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BULETINI KATHOLIK SHQIPTAR

Albania is nestled on the eastern shores of the Adriatic and Ionian seas between Yugoslavia and Greece. Her size is about 11,000 square miles. The climate and land are like that of central California. The estimated number of Albanians is nearly six million, but only half live within the physical boundaries. They call themselves SHQIPËRE "sons of the eagle," and their land SHQIPËRI "eagle's country." In terms of religious distribution, Albania is 68% Muslim, 9% Albanian Orthodox and 13% Roman Catholic. However the present government strictly prohibits its citizens from exercising their religion in public or private.

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

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P.O. BOX 881, SANTA
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Let us share the work to be done...

For the past eight years the Albanian Catholic Information Center has tried to keep the public abreast of the religious situation in Albania through news letters and press releases. Now, for the first time, we present our efforts in a new format. It has been a labor of love by a volunteer group of people concerned for the respect of human rights in Albania. Among them, we wish to single out: ARTHUR W. LEE, S.J., GERTRUDE EMANUEL, KARL PATZELT, S.J., REGINA MAAG, ZEF NEKAJ, JAMES TORRENS, S.J., and PATRICIA NEWTON.

The Bulletin is sent free of charge to anyone requesting it, however, to continue our important task, we depend on voluntary financial support. Any contribution, no matter how small, will be gratefully received.

FRONT COVER: The combination of the red cross with the black eagle symbolizes the crucifixion in the past and particularly today, of the Albanian nation irrespective of our different religious affiliation. The inscribed words "PER FE, ATDHE, PERPARIM," (For Faith, Fatherland, Progress) had been for centuries the motto of Albanian Catholics. As our forefathers were inspired to resist particular evils of the time, so do we feel today propelled to follow their ideals.

BACK COVER: In 1967, after more than two decades of fierce religious persecution, the Albanian government finally outlawed the public or private practice of religion. Everywhere churches and mosques were burned, destroyed, or converted for purposes other than religious. What was left of the resisting clergy was imprisoned or sent to forced labor camps.

The well known Albanian poet, writer and educator, Ernest KOLIQI, was deeply affected by these vandalistic acts, which moved him to write "DESPERATE PRAYER." This poem was first published in Msgr. Joseph J. Broshi's Albanian Catholic Life magazine in 1968 and later translated into English by Zef Nekaj.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Ernest Coha Dies In Labor Camp	1
A Savage Albanian Government Decree	3
Pope John Paul II - Messenger of Peace	4
Albanian Persecution Ignored	5
Holocaust of the Albanian People	6
John Paul II: "I Pray Every Day For Albania"	8
Archbishop Romero	9
Mother Teresa - Missionary of Love and Peace	10
Pain and Sorrow of Mother Teresa	16
Land of the Godless?	19
Dictator Enver Hoxha Attacks Vatican and Religion	20
Santa Clara Colloquium	21
Statement on Freedom of Religion and Belief	22
An Official Yugoslav Look at Religion	24
Imprisoned Albanians in Yugoslavia	25
End of an Era, After Tito — What?	27
Albanian Patriot Honored in Paris	28
Anniversary of the Death of Fr. Gjecovi	30
New Archbishop for Belgrade	33
Attacks on the Albanian Catholic Church in Yugoslavia	34
Consecration of Bishop Mark for Albanian Archdiocese	35
Ordination of Albanian Deacon	36
Arberesh, Italo-Albanians	37
Silver Jubilee of an Albanian Benefactor	39
A Great Loss for the Albanian People	41

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

Albanian Bible Translation	42
Lives of Albanian Orthodox Saints to be Published	42
Book Reviews	43
Albanian Actor Alexander Moisi	45
Only Stalin Escapes Admission to Mr. Hoxha's Gallery of Rogues	47
Albania is Not Hoxha's Private Estate	48
Albania's Chromite Production	48

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**BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)**

1

APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR OF SHKODRA, ERNEST COBA DIES FROM THE POLICE BEATINGS IN THE LABOR CAMP

ACCORDING TO STATEMENTS BY ALBANIAN REFUGEES WHO HAVE RECENTLY ESCAPED INTO YUGOSLAVIA, THE ALBANIAN GOVERNMENT, SINCE THE MIDDLE OF LAST YEAR, HAS TAKEN HARsher MEASURES AGAINST THOSE WHO DISOBEY ITS ANTI-RELIGIOUS LAWS. PEOPLE DISCOVERED OR REPORTED BY AGENTS OF POSSESSING RELIGIOUS OBJECTS OR OF PARTAKING IN ANY KIND OF RELIGIOUS SERVICES ARE SIMPLY ARRESTED, MALTREATED AND SENT TO LABOR CAMPS WITHOUT LEGAL PROCEEDINGS. THE POLICE AUTHORITIES ARE PARTICULARLY BRUTAL TOWARDS CITIZENS CAUGHT WITH RELIGIOUS LITERATURE OR ALBANIAN BIBLES WHICH ARE SMUGGLED INTO THE COUNTRY BY THE TOURISTS OR FOUND BY THE SHORES OF THE SEAS, LAKES OR RIVERS.

AMONG THESE REFUGEES IS A FORMER ALBANIAN SEMINARIAN, MARK NDOCAJ (NOZAJ), WHO RELATED TO OUR REPRESENTATIVE IN EUROPE, FATHER R. GEORGE, ABOUT THE DEATH OF THE APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR OF SHKODRA, BISHOP ERNEST COBA (CHOB). NDOCAJ TOLD A SHOCKING TALE OF BRUTAL ATTACKS BY THE POLICE AND AGENTS AT THE LABOR CAMP OF PAPERR NEAR THE CITY OF ELBASAN, IN CENTRAL ALBANIA, WHERE BISHOP COBA HAS BEEN CONFINED SINCE 1974. SOME CATHOLIC BELIEVERS HAD MADE SIMPLE MASS VESTMENTS AND A WOODEN CROSS FOR THE BISHOP, TO BE USED AT A SECRET EASTER CELEBRATION LAST YEAR. UNEXPECTEDLY, THE POLICE WERE INFORMED, AND AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SERVICE THEY ENTERED THE BARRACKS WHERE SOME BEGAN ASSAULTING THE BISHOP, TEARING OFF HIS VESTMENTS AND BREAKING THE CROSS, AND OTHERS BEGAN BEATING THE FAITHFUL WHO HAD GATHERED FOR THE EASTER CELEBRATION. THE OLD, NEARLY BLIND VENERABLE PRELATE WAS SERIOUSLY INJURED IN THE MELEE AND HE WAS FOUND DEAD THE FOLLOWING MORNING. HIS BODY WAS IMMEDIATELY MOVED AND BURIED BY THE POLICE IN AN UNDISCLOSED SITE. THE BISHOP'S SISTER AND A FEW RELATIVES OF OTHER PRISONERS WERE BRINGING SOME FOOD WHEN THEY CAME FOR THEIR REGULAR VISIT. UPON ARRIVAL THE POLICE REFUSED TO ACCEPT THE FOOD FOR THE BISHOP AND TOLD HIS SISTER THAT THE "PRIEST" HAD DIED FROM NATURAL CAUSES SEVERAL MONTHS EARLIER.

THE PRISONERS WHO HAD PARTICIPATED AT THE PRAYER SERVICE WERE DEPRIVED OF FOOD FOR 24 HOURS AND WERE WARNED NOT TO ATTEMPT ANY MORE RELIGIOUS MANIFESTATIONS. AN EYE WITNESS OF THE BISHOP'S TRAGIC DEATH AND THE HARSHMENT OF THE CATHOLIC PRISONERS RELATED THESE EVENTS TO MARK NDOCAJ.

WITH THE DEATH OF BISHOP COBA, THE ONLY REMAINING BISHOP IN ALBANIA IS THE 65-YEAR-OLD NIKOLL (NICHOLAS) TROSHANI, TITULAR BISHOP OF CISAMO AND APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR OF LEZHA AND DIBRES, WHO IS CONFINED IN THE LABOR CAMP OF TEPELENA NEAR THE SEAPORT OF VIOIRA. THE THIRD ALBANIAN BISHOP ANTONIN

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

FISHTA, ADMINISTRATOR OF PULTI, HAD DIED EARLIER ALSO IN A CAMP. HOWEVER, THERE ARE TWO OTHER ALBANIAN BISHOPS WHO WERE APPOINTED BY THE HOLY SEE IN THE PAST 10 YEARS, BUT THEY ADMINISTER TO THE 150,000 ALBANIAN CATHOLICS WHICH ARE UNDER THE YUGOSLAV TERRITORIAL JURISDICTION, MAINLY IN MONTENEGRO, MACEDONIA AND KOSOVA.

MARK NDOCAJ ALSO RELATED OTHER CASES OF POLICE BRUTALITY TOWARD THE FEW REMAINING CATHOLIC PRIESTS WHO ARE YET CONFINED IN PRISON AND LABOR CAMPS. THEIR CRIME IS THEIR REFUSAL TO OBEY THE ANTI-RELIGIOUS LAWS OF THE ALBANIAN STATE. AMONG THESE PRISONERS HE SINGLED OUT JESUIT FATHERS PIETER MASHKALLA AND ANTON LULI WHO, FOR A SECOND TIME, WERE SERVING LONG PRISON SENTENCES FOR CONDUCTING "RELIGIOUS SERVICES." ALSO CONFINED IN THE CAMPS OF SOUTHERN ALBANIA ARE FATHERS MARK HASI, SIMON JUBANI AND HIS OLDER BROTHER LAZER JUBANI.

WHEN ASKED WHAT KIND OF SERVICES ARE CELEBRATED AND WHO CONDUCTS THEM, SEEING THAT THE FEW PRIESTS LEFT ARE IMPRISONED, NDOCAJ AND OTHER REFUGEES EXPLAINED THAT USUALLY THE SERVICES ARE BAPTISMS OF CHILDREN BY THEIR PARENTS OR GOD-PARENTS; WEDDINGS WITNESSED AND BLESSED BY PARENTS OR AN ELDERLY PERSON IN THE COMMUNITY AND FUNERAL PRAYERS RECITED BY PARENTS OR CLOSE RELATIVES OF THE DECEASED. OF COURSE, ALL RITES ARE CONDUCTED IN FULL SECRECY, WITHIN A CLOSED FAMILY CIRCLE.

THESE REPORTS INDEED PROVE THAT RELIGION IS NOT DEAD IN ALBANIA BUT THAT GOD LIVES IN THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF ITS PEOPLE, THUS GIVING TESTIMONY OF LIFE TO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY CATACOMBS.



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"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)**

A SAVAGE ALBANIAN GOVERNMENT DECREE

DECREE ON INTERNMENT, EXPULSION AS ADMINISTRATIVE MEASURES

The following is the full text of a special decree approved by the People's Assembly (parliament) of Albania in June 1979:

GAZETA ZYRTARE No. 2, June 79 pp 42-44

On the basis of Article 78 of the Constitution, on the proposal of the Council of Ministers, the Presidium of the People's Assembly of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania has decided:

Article 1

Internment and expulsion as administrative measures can be used against Albanian citizens, foreign citizens and stateless persons who are over 14 years of age, are responsible and present a danger for the social system of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania.

Expulsion of foreign citizens can be executed by expelling them from the People's Socialist Republic of Albania.

Article 2

Internment and expulsion can also be used against members of the family of fugitives living inside or outside the state.

Members of the family are considered to be those persons who were living with the fugitive at the time of his departure, such as his spouse, children, parents, brothers and sisters, as well as other persons who lived with him and who had been his dependents.

Article 3

Internment and expulsion, as administrative measures, are decided upon by a commission consisting of a chairman, who is a deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, and a deputy chairman, who is the Minister of Internal Affairs, and including the chairman of the Supreme Court and the Attorney General, as members of the commission.

The chairman of the Internment and Expulsion Commission is appointed by the chairman of the Council of Ministers of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania.

Article 4

The Internment and Expulsion Commission can, at any time, revoke the administrative measure of internment and expulsion previously adopted by it.

The persons interned cannot be called for active military service; in the case they have already been called, they are released from the army by request of the Internment and Expulsion Commission so that they can execute their internment.

Article 5

The schedules established in articles 26 and 27 of the Penal Code of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania are also used for internment and expulsion as administrative measures.

Article 6

The Internment and Expulsion Commission can decide on the prolongation of the administrative measure of internment and expulsion, when it deems it necessary; it can also abolish it ahead of time, when the persons interned and expelled cease to be a social danger.

The commission can decide to change the place of internment for the persons interned from one place to another and it can change the places of residence forbidden to the person expelled.

Article 7

Decree No. 1906, of 2 August 1954, "On Internment and Expulsion as Administrative Measures," Decree No. 3027, of 12 January 1960, "On some Modifications of Decree No. 1906, of 2 August 1954, On Internment and Expulsion as Administrative Measures," and Decree No. 4137, dated 9 May 1966, "On a Supplement to Decree No. 1906, of 2 August 1954, on Internment and Expulsion as Administrative Measures," are abrogated.

Article 8

This decree comes into force 15 days after its publication in GAZETA ZYRTARE.

Tirana, 26 June 1979

Decree No. 5912

For the Presidium of the People's Assembly of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania:

Tefik Mezini, Secretary
Haxhi Lleshi, Chairman

As you can see, the decree speaks for itself in a very clear and harsh voice. Nevertheless, one or two simple things need to be said about it.

The decree enables the government to intern people to remote areas (presumably in labor camps) for indefinite periods merely because the government thinks they constitute a danger to the social system of the country. And they are considered to be dangerous not because they have committed any particular offense but because they happen to be related to people who have become fugitives at home or abroad. In other words, one can lose one's freedom simply because the authorities say so, not because a court of law has found one guilty after having examined all the available evidence.

By enforcing such a decree the Albanian government has violated article 56 of the Albanian constitution. This says plainly that no one can be detained unless convicted by a proper court. People may be detained by the police for only three days without a trial. But the real message of the decree is that the will or whim of the rulers is the supreme law of the land: all the splendid fundamental rights and freedoms mentioned in the constitution are a fraud and a sham.

One of course knew this was the case, but the Albanian government has been good enough to confirm this in black and white. So to hell with the constitution!

The decree contains another barbaric provision that deserves to be singled out. Young people of fourteen years and over will suffer the same punishment as their elders, for offenses they have not committed or about which they can have little or no understanding. You will remember that 1979 was the International Year of the Child. Was this the Albanian government's own contribution to it?

What else can we say about this piece of savage legislation? Only that those who are responsible for it have lost any particle of human feelings they may have ever had, and now they provide their own evidence of their untalented and helpless domestic animals at their mercy, let alone human beings.

DIELLI, March 16, 1980

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARILETTI"
SHKODER (2018)

Pope John Paul II - The Messenger of Peace

ALBANIAN DELEGATION AVOIDS POPE'S VISIT TO THE UN

A pilgrim pope became a messenger of peace on his trip to Ireland, the United States and the United Nations (October 1-10, 1979). The basic message of Pope John Paul II was simple: governments and individuals have the responsibility and obligation to work for peace.

