Belgrade has agreed to amend the federal Constitution in order to introduce an open market economy, permitting up to 98% foreign ownership of Yugoslav enterprises and banks, while calls are being made for Yugoslavia to join the European Community.

The stability of Yugoslavia's federal structure has also been severely shaken by national divisions and power struggles, mainly between Croatia and Slovenia on the one hand and Serbia on the other. Recently, the Serbian leadership, headed by Slobodan Milosevich, has reactivated its drive for centralism which has dangerous implications for the whole country. The Serbian chauvinists claim that the withdrawal of the limited autonomy granted to Kosova, with its 90% Albanian population, and the complete domination of the province by Serbia, would 'unify' Serbia once and for all. So, at the end of 1988, Serbian demonstrations called for open confrontation with the Albanians, the slogans chanted including 'Kosova is Serbia!', 'Away with the eagle flags!', 'We want weapons!' and 'Death to the Albanians!'.

During the course of this year, a real tragedy has overtaken the Albanians. Kosova and Vojvodina have been deprived of the limited autonomy sanctioned by the 1974 Constitution. Direct Serbian control in Kosova now extends to the fields of the judiciary, 'law and order', relations with abroad (including those with

neighbouring Albania), financial and social planning. A free hand has been given to Serbia to push through any legislation for Kosova and to alter the status of this province again at any time in the future.

The opposition of the Albanians to these changes led, in February, to an eight-day general strike, the first in Yugoslavia since 1945. Kosova was paralysed and the losses to its economy totalled \$500,000 a day. The strikes, which were followed by other demonstrations and protests, found the unanimous support of all sections of the Albanian population in Yugoslavia. Miners, workers in all the main industries, women, shopkeepers, students, teachers and even children -- all defied the authorities in Kosova and resolutely expressed their opposition to the arbitrary legislation eliminating Kosova's autonomy and imposing on them the status of second-class citizens. To silence the two million Albanians in Yugoslavia and their demands for equality and justice, Kosova was placed once more under a state of emergency which amounted almost to martial law, with troops and tanks patrolling the streets, with police roadblocks everywhere, and with helicopters bombarding the demonstrators with tear gas. A curfew prohibited movement on the streets between 8 p.m. and 5 a.m., gatherings of more than three people were banned, together with travel from town to town. Schools, university, theatres and markets were all closed.

Just as in 1945, 1968 and 1981, so once again this year the streets of Kosova have been covered in blood. More than two hundred Albanians have been killed, many others have been injured or have disappeared, and the prisons of Yugoslavia have been filled with Albanian political prisoners. Rankovich or the Karageorgeviches could not have carried out this repression more brutally. But such a flagrant violation of human and national rights is unacceptable in Europe today. As a result, the fascist and racist measures taken against

the Albanian population of Yugoslavia will merely postpone any solution of the crisis.

The plight of the Albanians in Yugoslavia also has negative repercussions on Albanian-Yugoslav relations. Socialist Albania has reiterated many times that it has no territorial claims against Yugoslavia, no wish to interfere in its internal affairs, no intention of seeking to export revolution to Yugoslavia. But when Albanians are being killed by the Yugoslav armed forces, when their language, culture, traditions -- indeed, everything Albanian -- are objects of attack and denigration, the People's Socialist Republic of Albania maintains that it has the duty to raise its voice in defence of its two million compatriots across the border. Tirana has made it clear that it wishes to have friendly relations with Yugoslavia, but that any improvement in these relations will also depend on the treatment of the Albanian population in Yugoslavia.

Today, even more than in the past, the participation of the Albanians in Yugoslav society on an equal footing with the other peoples is a necessary precondition for the stability of the federation. The demands of the Albanians of Yugoslavia are more than justified. Their three main points are:

1. Republican status for Kosova within the federation;
 2. The adequate economic and cultural development of the Albanian territories in Yugoslavia; and
 3. The release from prison of all those accused simply of having stood up for their national and democratic rights.
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ALBANIA v. ENGLAND

by Bryan Clark

With newspaper headlines of HELLBANIA! and BOBBY ROBSON, WISH YOU WERE NOT HERE! fresh in our minds, we walked the 150 yards across the border at Hani i Hotit not knowing what to expect. As we filed through the customs hall, the customs officers looked in amazement at our assortment of inflatable bananas and aeroplanes. We had heard of the many problems you could experience at the border, but we had no problems, especially after giving our guides and the customs officers an assortment of football badges and programmes.

After lunch at Shkodra, we watched the Under 21 international in an atmosphere that we thought had long since passed. The crowd applauded the England mascot as we walked round the pitch; there was no crowd segregation and certainly no crowd violence. The police even cleared the crowd back to allow us to tie our St. George and Union Jack flags to the perimeter fence. We left the ground in our coach through a crowd that applauded us all the way back to the hotel. In many European countries a brick through the window would have been more the order of the day.

The following day we just managed to beat the locals in a game of football on the beach at Durrës, before leaving for the game in Tirana. At lunch our guide asked us if we would give permission for two waiters at the hotel to travel to the match in our coach. Our group, plus the waiters, arrived at the Qemal Stafa Stadium thirty minutes before the kick-off to take up our positions in the main stand in seats priced at 60p. (For the return game at Wembley we paid £15 for a seat). We left the ground happy at the 2:0 result, but worried that we had given away nearly all our football souvenirs.

Wherever we went, people stopped and asked us for

any football souvenirs we might have, and in exchange we were offered Albanian football badges and pennants, which we gratefully accepted.

Our visit had many highlights, among which was a visit to the Albanian FA when they interrupted a committee meeting to give us Albanian FA badges, or when a policeman gave up his copy of Sporti Popullor to a member of our party.

We left Albania feeling proud that we had done nothing to tarnish further the image of English football supporters in a nation which welcomed us with open arms wherever we went.

The 125 England supporters who made the trip were the first such group ever admitted to Albania. I hope they are not the last to visit this land of football enthusiasts.



Writer Dritëro Agolli



Albanian national football team manager
Shyqri Belegu

THE VISITING MANAGER

Shyqyri Rreli is in his second spell as manager of the Albanian national football team. He was first appointed in 1982, and had some excellent results, notably over Belgium, in the qualifying matches for the 1986 World Cup tournament. He was replaced in 1986 by Agron Sulaj, but reinstated as national manager last summer.

