

Foreign visitors on Albania, an observation from the world press The beginning of the 70s of the 20th century

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Abstract

The present article is an extension of an article published many years ago. It provides a fully colored image of Albania at the beginning of the 70s of the 20th century, as perceived by foreign visitors. Turistic groups visiting Albania back then also included journalists or critical observers, who, after returning to their countries, published reports and different articles in the written press on their impressions of Albania, which was considered a castle of Marxism-Leninism in Balkan. Such newspapers and magazines were translated by the Albanian Telegraphic Agency (ATA) and were provided in the format of Specific Bulletins only to those who were at the highest Party rank. First, the peculiarity of this article is its sources, namely the foreign press. Second, the observations, the consultations, and the analysis conducted by foreign visitors on isolated Albania, as it was perceived to the world, comprise both an original image and an innocent one. The way how we deal with these observations is as in a puzzle, thus positioning them one after the other, completing the image of Albania in the period subject to this study. French, Italian, Belgian, Swiss, Austrian, and Rumanian but also Japanese press reflect worldwide reports on the unknown Albania. The content of these journals was accompanied by photos taken very carefully by the tourists, who were under very rigid supervision. The research is based on a qualitative research methodology, resulting in collective, descriptive, evaluative, and analyzing research.

Keywords: world press, communist ideology, propaganda, foreign visitors.

Introduction

Immediately after World War II, Albania distanced itself from the West by joining the East, first through Yugoslavia and then through its direct relations with the Soviet Union. Until the beginning of the 70s of the 20th century, Albania had “exported” visitors from the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and also far-away China, (“The mysteries of communist Albania”, 2018) including young generations who concluded their studies in these countries or others who had finished their university studies and continued their specialization in different fields, in line with the societal and political orientation of Albania at that time. At the beginning of the 70s, Hoxha’s regime selected very carefully to open the doors for foreign visitors, first by accepting delegations from Nordic countries or even Latin America, predominantly having a communist ideology. Without a doubt, many people were curious to come and visit a country that was almost unknown and triggered a huge mystery.

Even though the number of visitors was low, the tourism industry was very well organized. Tourism was not a priority for the Albanian economy, however, at that time, the country had its National and Tourism Enterprise, equivalent to nowadays National

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Agency of Tourism (Jacques, 1998). The tourists had a dedicated bus to arrive in Albania. They were accompanied by a guide, who was very well informed on all the history of the country and were properly instructed on what they should and should not transmit to the visitors. The guides at that time had knowledge of different languages, for instance, English, French, Russian, etc. The visitors had information on the dress code before arriving in Albania. Most importantly, the tourist visa duration was no longer than one month. All their equipment, such as cameras or radios, had to be declared at the borders, for instance in the Durres Port, or Rinas Airport. The tourists were informed before the trip about their dress code, said in other words, they were told not to go outside in short skirts, or swimsuits, because these acts were forbidden. The tourists took pictures of only what was allowed, nothing more than that. All in all, the chronicles of the time show that they were satisfied with their experience. This should have probably been true given the way the country they were visiting was presented to them. For the Communist Government, tourism development was not an objective for the country. "One of the tourism goals was the ideologic one and tourism infrastructure was developed to serve this purpose in the country" ("Tourism and holidays in Albania", 2017).

The tourism package in Albania was rich, but its destination was pre-determined. According to some testimonies provided by some foreign tourists at the time, changes in the program were not unfrequent. Part of the trip was also different visits to farms or stalls, which were considered to be a symbol of the regime's "success". Average Albanians could not stay close to foreign visitors, except for those who were chosen to do so. Foreign visitors were neither allowed to stay close to Albanians. In general, they used to meet only a few Albanians. Albanians joining such meetings were well instructed and advised on what to say or not and to ask no questions. They only answered following the guidance provided to them, not making any comments whatsoever. Each extra word had its costs. The tourists could get presents from our country, like different souvenirs, but Albanians were not allowed to accept any gifts from foreign tourists, no matter how symbolic the gift was.