Of all the more than 70 talks he gave, his speech to the United Nations on October 2 drew the most attention. He strongly called for peace, justice, human rights and religious freedom.

Pope John Paul gave an especially strong defense of the principles laid down in the UN Declaration on Human Rights.

The 1,993 places of the General Assembly Hall were filled by heads of state, and the some 4,000 UN staffers and 2,000 journalists were crammed into several other halls watching on closed-circuit TV as Pope John Paul II delivered his address.

Admitting that he had religious freedom "particularly at heart", John Paul pointed out that man's social nature requires "that he give external expression to his internal acts of religion, that he communicate with others in religious matters and that he profess his religion in the community".

"Therefore," he said, "respect for man's spiritual nature demands that nations and international groups allow institutions which serve religion to be considered when laws are being passed. Otherwise, the pope cited a danger of "imposing" rules or restrictions "opposed to true religious needs".

Ironically, Albania, who is a full member of UN and a signatory of the UN's Declaration on Human Rights refused to attend the pope's speech or to meet him at a UN reception the same day. This country is judged most guilty of imposing not only religious restrictions but exerting a truly religious genocide on its people. The Albanian delegation last year informed officially the UN and its General Secretary Kurt Waldheim that it had become the first country in the world to eliminate religion from its national life. Some 15 years ago, when Pope Paul VI visited the UN and was beginning to deliver his message against the war, the Albanian delegation walked out thus making infamous headlines.

In contrast to the Albanian boycott, delegations from other Communist countries, including Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, the Soviet Union, and all East European countries were present at the session and even met the pope during a reception by Waldheim in honor of the pontiff.

DIBLJOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

The free Albanians, at home and scattered throughout the world, categorically disapprove of the shameful behavior of the Albanian delegation at the UN. Pope John Paul's message for peace to the UN General Assembly is a sincere human invitation for brotherhood among all peoples, without any distinction, political, national or religious.



Pope John Paul in a cordial chat with Dr. Mentor Cioeku, an Albanian participant at the International Symposium "Nova Spes," held in Rome in February.

ALBANIAN PERSECUTION IGNORED

Eight international scholars on church-state relations examined the impact of the election of the new Pope, John Paul II, on the Eastern European Church at a conference held at the University of Notre Dame on April 15-16. The conference was sponsored by the University's Center for the Study of Civil and Human Rights and the Society for the Study of Religion Under Communism of Keston College in England.

The participants unanimously concluded that the church-state relations in Eastern Europe have entered into a new, positive phase of affirmation and expansion, particularly in Poland, Yugoslavia and Hungary as a direct result of the new Pontiff's reign, thus bringing a new ray of hope to Catholics in that area.

However, during all the discussion, we are sad to report that the tragic religious situation in Albania was ignored, or at least inadvertently overlooked. No matter how small the Christians in Albania are numerically, failure to notice their enormous sacrifices is more than deplorable.



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"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

Holocaust of the Albanian People

In a passage in his book Mein Kampf Hitler wrote precisely as follows: "In the struggle between ideas in this world and life, brute force used steadfastly and ruthlessly is capable of giving the decisive word to him who employs it."

Since far-off November 1944, ENVER HOXHA and MEHMET SHEHU, have been using brute force steadfastly and ruthlessly without regard for human feelings against the Albanian people, on whom they have imposed, by scattering rivers of blood and employing unheard-of tortures, the most rigid of the communist parties throughout the whole world.

It seems to us that three Great Powers of times gone by, as being the renowned Defenders of the rights of mankind of today, do not understand the mission entrusted to them when they make plain by their deeds rather than by their words "two and a half million people, more or less, will not change the course of the history of which we are the foremost actors".

Would it not be sickening cynicism if someone were to think that "so many human beings are dying in China, India and Africa; so what does it matter if we let a small people die in Europe in a very small country, the non-existence of which, would change nothing in international equilibrium?"

The propaganda directed towards the defense of the rights of man can easily degenerate or be turned into one single direction and is often aimed only at totalitarian regimes having fascist tendencies. Instead, there is a deep silence in the face of crimes of a communist origin, which indeed are much greater than crimes of the past as regards both numbers and atrocities.

The spectacular television film "HOLOCAUST" recalled faithfully, in many countries where it was shown, the crimes of the Nazis against the Jews. The heart-rending scenes rightly brought shivers to millions of viewers, who perhaps had been ignorant beforehand of such human brutality. Anyone of a given age at the time when these misdeeds were perpetrated will recall that such crimes were presented by the Nazis at that time as a lawful defense against enemies of the German people, against traitors and spies, while the innocent victims were off and the gas chambers cynically as being disinfection rooms and the cremation furnaces as being refreshing baths.

It needed the fall of Hitler to make known the cruel and dreadful truth.

In the same way we need the fall of the regime of ENVER HOXHA so that we can obtain a true knowledge of the crimes and unheard-of atrocities perpetrated in these last 35 years of oppression and slavery which a people, guilty only because Albania is small and abandoned, has had to undergo since the end of the war.

It is certain that future generations will see in the martyrdom of the people of Albania yet another "HOLOCAUST".

It is true that cremation furnaces do not exist in Albania, but the followers of Enver Hoxha have, more than once, had men roasted alive slowly on a spit; it is true that showers used as gas chambers do not exist, but the long tortures carried out by Enver's cutthroats have made final execution a glad moment, a happy freedom; it is also

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

true that there are no extermination camps called Dachau or Auschwitz or Buchenwald in Albania, but there must be some meaning in the fact that even today, after 35 years of so-called proletarian democracy, whole families are being obliterated in the camps of slow death spread from the north to the south of the country, and men and women, both young and old, are dying of want and overwork, condemned to death only because they are against the Marxism-Leninism of Enver.

The terrifying ENVER HOXHA, the faithful disciple of Stalin, has surpassed his master proportionally in the matter of atrocities. The Stalinist purges of the Thirties were started again on a smaller scale against the sympathizers of Tito in 1948, against the Russophiles in 1961 and now against the friends of great dissident China. And yet the friendship of yester-year with Tito, the kinship with the Russia of Khrushchev, the alliance with the China of Mao were, according to the Albanian Communist Party, never-ending, eternal and indestructible.

As what we are saying is not just plain propaganda, let us refer to the representative of Albania at the United Nations and ask him very politely to tell us precisely (instead of making accusations against American Imperialism, against Russian social imperialism or against Chinese revisionism) how many political detainees there are today in the prisons of BURREL, of Fortuzi Steet in TIRANA, of SHKODRA and VLORA? How many innocent people are dying without anyone's knowledge in the concentration camps of Berat a., Berat b., Batter (Martanesh), Burrel, Ballsh a., Ballsh b., Borsh (Sarand), Bulgiz a., Bulgiz b., Spac (Mirdite), Sillever (Lushnje), Terrovice, Tepelana, Ishem (Durrës), Nova Sella (Vlore), Mifal (Fieri), Paperr (Elbasan), Piceras (Saranda).

Let the most distinguished of speakers save his breath instead of trying to present Albania as the land of fairies, as the lighthouse of world Marxism-Leninism, and let him rather tell us truthfully-- if an Albanian communist can tell the truth, fully--what his "democratic" government is doing to the innocent families of the political detainees. Perhaps the children and women of the dissidents and refugees are to blame. If so, is that why they are interned en masse and deported for the whole of their lives if their relatives are dissidents? Let the Albanian diplomat also tell us what his government is doing with the political refugees when the latter are sent back to Albania by the authorities of the neighboring countries.

The answer must be the same as that of ENVER HOXHA, who, when inveighing against dissidents at the Seventh Congress of the Albanian Workers Party, said, "The Party and the dictatorship of the Proletariat have given the coup de grace with their iron fist to those who have endeavored by any means to open the door to revisionism, and have swept them into the garbage bin in which all traitors of the revolution find their proper place."



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"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

POPE JOHN PAUL II: "I PRAY EVERY DAY FOR ALBANIA."



POPE JOHN PAUL RECENTLY VISITED THE WELL KNOWN EASTERN RITE MONASTERY, GROTTAFERRATA, NEAR ROME, WHERE MOST OF ITS COMMUNITY IS COMPOSED OF ABERESH (ITALO-ALBANIAN) MONKS. THE PONTIFF CELEBRATED THE LITURGY AND TALKED OF ST. BASIL IN GLOWING TERMS. AFTER THE SERVICES, THE HOLY FATHER SPENT SOME TIME WITH THE BASILIAN MONKS, INSPIRING THEM WITH HIS CONVIVIALITY AND WARMTH. FATHER SOFRON PRENCE, AN ALBANIAN BASILIAN MONK, HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO CHAT WITH THE POPE AND TO TELL HIM ABOUT THE TRAGIC FATE OF CHRISTIANS IN ALBANIA. "I PRAY EVERY DAY FOR ALBANIA; I LOVE ALBANIA VERY MUCH, BUT UNFORTUNATELY....," THEN THE HOLY FATHER EXPRESSED WITH SORROWFUL VOICE HIS CONCERN FOR THE FLOCK UNDER FANATICAL OPPRESSION. ALBANIANS, NO MATTER WHAT RELIGION THEY PROFESS, ARE GRATEFUL TO POPE JOHN PAUL FOR THESE NOBLE REMARKS AND WITH UNRELINQUISHED HOPE THAT HE WILL PUBLICLY SUPPORT THEIR JUST CAUSE FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.

TO VATICAN RADIO: WHY NOT MASS IN ALBANIA?

The Vatican Radio is heard by countless millions throughout the world, including many who risk their freedom to listen to its rays of hope. While believers in many Communist countries have the privilege of listening and attending the broadcast Masses, Albania is the only country not included in this worthwhile apostolate. We earnestly hope that the directors of Radio Vatican will take into consideration this vital spiritual need of the Catholics in Albania.

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)



• Archbishop Romero, murdered in San Salvador, 25th March, 1980.

Where there is no persecution, there is no Church —
it is one of the necessary marks of being Christian.

"It is a task of a true Church to work among the poor, with whom it must stand in solidarity, even to the point of risk and the destiny of persecution, willing to give the maximum witness of love, to defend and to support those that Jesus especially loved ... It is necessary to call injustice by its name, to serve truth ... to denounce the exploitation of man by man, discrimination, violence inflicted by man against his own people, against his spirit, against his conscience, and against his convictions ... to promote integral liberation of man ... to urge structural changes, to accompany the people who struggle for their liberation."

Archbishop Oscar Romero

ALBANIAN CATHOLIC CLERGY WENT ALL THE WAY EVEN IN SUFFERING AND DEATH FOR THE ABOVE SACRED PRINCIPLES. HOW HAS THEIR MEMORY BEEN REPAID? WHO SPEAKS TODAY FOR THEM AND THEIR DYING FLOCK?



Plight of Albanians

When Mother Teresa was named a recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, the communications media carried stories about the wonderful humanitarian work she and the members of her religious order were doing for the poor and dying of Calcutta. Many of us Catholics were very proud. Sermons included reference to her. "Human rights" was mentioned, and we were again reminded of the poor and suffering in our country and in the Third World.

Unfortunately, nothing was said about Mother Teresa's fellow Albanians suffering under Communist oppression. Torture and death to religious and lay people alike, mosques and churches desecrated and closed, the Cathedral of Shkodra (Scutari) turned into a sports complex, communication with the outside world permitted for some, emigration forbidden to all. Escape through mine fields and barbed wire fences is the only way out; capture means a jail sentence. This is life in the first nation to declare itself, in its constitution, an atheistic one.

*"Freedom can never tolerate
an offense against the rights of others,
and one of the fundamental rights
of man is the right to worship God."*

—John Paul II

Why hasn't anyone raised his voice in protest? Are the Albanians unimportant? Too small an ethnic group to matter? Not politically influential?

Thousands of Albanians live in the tristram region, and thousands more are descendants of Albanians who settled in Italy because of oppression under the Ottoman Turks. Will the knowledge that many people in this region are of Albanian descent finally interest the media, the politicians, and the church in the plight of Albanians in Albania? In Yugoslavia? Will someone speak out for them, offer a Mass for them, a prayer?

John Cardino
Dumont



BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

MOTHER TERESA--MISSIONARY OF LOVE AND PEACE

For several years magazines and newspapers around the world have devoted ample space to the story of Mother Teresa of India. And with good reason. For decades now she and her sisters have been working with the poorest of the poor wherever they are--in India, the Middle East, Australia, Italy, Northern Ireland, Latin America, New York City, Detroit, and most recently even in Communist Yugoslavia. She is a universal figure who is repeatedly



Rare photo of Mother Teresa, autographed in Albanian.

honored for her altruistic efforts and devotion to the poor, to children, the sick, the destitute and dying. The Nobel Peace Prize for 1979, given to her last year, is the peak among those international marks of recognition bestowed upon her over the last three decades for her outstanding service to mankind.

Mother Teresa was born to Albanian parents on August 27, 1910, in Skopje, the capital of today's Republic of Macedonia in Yugoslavia. Before World War I this city was called Shkup, or Uskub, and had a predominantly Albanian population. Before entering the order of Irish Sisters of Loretto, Mother Teresa's name was Gonxhe Bojaxhiu. Gonxhe is a very common Albanian name among both Christians and Muslims, meaning 'rosebud'.

A mere fistful of a human being, her face wrinkled and lined from her exposure to the pain and suffering of others more than from advancing years, Mother Teresa's happiness and radiance give the impression that she lives for more than this mortal life. This small, yet great, woman amazes people of every rank and profession with her simplicity and indifference towards the things of this world. They feel honored when they meet with Mother Teresa, and

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"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

are willing to aid in her humanitarian endeavors. Simple and sweet in conversation, but also intuitive and straightforward regarding her plans, of which she considers God Himself to be the designer, Mother Teresa never wavers from her unselfish program of seeing and meeting Christ in any human being who needs help.



The efficiency and the power of Mother Teresa have been the result of a spontaneous and fruitful unselfishness which is prodigious. Her work and her life prove that even in our time of statistics and pre-planning, unselfishness

is a powerful lever for moving the spirits of men, and that all our contemporary exhortations to be authentic or to act on behalf of progress, must have as their presupposition the dignity of man recognized concretely.

Mother Teresa does not use rational confrontation or philosophical arguments, but through a concrete exercise of charity, she has presented a religious vision through which even the most humble human situation and existence is given a place in the economy of salvation.

Mother Teresa has shown how extreme poverty, when accepted consciously or chosen voluntarily, may be an attitude of freedom that is able to consolidate a precious energy, unsuspected and unsuspecting, breaking the vicious chains of misery. And this is indeed the road to love and peace in today's world.

People of the stature of Mother Teresa no longer belong to their country of origin or to their families, since they are revered and belong to all the human family. Nevertheless, Albanians everywhere cannot help feeling for her, love and respect of a special kind. They look upon her as a sign of providence which will help in some way to restore peace and religious freedom to their oppressed homeland. Ethnic Albanians from Yugoslavia

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"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

rejoice in particular and are moved when they see a woman born in their midst who has achieved, through humility and selfless hard work, a holy name which is an inspiration to all mankind.