Prior to 1982, Rreli was in charge of the Albanian Under 21 squad, which formed the basis of the national team which surprised the Belgians.

Rreli took coaching courses in West Germany and Italy, so he is no stranger to Western European football tactics.

As a player in the 1950s, Shyqyri was an excellent defender both with Dinamo and 17 Nëntori, two of the top clubs in the capital, Tirana, as well as winning caps at international level.

What does he think of Albanian football at international level?

"Albanian football is at a new stage of development. It is by far the most popular sport in Albania, and many measures have been taken to raise the level of ability. The youth of our country are very keen, and we must promote this enthusiasm. We now have a programme whereby even young children at school are involved in training sessions. When they move up to the Middle Schools, they have specialised sports lessons".

What about Albania's present level of football?

"Our ability has risen over the last few years, but we realise that we still have much to learn to bring us up to the standard of other European countries".

ALBANIAN EYE-OPENER

(from the official programme of the World Cup match)

Albania is not an easy country to visit, and the general impression one is given of the country is of hardship, poverty and general unfriendliness.

However, with the interest generated by the visit of the England football team to Tirana, the Albanian capital, to play a World Cup qualifying match, the curtain of doubt and mistrust has been lifted, if only a little, to reveal a surprisingly different overall view of life in Albania.

Certainly, what many of us saw on our television screens showed that the Albanians were not just a bunch of amateur also-rans when it comes to soccer and, as the England team manager, Bobby Robson, has been quick to point out, there was absolutely no unfriendliness at all. In fact, it would appear that the natives showed a marked interest in their visitors, with no animosity whatsoever.

One person who has toured Albania to a reasonable extent has been Dave Twydell, a self-confessed Brentford fanatic, and Dave has written a booklet about his visits to various venues in Albania and the general football scene that those venues portray.

Included in his resumé on soccer in Albania is a visit to the national stadium in Tirana for a league match involving two of the capital's top teams, plus a chance meeting and interview with the Albanian national team manager, Rreli.

It would appear that top English matches are frequently seen on film in Albania and the Albanians themselves are very generous in their praise of our football. I just hope that all English fans will show

THE BOTANICAL GARDEN

as much warmth and goodwill to the Albanians on their first visit to Wembley as their supporters showed to England in Albania.

All in all, the booklet makes interesting reading for any discerning football follower. It has 48 pages and is titled 'Albania F. C.' The booklet can be obtained from the author: Dave Twydell, 12, The Furrows, Harefield, Middlesex, UB9 6AT. Price is £2, including postage and packing.

EDITORIAL NOTE

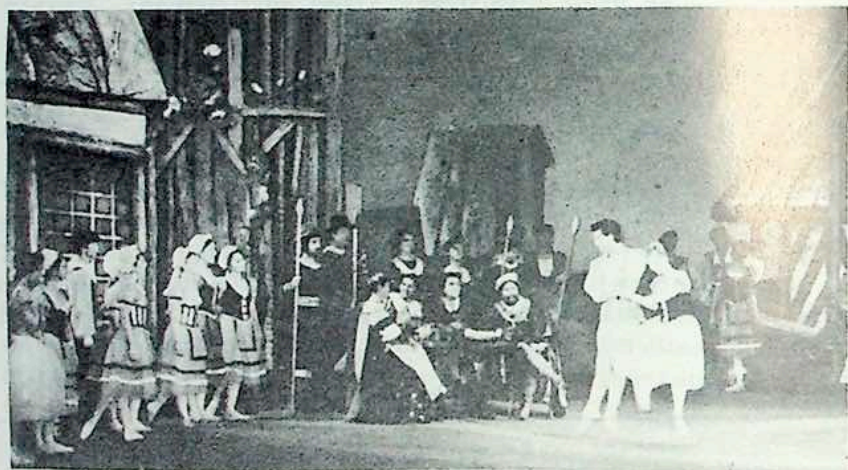
For reasons of space, the continuation of Skifter Këllici's article on the history of Albanian football has been held over to the next issue.

CORRECTION

The reply to John Broom published in the last issue requires correction on two points. As a result of recent changes in the law, homosexual relations between consenting adult males are now legal in Scotland and in more than two states of the USA.



Statue of Enver Hoxha, Tirana



The ballet 'Giselle'
at the Opera and Ballet Theatre, Tirana

THE BOTANICAL GARDEN

by Liri Dinga

The Botanical Garden in Tirana is a national scientific institution which also serves educational and cultural purposes.

The flora which grow naturally in Albania are arranged in the garden proportionally to the geographical position they occupy within the country, so as to reproduce on a miniature scale the principal phyto-climatic zones of the country. In addition, a great many species and varieties have been introduced from other countries.

The botanists working in the garden devote particular attention to the study and preservation of rare plants and those which are threatened with extinction.

Although the Botanical Garden is relatively young, it already contains 1800 different species and varieties, of which 1300 are native to Albania while 500 have been introduced from abroad. The latter feature has been achieved thanks to exchanges with gardens in other countries. The staff of the Albanian Botanical Gardens published in 1980 'The Index of Seeds'; during 1988 the index was sent to 100 foreign botanical gardens, to which 884 boxes of seeds have also been sent.

The Botanical Garden is attached to the Chair of Botany of the Enver Hoxha University of Tirana, and its plants play an important role in the education of its students. In addition, many people visit the Garden for pleasure, spending many hours wandering among its tall exotic palms, its beautiful eagle-trees, its scented rose gardens, and its water plants.

OFFICIAL VISIT

A short story by Diana Çuli

For a whole week feverish preparations had been going on in the little town. The inhabitants had decorated their homes, placed beautiful vases of flowers on their window-sills, decked their balconies with red flags, and swept their yards. Gardens had been weeded, windows polished till they shone, the marble graves of those who had fallen in battle and who now lay on the slope of a hill at the entrance to the town, shone white in the sun, and the well-watered red roses which surrounded them blazed like tiny fires.

Mother Kristina, as everyone called her, was taking coffee on the balcony, brought to her on a tray by her daughters-in-law along with a glass of water. Her hair was completely white, her face so filled with wrinkles that one could scarcely believe that it had once been smooth and white. Her roughened hands, their fingers swollen with arthritis, trembled slightly.