Methodology:

The research is based on a qualitative method resulting in the realization of a research of a collective, descriptive, evaluative, and analyzing type, based on what the foreign press has presented and analyzed. Initially, preliminary research has been used, where available facts and data have been gathered. These data collected chronologically have helped us a lot to provide a clear reflection on how the foreign press mirrors the relations of Communist Albania at that time with neighbors in the region. The period from 1970-1973, covered by this study, is based on newspaper articles as well as different editorials of news agencies.

The article by A.B.Mische, published in the Parisian magazine "Africasia" in August 1970, was written with propaganda tones. The author aims at representing a different Albania from the one little-known by the Western countries. After a historical overview, where the continuous attempts of the Albanians to gain freedom, and liberation wars against the enemy, were highlighted, the focus goes towards building the country under the Communist regime. In the sub-tittle "Gigantic Attempts" the author lists the achievements in the context of agriculture, industrial and societal aspects. Mische evaluates the emancipation of women, who because of lack of education, had become an active force in production, going as high up to the leading positions (Mische, 1970).

The "News Week" magazine published the article entitled "Albania, the first winds of change" where, amongst other information, it indicated that "even in Albania, a primitive Balkan country with steep mountains in the middle of Yugoslavia and Greece, the winds of change are finally being felt. The Communist regime increased the number of foreign visitors in Albania. After two weeks of visiting Albania, as a member of a tourist group,

T. Tiller wrote this mail: “The proof that the severity of Albania’s Stalinism is losing ground can be noticed starting from Rinas Airport, where a reactive aircraft called “Karavalle” ordered from a travel agency in Denmark, arrives every summer Friday with youth from Denmark and Sweden, who come in a group of 100 persons for a not very expensive two-week vacation. Albanian authorities encourage visitors to spend their currency in Albania, even if they come from Marxism-Leninism groups or are just common tourists. What the tourists see in the cities as well as in rural areas is a mixture of the 16th century and the 20th century where the carts with oxen and old rural women wearing “shallvare”, a kind of loose and heavy trousers, walking slowly by the sides of metallurgic and textile plants and where the old Balkan shacks were located near workers’ buildings. The portraits of the First Secretary of the Albanian Labour Party (the so-called PPSH), with grey hair, where despite the age of 61, presented him as younger and were put on every important wall. Slogans with citations of Enver Hoxha were noticeable as well in different corners of walls in schools, enterprises, offices, and sports centers. At the Durres beach, the specific area for foreign tourists was theoretically beyond the native reach, however many young Albanian people ignored the boundaries and communicated with the visitors. At night, some young people, especially the ones studying at Tirana University, who knew foreign languages, lay on the beach, and while keeping an eye on the police, asked the visitors about films, dress codes, and lifestyles in their countries. However, not all Albanians were on vacation at the beach during summer. Thousands of young people used to perform labor-intensive works, such as being members of battalions of young people in the construction of the railway from Durres to the industrial center of diesel in Fier, where a 15 years old female was found dead and was proclaimed a national hero (“Albania: the first breezes of change”, 1970).

The journalist Henry Hartie, as a careful visitor of Albania, has written some reports that were very popular in the press in the West. After coming back from his visit to Albania, he published some articles. Below follows the full text of the first article in the Belgian newspaper “Le People”:

“Conversation with students. After concluding the 8-year mandatory studies, Albanians, especially 90% of young people coming from the cities, finish their high school studies as well. For more than one decade Albania has had a public University, attended by 14 thousand young adults. Next to a torrent, we met with some students, who were constructing a railway under the supervision of a worker. Tirana had informed them about our visit. Afterward, some students of philosophy came and joined us, all of them with a yellow and blue batch of the liberation front of Vietnam. The student V.J., 19 years old, submitted that he was working with pleasure and that his work was part of the revolutionary study program, which included eight months of study, two months of production (work), and one month of military training. The student E.P., a brunette and energetic young lady, believes that working eight hours of work per day with a pickax, shovel, and wheelbarrow is not too much. Right after work comes leisure time, she says, with the dancing nights as well as political displays. Instead, Sundays are for cleaning the living environment and for marches. The answer the students provide to the question of what did they concretely learn is “I want to learn how to love work and how to appreciate it; moreover, I want to learn how to perfect my revolutionary background.”