Mother Teresa Receives India's Highest Award

NEW DELHI, March 22 (AP) — India honored Mother Teresa, the Nobel Prize winner, today with its highest civilian award, the "Bharat Ratna," or "Star of India."

"It is a gift of God and I have accepted it in the name of all the religious, all those who serve God — the missionaries," the 69-year-old nun said after receiving the award from President Sanjiva Reddy at a Presidential Palace ceremony.

Mother Teresa, whose Missionaries of Charity order runs welfare facilities around the world, won the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize for dedicating her life to the destitute. The Indian Government recently exempted her from paying income tax on the \$192,000 prize.

N.Y. Times, Sunday, March 23, 1980

ALBANIA IGNORES MOTHER TERESA

When Mother Teresa was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 1979, all the world's news media, including Communist countries, widely publicized her humanitarian achievements. The award ceremonies held in Oslo, December 8, 1979, were covered by all broadcasting and T.V. stations in the world. It was natural that Albania, her homeland, would do the same, if not more. However for obvious reasons of fanatic communist outlook on activities such as Mother Teresa's, the Albanian news media completely ignored this wonderful event for mankind and particularly the Albanian people.



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"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

**MOTHER TERESA:
GOD'S GIFT
TO HUMANITY**
By Louis M. Prifti

"Each one has a mission to fulfill, a mission of love. At the hour of death when we come face to face with God, we are going to be judged on love; not how much we have done, but how much love we have put into our actions."

Mother Teresa of Calcutta

MOTHER TERESA

Mother Teresa, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize,

How great a gift her love of humanity has wrought?

Only immortal tongues can say.
Her mission in life is to give of herself,
Live with the poorest of the poor,
Care for them day after day.

Mother Teresa, God's gift to humanity!
Her soul is not concerned with outward things,

To gain a name and fame.
Her gift is in giving and caring for the abandoned,

Where misery and poverty run rampant,
Where the sick wait to join the vanished dead.

Mother Teresa, God's gift to humanity!
She serves world's mankind.

Filled with grief and hunger,
With pain and strife,
She has pledged
Her heart and soul to peace and life.

Mother Teresa, God's gift to humanity!
Her extraordinariness is saintliness!
How can we explain or really understand
The lives she has saved, wounds healed,
And fever's dreadful agony
She has eased with a touch of her hands?

O, Mother Teresa, God's gift to humanity!
O, Beloved Daughter of Albania!
You have given honor unto Him,
Love and hope to humanity,
And in giving them
You have given honor unto yourself.

October 30, 1979
Arlington, Virginia

MOTHER TERESA RECEIVES LARGE GIFT FROM GERMAN CATHOLICS



Every two years Catholics of West Germany celebrate "Catholic Day." This year's celebration was the 86th and was held in Berlin, from June 4 thru 8. Many prominent religious world personalities were present. During the celebration, Mother Teresa was presented with a gift of \$280,000 for her work by German actress Maria Schell.

At the end of the German Catholic Day celebration, Mother Teresa went to Rome to attend the profession vows of her sisters and then travelled to Palermo to visit her brother, Lazer.

After visiting her brother, she flew to her native city where she was proclaimed the "Meritorious Citizen" of Skoplje. Mother Teresa declared that she had come to Skoplje, not only to receive the honoring award, but also to open another house of her Missionary Congregation.

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

"MY ALBANIAN PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS IN MY HEART"

At a press conference after receiving the Nobel Peace Prize, Mother Teresa spoke to many journalists about her work among the sick and the poor of the world. One reporter broke the continuity of her presentation and asked her the following question: "The Nobel Peace Prize is the highest human recognition of the outstanding dedication and work of you and your sisters. We realize that your background is Albanian. It is known that in Albania people are persecuted for their religious beliefs. What can you say about this?"

Mother Teresa, with an expression of concern, answered:

"I DON'T KNOW
WHAT TO SAY
SINCE I DON'T
KNOW WHAT IS
HAPPENING
THERE. I CAN
SAY ONLY ONE
THING. MY
ALBANIAN
PEOPLE ARE
ALWAYS IN MY
HEART. I
PRAY VERY
MUCH TO OUR
LORD THAT HIS
PEACE MAY
COME TO OUR
HEARTS, IN
OUR FAMILIES

AND IN ALL THE WORLD. I PRAY FOR ALBANIA THAT THE LORD MAY HELP ITS LEADERS TO SEE CLEARLY BECAUSE IF THEY WANT TO LIVE IN PEACE, THEY SHOULD LOVE ONE ANOTHER... I THINK THAT THE ALBANIAN CHURCH



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SHKODER (2018)

IS EXPERIENCING THE GOOD FRIDAY, BUT OUR FAITH TEACHES US THAT ON GOOD FRIDAY, CHRIST'S LIFE DOESN'T END, BUT CONTINUES ON THE CROSS AND ENDS WITH THE RESURRECTION. OUR ALBANIAN PEOPLE SHOULD KEEP IN MIND THIS TRUTH. THIS IS THE SECRET OF CHRISTIAN ENDURANCE. CHRIST GAVE HIS LIFE SO THAT HE MAY BECOME OUR LIFE, PRESENT IN EACH PERSON, IN EACH FAMILY, THROUGH THEIR PRAYERS ... HE CERTAINLY WILL NOT FORGET US. HE IS LOVE AND HE WANTS NOTHING MORE THAN FOR PEOPLE TO LOVE EACH OTHER."

*Handwritten
statement by
Mother Teresa*



Mother Teresa with Albanian Bishop Nikola Prela during the Oslo ceremonies.

Oslo

Oslo, 10/12/79

*Une gjithmoe e beain në
këmbër popullit tërë Shqiptar
Shumë luti Zotin që Paqja
e Tij të vijë në shtat
tona, në gjithë familjet
tona, në gjithë botën.
Lutni shumë për fëmijët
e mijë - dhe për mami
dhe motrat e mijë.
Une lutem për juve.
U. Teresa Bogdan*

This was the first time that Mother Teresa spoke openly about Albania and the persecuted church there

**BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)**

THE HIDDEN PAIN AND SORROW OF MOTHER TERESA

The public is aware that Mother Teresa of India has had many pains and joys while working in her vocation to help the needy. But despite the number of articles and books written about her and her work, very few people know the hidden sorrow that she has endured on behalf of her family.

Now, in a rare interview, her only brother, Lazar Bojaxhiu, recently disclosed to the Italian press the tragic background of Mother Teresa's family. "I know that Mother Teresa will not be pleased to read about these things in the newspapers. She has always been very reserved and even timid to talk about her own family. For years I have respected her desire to remain silent, but now I have decided to 'talk': the world simply has to know about the cruelty of Communist regimes."

Sentenced to death for political reasons 30 years ago, Lazar, who is now 71, fled Albania and settled in Palermo, Sicily, where he has been living ever since.

THE BOJAXHIU FAMILY

It is commonly thought that Mother Teresa is of Yugoslav origin; in fact, she is Albanian by birth. The ambiguity arose from the fact that Skoplje, her native city, fell under Yugoslav rule after her birth. Albanian is her native tongue, although she also speaks fluent English and French.

Her father, Nicola Bojaxhiu, was a wealthy merchant and the owner of a successful construction firm. Her mother, Trone, came from a well-to-do family. Three children were born of their union: Age (Agatha) in 1906, Lazar in 1908, and Gonxha (Agnes) in 1910. Gonxha or Agnes is Mother Teresa's baptismal name.

The family's troubles began when Yugoslavia and Albania fought for possession of Kosovo, the region in which the city of Skoplje is located. After the fall of the area to Yugoslav forces, many Albanian nationalists continued their resistance. One of them was Nicola Bojaxhiu. Troops were dispatched from Belgrade to put down the disorders and those who had opposed Yugoslav rule were punished or imprisoned. When Bojaxhiu's company went bankrupt, the family was left in extreme conditions. At the age of 46, the father of the family collapsed on the street and died within a few hours.



Mother Teresa with her brother, Lazar, in Oslo.

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

Drone, Teresa's mother, saved the family from economic ruin. Since their company was bankrupt, she began a small business in rugs, needlework and other artisan products. The children, who were still very young--Agatha was 13, Lazar 11 and Agnes 9, helped their mother carry on this work.

TERESA'S VOCATION

It was during these years that Teresa first began to experience the call to the missionary life. As she herself explains, "I can't say if the maturation of my calling was influenced more by the example of my mother and her love for the poor or by contacts with the Jesuits of my parish. I first began to feel something shortly after my twelfth birthday, but I didn't talk to anyone about it. I continued to study, and finished high school. At 18 I confided my aspirations to my mother. 'If this is the will of God', that saintly woman answered, 'far be it from me to oppose it'. The Jesuits were the first to talk to me about the Congregation of Loreto Abbey with its mother-house in Rathfernham, Ireland. So I left for Ireland. It was November 28, 1928. Within a year I was in India beginning my novitiate in Darjeeling."



Mother Teresa with Indian Premier Nehru.

In 1929 Mother Teresa pronounced her vows. For the next 20 years she taught geography at St. Mary's High School in Calcutta.

In the meantime Lazar fled from Albania and settled in Italy. Drone and Agatha moved to Tirana, which from 1939 was under Italian rule. The Second World War had already begun.



Mother Teresa paying homage to Pope Paul VI.

At the end of the war Enver Hoxha took control of Albania. In short order he forced the country to adopt a Russian-style constitution and made himself premier. Teresa's mother and sister were caught in the web of the new Communist regime. Though she heard nothing from them in over a decade, Mother Teresa always hoped to be reunited.

In the mid forties, Teresa made the important decision that would change the course of her life. On September 10, 1946, she asked permission to leave her convent and to live

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"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

among the poor of Calcutta. Her request was forwarded to Rome and approved. In 1948, she changed her habit of the Sisters of Loreto to the blue-edged white cotton sari of the poor women of Bengali. Two years later the Church approved the new community founded by Mother Teresa. They came to be called the Missionaries of Charity. Her convent in Calcutta is now the motherhouse for all her sisters in India and abroad.

A LETTER FROM TIRANA

Finally in the mid fifties Lazar received a letter from his mother. He answered immediately telling her of the important developments in his and Teresa's lives. The first letters from Tirana arrived sporadically. The Albanian government would not permit more than one letter a month to be mailed abroad by any given citizen. These exchanges filled Lazar and Teresa with hope.

In 1960, brother and sister met in Rome to discuss ways of getting their mother and sister out of Albania. By then the diminutive nun had won the friendship and esteem of some of the most influential people in the world: J.F. Kennedy, De Gaulle, and Sweden's King Gustavus. She hoped that they would be able to intervene with the Albanian government to let her mother and sister emigrate. Many attempts were made, but the years went on without any results. The letters became more desperate. In one of them, Drone wrote "I want to see you before I die. It's the last favor I ask of the good Lord". Prospects seemed to improve when Albania, then an ally of China, made its first timid contacts with the West.

"I know particularly," her brother Lazar related in anguish, while disclosing the tragic background of his family, "about the plea Couve de Mourville, the French Foreign Minister, gave on behalf of my mother and Sister to the Albanian government, but to no avail. The French Foreign Minister received this answer: 'Mesdames Drone and Agatha Bojaxhiu are not in any physical condition to make a trip abroad'. Our mother and sister were not sick, nor in bed. The only sickness was their loneliness and desperation. Our mother died alone and in pain, having been denied for fifty years the opportunity of seeing and embracing her daughter. Our sister died two years later, crushed with despair."

Lazar continues: "Mother Teresa has forgiven the assassins of our family, but I cannot. She has a great strength in her love which has enabled her to overcome many difficult moments in her life. I vividly recall her advice, 'Remember well, my dear brother, to love means also to know how to forgive.' As my sister was receiving the Nobel Peace Prize, I felt that her smile was an invitation for me also to pardon. And I ask myself whether I am also going to receive the grace of her strength for forgiveness."



BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

Land of the Godless?

There can surely be no country more beautiful per square mile than tiny Albania. One is reminded of Aida of Leningrad's words about Russia: "Our country could be the most beautiful in the world were there no persecution here." The atrocities of the past, as Albania struggled to abolish religion in order to become "The First Atheist State in the World", have been well documented. It is almost impossible to obtain information about the current religious situation. A small agrarian society of about 2½ million, whose ploughing is still mainly done by oxen, seems hardly likely to produce a strongly dissenting intelligentsia. A pro-soviet revolt in the army two years ago, however, indicates that the seeds are there.

The boast that all vestiges of religion have been destroyed is



Berat: a mosque in process of restoration. It is interesting that, while the more modern Christian churches have been converted into theatres and youth centres, mosques are usually preserved.



The restored Byzantine Church in the museum at Apollonia. The roofs retain their crosses and paintings and icons can be seen inside.

manifestly untrue. Churches and mosques are being restored in many towns, and a painted chapel dedicated to St. Stephen has been discovered under the excavated Roman arena at Durrës. According to one family the authorities have asked people to give up any crosses or icons in their possession to refurbish the museum-churches. As such things were supposedly destroyed by 1967 nobody is particularly anxious to risk a prison sentence by helping the government in this way. Many treasures remain hidden.

Before 1944 the Catholic Church, though small in comparison with the Orthodox, or the large Muslim majority, was strong and influential. Today any move from the Vatican is regarded as political. An example of its propaganda is shown in the Atheist Museum at Shkodra in a glass case: a Gospel according to

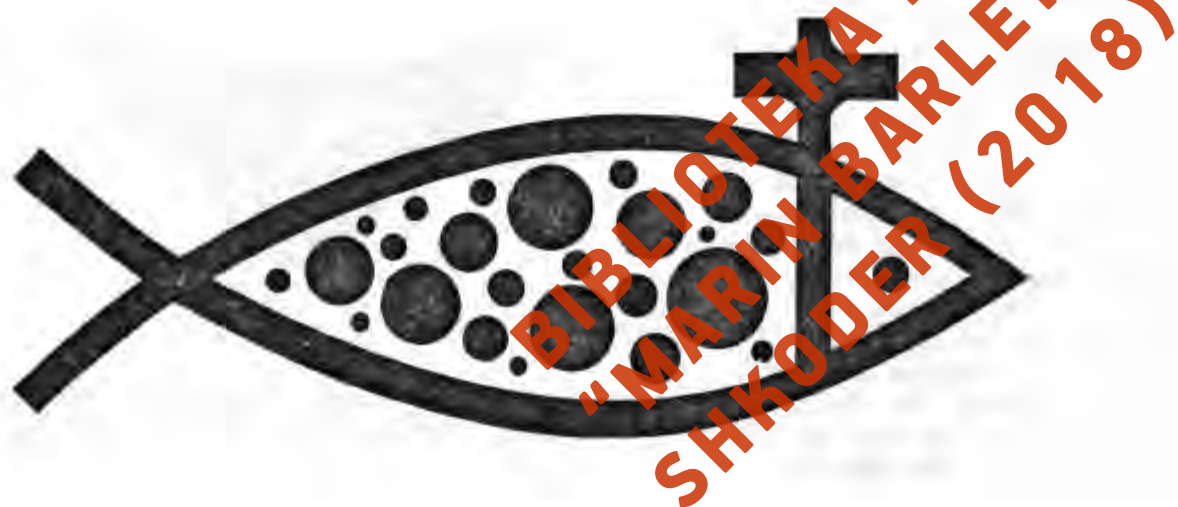
St. John. Missions might well be encouraged by the curator's complaint that Gospels are left around in local bars or floated ashore in polythene bags.