She was well aware that she was in the last months -- perhaps the last days -- of her life. She knew it without being told by doctors, without the concerned looks of members of her large family. She felt it by signs of which she alone was aware and, like the old pear tree which had blossomed and given fruit for so many years but could no longer do so, Mother Kristina awaited the inevitable end foretold by her knotted veins, her creaking bones, her weakened heart, her whole worn-out body.

She rested in her rocking-chair, sipping her coffee, thinking of the past. Recently she had dreamed a great deal of those who were dead. She dreamed of her grandparents, of her little sister who had died of diphtheria sixty-five years ago, of her father and

mother, of almost forgotten cousins, of a quarrelsome neighbour who had died long ago from the kick of a mule. These dreams disturbed her sleep so much that she woke each morning exhausted. She had no doubt that they were calling to her from beyond the grave, but she did not dare to speak of this in front of her sons and daughters-in-law, who might have made fun of her. These young people had been to school; they knew more than she, and they believed that there was no other world, neither heaven nor hell. But she, who had listened to their words for so many years, clung to the hope that she would see again those she had known, those she had loved, even those she had disliked.

What intrigued her most of all was that she never dreamed of the son of eighteen who had been killed in the war and who now lay under a marble plaque on the edge of the town, sleeping his last sleep. Perhaps she did not dream of him because he had been present in her heart for more than forty years.

One stormy night he had arrived unexpectedly, wearing the partisan uniform which was a little too big for his slender body, embraced her and whispered in her ear: "Mother, this evening you are going to meet a great man, the man who is leading our struggle".

And this man had come and dined with them, had slept in their little house. Before he left she had embraced him as though he were her own son. He had praised her son's bravery, and had looked closely around the house as though he wished to engrave its memory on his mind. She had watched them leave, tramping through the snow, its flakes blown about by the wind, until they had disappeared behind the hill. One day they had told her quietly the news of her son's death. Even today she was still amazed that her heart had been strong enough to go on beating for another forty years.

She had seen their visitor many times since then, in photographs and on the little screen in the living room. In one of his books, they had told her, he had written of Ilia Koma, her dead son -- had described the house which had given him hospitality during the war, had even mentioned his mother as a brave woman whom he recalled with profound respect.

One of her sons had bought the book, and had read to her, surrounded by her grandchildren, the part which spoke of her family. And she had asked for it to be read again and again, until she knew the passage by heart.

Now, next Thursday, their visitor was to come again to their little town. She had not seen him since that night, but as a mother whose son given his life for his country, a place had been reserved for her in the front row at the Martyrs' Cemetery which he was to visit.

A slight trembling had run through her body at the thought that he might speak to her, might even clasp her hand.

As it was getting cold, she got up and went indoors. Her hearing was still acute, and she could hear the voices of a man and a woman speaking quietly in the kitchen. "What are they plotting now?", she said to herself, and took up her customary posture, in which no one could perceive any sign of stooping, of weakness, of rheumatic pains. Sitting bolt upright in her chair, she adjusted her glasses, removed all signs of emotion from her face, and waited. She knew that, as soon as they lowered their voices in this way, they were about to ask her some favour.

In a few moments they came in -- her two sons, her two daughters-in-law and her youngest grandchild, who had to her intense disapproval given up his studies.

Where did he get his laziness from, she wondered. Not from their side of the family, she felt sure.

"Have you finished your coffee, Grannie?", asked her eldest daughter-in-law, the mother of the lazy boy.

"Yes, thank you", said the old woman, gazing at her son. Why couldn't they stop beating about the bush and come out with what they had to say?

"Listen, Mother", said her eldest son at last, coming up to her and taking her hand; "when the visit takes place next week, you will be in the front row".

"I know", she said, wondering what was to come.

"He will know who you are", intervened her other son.

"Oh, nonsense!", she rejoined; "how could he recognise me after all these years. I was a young woman then".

"Look, Mother", said her eldest son who, it appeared, had been charged with speaking in their name; "you know how cramped we are here. Two rooms and a kitchen for all of us. Every time I see the Council they just tell me to be patient. And you know that our son, your grandson, is in a difficult position; the factory director doesn't like him and has threatened him with the sack".

The old woman's face darkened, making her wrinkles still deeper.

"And there's Tana", said her younger son, speaking of his wife and patting her shoulder; "she hates working on the night shift. She finds it very tiring. If she could get transferred to the laboratory, it would make things easier for all of us".

The old woman was silent for a moment.

"So you want me to grab him by the sleeve in the Martyrs' Cemetery and say: 'Get me a new flat, reprimand the factory director for trying to get my grandson to work, change my daughter-in-law's job to something easier'. That's what you want me to do?"

"No, no", replied her eldest son hastily; "you are twisting what I said. Of course you could say no such things. All you have to do is to tell him who you are. That is all. But the Council Housing Officer will be there, and he will say: 'Heavens! We've done nothing about Kristina's request to be rehoused -- Kristina that he knows well. Suppose she writes him a letter of complaint!' And my son's boss and Tana's chief engineer will feel the same. You see?"

"Everybody knows I can't write", said the old woman.

"It's not much to ask, Mother. Just tell him who you are!"

"Leave me now", said Kristina; "I want to have a little nap".

They went out, having said what they had come to say.

"She'll do it", her youngest son said confidently in the kitchen.

"I don't know", said the eldest daughter-in-law; "you never know what's going on in her head".

* * * * *

The long-awaited moment arrived on Thursday evening punctually at seven o'clock. They had been

waiting for a long time. The evening sun bathed the hillsides, the fields, the river and the buildings of the town in a warm, sweet glow.

Kristina sat in the front row of the stand which had been erected in the Martyrs' Cemetery. She had walked all the way from the town, and she panted slightly -- not with fatigue but with excitement.

Suddenly a ripple of excitement ran through the crowd and everyone stood on tiptoe. Press photographers ran to and fro, and the stewards, red ribbons on their sleeves, urged people not to go beyond the cordon. The old woman, blinded by the sun, screwed up her eyes to make out the features of the young man who had been their guest so long ago. He passed between the graves, stopping for a moment at each. Pausing before Ilia's grave, he said something to the man who accompanied him. Then he moved forward to say a few words to each of the guests who occupied the places of honour.