The journalist Hartie highlights that “The regime has extended all over the country a system called “action” with concentrated working efforts. On a specific day, all the habitants of the countryside or a neighborhood would get their pickax and shovel and would start to open a canal. On Saturdays and Sundays, the people would start constructing homes in volunteer work, which is immediately noticed as bad construction. But, the individual cannot be hidden after the mass, because the party has put another tool in action, the permanent public critic. In all the factories, all over the countryside and city squares, one could see big plaques with flyers showing the names of persons working badly and of the organizations which only partially fulfill the appointed duties. In the

obligatory meetings, the accusation had to be explained. One supervises the other and all of them live with the permanent fear that they can be criticized. In the motorway, voluntary police dressed in civilian clothing drove motorbikes and criticized the drivers who were driving fast. Fines are not applicable for a long time now because the whole education process is realized through criticism.

One fact that Hartie notices in his article is the non-existence of an independent elite. He highlighted that there is no independent elite. Tirana's authorities report that it will take two other generations for the old tradition to fade away. One of the difficulties encountered by the system is the one with university graduates, who after finishing their studies in Tirana, do not want to go back to other cities and towns. The Party hinders the development of an independent elite, and one can find in a plant or factory an artist obligated to serve one month of production work. Following this political mindset that forces every Albanian to regularly do some work beyond his or her field of expertise, the Party hopes to connect the population with the realization of a new Albania. The Party adds value to this connection by not remunerating this work. The relations Albanians have with money are different given that almost everybody gets the same salary. The regime imposes absolute equality also with the price of massive transfers of population towards the industrial centers (Hartie, 1970).

The article in the Belgian newspaper "Le Peuple" observes that pictures and the name of the leader were everywhere in Albania. Everywhere is the little Stalin. In Tirana, instead of advertisements, on every corner of different streets, in the peaks of the mountains, and everywhere the eye can see, one could distinguish the name of the successor of Stalin, Enver Hoxha. There are no personal vehicles. Men tanned from the sun, with a simple outfit work around the immovable trucks. Mini coats do not exist, women are dressed in cheap colored calico dresses.

The whole country is covered by the fear of a possible diversion. All the world is seen as an enemy and the enemy is found everywhere. One day, some villagers neutralized three archeologists because they had mistaken them for foreign parachutists. In case a tourist gets out his or her camera, the villagers run away. Once I took a picture of a villager on his donkey and the supervisor of the group immediately yelled at me: "Why did you take a picture? Neither the dress code nor the characteristics of the donkey are a reflection of the new Albania". Officially you can visit the factories of Albania, but households are closed to foreigners.

The old traditions are officially non-existent, nevertheless, they are still active in the family circles. Blood feud does not exist anymore, but women cannot always marry freely and marry for love. Women can be appointed heads of factories, hospitals, or collaborators of institutions, but they cannot yet stay alone in a coffee shop and cannot go to the beach all by themselves. I have never seen such a big change between the rural population and the students studying in the capital; the former presents medievalism, and the latter the 20th century. Both worlds meet one another when the students get back to their families (Hartie, 1970).

H.Hartie also published in the Swiss newspaper "Journal de Geneve", where he started his report with a conversation with a Party spokesman, a former partisan, in front of a bottle of wine on the Durres coast, listening to a propaganda speech from him. Nevertheless, the journalist says that in the 1970 summer peak, the foreign tourist felt extremely lonely and isolated in Albania, not noting any aspect of integration in the country compared with the European context. It was impossible to develop tourism, except for the small and organized groups and the open contact with the population was impossible. Different from other Socialist countries, as Hartie reports, in Albania the regime did constantly cultivate distrust towards the foreigners. This alertness supersedes everything, even the hypothetical development of tourism because Albanians were convinced that the enemy was much more in number than the allies. Intellectuals,

although not every one of them, could keep in touch with the outside world, for the need of their professional perfection. One surgeon in Berat Hospital said that he took the best foreign magazines in the world on tumor interventions, which was his field of expertise. Some doctors, engineers, and artists got visas to attend courses in countries such as Italy and France. A literary critic whom the author had a conversation with in Tirana, said that he knew the world through the movie summaries, published in the cinema's notebook. Instead, the chief of a cooperative near Korca city, who hosted an official reception, expressed surprise over the fact that every villager in the West had electricity at home (Hartie, 1970).

The Marxist and Maoist groups from different countries had highly expressed the wish to visit Albania.