One admits reluctantly that there is something impressive about this patriotic, apparently law-abiding people. Their way of working out their Stalinist Marxism-Leninism is ethical, even puritanical, free, they say, from any taint of "revisionism". There is something too which chills the blood. Two charming, sophisticated young men sipping drinks at one of the big hotels: "There can be no pacific revolution." "There must be a chance of re-education. If that fails, bad elements must be exterminated."

English is taught in the schools and children under a certain age are not afraid to try their few words on foreigners. "Language is a weapon", say the guides. A double-edged weapon perhaps.

"THE RIGHT TO BELIEVE"

Keston College



ALBANIAN DICTATOR ENVER HOXHA (HOJA) AGAIN ATTACKS VATICAN AND RELIGION.

More than a decade has passed since Albania officially proclaimed itself "The first atheist state in the world." Although the government and Party propaganda claims that the elimination of formal religion has been successfully achieved, the Albanian leaders continue to attack religion in general and particularly the Vatican. We wonder why, since as the propaganda machine boasts "religiousless" Albania has become a model for other communist countries. If that is true, why continue the attack on religion?

Albanian leaders must be aware that religious feelings are deeply rooted in the hearts and minds of people, and cannot be plucked out simply by closing churches and mosques. This, Enver Hoxha clearly echoed in his long speech delivered recently in Shkodra at the ceremonies of completion of the rebuilt villages which were damaged by earthquake:

"Everybody knows that all this magnificent work was done, not by the Pope of the Vatican, not by the holy spirit, nor by the so-called immaculate lady, but by the sharp minds and strong arms of the working class of Albania. Peoples and poor men are not saved from sufferings and distress by the prayers from the Pope's Vatican, nor by lies from Washington or Moscow, and even less by building church bell towers or mosque minarets..."

Enver Hoxha, for thirty-five years, as head of the Albanian government and party, has striven to wipe out any trace of religion. For how long must he continue the struggle against God and the people?



WHILE STALIN'S STATUE BROODS OVER TIRANA, AN ALBANIAN POLICEMAN IS TRYING TO STOP THE PHOTOGRAPHER FROM TAKING THIS PICTURE.



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SHKODER (2018)

SANTA CLARA COLLOQUIUM

on the

International Protection of Religious Freedom

November 30-December 2, 1979

SPONSORED BY

UNIVERSITY OF SANTA CLARA

Santa Clara • California

&

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
HUMAN RIGHTS

Strasbourg • France

Program

Jointly sponsored by the University of Santa Clara, Santa Clara, California and the International Institute of Human Rights, Strasbourg, France, the Colloquium was a step forward for the noble cause of those people around the world who are oppressed and persecuted in different ways for their religious beliefs. In the Colloquium, which lasted two days, many prominent international scholars discussed the complex issues of religious discrimination and persecution. The entire schedule of this very meaningful gathering is printed below.

FRIDAY • NOVEMBER 30

OPENING SESSION

7:PM CHAIR: George J. Alexander

Dean, School of Law, Santa Clara

WELCOME: Very Reverend William J. Rewak, S.J.

President, Santa Clara University

Alexandre-Charles Kiss

Council Member,

International Institute of Human Rights

OPENING ADDRESS: Arthur J. Goldberg

United States Supreme Court,

U.S. Representative to the

United Nations

1:PM Lunch

3:PM Rights and duties of church and state

Michael J. Buckley, S.J. (chair)

Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley, U.S.A.

Vladimir A. Kartashkin

United Nations Legal Advisor's Office

Johan van der Vyver

University of Witwatersrand, South Africa

Abdul Aziz-Said

American University, U.S.A.

II

PREPARATION OF A WORLD-WIDE LEGAL INSTRUMENT TO PROTECT RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

SATURDAY • DECEMBER 1

I

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND THE RELATIONSHIP OF CHURCH AND STATE

9:AM The problems of religious freedom where there exist institutional links between Church and State.

Felix Ermacora (chair)

European Commission of Human Rights

Abdoulaye Dieye

Supreme Court, Senegal

Hector Cuadra

University of Mexico

Thomas Quigley

Office of Justice and Peace,

U.S. Catholic Conference

11:AM The problems of religious freedom where there is separation of church and state

Mizra Beg (chair)

Supreme Court of India

Adam Lopatka

University of Warsaw, Poland

William Whipler

National Council of Churches, U.S.A.

5:PM The efforts of the United Nations to draft a Declaration on Religious Freedom

Sidney Liskofsky (chair)

American Jewish Committee

Theo van Boven

Director, United Nations Human Rights Division

Louis Longarzo

United Nations Representative, CARITAS

SUNDAY • DECEMBER 2

III

ISSUES FOR THE FUTURE

9:AM Issues for the future; adoption of final declaration

Ambassador Yvon Gaulne (chair)

Ambassador from Canada to the Holy See

Diane Epps

World Council of Churches

Alexandre-Charles Kiss

University of Strasbourg

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"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

During the Saturday afternoon discussion sessions, spokespersons for the Albanian and Lithuanian Catholic Church took part and raised questions of the legality and discrimination of the laws of these countries towards citizens who want to practice religion in private or public. After the discussion, they also passed out literature concerning religious oppression in their countries.

The Albanian Catholic Information Center has learned that in 1977 the Human Rights Commission in Geneva initiated the process to investigate Albania's violation of Human Rights concerning religious worship and freedoms.

At the end of the first day's session the Albanian representative had a private talk with Dr. Theo van Boven, Director of the United Nations Human Rights Division in Geneva. Dr. van Boven stated several times during the conversation that Albania simply IGNORES every communication of the United Nations Human Rights Division, not only on the issue of religious rights, but also on any other issue. He stressed the difficulties his office had in communicating with Albania and a few other countries, who although U.N. members, do not comply with the solemnly signed articles of the U.N. Charter and Declarations. Dr. van Boven decried this attitude, which is damaging the international prestige of the countries involved, but most of all causes much pain and suffering to innocent people, whose legal rights are denied. Dr. van Boven also expressed hope that the resolution which will come out from the Santa Clara Colloquium will help in some way to remedy this unjust situation.

Indeed, the Santa Clara Colloquium drafted a powerful resolution which will greatly contribute in formulating the forthcoming U.N. Declaration on Religious Freedom. The following is a copy of this resolution.

STATEMENT CONCERNING PRINCIPLES ON FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND BELIEF

The Santa Clara Colloquium on International Protection of Religious Freedom

1. 1. Considering that freedom of religion and belief is an essential element in a good and just international order and that a declaration of religious freedom would be an important step for achieving international cooperation in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without discrimination;
2. Recalling with deep regret that in many parts of the world today individuals and groups, as a result of their actions for justice, based on religion or belief, are being deprived of their fundamental human rights;
3. Taking note of the work being done by the United Nations and especially by its Human Rights Commission in this field;
4. Urging the United Nations to accelerate the adoption of a declaration formulating the main principles which should be observed to ensure the protection of freedom of religion or belief;
5. Stressing that any principle included in such a declaration should sustain existing international standards for the protection and the promotion of human rights, especially as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Covenants;

6. Recognizing the importance of religious and social scholars intensifying their discussions as to the relation between world order and justice and religious and ideological commitment;

Adopts the following principles:

11. 1. Freedom of religion or belief should be considered as including religious and non-religious belief and the right to adhere or not to adhere to any religion or belief.
2. Freedom of religion or belief includes, in particular,
 - a) Freedom to worship, assemble, establish and maintain places of worship or assembly;
 - b) Freedom to teach, to disseminate and to learn one's religion or belief;
 - c) Freedom to carry out into daily life the tenets of one's religion or belief;
 - d) Freedom to establish and maintain charitable and educational institutions;
 - e) Freedom to observe the rites and customs of one's religion or belief;
 - f) Freedom to maintain contacts with any community and institution-- locally or internationally-- belonging to the same or to any other religion or belief.
 - g) Freedom to object to, and seek exemption from, involuntary military service on the grounds of religion or belief.
3. Freedom of religion or belief also implies the freedom to dissent from, or to criticize any religion or belief and its practice.
4. No individual or group shall be subjected on the ground of religion or belief to any discrimination in the recognition, exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms.
5. Full freedom of religion or belief is part of the process of the realization of economic, cultural, social, civil, and political rights as set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Covenant, which are interdependent, interrelated and equally important.
6. Freedom of religion or belief should not be considered a privilege or and exclusive freedom for any particular group, but as part of a common good of the whole community.
7. Restrictions on the manifestation of freedom of religion or belief should be limited to those cases provided for by the United Nations Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
8. Mutual understanding and respect for freedom of religion or belief should be promoted by governments, organizations and individuals, through teaching, education, culture and information.

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SHKODER (2018)

An Official Yugoslav Look At Religion

The Croatian Daily, *Vjesnik*, printed in Zagreb, January 1, 1980 issue published an interesting interview with Dr. Vladimir Bakaric, Secretary of the Communist Party of Croatia and a prominent Yugoslav leader.

Bakaric stated that the relations between the Catholic Church and the Yugoslav State are very satisfactory and he praised the changes in the Church since Vatican II. Much of the interview though, concerned the relations between the Catholic Church and the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, and he condemned both, extreme positions on the part of the clergy, and the Communists regarding socialism. He reiterated that, "atheism was a movement belonging to the 19th Century." Bakaric stated the following: "Now however, we are not involved in any such business [atheism], for a very simple and Marxist reason, because we know that a Church cannot be abolished. Not because priests are strong, but because the Church lives within the people, it exists in their heads, and because the present world situation influences everything that is going on in people's heads. Therefore, to fight the Church as a religious institution is nonsensical. Our criterion should not be whether one is an atheist or not, but whether one supports our socialism or not, and whether one supports peace or not. All the rest is secondary."

We hope that this open and very moderate stand will be applied also in the other parts of Yugoslavia, mainly in the Republics of Macedonia, Montenegro and as well as in the autonomous Province of Kosova, where 2,000,000 Albanians live.



At the Fourth International Round Table tribune, "Socialism in the World," held October 1979, in the Southern Dalmatian town of Cavtat (Yugoslavia), for the first time participants from 57 countries and two liberation movements, openly discussed the role of religion in history and especially today in the struggle for liberation. The following excerpt is taken from the monthly journal, "SOCIALIST THOUGHT and PRACTICE," #12 - 1979, printed in Belgrade.

RELIGIOUS MASSES AND REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS

At Cavtat, the problem of religion, in this case primarily Christianity and Islam, was posed not as a question of theology and confession, but as a matter of certain inherited humanistic values which socialist and progressive culture generally must respect and moreover integrate. It was explicitly stated that this is not a political tactic to win over the religious masses but rather an endeavour to enrich movements with the general values of mankind which can become an incentive in the striving for a socialist civilization free of antagonisms. Christianity is not only a factor of alienation; it can also be an incentive, an impulse and part of the revolutionary strength of the people, said some; Islam should not be considered only as a religion for it is a philosophy of individual and collective existence and can be progressive and give stimulus to the struggle for liberation and against exploitation, said others. Latin American theology based on the revolutionary compromise of the working masses is opposed to idolatry and fanaticism and illuminates the profound link of the religious masses with the political and revolutionary movement, remarked certain participants. Some West European Marxists said it would be wrong to discriminate between Christian communists and atheistic communists. The social and historical weight of the religious factor and its considerable significance in third world countries should be understood not only as reflecting a level of social consciousness strongly bound by tradition but also and primarily a desire to express through religion the aspirations to emancipation and national selfhood and also as resistance to class culture and the domination of colonisers and exploiters. In this case, it was stated, religions can be counted among progressive and emancipatory ideologies.

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SHKODER

IMPRISONED ALBANIANS IN YUGOSLAVIA

THE BIGGEST TRIAL SINCE THE END OF WORLD WAR II.

The World's international news media have been recently reporting about massive arrests of Albanian Nationals from Kosova and Macedonia. The Yugoslav newspapers have confirmed these reports and have labeled the arrested Albanians as anti-Yugoslav conspirators, linking them with pro-Soviet and pro-Albanian activities. According to some Italian reports, the number of arrested is over 250. However, the Yugoslav Daily, POLITIKA, of March 30, 1980, states that a group of only 50 Albanians will be brought to trial for anti-state activities. The newspaper by reporting about unproven actions of the accused, is trying to establish the guilt of the arrested before the trial begins.

Not many people know that about 2,000,000 Albanians are presently living in Yugoslavia, forming the largest minority group in that country. The present suppression of this minority by the Yugoslav police is aimed at detecting any further national discontent of the Albanians for their unequal political, economical, and cultural status in the Yugoslav Federation.

We urge all people concerned with the preservation of freedom and human rights to raise their voice against these last Yugoslav police brutal actions against the Albanian people. Please send courteous telegrams or letters to:

- 1- MR. LUKA BANOVIC
FEDERAL MINISTER OF JUSTICE
BOULEVARD LENJINA
2 BEOGRAD, SFR YUGOSLAVIA
- 2- MR. FRANO HERLJEVIC, FEDERAL MINISTER
OF THE INTERIOR
SAVEZNI SEKR. ZA UNUTR. POSL. SFRY,
KNJEZ MILOSA 100, BEOGRAD
SFR YUGOSLAVIA
- 3- MR. FADIL Hoxha, MEMBER
PRESIDIUM OF PRESIDENCY
OF REPUBLIC NARODNA
SKUPSTINA, BELGRADE
YUGOSLAVIA
- 4- MR. XHAVIT NIMANI, PRESIDENT,
PROVINCIAL PEOPLE'S COUNCIL
PRISHTINE, SAP KOSOVE, YUGOSLAVIA
- 5- MR. MAHMUT BAKALLI, SECRETARY,
YUGOSLAV COMMUNIST LEAGUE FOR
KOSOVE, PRISHTINE, SAP OF
KOSOVE, YUGOSLAVIA
- 6- SECRETARY OF JUSTICE FOR THE SAP
OF KOSOVE: THE SECRETAR MARSHALL
TITA, 2, PRISHTINA, SAP OF KOSOVE,
YUGOSLAVIA
- 7- SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR FOR
THE SAP OF KOSOVE: THE SECRETAR
MAGUEVACI 4, PRISHTINA, SAP
OF KOSOVE, YUGOSLAVIA

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

For your convenience, here is a sample protest form:

Telegram SHPREHIM SHQETESIMIN TONE THELLE PER GJYKIMET QE
PREGATITEN KUNDER SHQIPTAREVE NE JUGOSLLAVI STOP LUTEMI NDERHYNI
NDALOHEN PERSEKUTIMET KUNDER SHQIPTAREVE DHE RESPEKTOHEN PARIMET
KOMBEVE BASHKUEME DHE DEKLARATA UNIVERSALE DREJTAVE NJERIUT PRANUE
NGA QEVERIA JUGOSLLAVE

(Emni dhe adresa)

Telegram WE EXPRESS OUR DEEP CONCERN ABOUT THE ANNOUNCED FORTHCOMING
TRIALS AGAINST ALBANIAN NATIONALS IN YUGOSLAVIA STOP WE URGE YOU STOP
THEIR PERSECUTIONS AND RESPECT THE PRINCIPLES UNITED NATIONS CHARTER
AND UNIVERSAL DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AGREED TO BY YUGOSLAV
GOVERNMENT

(name and address)



ALBANIANS



A group of Albanians sentenced to death and executed in 1979.
From left to right: Avdi Seferaj, Milaim Mustafa, Gjergj Gjergjaj,
Agim Rexhaj, and Samet Hyseni.