"Do not forget, Mother, what we said", said the voice of her son in her ear. But she did not hear. The visitor had stopped in front of her.

He was no longer the young man she had watched disappear into the snow with her son.

"You do not look well, my son", she said to him as he took her hand; "you must not work so hard. Remember, the years pass . . ."



The Albanian National Football Team, 1990

FIRST GLANCE

by Primrose Peacock

(Miss Peacock is a lecturer, photographer and writer)

"They are not tourists, but students of culture". Our Albaturist guide was speaking to a museum worker. Most of my friends, when told I was joining a University Cultural Study tour of Albania, had commented 'How interesting'. One or two church connections had raised an eyebrow, but I was more worried about my professional aspects -- photographer and writer. Would they let my cameras in? Was some of the nasty newspaper and book comment accurate? Objective non-political viewpoints were scarce.

All fifteen of us arrived safely. All our luggage was admitted without comment. We coalesced into a group of cheerful academically minded Brits, who would walk up a mountain if the bus punctured. There no trivial grumbles and constant interest. We left Albania with a corporate admiration of the country and her people and gratitude for our status of privileged guest. We crammed a lot into seven days and were frustrated only by the lack of non-political English language books available. Our guides, Ernest Shyti and Pjerin Sturaj, dispensed information ad lib, answered hundreds of questions and smoothed the path. Our art historian group leader supplemented local knowledge, and many of us had specific knowledge ranging from medicine or geology to agriculture or botany! Eccentricities, like diving into the undergrowth for beetles, delight over wild flowers and pleas to stop the bus to photograph oil derricks or cows were politely acceded to by our very careful driver, Besnik.

There were photographic frustrations. Specialising in agriculture and horticulture, at my own pace it would have taken a week to go from Tirana to Saranda and two to return via Vlora! Two days in the Botanical

THREE POEMS

Gardens rather than half an hour, and a further two in the Butrint area would have been preferable! Kruja was too quick, and if only the sun had risen earlier. It was all a beautiful paradox in some respects, but obviously to me also a careful agricultural plan. The work was not only suited to the labour force available, but more importantly to the individual abilities of that force. The results, considering the climate, terrain and experience, were impressive. A longer, closer look would be fascinating and pictorially magnificent.

So I came away with six hundred pictures and a kaleidoscope of mental images: the moon over Corfu; student drawings at Apollonia; a pair of turkeys in Vlora; trilliums in a pine wood; Onufri ikons; nightingales at Butrint; swallowtail butterflies at Ksamil; and the only really fat Albanian we saw, unable to make his donkey budge!

When we left, Ernest told us not to try and compare Albania with Britain, but with Albania forty years ago. It would be inappropriate to make comparisons with Britain and I know nothing first hand about Albania forty years ago. As a natural scientist with an interest in history and theology, I can say that it is a very interesting and beautiful place now, not ruined by tourists. My audiences will ask "What about the people?" Language is unfortunately a great barrier. One can only describe attitudes and spirit and repeat what we were told. But perhaps the easiest way to convey to western people the Albanian spirit and indomitable attitude is to point to the one Albanian most of them know about -- Mother Theresa!

THREE POEMS

BY DRITERO AGOLLI

THE POTTER

In Istanbul I went to the market
to buy a a souvenir, a pot.
"May peace be with you, master potter!
I want to buy a pot, the best you have,
May peace be with you, master potter!"

The pot slipped from my hands,
to break in a thousand pieces.
The Sea of Marmara swirled around me
and the potter's shop; like a whirlpool
The Sea of Marmara swirled around me.

The potter began to abuse me in Turkish,
and I apologised in Albanian.
Strangely, he was surprised;
I saw a tear form in his eye.
Strange that he should be surprised.

Could he be mad, this Turk, this Muslim?
I was amazed when he embraced me.
He left to seek another pot,
and said: "Here is a better pot for you to break!"
Could he be mad, this Turk, this Muslim?

"I am Albanian, I too", he sighed;
"Abuse me, brother, let me hear
more precious Albanian words.
No one has spoken here before
those precious Albanian words".

I was alone in the shop,
alone with the master potter.
The wind blew from the Sea of Marmara;
the potter spoke to his pots in Albanian,
and the wind blew from the Sea of Marmara.

FRANKLY

If one has shut oneself off
from pain and joy, from hope and sorrow,
I tell you frankly, hand on heart,
one might as well be dead.

MONTPARNASSE 83

1.

I walk along the Boulevard du Montparnasse,
and say to myself some words in French.

At 'La Rotonde' I find a vacant seat
where Hemingway once took his coffee;

my spirit wanders over the boulevard
whose name rhymes with that of my native village:

Menkulas, my village on the bank of the Devoll,
which has no 'La Rotonde', no 'La Coupule',

which has no hoardings, bureaux-de-change,
no bearded men or painted women.

2.

Why the devil did I think of Menkulas,
here on the Boulevard du Montparnasse?

Down there a cock is surely crowing,
but now it rises up in front of me;

it taps its beak against the café window,
sending me a telegram in morse:

"Enough of strolling on the boulevards,
I am waiting for you, as always, at Menkulas!"

THREE POEMS

3.

Farewell, 'Rotonde', to your hazel-trees!
I come, Menkulas, to your scented hills,

where cocks, precise as watches,
welcome each radiant dawn!

There Hemingway has written not a single word,
but Homer in his rags still walks your paths.



Part of the Italian camp at Berat, 1940

CHRONICLE IN MILAN

by Enzo Puzzovio

A few days after having read Kadare's Chronicle in Stone, I found myself visiting relations in Milan. By extraordinary coincidence I discovered that my late father's cousin, Giuseppe Puzzovio, from Lecce, had been part of La Divisione Fanteria 'Casale' (56), which occupied Albania and was then involved in the war with Greece. Fascinated by his memories of Gjirokastra and particularly Berat, I jotted down accounts of his experiences.

* * * * *

The boat left Bari on 28 October 1940 and we disembarked at Durrës. We stayed there overnight and in the morning marched on to Tirana. After two weeks there, we set off in trucks to Vlora. I expressed surprise to my colleagues that, so far, no shots had been fired -- I had never thought that going to war would be like this. 'Taking' Albania seemed to be an easy job; we just walked in and took over.