It was noted in the slogan placed at the entrance of Adriatik Hotel reading "Imperialism the Revisionisms will be ruined", which was directed indiscriminately to the allies coming from the East and also those coming from the West. Attacks towards the United States of America and the Soviet Union were very high in number. The concept of "before" for the new Albanian was every period before the presentation of Enver Hoxha's figure in the scene. According to the propaganda, life was crucially changed Socialist Albania had its roots, including the creation of a new person. Everything from the past was left behind in a very courageous way, and the vision was cast toward a bright future ("The experience of a tourist in Albania", 1970).

Continuing with the Italian press, the newspaper "Corriere della Sera" in February 1971 published the article by Enzo Betica entitled "The secret place of Marxism Puritans". According to the author, the arrival in Tirana resembles the atmosphere of a surrounded castle. Everywhere, it is noticeable that Communism and nationalism were implemented in the best way possible. A closed country, not explored through the lens of observation, considers tourism as something very rare, which can happen only in groups. Journal services are very rare and no professional camera can go through them. An intermediate European is only exposed to some unclear and mysterious information about Albania, including the Stalin cult, the Chinese silence coming after the 1960s, and the harsh and novel articles of "Zeri i Popullit" against the Soviet Union and the United States. But, behind these scarce data, after a quarter of a century, Albania has not yet formed its face. The observer feels very surprised, a feeling shared by Albanians as well, who, by overcoming five centuries, in just 25 years jumped from the Medieval times to times enlightened by electricity. Everything is brand new, lights on the countryside, public schools, the disappearance of illiteracy, reclaimed lands, eradication of malaria and syphilis, chemical waste, automatic plants, the working woman, etc (Betica, 1971).

The same newspaper goes on by publishing impressions of visitors coming back from Albania. "... A strict revolutionary atmosphere; strict control, pedanticism, puritan moralism go deep down since the moment the tourists' plane takes off, where the control of passports started before passengers got off the plane. Before arriving at the customs building, which had the form of a cube in argil color, one had to go through a fenced route. After that route, a man who was dressed in civil clothing, without speaking but with body language shows a white plastic bucket filled with disinfection matter over a simple table where the tourists must disinfect their hands. The first tourist manual, warns in French "Before everything one should pay attention that the dressing code in the streets is normal...".

In the center of Tirana, one can easily distinguish the Italian architecture, with the buildings being built in the 20s-30s of the XXth century. A very long avenue, with pine trees and fir trees alongside, in a straight line from the Scanderbeg Statute riding a horse, until the University building, forms the most important part where residential and administrative parts of the capital are located. The statute of Napoleonic Stalin is noted, staring at agitator Lenin on the other side of the avenue; the headquarter of the Central

Party Committee, the leading neighborhood which is fully isolated, the museum which resembles the Illyrian ancient ethos, the complex of the public education with the University at its heart, the conservator and the Academy of Figurative Arts, the stadium, etc. The Dajti Hotel is placed along the same boulevard, mainly reserved for the accommodation of foreigners. Along the avenue, during the day, one can only rarely see vehicles appearing and disappearing, a few small black Mercedes with grey curtains used by the leadership, some few old Varsava or Volga-type cars pretending to serve as taxis, a few trucks or military vehicles, buses of public services and citizens' bicycles. Instead, at night after going out from the Dajti Hotel, one can see a massive group of people walking along this avenue. The mass is clean and correctly dressed. It is a calm mass, relaxed, feeling proud; no signs of fanaticism, overdoing, or political exaggeration are seen. There are no badges and no red books. After 10 o'clock silence reigns and the guards with arms can be seen in the state buildings. Resembling an island of utopia, ascetical not idyllic, located between Greece on the right and Yugoslavia on the left, Albania has decided to try the best of a primitive accumulation, which recognizes the industrial revolution that caused lots of troubles in feudal countries.

In the factory of production of bulbs in Vlora, led by a woman, most of the workers are women. A Chinese technician, wearing blue trainers and a grey cap on his head, controlled an automatic machine, which, by absorbing through a whole incandescent filament of melted glass, releases through another bigger whole many cold lamps. The director says that there were some Chinese technicians of this type in all the factories. She appreciated the work and the attitude of the Chinese specialists who, according to her, have been integrated into Albanian society. Moreover, she admits that after getting experience from Albanian employers and specialists, they go back to their country (Betica, 1971).