The Albanian Catholic Information Center has learned while this bulletin was in the press, that the trial of 57 Albanians has started and is expected to last a few weeks.

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

END OF AN ERA. AFTER TITO--WHAT?

Ancient Romans left us a saying: "De mortuis nihil sine bene" ("speak only good about the dead"). We would like to apply this proverb to Josip Broz Tito, President of Yugoslavia who died May 4, 1980. Tito kept together the large groups of squabbling nationalities, rejected Soviet domination in 1948, organized the non-aligned movement in 1961, and made Yugoslavia an industrial country to be reckoned with. Nevertheless, the fact remains that he is responsible for the lives of hundreds of thousands of people whom he ruthlessly eliminated in order to firmly establish his power.

At the end of the war, his army wiped out countless numbers of Croats who had been handed over by the British in Austria. About fifty thousand Albanians suffered a similar fate, according to the today's official Albanian Communist press. Italian authorities for years have accused Tito's army for the genocide of the innocent Italian population in 1945, when its divisions held Trieste for forty days, not to mention the fierce persecution of the Church.

Did world leaders who assembled at Tito's funeral realize that they were paying tribute, not only to a great leader, but to an absolute dictator as well? Of course, by their presence, they were expressing their desire to keep Yugoslavia alive, united, and strong as a means to preserving the ideological, political and military balance between East and West.

Established by the Versailles Treaty, Yugoslavia never became more than an artificial creation of political machination. World War II experience confirms this by the quick fragmentation following the German and Italian attacks. In order to re-establish Yugoslavia at the end of the war, Tito unscrupulously eliminated any resistance to his total control. Tito was aided by the Communist Party's disciplined and strong organization, and Anglo-American military and material help.

How long will post-Tito Yugoslavia last? This is certainly not an insignificant question because of the brewing discontent of separate nationalities, particularly Croats, Albanians, and Macedonians. In our opinion, the Soviet Union, which for long has striven to reach the shores of the Adriatic and Ionian Seas will, without doubt, take any advantage of the situation to attain that goal.

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

Albanian Patriot Honored

In a ceremony held in Paris on May 6th and 7th, the 15th Century national leader, George Kastriot SKANDERBEG, who for 25 years successfully fought the Ottoman Turks, was honored with a square dedicated to his name by General Robert Casso, Councilman of the city. Dedication was preceded by a solemn Mass of Thanksgiving, offered in the Church of Notre Dame by Albanian Basilian monk Sofron PRENCHE, with the Cardinal of Paris and other clergy of the French capital present. The famous ARBERESH choir from Sicily, which purposely came to attend this event, sang during the Liturgy.

The event brought to a successful conclusion the efforts of many years of labor of Mr. Lec SHLLAKU, a veteran Albanian journalist and editor of the renowned quarterly KOHA e JONE (Our



Albanian Clergy leading the group of Albanians on their way to the dedication ceremony in front of the City Hall in Paris, France.

Times). This dedication has brought to Parisians and France better knowledge of the exploits of the famed and loved Albanian patriot Skanderbeg. Albanians everywhere are deeply grateful to JACQUES CHIRAC, the Mayor of Paris (and former French Premier) and other city officials such as Roger ROMANI, General Robert CASSO, Madame MOREL, Madame Bette MAURANGE-TOUMI, and many others for their support in this most worthy endeavor and for their sincere sympathy towards Albania.

Thus Paris joins a number of great cities: Rome, Brussels, Vienna, Belgrade, Zagreb in perpetuating Skanderbeg's memory. For many years, Albanians of the Boston (USA) Area have attempted to immortalize his name with a statue or a street name but with no success so far. The Albanian Catholic Information Center, supported by large Arberesh community in the San Francisco Bay Area, is working towards similar recognition of this Albanian hero. With the support of all Albanians, Arberesh and their friends, this action can be realized.

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)



LE MAIRE DE PARIS

vous prie de bien vouloir assister
le Mardi 6 Mai 1980, à 18 heures,
à l'inauguration de la place Skanderbeg.

*Facsimile of the City
Hall invitation.*

Rendez-vous: avenue de la Porte-d'Aubervilliers,
à la hauteur de l'hôpital Claude-Bernard,
à Paris (19e).

*Bishop Mark Lipa, head of the U.S.
Albanian Orthodox Church, greeting
guests at the reception. Next to
the Bishop is Prof. Namik Resuli,
of the University of Rome, and
Mrs. Nermin Vlora Palaschi, an
Albanian international author.*



*Albanian ladies in
their beautiful
costume at the
ceremony. In the
middle, Madame Nette
Marrange Touni at the
far right, Mr. Les
Sillaku, the initiator
of the plan to recognize
Skanderbeg.*

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TRAGIC DEATH OF FR. SHTJEFEN K. GJECOVİ, OFM.

At the end of 1979, Albanians in Kosova, Albania, and around the world celebrated the 50th anniversary of the tragic death of Father Shtjefen K. Gjecovi, a shining example of love for Faith and country. Newspapers and magazines widely carried accounts of the life of Fr. Gjecovi. His achievements in the fields of the Albanian language, archeology, history, and literature were highly praised. Fr. Gjecovi's works, without doubt, represent a scholarly treasure of Albanian heritage.



Father Gjecovi in his room surrounded by books and papers.

Sad to say, Fr. Gjecovi, in all the press and public praises during this anniversary, has never been singled out also as Catholic Priest and Franciscan. It is taken for granted that this intentional omission could occur in Albania, but we cannot understand why it also occurred in Yugoslavia where religion is guaranteed by the Constitution and where the government boasts about it.

Most Albanians know about Fr. Gjecovi but for those who have not known of this saintly man's contributions to Albanian culture, we print below a short account of his life.

Fr. Gjecovi was born on October 3, 1874 in the beautiful town of Janjeve (Yanyev) in the region of Kosova, now under Yugoslav jurisdiction. After primary education, he entered the Franciscan Order in Shkodra, Albania, where his vocation to the priesthood matured. Fr. Gjecovi completed his higher education in Bosnia. Then he returned to Albania where he deeply immersed himself in many religious and cultural projects.

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

Quiet and humble as St. Francis Assisi himself, he reminded the people of their beautiful language, their customs, their traditions. He instilled in them a pride in the past. Gjecovi traveled extensively, encouraging all to treasure these gifts for themselves and for the generations ahead. He also collected and recorded every custom and tradition of the unwritten law of Lek Dukagjini, a Northern-Albanian prince and contemporary of Albania's great hero, George Kastrioti Skanderbeg. This law was in practice until recently in some regions of Albania and still is in parts of Yugoslavia populated by Albanians.

The Yugoslav Royal Government watched Gjecovi's activities closely, particularly in the region of Kosova, whose inhabitants to this day are predominantly Albanian. Yugoslavia won jurisdiction over Kosova at the Treaty of Versailles in 1918, and instituted a

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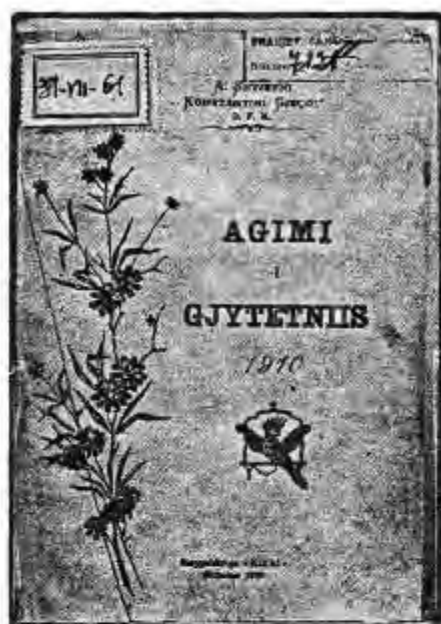
brutal policy of denationalization, whereby Albanians in the area of Kosova were either declared Turks and expatriated to Turkey, or forced to change their names with Yugoslav suffixes. The Albanian language was forbidden for public use.

Gjecovi's work defied these plans. On the evening of October 14, 1929 as he returned from a visit to his bishop in Prizren, he was shot in

the back by government police. The same night his personal papers and belongings disappeared from his humble home near the church. This wanton assassination provoked indignation, made more intense by the government's announcement that Gjecovi had been allegedly killed for an Albanian spy. Great numbers attended his funeral and his burial on the spot where he was shot down in cold blood. This gave an impressive testimony of the love and admiration which the people had for the slain Franciscan.

Father Gjecovi's writings were published posthumously by his confreres in Shkodra. His most prominent work was the Canon of Lek Dukagjini (Kanuni i Lek Dukagjinit). This compact volume is a rich source of traditional Albanian laws for which he received posthumously an honorary Ph.D. degree from the University of Leipzig in 1936.

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)



"Agimi i Gjetetnis (The Dawn of Civilization)," written by Father Gjecovi in 1910 before Albania won her independence, challenges us to treasure our mother tongue and to share the patriotism of the author who died for it.

Fr. Gjecovi's life and achievements undoubtedly confirm the opposite of what the present Albanian government claim, that the Catholic clergy was a detrimental instrument of foreign influence. Documents show a different view. Aided by dedicated scholars such as Fr. Gjecovi, the clergy instructed people in the faith and at the same time in their culture and history. The clergy also provided the first written testimonies of the Albanian language. No matter how passing governments may label the Catholic Church, outstanding contributions to Albanian culture, society and educational progress by the Catholic clergy cannot be ignored. Nor can the deep, selfless zeal that propelled them through many hardships go unnoticed. The Commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the tragic death of Father Shtjefen Konstantin Gjecovi attests to this fact.



Solemn memorial Mass and the unveiling of Father Gjecovi's bust. Prizren, October, 1964.

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

NEW ARCHBISHOP FOR BELGRADE

Pope John Paul II recently named Msgr. Alois Turk, a missionary among the Albanian people for many years in Kosova and Macedonia, as Archbishop of Belgrade, Yugoslavia. Albanians living in Yugoslavia and abroad remember Father Turk as a very dedicated priest who selflessly ministered to them, especially in a wide area where there were no resident priests available.

The new Archbishop was a friend of the well known Franciscan writer, Shtiefen Gjecovi, who was killed in 1929 by the Yugoslav royal police.

We wish Bishop Turk a most successful diocesan pastorate.



It seems appropriate, following the above news, to print the beautiful poem which Pope John Paul dedicated to the Ministry of the Priesthood.

When There's No Priest
by Pope John Paul II

Think of the places where people anxiously await
a priest,
And where for many years,
feeling the lack of such a priest,
they do not cease to hope for his presence.
And sometimes it happens
that they meet in an abandoned shrine
and place on the altar a stole which they still keep,
and recite all the prayers of the Eucharistic
Liturgy;
and then, at the moment that corresponds to the
transsubstantiation
a deep silence comes down upon them
a silence sometimes broken by a sob...
so ardently do they desire to hear the words that
only the lips of a priest can efficaciously utter.
So much do they desire Eucharistic Communion
in which they can share
only through the ministry of a priest,
just as they also so eagerly wait to hear
the divine words of pardon:
"I absolve you from your sins."
So deeply do they feel the absence of a priest
among the!...
Such places are not lacking in the world.
So if one of you doubts the meaning
of his priesthood,
If he thinks it is "socially" fruitless or useless,
reflect on this!



BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

NEW ALBANIAN BISHOP CONSECRATED IN YUGOSLAVIA

Last year the Holy See named Rev. Peter Perkoliq to head the Archdiocese of Bar (Tivar), which is composed of over 20,000 Albanian Catholics in Montenegro. The Consecration took place in Titograd with Archbishop Michele Cechini, Apostolic Nuncio of the Vatican, in Yugoslavia officiating.

Archbishop Peter Perkoliq was born in 1922 to Albanian parents. He studied at the Pontifical Seminary in Shkodra, Albania and in Rome.

About ten years ago, Pope Paul VI named another Albanian, Nikola Prela, to head the ancient Diocese of Prizren. Bishop Prela was at the same time appointed coadjutor to the Archbishop of Skopje, where Albanian Catholics compose the majority of the Archdiocese.



ATTACKS ON THE ALBANIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN YUGOSLAVIA

Under the title "When Communists sleep, the Catholic clergy gets into action", the Albanian Language Daily, RILINDIA, in Prishtina, the capitol of the predominantly-Albanian autonomous Province of Kosova, Yugoslavia, printed recently a long article by MUHAMET HALIMI attacking the Albanian Catholic Church in Kosova and its clergy for "superstitious and hidden practices" against the progress of the socialist state. This is not the first time that the Albanian Catholic clergy has been vehemently attacked by this newspaper. Halimi, Muslim by birth, in the past ten years on several other occasions has been engaged in a propaganda campaign to malign Catholic clergy and religious, and also Albanian believers of the Kosova region.

The above-mentioned article is vitriolic in its direct attack against the Church activity in religious, cultural, educational and social fields, slanderously labelling it as "anti-socialist", "anti-progressive", "reactionary", "divisive" etc. Obviously Muhamet Halimi thoroughly indocrinated follows Enver Hoxha's anti-religious state policy without taking into account Yugoslavia's constitutional laws which guarantee religious freedom. Moreover, Halimi overlooks the fact that Mother Teresa is a daughter of this small "anti-socialist, anti-progressive and superstitious Catholic Church", to whom President Tito himself sent his heartfelt greetings, filled with praise for her outstanding contribution to mankind.

Halimi's poorly-timed remarks against the Catholic Church in Kosova (the same day on the first page of the newspaper RILINDJA the telegram of congratulations to Mother Teresa by President Tito was printed) certainly are not a contribution to Yugoslav socialism and progress, and even less to the unity of the State.