From Vlora we continued to Tepelena, then Gjirokastra where we camped. Our trips to Gjirokastra were quite frequent, although we were on strict orders not to go into the town. Whenever we stayed there we slept in a building in the Muslim cemetery, situated just beyond the sharp bend in the road to Gjirokastra, before it began the steep rise into the town. It was made up of two large rooms with sheepskins on the floor. The mullah saw us from afar and rushed to meet us. Without saying a word or showing the slightest hostility, he removed the collection box and bundles of silk sheets (apparently used to wrap corpses) and left. Just outside Gjirokastra, near our base, was a concrete airstrip.

On one of our stays in Gjirokastra I decided to flout the rules and go exploring. I felt uneasy going up the narrow, winding streets. I was watched from their doorways by the locals, who shut themselves in as I passed. They seemed frightened of me but, if only they had known, I was more frightened of them. The only people I saw, though, were old men and women -- never younger adults or children. Were they hidden away, I wondered?

From Gjirokastra we went on to Kakavia, twelve kilometres from the Greek border. It was there that we eventually used the heavy artillery that had been accompanying us all through Albania. We were beaten back by the Greeks, who outnumbered us by far, and retreated to Tepelena.

Our base for the next few months was to be Berat, on the castle at the top of the hill. Berat suffered much from bombing, mostly from British air raids. Apparently the bridge over the Osum was strategic and therefore their main target. Nonetheless there were many attacks on civilians. During these attacks our troops used St. George's Church as an air-raid shelter as it was below surface level. (I don't know where the Beratis hid during the raids, probably in the cellars of their homes). Berat was a dangerous place during the raids, as the cobblestones that formed much of the roads were as lethal as the bombs themselves. If I couldn't reach our shelter in time, I used to wedge myself in between a tree and a wall for maximum cover. A friend of mine was hit by flying cobbles: one broke his foot and another sheared off his other foot at the ankle.

The British were unsuccessful in bombing that bridge; it was flanked by steep slopes and descent by air was tricky. On one occasion a British plane dared to enter the valley to get closer to its target. I watched it from afar as it crashed into a hillside, and

then rushed down to see if the pilot had survived. But the plane was nowhere in sight and as I approached the bridge the ground became increasingly boggy so that, fearing for my own safety, I returned to base.

The best chance I had to see girls was soon after an air-raid. They appeared from wherever they had been hiding and filled the streets, panic-stricken. My companions and I did our best to take advantage of these opportunities, but to little avail! I did, though, eventually have a girl friend in Berat. She seemed to dress better than the average Berati girl and wore make-up; it turned out that she was of Turkish origin.

After a particular raid we were asked by a family for help in lifting furniture and effects out of their destroyed home. Another soldier from Lecce and I went to help. I remember we were lifting out a very heavy trunk and agreed that, if the opportunity arose, we would satisfy our curiosity and take a quick look inside. We saw many clothes, together with bundles of banknotes; they were Turkish 20 Corona notes. Obviously the family was fleeing somewhere with their life-savings.

In early April 1941 Mussolini arrived to visit our division. Morale was low and our uniforms were in tatters. He immediately ordered new uniforms for us and made sure we were well-fed. Eventually we forced the Greeks back across the border, and were each awarded a medal for our efforts.

We proceeded out of Albania into Greece, and on the 14th of May we arrived at Agrinion and Missolonghi, near Patras. There begins another episode of my war travels.

BOOK REVIEWS

Frances Wilkins: 'LET'S VISIT ALBANIA';
Macmillan; 1988; (£4.95)

Reviewed by Gill Ball

In many ways I was pleased to see this book, which is published as one of a well known series. There is so little published on Albania for children that most children have either never heard of it or have read only the tabloid press accounts. There are major weaknesses in the book which are typical of the series, but it has positive qualities too.

The author gives us plenty of historical and geographical detail, with a wide coverage of the different regions and towns, their history, industry, landscape, etc. There are many photographs of Tirana, Durrës, the highland towns and villages, the national monuments. Descriptions of the day-to-day life of the people in both town and country are attractive and interesting. It is a shame that, after a very lively description of Tirana, the author tells us it is 'small and uninteresting' with little 'gaiety and chatter' in its streets!

Perhaps the best attribute of the book is its depiction of the Albanian people as standing firm and strong at all times in history, 'like eagles'. The author shows the independence of Albania as having been won after centuries of invasions and occupations. The predominant weakness of the book is that it does not tell us why events occurred, causing confusion to the reader's understanding of Albania's history. The author fails to tell us why Albania became what it is today. We are given bare facts -- without sensationalism, a welcome change! -- but we are not told why the Communist Party came to be the dominating force in society after the war, why Albania is not in the Soviet

bloc, why the rift came about with Yugoslavia, China, etc.

A factual account is given of the closure of the churches. Enver Hoxha is portrayed positively, and we are told that the people regard him with deep affection as 'the Father of Modern Albania', but we are told little about his life. There is no mention of the reasons why Stalin is held in such high esteem in Albania.

While the information on tourism and trade is out of date, and there is a lack of information on health care, the section on education is very good, with strong emphasis on the achievements in achieving literacy, and the review of today's curriculum is interesting and sympathetic.

In general, I felt that the weaknesses in the book were the result of the author's lack of understanding rather than of the anti-Albanian and anti-Communist prejudice which is so common in such books. I hope that schools and libraries buy it, for it is certainly an improvement on currently available sources of information for children. Does not this, however, present the Albanian Society with a challenge?



Abaz 'Iado:
'Berat'.

Susan Hyman (Editor and Compiler):

EDWARD LEAR IN THE LEVANT: TRAVELS IN ALBANIA, GREECE and TURKEY IN EUROPE, 1848-1849; London; John Murray; 1988.

Reviewed by John L. Broom.

Most readers of this periodical will know that the great English artist and humourist, Edward Lear, visited Albania and neighbouring lands in the middle of the last century, and this beautiful book, brought out last year to mark the centenary of his death, consists of the journal he kept during that memorable tour, together with the letters to his sister Ann and much previously unpublished material, including many wonderful paintings and drawings. The editor, Susan Hyman, an authority on Lear, provides a scholarly introduction and a perceptive commentary, though she cannot resist a sideswipe at contemporary Albania: "In the nineteenth century Tirana was a small town notable for its beautiful mosques. . . Its transformation into the bureaucratic capital of Albania is a modern invention".