The "Rude Pravo" newspaper in January of 1971, under the title of "The convenient isolation", published an article written by Jaroslav Mazal. According to him, in the capital of the country, a mixture of the XXth and the XVIth century is noted. "...Albania is a harsh and undeveloped country, where after the modern textile and metallurgic plans built by the Chinese one can see carriages with buffalo leather move along, where the shelters build from mud are very close to the buildings. Tirana's inhabitants are not badly dressed, but they are very simply dressed. The living level is much lower than in other Socialist countries. One kilogram of meat costs 36 Albanian Lek (AL), the man shirts cost 100 AL, and a very high-quality suit costs 1200 AL. The rents of houses are very low, on average 15 AL. Health services and educational services are provided for free. Two weeks of vacation for the worker costs 100 AL. A scooter, which is considered to be something expensive, costs 7000 AL, while TV sets with restricted broadcast time cost 4000 AL. Buying such stuff is not possible for the majority of Albanians. The white cover book with 385 pages was published in voluminous copies, containing a summary of selected speeches from Enver Hoxha, the Party's state leader who keeps the most important position in the country for 20 years..." (Mazal, 1971).

The French newspaper "Le Monde" published an article by Maurice Duvengere, entitled "The Albanian Socialism" on 5 September 1971. The author highlights that the tourists who come to Albania perceive it as a severe, tough, and strict Socialism, following the Chinese model, which does not tolerate any deviation. Very few cars provide a more normal look to the city, where people meet and communicate with one another, instead of not communicating and being just stuck in metallic cars. The cities have fresh air, even though in some cases they are built without the right study fabrics, which play a role in the city's pollution. Order forces are very few in number in the cities. Enormously repetitive slogans on the buildings' walls and over the picture in the countryside encourage work and discipline, by boosting the Party and Government's successes. They are noticeably different from the advertisements of the Western countries. One can easily note the poorness of library shelves. Books are not sacred, and Albanian citizens could

buy lots of books that are translated from foreign languages, but they are missing. The shops are of a modest type, only very few of them sell radio and TV sets of domestic production, electric equipment for home usage, and rare objects. These shops are rare, because the buying power is low, too (Duvengere, 1971).

The French magazine “Jeune Afriques” published a report by Claude Bertrand on January 1972. Amongst other information, the author writes that in this country uniformity is noticeable, there is a lack of poor people, but at the same time rich people simply do not exist. What impresses the tourists is that in the most important cities, given that movability of cars is restricted, the routes very often are left to the walkers or the ones with bicycles. It would be difficult for one to figure out who the officials, the workers, or the rural was out of a crowd. The suits being worn by people are modest, because the difference in wages in Albania is one to three, with an employer conducting a difficult job getting a higher salary than an engineer. The ideology rests on the voluntary work, shared by students, intellectuals, ministers, and ambassadors, who go to the production sites and use pickax. Nearby Elbasan, while working on building a railway, a student says that he/she could be a professor or a doctor, but chose to be a chemist, because the country was in need of chemists. Therefore, professional orientation was guided on the basis of needs, where collective interest prevails the individual interest (Bertrand, 1972).

“Le Monde” newspaper published the article by Etienne Mallet on 26 August 1972, after he had just come back from his visit to Albania. Under the title “Vacations in small Western China”, the article involves a map of Albania and a detailed explanation of French touristic agencies, the journey price, the transportation method, and other conditions of visiting Albania as a tourist in a group. According to the author, tourists visit Albania to spend their vacations at the Adriatic beach, or on the country’s mountains, organized in groups, being available for “political tourism”. “...Buildings surrounded by thorn wires in the borders, moody and armed guards, who consistently ignore their counterparts in the front. Ilija, a professor of Tirana University, who teaches French, and who will be both a guide and interpreter during the three weeks of the group stay in Albania, stays in front of the group and is accompanied by the station director, who is wearing a khaki uniform with the red star in the hat. There is no luggage control. The passports get collected, and a list of cameras and other valuable objects is being formulated. It is required that each of the tourists show their books or magazines brought with them. The group comprised 40 persons, most of them students and professors, sit in a comfortable bus. In the routes under construction, propagandistic slogans circulate one after another as the likes of: “Long life to the Albanian-Chinese alliance”, “Fight against Negligence”, “Get the book, pickax the arms”, “Let’s make the tasks assigned by the VIth Congress a reality”.