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

CONSECRATION OF BISHOP MARK FOR ALBANIAN ARCHDIOCESE

The Right Rev. Archimandrite Mark Forsberg became the first bishop of the Orthodox Church to be consecrated in Boston in November of 1979. Nearly two thousand faithful attended the solemn services with a great number of concelebrating clergy.

The new bishop became the spiritual leader of almost all Albanian Orthodox Christians in the United States. As bishop of the See of Boston, he is a member of the Holy Synod of the autocephalous Orthodox Church of America, composed of Romanian, Albanian, Bulgarian, Russian Dioceses, as well as Dioceses in Alaska, Canada, and Mexico.

In his installation address, Bishop Mark said the following:

"IT IS NO SMALL LEGACY TO HAVE INHERITED THE DIOCESE SHEPHERDED BY METROPOLITAN THEOPHAN WHO, THROUGH GUIDING HIS ALBANIAN FLOCK FROM THE EARLY YEARS OF THIS CENTURY IS UNIVERSALLY ACKNOWLEDGED AS AN INSPIRED PROPONENT OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA. HE TAUGHT THAT TO LOVE CHRIST IS NOT TO DENY ONE'S BIRTHRIGHT, BUT RATHER TO TRANSFORM OURSELVES INTO CITIZENS OF THE HEAVENLY KINGDOM.



Bishop Mark's Address to the Venerable Hierarchs of the Holy Synod in the presence of the Assembled Church on the Eve of his Ordination to the Episcopacy Saint George Cathedral, Boston

BISHOP STEPHEN, LIKE HIS HOLY PATRON THE FIRST MARTYR, SUFFERED MANY TRIBULATIONS. BUT, NEVERTHELESS, BOLDLY PROCLAIMED THAT THE AMERICAN CHURCH WAS RIGHT AND GOOD FOR US, AND FOR ALL OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN THE FAITH. I FEEL STRONGLY THAT, HOWEVER UNWORTHY I AM, I SHARE IN THEIR IDEALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND WILL STRIVE TO CONTINUE THEIR GOOD WORK AND BUILD ON THAT FIRM FOUNDATION.

WE, OF THE ALBANIAN ARCHDIOCESE, WILL NEVER FORGET OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS WHO SUFFER BECAUSE OF THE FAITH WE SHARE. WE KNOW WELL THAT IN THE CHURCH OF GOD; WHEN ONE SUFFERS, ALL SUFFER. WE KNOW, TOO, THAT AS WE REJOICE TODAY, THEY REJOICE."

We hope that, although not of Albanian descent, Bishop Mark will continue to speak out fearlessly on behalf of his persecuted Orthodox brothers and sisters in Albania who for decades have been desperately looking for someone to speak for them.

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

ORDINATION OF THE FIRST ALBANIAN PERMANENT DEACON

Last year, Reverend Mister Gjet Bajraktari was solemnly ordained as Permanent Deacon by the Most Reverend John Michael Beahen, Bishop of Ottawa, Canada. The ceremony took place in the Church of Our Lady of the Visitation. The concelebrated Mass was attended by a multitude of people.

Rev. Mr. Gjet Bajraktari, a native Albanian, came to Canada several years ago and was a volunteer worker in the immigration offices of the Catholic Diocese of Ottawa, while continuing his higher religious education. He also translated parts of the Bible, which soon will appear printed in Albanian.



The Rev. Mr. Gjet Bajraktari is seen on the right side of the principal celebrant during the concelebrated Mass

Be sure to read in our next issue about Albanian Catholics in Yugoslavia.

**BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)**

ARBERESH, ITALO-ALBANIANS

By ANN MERIDIER

It is ironic that in 1979, the Islamic calendar year, 1400, there is a repetition of two incidents that occurred in 1400 A.D. When one reads of hostages, the ambitions of the Islamic (Moslem) fanatics to recapture the grandeur that was theirs in the 1400's, and one reads about the "boat-people" escaping persecution, the Italo-Albanian, Arberesh experienced these happenings in 1400 A.D.

The Islamic Ottoman Turks over-ran what is now Albania, the last Christian stronghold that protected the rest of Europe. George Kastriotta, an Albanian (Arberesh) prince, was held hostage by the Turks, as were the best of Arberesh boys to keep their families from rising against the invaders. These boys were forced to become Moslems and to fight in the Turkish armies.

George Kastriotta was given the name Skanderbeg (meaning Alexander, the Commander) because he was an outstanding Military leader. He and other Arberesh men revolted on the field of battle when he heard of his father's death. He returned to free his people and for twenty-four years held the Turks at bay until his death in 1468. Inspired by the news of his death, the Turks made an all-out attack and overran these saddened Arberesh people.

The King of Spain who also was the ruler of the Two Sicilies (The area included in today's provinces of Abruzzi, Molise, Campania, Apulia, Lucania, Calabria and the Island of Sicily, The Pope, the rulers of Genoa, Rome and Venice opened their lands to the Christian Arberesh refugees.

Andrea Doria, the great Admiral of Genoa was sent to help evacuate the refugees, as was the Spanish fleet to protect those escaping by boat from the Turkish fleet.

Pope Paul II related in a letter to the Duke of Burgundy in 1468: "The Albanians are in part thrown into prisons and in part killed by the sword .. It is tearful to see the boats searching the shores of Italy, and the needy families raising their hands toward heaven, praying in a language which we do not understand and filling the whole world with their cries and lamentations ..."

Even as the "boat-people" of today are being picked up at sea and reluctantly welcomed for humanitarian reasons in strange countries, Italo-Albanians-Arberesh who know their history, empathize with these people. The refugees of 1400 A.D. endured intolerance against their people who were different in language, in Eastern-Orthodox religion and in culture. As descendants of these brave people, the Italo-Albanian Arberesh, are proud of the important part Francisco Crispi, the political advisor of Garibaldi, a child of Arberesh parents born in Ribera, Province of Agrigento and of the Eastern-Orthodox religion played in the unification of the new government of Italy,

The original refugees could not return to their homeland because the Ottoman Turks held Albania from 1468 until 1912. As is true until today, their children's children embrace the heritage of their adoptive countries and become productive contributing citizens. They retain the Eastern-Orthodox and Roman Catholic religions, their brotherhood with all who have a drop of Arberesh-Albanian blood in their veins, their honor, their great love of family and their language, the living reminder of their pride in their original roots.



Ann Meridier during the literary meeting honoring the Albanian poet and writer Ernest Koliqi at the University of Santa Clara, 1974.



Editor's note:

Ann Meridier, a retired school principal of San Jose, has been for a number of years an active and devoted organizer of the Arberesh people in the San Francisco Bay Area. She was a great source of information to Professor Koliqi in his research regarding the preservation of the Arberesh language and customs in America. Her unpublished genealogy of the Arberesh people in America is certainly a great treasure for future history writers.

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

It is appropriate that we print, following Ann Merider's article, Monsignor Mario Ferraro Brasacchio's heartfelt reflections on the role and place that Albania should take amongst the European nations. Msgr. Brasacchio is a known poet and writer and an ardent Arberesh, devotedly dedicated for the preservation of ties between the Arberesh people of Italy and Albania.

THE ITALO-ALBANIANS FOR A UNITED EUROPE

European unity has been prepared for by past centuries, and is part of this historic process, the brotherhood of nations has emerged full of life! The lesson from history shows that divisions were always a real disaster for everyone. Today, the world seems to shrink, the distances are shortened, while the power and superpower of a few states is indeed a real threat to an apocalyptic war! There comes an urge to unite, just not to be alone and weak! In the history of Albania, you can discover a design or destination grandious and sublime, even at time with drops of blood and tears. It is a martyred and strong people, these Albanians, generous and indomitably vibrant.

If at one time, the Albanian People had defended Europe, when the Turkish threat was contained by the arm of the valiant Scanderbeg; in our days, it has given to the world Teresa of Calcutta; a real smile of God; it has given to the universal Church the Patriarch Athenagoras, the apostle of peace! For us, our home country is the world in which we are spread to many lands. However Albania, on the way to serfdom, has preferred the road into isolation. It has inaugurated new times of equidistance and of self-determination, and can inscribe on its banners: Alone and Free. Albania, by entering the European Community, has something to offer: her courage which fears none; her strategic function derived from her geographic position, which makes her an advanced outlook in the Mediterranean; her independence from East and West; her youth with a hard and strong past, which moves ahead with their flag, as a program written there: *Bashke Jemi Shume* (United we are Many). It is this message which brings us to new levels. Today, a new social and political springtime seems to emerge from the background of changing situations and from unforeseeable and unstoppable events.

Everything invites us to unite, our own past as Latins and Christians; the arts -- by their very nature are universal, justice, the love of freedom, the inheritance of every nation and presupposition of every civilized being. In Old Europe, which is washed by the splendid Mediterranean, has blossomed the finest culture, has resounded the different and powerful voice of 1000's of poets of every century and nation! Holiness has shown forth by chosen souls and lofty minds, along with heroism of the purest kind. People of Europe are the oldest noble family, rich and varied in traditions, which are invited today to organize themselves to listen to a mysterious motto of unity. This motto was always proclaimed but actually accepted with joy only by the youth who see over all borders created by politics and who dream of new shores and beacons.



BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

SILVER JUBILEE OF AN ALBANIAN BENEFACTOR



FATHER LEO WITH CONCELEBRANTS AT BELLARMINI COLLEGE CHAPEL IN SAN JOSE, 1972

Recently in Detroit, Father Leo G. Neal, O.F.M. Conv., observed his Silver Jubilee as priest in a concelebrated Mass attended by a multitude of relatives and friends. Among them were Albanians to whom Father Leo has ministered in various ways for about fifteen years. From far away many sent warm congratulations and heartfelt wishes for the continuation of Father's apostolate.

Father Leo has been President of the American Albanian Charity Association of Detroit, formed in 1967 under the auspices of Cardinal Dearden, with the aim of alleviating the persecuted Church in Albania and settling newly arrived refugees in the U.S. This Association was reorganized in 1972, under the name of Albanian Catholic Information Center, which is now based in California. Father Leo has served as Director since then. We are most grateful for his assistance and dedication to the cause for religious freedom in Albania. We could recount many occasions where Father Leo has spoken and acted with much love and dignity on behalf of Albanians and Albania, but we will single out just one occasion where he spoke warmly about the Albanian modern martyrs during the celebration commemorating the 25th Anniversary of the persecution of the Catholic Church in Albania, held in 1972 in San Jose, California:

"The Albanian people realized that these martyrs had taught them how to live; taught them not only their books and their culture, but their faith in God. They were men and women who had lived side by side with Moslems, Orthodox and Catholics, and people of all denominations revered the Church in Albania.

"Men and women around the world, Albanians and Italo-Albanians who live here in America, we Franciscan and Jesuit Fathers here at the altar today, as well as our brother priests throughout the world, and all of you in the congregation here

today, are living witnesses to the courage and suffering of the Albanian martyrs, to the chalices of their blood that was poured out on the Calvary that is Albania.

By looking at them, you and I can see men and women like us, with faults and failings. Yet, they willingly gave their lives, not only for Albania, but they laid down their lives for you and me. Indeed they are our brothers and sisters—blood brothers and blood sisters. Some of you here knew them intimately and personally. Today we remember them even as the Lord has asked us, His priests and His people, to remember Him.

"We should not look back in hatred and anger against those who persecuted and put them to death. No, we cannot waste time in our lives by having any bitterness in our hearts. That is a luxury unworthy of any human being. Seeing the example of charity set by these martyrs of Albania we can only pause and wonder, knowing that they, like ourselves are clay. Yet, they are such shining examples to all the world of what human beings can be. Their sacrifice has not been in vain. The goodness of their lives touches all the world whether the world knows it or not. We are touched, and touched deeply, by all the martyrs of the Faith and the Fatherland. They make us better people. The goodness of their lives has been dropped into the world and we are responsible to give a worthy answer in our lives.

"We join in memory of these fallen martyrs, and though we may not know all their names, we know that they belong to us.

Let us make their blood, and their deaths a pledge in our lives that we will not forget. Let us be grateful, deeply grateful in our hearts, for the gift of their deaths. It is a triumph of love that goes beyond all death. They are witnesses to life, a life in Christ; life as worthy human beings; life as people who know and love and serve a living God; life as those who love the Fatherland.

"Today we thank God for the gift of these martyrs of Albania. Rrnofte Populli Shqiptar! Long live the Albanian people, their ideals and their sacrifices."

Our warmest wishes go to Father Leo G. Neal, for continuation of his selfless ministry among his confreres and Albanians.

ANOTHER NEW CHURCH FOR ALBANIAN CATHOLICS IN U. S.

With great sacrifice and a spirit of joy, Albanian Catholics in Detroit broke ground for their St. Paul's Albanian Catholic Church on June 15, 1980.

For a decade now, Albanians have been settling in the Detroit area. The number of Albanian Catholics there has reached 15,000. Five years ago the first Church, Our Lady of Albanians, was opened with Rev. Prenk Ndrevasaj as pastor. The pastor of the new Albanian Church is the young, active Rev. Prenk Camaj, who was educated in the U.S. and obtained to the priesthood in Detroit in 1976. Rev. Camaj was greatly supported toward the realization of his priesthood, after many hardships, by Father Leo G. Neal, O.F.M., Conv.

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

A GREAT LOSS FOR THE ALBANIAN PEOPLE



P. Valentini S.J.

Father Zef Valentini, S.J., one of the most outstanding and productive writers of Albania, died in Milan, Italy, November 16, 1979.

Father Valentini was born in Padua, Italy, July 1900. From 1922 to 1944 he served as professor at the Pontifical Albanian Seminary and at St. Xavier's College in Shkodra, Albania. He was at the same time editor of the literary journal I.E.K.A. published by the Jesuits.

Providentially away from Albania when the Communists took over in 1944, Father

Valentini focused his activities on Albanian studies in Italy, and at the State University of Palermo he co-founded the Sicilian Center for Byzantine and Neo-Hellenic studies.

A world renowned specialist in Illyrian (Albanian) studies, Father Valentini has written extensively on the language, history, law and art of Albania. Besides more than 1,000 lengthy articles, he was also the author of some 60 books, the best known among which are: **CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHRONOLOGY**

OF ALBANIA, (3 volumes); **JURIDICAL TEXTS AND STUDIES**; **FAMILY LIFE IN THE ALBANIAN JURIDICAL TRADITION**; **COMMUNITY LAW IN THE TRADITIONAL ALBANIAN LAW**; **ACTA ALBANIAE VENETA** (32 Volumes); **ACTA ALBANIAE JURIDICA** (2 volumes); **THE LAW OF ALBANIAN MOUNTAINS** (2 volumes); **DOMUS ECCLESIAE**, a large volume containing 1150 illustrations designed by him, about sacred Christian architecture. Some of these works have been translated and published in other languages.

This scholar who tirelessly dedicated his life to the promotion of Albanian culture, was a school mate of the late Paul VI. He was also instrumental in mediating the ecumenical encounters with the Orthodox Church, especially with the Patriarch Athenagoras, who himself proudly declared his Albanian origin.