As the blurb states, Lear was the most improbable of travellers. Plagued by ill-health and of a timid disposition, he nevertheless ventured, often alone or with only one companion, into wild, remote places which would have deterred many much more intrepid explorers. Indeed, his very innocence saved his life on at least one occasion. His writings are characterised by his unfailing good humour even during his frequent bouts of illness and under the most trying circumstances.

Lear was attracted to Albania by the praises lavished upon the country by his hero Lord Byron in

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, but apart from its magnificent scenery and fine buildings, captured for posterity through his impressive illustrations, the reality often disappointed him. In Elbasan he was attacked physically by some of the inhabitants who thought he was a Devil; Tirana he found "wretched and disgusting . . . save only that it excelled in religious architecture and spacious market-places"; while Vlora "exhibited a mournful air of decay". In Himara he was awakened the morning after he arrived by the most horrible screams, which he later learned emanated from a woman whose husband had been murdered in a blood feud. He was also horrified by the brutal treatment of the local women, who served as beasts of burden, there being no mules in the area. In Shkodra, however, he was greatly impressed by the colourful national dress, which he duly reproduced in all its glory through his artistic genius. His final impression of Albania was that "it is more like a great Zoological Garden than any country I ever saw", although he "wished to goodness they would kill their dogs, who eat up the calves of my legs continually".

Edward Lear in the Levant has a glossary, a select bibliography and a name index. At £15.95 it is excellent value, but those who cannot afford to buy the book should certainly ensure that it is on the shelves of their local library.

Bland, William B.: 'ALBANIA'
(World Bibliographical Series, Vol. 94; Clio
Press (Oxford, England - Santa Barbara, California --
Denver, Colorado; 1988).

290 pages and one map. £36.

Reviewed by Martin F. Smith

This annotated bibliography of publications relating to Albania is the first of its kind in English. It will be of inestimable value to all who have an interest in Albania, whether that interest be general or specialised. Like the other volumes in the series, the bibliography is aimed chiefly at the English speaker, and no one was better qualified to compile it than Mr. Bland, the breadth and depth of whose knowledge of Albania are almost unrivalled in the English-speaking world.

The bibliography is arranged in sections, some of which have two or more sub-sections. The main section-headings are: The Country and its People, Travellers' Accounts, Geography, Geology, Tourism and Travel Guides, Flora and Fauna, Archaeology and Pre-history, History, Population, Nationalities and Minorities, Albanian Communities Abroad, Languages and Dialects, Religion, Society, Constitution and Law, Government and Administration, Politics, Armed Forces, Foreign Relations, Economy, Trade Unions, Statistics, Environment and Town Planning, Education, Science and Technology, Health and Social Services, Literature, The Arts, Food and Drink, Sport and Recreation, Libraries and Museums, The Book Trade, The Press, Encyclopaedias, Bibliographies. Within each section or sub-section the items are listed alphabetically by title. Mr. Bland tells us that works "have been selected to cover, as far as possible, all aspects of the subject as well as differing and indeed, opposing, views" (p. xxxv). In his informative notes on each item he usually refrains

from making critical comments, leaving it to the reader to make up his/her own mind, but sometimes he draws attention to mistakes (e.g., nos. 534, 538).

The bibliography is preceded by an introduction of just over twenty pages, in which Mr. Bland with admirable economy and lucidity presents factual information about Albania. At the end of the volume there is a map of the country.

A notable feature of the book is its "user-friendliness", manifested not only in the clarity and helpfulness of the introduction and the bibliography itself, but also in the careful and thorough indexing. There are in fact three indexes -- of authors, of titles, and of subjects -- and their provision ensures that the reader gets the maximum of benefit from the book with the minimum of trouble. I have noticed some minor mistakes and misprints, but none which will cause difficulty.

Although the bibliography contains 893 items, it is by no means exhaustive. Since it is intended for English readers, works in English are most numerous. Of the 806 items which are not periodicals or newspapers, 625 are in English, 79 in French, 76 in Albanian, and 26 in other languages. In the case of foreign (i.e., non-English) works, an English translation of the title is given in brackets after the original title.

The bias in favour of works in English and, to a lesser extent, in French is understandable, given that so few English people can read Albanian, but is perhaps carried a little too far. For example, non-Albanian readers might not inappropriately be referred to books which, though their text is in Albanian, are essentially photograph albums, such as Gju me gju me popullin (Tirana, 1978), commemorating the seventieth birthday of Enver Hoxha, and K. Frashëri's Tre vëllezër pishtare (Tirana, 1978), on the three famous Frashëri

brothers.

Mention might have been made, too, of more books which, though in Albanian, contain summaries or even complete translations in French, such as: E. Çabej, Studime etimologjike në fushë të shqipes I /Études d'étymologie albanaise I (Tirana, 1982); F. Drini, Bibliografi arkeologjike dhe e historisë së lashtë të Shqipërisë 1972-1983 (Tirana, 1983); A. Dh. Dhima, Gjurmime antropologjike për shqiptarët (Tirana, 1985). It may be further noted that, although Mr. Bland includes the irregularly-appearing French-language journal Ethnographie Albanaise (no. 806), he does not mention the regularly-published Albanian version of the same journal, Etnografia shqiptare, even though this contains resumés in French. The omission of Studia Albanica (mainly in French) from the bibliography was presumably a mere oversight, since this journal is mentioned in the introduction (p. xxx).

Even so far as work in English is concerned, this is (deliberately and rightly) a selective bibliography. I have few grumbles about what the compiler has included and omitted. However, in such a big field the individual's choice will never be exactly the same as another's, and there are almost bound to be some oversights. The following items, in my view, deserved inclusion:

Andrea, Zh., "Archaeology in Albania, 1973-83", Archaeological Reports, Vol. 30 (1983-84) pp. 102-119.

Durham, M.E., Some Tribal Origins, Laws, and Customs of the Balkans (London, 1928).

Hammond, N. G. L., "Travels in Epirus and South Albania Before World War II", The Ancient World vol. 8, nos. 1 & 2 (October-November 1983), pp. 13-46.

Hoxha, E., Reject the Revisionist Theses of the XX Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Anti-Marxist Stand of Khrushchev's Group! Uphold Marxism-Leninism! (Tirana, 1969). (The text of the speech, of great historical importance, delivered by

Enver Hoxha at the meeting of 81 Communist and Workers' Parties in Moscow on November 16, 1960).

Islami, S, and others, Les Illyriens (Tirana, 1985).

Myrdal, J. & Kessle, G., Albania Defiant, trans. from the Swedish by P. B. Austin (London, 1978).

Puto, A., From the Annals of British Diplomacy (Tirana, 1981).

Robinson, V., Albania's Road to Freedom (London, 1981) (which includes excellent photographs).

Seymour-Smith, M., Guide to Modern World Literature, 3rd ed. (London, 1985), pp. 1240-1247.

It is inevitable that a reference work of this kind becomes out of date as soon as, or even before, it is published. For example, in archaeology we now have the magnificently produced and illustrated book, resulting from Albanian-West German collaboration, Albanien, Schätze aus dem Land der Skipetaren (Mainz am Rhein, 1988). Another book which probably appeared too late for inclusion in Mr. Bland's bibliography is Albanica II (Tirana, 1987), a bibliography of works published in Albanian and foreign languages between 1800 and 1849. It is interesting to compare this with Albanica I, which is recorded by Mr. Bland (no. 862): whereas volume I, which deals with the 16th-18th centuries, lists only 294 works, volume II, covering a mere half-century, lists 382, though it is noteworthy that almost all of these are foreign publications, since Albanian culture was still being suppressed by the Turks. This situation was to change in the second half of the 19th century, and if Albanica III covers the period 1850-1899, it will be much more bulky than volume II and will contain many publications in Albanian. As they move into the 20th century, and especially into the period since Liberation in 1944, bibliographers face a more and more formidable task as they encounter an ever-increasing volume of publications, and Mr. Bland deserves our warmest thanks for making such a sound selection for English readers.

ALBANIAN NEWS

(January-April 1989)

POLITICS

January

'The Order of Freedom, First Class' was awarded to Members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Party of Labour of Albania Simon Stefani and Manush Myftiu.

February

The 7th Plenum of the CC of the PLA, devoted to agricultural questions, was held in Tirana (1st-2nd).

March

The General Council of the Women's Union of Albania convened in Tirana (4th.).

The General Council of the Trade Unions of Albania convened in Tirana (7th.)

The General Council of the Democratic Front of Albania convened in Tirana (10th).

A scientific conference on 'Perestroika -- Anti-Socialist Theory and Practice' was organised in Tirana by the Marxist-Leninist Studies Institute (16th).

April

A conference of the Writers' and Artists' Union was held in Tirana (24-25th).

DIPLMACY

January

A meeting of the Deputy Foreign Ministers of the Balkan countries was held in Tirana (18-20th).

February

The Albanian Ambassador to the Philippines, Justin Papajorgji, presented his credentials to President Corazon Aquino.

March

The Albanian Ambassador to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ismail Djaloshi, presented his credentials to President Kim Il Sung.

The Ambassador of Mali, Seydon Niare, presented his credentials to President Ramiz Alia.

April

The Norwegian Ambassador, Georg Crane, and the French Ambassador, Michel Boulmer, presented their credentials to President Ramiz Alia.

The Albanian Ambassador to Romania, Piro Vito, presented his credentials to President Nicolae Ceausescu.

FOREIGN VISITORS

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

January

Greek composer Ilia Andriopoulos and his music group.

February

A Czechoslovak government delegation headed by Minister of Foreign Trade, Jan Sterba.

A Greek government delegation, headed by Foreign Minister Karolos Papoulias.

A delegation of the Youth Organisation of Tanzania.

March

A French government delegation headed by the European Director of the Foreign Ministry, Jacques Blot.

A West German Government delegation, headed by the State Secretary at the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation, Siegfried Lengl.

April

A Romanian government delegation, headed by Deputy Premier Stephan Andrei.

A Laos government delegation headed by Deputy Foreign

Minister Soulivong Phrasithideth.

FOREIGN VISITS

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

January

A delegation, headed by Foreign Minister Reis Malile, to the International Conference on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in Paris.

A delegation, headed by Minister of Education Skënder Gjinushi, to the International Conference on Education in Geneva.

A delegation, headed by Rahman Janku, to Cuba.

February

A delegation, headed by Foreign Minister Reis Malile, to Turkey and Switzerland.

A women's delegation, headed by the Secretary of the WUA Valentina Leska, to Vietnam and Cambodia.

A delegation, headed by Foreign Minister Reis Malile, to Greece.

A trade union delegation, headed by Nesti Dhimitri, to Egypt.

March

A trade delegation, headed by Minister of Foreign Trade Shane Korbeci, to Austria and the German Democratic Republic.

A trade delegation, headed Minister of Construction Ismail Ahmeti, to Vietnam.

A trade union delegation, headed by Aden Tukaj, to Ecuador.

A delegation, headed by Aranit Cela, to a Conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Budapest.

A delegation, headed by Foreign Minister Reis Malile, to France.

April

A delegation, headed by Minister of Health Ahmet

Kamberi, to Turkey.

A government delegation, headed by Chairman of the State Planning Commission Niko Gjyzari, to Greece.

The symphony orchestra of the Opera and Ballet Theatre to the Balkan Music Festival in Athens.

A women's delegation, headed by WIA President Lunturi Rexha, to Egypt.

FOREIGN TRADE

February

Agreements in the fields of culture, news agencies and telecommunications were signed with Turkey.

A trade agreement for 1989 was signed with Czechoslovakia.

Albania participated in the international trade fair in Frankfurt (Federal Republic of Germany).

March

The protocol of the first session of the Franco-Albanian Joint Commission on Economic, Industrial and Technical Cooperation was signed.

Trade agreements for 1989 were signed with Austria and Vietnam.

A civil transport agreement was signed with France.

Albania participated in the International Book Fair in Brussels.

An agreement on scientific and technical cooperation for 1989-90 was signed with Greece.

April

An agreement was signed with Romania on economic, industrial and technical cooperation.

An agreement on the road transport of goods for 1989-90 was signed with Yugoslavia.