Father Valentini died while still carrying a heavy load of responsibilities and work as Director of the Center of Albanian Studies in Palermo and Editor in Chief of nationally known book review journal, **LETTURE**, published in Milan by Jesuits.

Albanians and Italo-Albanians (Arberesh) of the Bay Area and California, commemorate Father Zef Valentini, on December 19, 1979 at the University of Santa Clara Mission Church.



In Memoriam

Father Pjeter Palladini, S.J.

Father Pjeter Palladini, S.J., died on May 7, 1980 in Gallarate, near Milan, after a long illness. Many Albanian Catholics mourn his passing, for throughout most of his life, he was closely associated with them. Father was born in Milan on June 28, 1900, and joined the Jesuit Order in adulthood. Soon after his ordination, he was sent to Albania as a teacher and administrator at the Pontifical Seminary and Xavier College in Shkodra. His abilities and dedication quickly won him the honor of Vice Rector. For nearly twenty years, with selfless zeal and love, he educated and served a whole generation of new priests. Most of them were to suffer martyrdom at the hands of the communist persecutors, who took power in 1944.

Father Palladini was expelled from Albania at the end of 1945, but still continued from Italy to work actively for his beloved Albanians. He is greatly missed by his many friends in Albania, Italy and around the world. May God reward his cordial and generous heart.



Pjeter Palladini S.J.

AN OUTSTANDING AND MUCH NEEDED ACCOMPLISHMENT

With great personal sacrifices, Rev. Msgr. Joseph J. Oroshi, printed the first literal translation of the Bible into the Albanian language two years ago. This scholarly work took him many years to complete. The importance of this work will have lasting benefit since the present Albanian government has been desperately attempting to wipe out any vestige of religious belief in Albania. Through Msgr. Oroshi's achievement, Albanian people everywhere will be able to preserve the faith of their forefathers. This praiseworthy accomplishment deserves the support of everyone concerned with spreading the Good News.



Msgr. Joseph Oroshi presenting the first literal translation of the Bible into Albanian to Pope Paul VI in February, 1976.

After World War II, Msgr. Oroshi was imprisoned for his religious leadership. Upon his release he evaded the police by hiding in the Albanian mountains and there became the spiritual guide to the guerrilla freedom fighters, celebrating underground Mass, preaching the word of God whenever and wherever he could. Through persistent efforts and great sacrifices, he established the first Albanian Catholic Church in the Western hemisphere, located in the Bronx, N.Y.

Msgr. Oroshi has a supply of the Bibles which can be obtained by writing directly to him: Rev. Msgr. J.J. Oroshi, 4221 Park Avenue, Bronx, N.Y. 10457.



LIVES OF ALBANIAN ORTHODOX SAINTS TO BE PUBLISHED IN THE UNITED STATES

According to the bi-weekly "GLAS CONCILA", April 1980, printed in Zagreb, the capital of Croatia, the Albanian Orthodox Church of America is preparing now for publication, a huge volume dedicated to all Albanian Orthodox Saints, from the beginning of Christianity up to today. This publication will undoubtedly help preserve the rich spiritual treasure that abounds in the Albanian Orthodox Church and inspire its members. The newspaper states that the government in Albania has outlawed any formal religion since 1967.



BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)

THE FULFILLED PROMISE



**A Documentary Account
of Religious Persecution in Albania**

From the underworld

THE FULFILLED PROMISE. A Documentary Account of Religious Persecution in Albania. By Gjon Sinishta (H & F Printers, 1440 Franklin St., Santa Clara, Calif., 1976), 249 pp. PB \$7.95.

Once wandering through the vast Roman Cemetery, I remember coming across the Tomb of Cardinal Fumasoni-Biondi, who was once, I believe, Apostolic Delegate to the United States. How strange, it seems now, to come across his name in John Sinishta's moving book accounting for the martyrs of modern Albania. In 1940, Fumasoni-Biondi ordained in Rome a young Albanian, Peter Cuni. The priest was later arrested in 1948 and "died in prison after fifteen days of uninterrupted interrogation accompanied by painful beatings and electrical shocks. His body was left in a garbage heap" (p. 159).

As I entered the Jesuits in 1948, this book seems like an account of things we were never told about. During the 1946-50 period and after, hundreds of Albanian Jesuits, Franciscans, Bishops,

priests and laity were brutally executed for their faith. To my knowledge, I never knew anything of this until I read an article some ten years ago in *Corriere della Sera* about the persecution of all religion in Albania. As most Albanians are Muslim (Catholics are 13%), the irony of the article was rather about the marxist pro-Islamic mood as opposed to the Albanian practice, where, as the article recalled and this book affirms, lovely old churches were, like Mosques, turned into basketball courts.

But it takes John Sinishta's book, with its forceful documents, even to begin to account for the meaning and extent of persecution against Christianity itself. And it takes this too to articulate the strange indifference western Christians and governments have paid to this systematic violation of human and religious rights. Religiously we seem, in this context, like such helpless, indifferent people.

The Fulfilled Promise is an account of the Albanian Church's story. But more particularly, it is a detailed descriptive enumeration of the persons

book review

**Illustrated Documentary
Account
of religious persecution
in Albania**
**John Sinishta's
'The Fulfilled Promise'**
gives hitherto unpublished
information on the religious situation
in Albania from its origins to the
present day.
£4.80 post free (cash with order)
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3-5 North Street, Chichester, West
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Also available through
OPEN DOORS, P.O. Box 6,
Standlake, Witney, Oxon,
OX87SP, England, or by
writing to Albanian
Catholic Information
Center, P.O. Box 881,
Santa Clara, CA 95053



killed by the communist policies there — the who, the where, the why, the by whom. This is the authentic Christian instinct that all life is worth remembering, must be remembered.

John Sinishta, as a young man in Albania, a Jesuit for a few years, in early training once vowed to let the world know this story, a story no one really told us before him. His book is, in my view, a powerful one, a witness to our indifference to fellow Jesuits and religious and laity and priests, of our own remarkably ineffectiveness toward Christians suffering actual persecution.

Yet, there is a strong Christian sense about this account. These men and women almost invariably died forgiving their enemies, seeking God's will. Catholicism was and is the special object of the violent attacks of the Albanian Communist Party, a particularly brutal lot, it seems, even among that brutal breed. The Polish Pope and the Albanian Christian martyrs of our time remind us vividly that ultimately, for most, only faith will matter. This is a book from the underworld we do not, at our peril, choose much to know. *The Fulfilled Promise* at least allows us to begin.

James V. Schall, S.J.
Georgetown University
Washington, D.C.

book reviews

LITERARY SERIES "ALBANIAN LIBRARY" - SET I
Martin CAMAJ, CIRCLES, a novel (in Albanian),
Munich 1978, pgs.317.

In the novel, CIRCLES, written over a period of some fifteen years, the author, Martin Camaj, portrays a series of events which are closely related to one another. The focus of the author is the observation of the individual in various situations of activity, not so much as a representative of a class or an ideological orientation, but rather as a particular being in a world unto himself. As events develop, emphasis is given to symbolic values, and on occasion, light irony. The location, characters and circumstances portrayed in the novel are fictional and the language basically follows the recent orthographic changes of the Albanian language.

Martin CAMAJ, MAN BY HIMSELF AND WITH OTHERS,
a collection of poems (in Albanian), Munich
1978, pgs.99.

The short poems of the volume MAN BY HIMSELF AND WITH OTHERS, was written during the same period as the novel CIRCLES. It shares several basic concepts with the latter work, but differs from it in style, expression and language. Due to this contrast, both works are being offered together. They are printed using certain typographical embellishments that will enhance the library of every connoisseur of Albanian literature.

Both works can be ordered by writing to: VATRA, Headquarters, 517 E. Broadway,
S. Boston, Mass. 02127 (U.S.A.)

Martin Camaj, author, has already made a name in Albanian letters, not only as poet and writer, but also as an outstanding scientist in Albanian studies. His works, however, are prohibited in his native country Albania. He is currently serving on the faculty of the University of Munich. Martin Camaj has in print, two additional sets of the literary series which will appear shortly.

THE ALBANIANS EUROPE'S FORGOTTEN SURVIVORS

Anton Logoreci

"... comprehensive survey. ... Logoreci's testimony is impressive.
... The writing is sure, the style rational, the historical retrospect
vivid. ..."

—CONTEMPORARY REVIEW

"This valuable account of the Albanians, concentrating largely on
modern Albania, contains many little-known facts which help to
explain why Enver Hoxha has managed to remain in power since
the end of the Second World War. ..."

—INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

"Histories of the Albanian people in western languages are rare
indeed, so there is considerable reason to welcome this account by
Anton Logoreci, former member of the now defunct Albanian
service of the BBC. His book will be of considerable interest to
all students of Eastern Europe and of communist societies."

—BRITISH BOOK NEWS

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WESTVIEW PRESS
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Frederick A. Praeger, Publisher

Among the books printed (in English) recently about Albania, Arshi Papa's TRILOGIA ALBANICA, is most significant. A prominent scholar and poet, Professor Pipa presents Albanian literature with a rich perspective and wide view. Divided into three volumes, #1 ALBANIAN FOLK VERSE: STRUCTURE AND GENRE, #2 HIERONYMUS DE RADA, #3 ALBANIAN LITERATURE: SOCIAL PERSPECTIVES. The TRILOGIA ALBANICA is a true literary treasure for all those studying Albanian or interested in Albanian cultural history. These volumes may be ordered by writing to Dr. SAMI REPISHTI, 663 WESTMINSTER ROAD, BALDWIN, NEW YORK 11510, U.S.A.

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI" (2018)
SHKODER



Many outstanding men of art and culture: great poets, philosophers, historians, engineers and actors have emerged from the ranks of the Albanian people. Alexander Moisi is one of these men. Alexander was born in Trieste on April 2, 1880 to Albanian parents, who had emigrated from Kavaja (Central Albania). After finishing secondary school in the city of Graz, young Alexander went to Vienna where he was tested as an actor but was declared as having no talent. He then was compelled to earn a livelihood by taking a job as an "extra" in Burgtheater of Vienna. One evening, when one of the actors was absent, the lowest ranking "extra", Moisi, replaced him, and although in a wordless role, left his partner, who was one of the outstanding actors of the time, gaping in amazement at his talent. But even this did not assure him of a stage rating. After many efforts to master the language, and in difficult financial conditions, working with unbelievable will and persistence, he broke through and made his momentous first appearances in the German theatre of Prague. He then appeared on the stages of Berlin, and later, made triumphant tours of almost all the continents.

Alexander Moisi became one of the greatest and most unforgettable actors for all those who saw him on the stage and screen. He brought stage appearances to unprecedented heights, both in regard to the progressive ideas with which he interpreted his roles and in regard to his amazing artistry and virtuosity as an actor. Moisi is rightly considered among the greatest artists of our century for his contribution to stage artistry.

During his entire life, Moisi always kept his ardent love for his homeland alive and undimmed. Time after time, he made statements about his origin, he sought Albanian citizenship until he received it in 1921. For him, his moments of meeting and talking with his compatriots in various countries were happy and unforgettable.

Today, on the 100th Anniversary of his birth, we remember this great son of Albania with profound respect and admiration for the outstanding contribution he made to the treasury of world culture.



The activity of Aleksander Moisi was highly appreciated by many of the great thinkers and artists of the world. Here are some of their comments:

«Alexander Moisi is Europe's greatest and progressive actor.

«The part of Faustus is one of the magnificent creations of Moisi. A great man on the whole, and perhaps the greatest actor of our time, he recites Goethe in a particularly wonderful manner...»

Anatoly Lunacharsky

«Moisi is an actor of such strong personality as men have ever possessed. He is not one of those actors whose power lies in their metamorphosis. Quite the contrary, his power lies in the fact that he expresses his own nature in a pure and delicate manner...»

Hugo von Hofmannsthal

When a man is dragged to the theatre, he usually arrives late and is not likely to be attentive to what is said on the stage by Hamlet, but hardly a minute has passed, no more than twenty words are said, and he is impressed, he feels the tears on his cheeks: this is the wonderful effect of the spell of art cast by the archsorcerer of sorcerers, the poet and the pupil of Shakespeare — Aleksander Moisi. I have never seen the part of Hamlet played so marvellously, I have never seen Moisi ever play so well. Hamlet is written for Moisi, and Moisi, Moisi alone, is born to play Hamlet...

Max Brod

«Congratulations to Alexander Moisi, to whom the most perfect interpreters of many of my heroes, I am greatly indebted forever. First of all, I greatly regret, dear Moisi, that I failed to personally admire your playing «Henry the IV» in such a way, I am told, as to make your interpretation the finest of this role...»

Luigi Pirandello

«...A southerner, always a southerner, he brings the sun of his country everywhere... He wants all the people around him to be gay, impassioned and ready to flare up... in discussions, everlasting discussions, on ideas, politics, attitudes... That is why one learns something new from the essence of the truth of the world when in his company...»

Stephan Zweig

«...Like me, he too, has had to breast through so many difficulties. But one should admire the energy of Moisi. He knows that it costs to persevere under such circumstances.

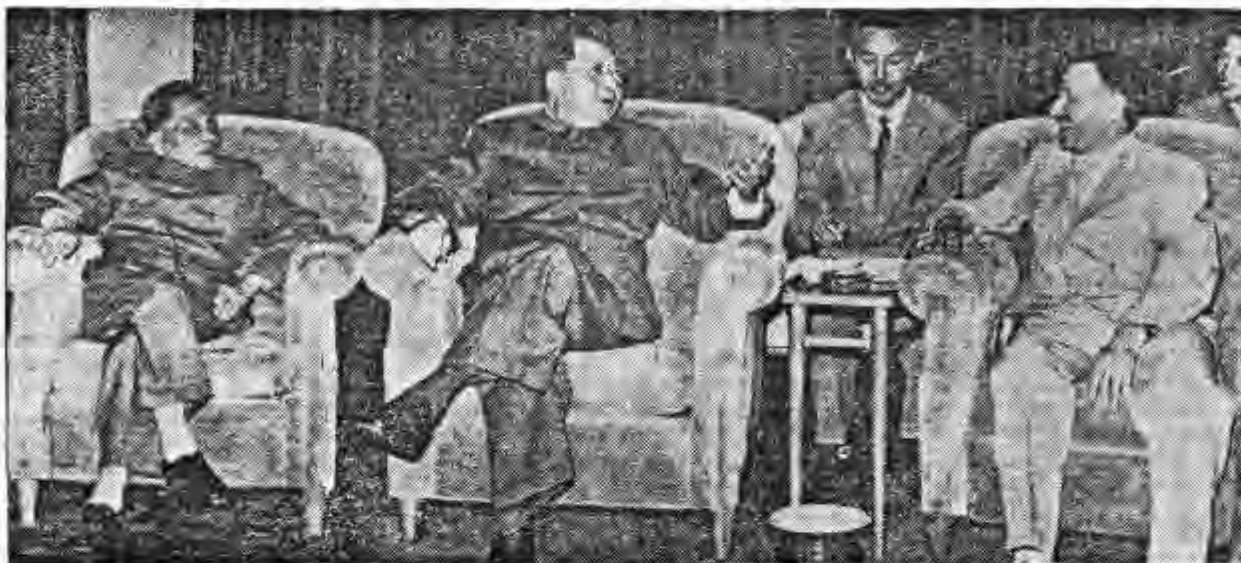
My partnership with Moisi, especially when working under the direction of Reinhard for the parts of «Henry IV», «Emilia Galotti» and «Don Carlos» is one of my best reminiscences. He was an extraordinary actor».