An agreement on cooperation in the field of health was signed with Turkey.

The bi-weekly Frankfurt-Tirana airline was inaugurated. Albania participated in the International Book and Press Fair in Geneva.

TRANSPORT

The Yugoslav airline JAT has informed ALBTRANSPORT that the Belgrade-Tirana air service will be temporarily suspended on 16 May 1989 because of 'shortage of aircraft'.

CULTURE

March

An agreement on cultural, educational and scientific cooperation was signed with Spain.

An agreement on cultural cooperation for 1989-91 was signed with the Federal Republic of Germany.

April

An agreement on cultural cooperation was signed with Argentina.

Books

Among books published during the period under review were:

- Enver Hoxha: 'Works', vol. 64 (March 1978);
Enver Hoxha: 'Diary', vol. 5 (1973);
Aeschylus: 'Tragedies';
Joyca Cary: 'The Horse's Mouth';
Gunter Grass: 'Cat and Mouse';
Ernest Hemingway: 'Short Stories';
Nazim Hikmet: 'Poems';
Sirri Jaho (ed.): 'Climatic Atlas of the PSRA';
Thomas Mann: 'Tonio Kroger';
Marcel Pagnol: 'Marius';
Erich Remarque: 'Arc de Triomphe';
Sophocles: 'Tragedies';
John Steinbeck: 'The Grapes of Wrath';
Irving Stone: 'Lust for Life';
Lev Tolstoy: 'The Cossacks';
Lev Tolstoy: 'War and Peace';
Walt Whitman: 'Poems'.
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NEW MAGAZINES

NEW ALBANIA, No. 5, 1988

Secondary schools; Dibra; the new village of Poveiça; Leo Tolstoy; Migjeni; photographer Gjon Mili; textile design; actor Aleksander Moisi; Edith Durham; the ancient city of Aulon; the 1988-89 football season.

NEW ALBANIA, No. 6, 1988

The 6th Congress of Agricultural Cooperatives; the Enver Hoxha Museum; the National Folklore Festival; Preza Castle; the new town of Kukës; Professor Ylli Popa; Albanian television; Dora d'Istria; the river Drin; Albanian archaeology in 1988; young naturalists.

NEW ALBANIA, No. 1, 1989

The Balkan Foreign Ministers' meeting; agriculture; Korça; Ismail Qemali; 'Giselle'; the new film 'Spring did not Come Alone'; the Albanian Riviera; the Institute of Folk Culture; Arbëresh costumes.

ALBANIA TODAY, No. 5, 1988

The Enver Hoxha Museum; the National Folk Festival; the new water supply system in Berat; medical research; the state and the cooperatives; contacts with world culture; Albania's foreign policy.

ALBANIA TODAY, No. 6, 1988

Ramiz Alia's New Year address; the 6th Congress of Agricultural Cooperatives; the November celebrations; economic development; environmental protection; Albania recognises Palestine; Yugoslavia at the crossroads.

ALBANIA TODAY, No. 1, 1989

Agriculture; raising the well-being of the people; the cooperative farms; education; the struggle against contagious diseases; Albania's stance in favour of the prohibition of nuclear weapons.

(The above are available from the Albanian Society at 50p each including postage)

ALBANIAN SOCIETY MEETINGS

On 1 April Laurie Prescott spoke on Albania's foreign policy at a conference on NATO.

On 23 April the London and South-East England Branch held a meeting in London at which Norberto Steinmayr spoke on 'The Plight of the Albanians in Yugoslavia'. The lecture was followed by a screening of the West German documentary film 'The Albanians are Coming'.

On 30 April the society had a bookstall at the Llantrisant May Day Festival.

In May-June Ron Gregory, Secretary of the South Wales Branch, made a tour of South Wales with books and posters, visiting Llanelli, Carmarthen, Cwmbran, and Pontypool.

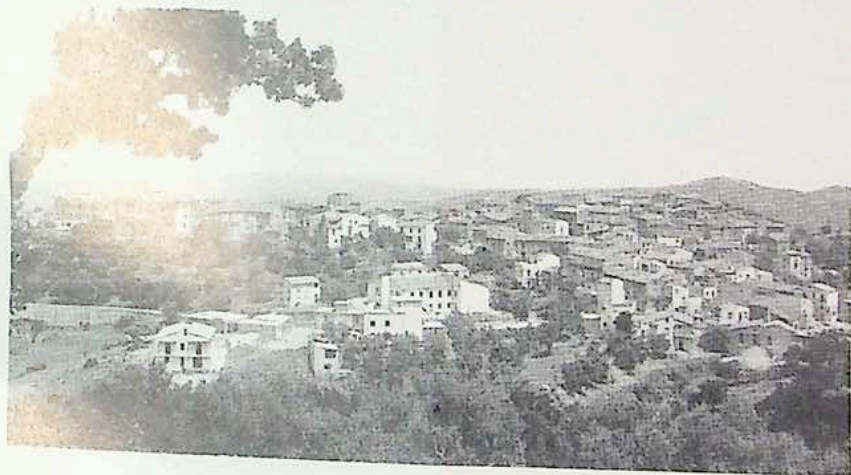
On 14 June Laurie Prescott gave a talk on Albania at the London School of Economics. This was followed by a screening of the film 'The Albanians are Coming'.

On 26 June the South Wales Branch held a meeting in Bridgend at which Ron Gregory gave a talk on Albania illustrated with slides.

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Part of the audience at the Albanian Society's
London meeting on 23 April 1989.



The Arbëresh village of San Giorgio Albanese, Italy

THE ALBANIAN SOCIETY

presents at 3.00 p.m. on SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26th, 1988
at HOLBORN LIBRARY HALL, 32, THEOBALDS ROAD, LONDON WC1
(Nearest Underground station: Chancery Lane)

AN ARBERESH AFTERNOON

INTRODUCTION by MARIO BRUNETTI, President of the
Italian League for the Defence of the Albanian Minority

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A CONCERT OF ARBERESH MUSIC, arranged by DAVE SMITH

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LECTURE (in English) by MARIO BOLOGNARI
(Professor of Anthropology at the University of Calabria)
on

THE ALBANIANS OF ITALY

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The film (with English translation)

THE ALBANIANS OF ITALY