Albert Reisman



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"MARIN BARLETTI"
SHKODER (2018)

AN HISTORIC PHOTO, WHEN ALBANIA WAS A TRUSTED ALLY OF CHINA.



Mao chatting with Albanian Premier Mehmet Shehu, while Deng Xiaoping ponderously listens.

Only Stalin escapes admission to Mr. Hoxha's gallery of rogues

Diary of the Albanian outsider who finds rest of world now totally out of step

From Dessa Trevisan
Belgrade

Politicians do not usually publish their memoirs while they are in power, but Mr. Enver Hoxha, the Albanian Communist Party leader, is an unusual politician even by Communist standards. He has been in power for 35 years and, over that period, his country formed and broke off three successive alliances—first with Yugoslavia, then with Russia, and finally with China.

He has now just published his 1,900-page diary, entitled *Reflections on China*. It is an insider's story with a running commentary about the state of Sino-Albanian relationship. The "eternal, unbreakable alliance" began in 1961 and collapsed in 1978 the same way as the previous two.

The Hoxha story is as bizarre and intriguing as the alliance itself, providing an even more fascinating insight into the Albanian leader's character, deep-rooted mistrust, extreme pride, fanaticism and the claustrophobic world of communist politics.

In the process, Mr. Hoxha reveals his gathering doubts about Chairman Mao and the theory and practice of Maoism. He concludes that Mao was not a Marxist and that the Chinese revolution was not genuinely proletarian. With China

disqualified from being a genuine socialist state, Albania is left as the sole, lone bastion of true revolutionary Marxism in the world.

To make his point clearer still, he dismisses virtually the entire past and present leadership of the Communist world as turncoats, pseudo-Marxists, American agents or lackeys of the bourgeoisie.

Chou En-lai, the late Prime Minister, was "the greatest Iago of the Chinese Shakespearean theatre of American imperialism."

President Ceausescu of Romania was "an adventurer and a panderer, who runs a corrupt regime"; when Mr. Brezhnev, the Soviet party leader and head of state "talks of communism it is like the noise of a tin can tied to a dog's tail."

Stalin is the sole exception in Mr. Hoxha's gallery of rogues. That Mr. Hoxha is the only genuine Marxist revolutionary leader left is thus established beyond doubt, and this is obviously what the diary is designed to prove.

What it all boils down to is that ideologically, Albania disagrees with the rest of the world, capitalist, socialist, and whatever is in between. But the message Mr. Hoxha appears to convey is that Albania needs the world, and thus being so, he wants to establish businesslike relations

with all, except those who have "evil intentions"—America and Russia, and those who are still "not honouring their debts," Britain and West Germany.

Paradoxically, the diary prepares the ground for a more pragmatic foreign policy which, after a difficult start a year ago, is now beginning to make some headway. Diplomatic and other contacts with West Europe, in particular, are being stepped up, and relations with Yugoslavia continue to improve.

What Mr. Hoxha is looking for is trade, not ideas. For Albania, which in its postwar history relied heavily on its successive patrons, trade is obviously a vital issue. A few days ago Mr. Hoxha called for great efforts in the search for markets and hard currency, which suggests that results have been disappointing.

In fact, there was a note of impatience in what an Albanian diplomat described as Britain's failure to settle the Albanian gold issue, which the Albanians insist upon as a precondition for the resumption of diplomatic relations.

The gold, estimated at 8 million pounds, has been kept in British custody pending settlement of Britain's counterclaim for compensation arising from the sinking of British warships in the Corfu channel 30 years ago.

ALBANIA IS NOT HOXHA'S PRIVATE ESTATE

By Sulljman Spata

This article is an accusation of the Albanian communist regime's policy on tourism. It is a denunciation of a policy that has caused untold suffering to thousands of Albanians abroad, and puzzlement and dismay to numerous Americans who have wanted to travel to Albania since the war.

Look at the record. For 13 years, from 1945 until 1957 Albania did not let anybody at all to visit the country. If you add to that the war years, this means that the many families were split asunder for almost 20 years, or a whole generation. For numerous Albanians in this country and elsewhere, their homeland and the land of their progenitors was barricaded and placed "off limits". They could travel to the rest of the world, but not to the one spot on

earth that was dearest and closest to their heart.

Besides the elderly, those who have been hardest hit by Hoxha's inhuman tourist policy are the political exiles and the escapees from postwar Albania. I ought to know, since I am one of them. The people in this category are denied not only tourist visas to Albania. They can't even send money to the members of their families in Albania, many of whom are in prison or concentration camps. This is a policy of revenge unbecoming any country that calls itself civilized and progressive.

Albania's policy on tourism does not make sense, no matter how you look at it. Let's be blunt about it. It's a senseless, cynical, cruel and criminal policy.

Isn't it time, after 35 years, for the Albanian leadership to adopt a decent and

reasonable policy on tourism, like the rest of the countries in Europe, which not only throw the doors wide open to tourists, but do all they can to welcome them in? The Albanians of America should be allowed to visit Albania without any delays or restrictions whatsoever.

After all, Albania is our country of origin, to which we are bound in a thousand different ways, and for which we have a natural and lasting love and affection. It is NOT THE PRIVATE ESTATE of Hoxha and Shehu. No one gave them the right to behave like arrogant landlords and treat Albania as if it were their ciff or "private property."

The time is long overdue for a radical change in Albania's tourist policy. Let the year 1980 be the year for that long-sought change that is so anxiously awaited by tens of thousands of our fellow countrymen all over America and the world.

DIELLI March 1, 1980



Albania's Chromite Production May Soon Surpass the USSR

By LORI IOANNOU

In a race for second place among world producers of chrome ore, Albania is hot on the heels of the Soviet Union and may soon surpass that nation as it steps up annual production levels. Producers in South Africa, the world's largest producer of the ore, are concerned that Albania may overtake them in trade with other nations.

Albania is selling chromite to American metal companies and to international trading companies of metals and ores. It is also selling chrome ore to Western European companies.

All U.S. purchases of Albanian chrome ore are kept strictly confidential. Only the quantities of chrome ore and chromium concentrates imported into the United

States are cited. Names of the Albanian seller are not disclosed.

Albania mines approximately 1.5 million short tons of chrome ore annually. Informed South African sources report that Albanian chromite production is increasing at a level of about 700,000 short tons each year.

Compared to the world's largest producers of chromite, South Africa and the U.S.S.R. which mine an estimated 3.5 million short tons and 2.5 million short tons a year, respectively, Albania is increasing production of all grades and concentrates at a rate which would bring its chromite production to 2.2 million tons this year and 2.9 million tons next year if it is maintained at this pace.

DIELLI April 1, 1980

Chrome ore, which is called chromite, is used primarily in the steel industry as a constituent of the alloy ferrochromium used to make stainless steel. It is used in plating metals such as steel and nickel because of its hardness and anti-tarnishing properties. Albania's No. 1 commodity for export, it is a resource which the nation's economy depends on for foreign exchange.

Albania is currently selling its chrome ore to Great Britain, France, Italy, Greece, Yugoslavia, and Finland.

The U.S. Census Bureau reports that in the six months ending November 1979, the United States imported Albanian chromite valued at approximately \$4.5 million. The bureau projects that during 1980 \$5.5 million worth of chromite will be exported to the U.S. from Albania.



BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
"MARIN BARLETI"
SHKODER (2018)



Lenin's Confession

"I have made a great mistake. Our main purpose was to give freedom to a multitude of oppressed people. But our method of action has created other oppressors and frightful massacres. It is my nightmare to feel that I am drowning in this ocean of blood of innumerable victims. It is too late to turn back now, but in order to save our country, Russia, we should have had men like St. Francis of Assisi. With ten such men we could have saved Russia."

During his last illness a disillusioned Lenin made the above confession to a Hungarian Jesuit, Fr. Michael Herkany, who had been his childhood friend, companion and confidant for many years.

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**BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
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Ju qi keqas t'vorrosun keq flëni ndër murâna
mbi shpate t'pjerita a n'pyje, n'breg deti ase n'breg lumi,
deshmor', q'ëmën t'lavdishem keni thadrue n'gojdhâna,
nën dhë me gjak t'uej t'rimun idhnin nuk u a shuen gjumi.

Ju qi n'vorre t'vetnueme keq flëni e nuk pushoni
e as deka varrt e shtatit nuk thau as nuk u a mbylli.
qi ështëat vrik ju dridhen kur del nji zâ nga pylli
a kur nji zhapillim' hapash përbrf murân's ndëgjoni,
ju qi n' maimë fisnike t'lahutës jeni rritun.
Ju qi burrnin jetike e patët si mësuese,
ju qi lirin kreshnike zgjedh' e kishi për nuse,
ju qi n'mprojen e nderit botën keni çuditun.
sor n'murâna t'harrueme kërkoni kot pushimin:
ju qi epopë t'panjoftun shkruet me gjakun e kuq,
plot vrumulisje n'eshtna rrini tue bluem idhnimin.
fatosa orzez, për ilfjen e jetës q'u shkoi huq.

U rrzuet tue rrokun armën dhe u rrzue me jue dhe fisi:
ato q'atdheut i kjenë ndër mote gardh çeliku,
parzmat vigânë t'ueja, jo, nuk i mposhti anmiku
por nâma e fatit, nâma qi befas mbi në krisi.

N'heshitim t'natës shqiptare s'ndëgjohet kund zâ njerit,
prân' votres s'fikun nânat n'vaj nuk e njomin bukën,
por me s' t'papërlotun plot shkndija mnijs, strukën
tue prit' furin ahmarrse qi t'thej' t'primunt e mnerit.

Jo vaj por gjâmë e ahte prej pyjesh sjell jehona,
zhumhura e rrebtë e lumit kushttrim zâ-mbylun ngjanë,
shpirtnat errson e ballet vrugon, ndiell mort zezona
q'atdheut palcet gjallnuese mâ t'mshefta po i a thanë.

O Perëndi, na takën pranuem qi Ti na fale,
n'të tash tridhet' qindvjeta na u end e ndershme jeta,
jetuem m'kto troje t'vobta, n'kto brigje t'thata e t'shkreta,
ngujue larg botës tjetër tue ruejtun dhën mbi male.

Me mzi strehueme trupin nga shiu e breshni e marrdha,
n'kasolle e stane t'brishta qi shpërthejshin duhinat,
pa dijt' qejfet e holla, pa dijt' q'janë miradinat,
pa njoft' doket e lmueta të kombeve fatbardha.

E, prâ, t'ushqyem n'kto gryka me bukë kollomoqe
qi e zbutshim n'uj të kronit, s'lypshim kurr gjâ mâ shum,
sepse bylmet na kishim nji liri t'thjesht', t'pashoqe,
qi me hiet e veta na e bante gjakun t'lum.

Nânat me qumshë të pastër andjen n'shpirt t'on' dikojshin
me fluturue si shqipe në qiell t'nderit shqiptar,
n'flak t'dokeve m'u kndallun e n'zjarrm t'buazit bujar,
qi kobin e zvetnimit nga votra na e largojshin.

O Perëndi, ndër shekuj ûja buzën na e zverdhi,
shpesh u errem pa hângër bukën m'e ruejt' per fmin
e mifun q'ish n'e rritun, por n'që se i mik në shpîn
na msyni, ia vûm para at buk mikut kur erdhi.

Pse kahtuna e randon jetën me dhunë e me krajata?
Lirin e dy gisht nderi n'shtek t'ballit: s'kishim tjetër
kto dy të mira zditshin vobeksin t'on' të vjetër.

Po pse, o i Lumë i Qiellvet, na i rrmbeve kto dhuratat?
Deshmorve u dridhen eshtnat n'vetminâ plohmuena
e qeti n'vorr nuk njoftin as tash qi ata kan' vobkë,
e, pra, gjat' jetës luta t'naltuen, Zot, n'q'ullit e gjâna
e n'shekull udhën t'Ande përhera shkua tue ndjela.

Pse nuk i a kput' Ti kombit vargun t'ditve t'zezë?
pse nânave kërcûna, mbështjellun t'futa zije
s'i a zbardh' styrat e zëmrat me rreze t'fite?
Pse nuk i fal' deshmorve n'itium' të qet n'vorrez?

28 nanduer 1967

nga ERNEST KOLIQI

BIBLIOTEKA PUBLIKE
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SHKODER (2018)

DESPERATE PRAYER

BY ERNEST KOLIQI

In the silence of the Albanian night no man's voice is heard,
No mother moistens bread with tears beside the cold hearth,
But each sits still with dry eyes full of sparks of hatred
During this prelude to a furious time of vengeance.

No cry but sigh after sigh echoes from the forest.
The harsh rumbling of the river resembles a choked alarm.
An evil fate is darkening the souls, blackening the faces,
of those who foresee death;
It is drying the nation's most hidden veins.

O God, we accepted the land that you bestowed upon us,
We lived in it for three thousand years,
We dwelt in these sterile plots, in these dry poor hills,
Besieged, far from other folk, guarding the land
from the mountains.

We barely sheltered our bodies from the rain and hail and frost
In huts and shacks, vulnerable to storms,
We lived without knowing the subtle pleasures, or what's good,
Without knowing the nice customs of the lucky nations.

And still, we were nurtured in these canyons with cornbread,
Which we dipped in the spring's water.

We asked for nothing more.
As our condiment we had a peerless, simple freedom,
Which with its grace gave our senses joy.

Our mothers with their pure milk engendered
in our souls the desire
To fly like eagles in the honored Albanian sky,
And thrive around the flame of customs and the fire
of the proud yule-log,
Which cast out the horror of isolation from the hearth.

O God, for centuries our lips grew pale from hunger;
Often we left untouched our dinner, so as to save it
For our growing children, so that, if any guest should come,
We might share with him that bread, for having honored us.

Why do You burden our lives with disgrace and hardship?
Freedom and a little pride of bearing, we had nothing else;
These two precious things made our old poverty shine.
So why did you, the Blessed One of Heaven,
seize from us these gifts?

The bones of our martyrs tremble in solitude
among many ruins,
And they don't know the grave's silence even after death.
However, during their lives they exalted You,
God of the Universe,
And in this world they always followed Your road.

In this day of sorrow, why don't You cut our nation's chain?
As for the hearts and faces of our women, mourning
Why don't You make them shine with rays of freedom?
Why don't You bless our martyrs with a
silent sleep in graves?*



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