Durresi is the main touristic center of the country. Albanians who are spending their vacations by the sea, gather with one another in the villas or under the umbrellas located nearby the beach in every fine sand for some kilometers. Until night hours the groups of people walk around by transforming the zone by the water into a real avenue. Five luxurious hotels with a capacity of around 2500 beds are built some years ago. Comfortable rooms, rapid service, and big but non-original meals are noted by all the tourists.

In his article, Etienne Mallet highlights that the foreign people who spend their summer vacations in Albania, are mostly Scandinavians, but there are also Belgians, Austrians, and French people. Most of them are fans of the Marxist-Leninist parties who come and see “Little Western China”. The rest is just curious or willing to get sun rays at a cheap price. During the night, depending on their wish, they can attend traditional events which are rich and varied, watch a movie about the Albanian partisan war, or they can dance (only with one another) in the night taverna of the Adriatic Hotel.

For those who wish to learn how Albanians apply in their everyday life the tradition of Marxism-Leninism, a political program, conferences with different topics such as education, planning, literature, Party's position, etc. is offered to them. Visits in kindergartens are conducted, as well as visits to hospitals, public farms, agriculture cooperatives, textile plants, chemical production, or raw parts plans. There is extraordinary hospitability everywhere. The responsible person provides a nice overview and then directs the hosts to a long and detailed visit to enterprises. He is patient while answering questions of a political or technical nature. It is very rare to come across a female or male worker who communicates in Italian, or French, who stays near the tourists and provides them with extra information on the job.

First, one notes "a deconstruction" of the workers, a relatively slow-motion work, despite all the slogans inviting the people to go beyond planned objectives. A big sense of responsibility is noted through the "worker's control" which, starting from the leading positions up until the grassroots ones tries to mobilize the workers. What is striking is a big assurance from the perspective of the workers that the type of Socialism followed by Albania is the right one.

Walking around the streets of Korca is the best introduction to getting to know Albania. At around 6 pm, the mass invades the avenue, which was forbidden for vehicles. Football, music, politics, or the last Italian broadcasts are the central topics of the conversations. People sit around a glass of beer, cognac or raki. They stop in front of flyers, which are wall newspapers, where everybody can criticize public authorities without intimidation: "The director of the factory has an authoritarian character", "Sport territories are not sufficient", "the site works are being delayed", etc. The persons subjected to criticism are given a deadline in order to provide an answer. They either judge themselves or justify themselves according to the occasion.

Mallet highlights in the article that: Albanians are proud of having transformed swamps into productive land, brought electricity to the most remote areas, and for having built factories. They are intransigent; the long hair and some extravagant outfits worn by the foreigners seem ridiculous to them. Provocable proposals or exaggerated criticisms offend their morality. If these comments are made openly their mouths will be shut and the guide will hurry up, or he will cancel the aforementioned visit..."(Mallet, 1972).

"La vie catholique" magazine, which is published at the same time in France, Belgium, and Switzerland, published the report of the French journalist Georges Pelter going by the title of "Albania, a forgotten country", accompanied with a map from Albania and seven images. The group of tourists who were fans of Marxism-Leninism, curious, or sun-tanned candidates, traveled by bus from the airport to the hotel. In the streets, they notice that there are no advertisements, but slogans and notes with the Party's orientation and citations from Enver Hoxhes. Lots of monuments, dedicated to national heroes for liberating the country are built during the Socialist period (Pelter, 1973).

The "Il Tempo" newspaper published the article "The Book, the Arms, and the Pickax" at the beginning of 1973, referring in particular to Albanian students. At the construction site of Hodolisht, around 60 km from Tirana, people wake up at 5 a.m. At this time the head of the group it's an empty bin, with the noise serving as an alarm and causing around 200 young people to get up and go in the dawn. In the two big dormitories, one for males and the other for females, immediately start the obligatory quarter of an hour of gymnastics. After making up the bed comes the ceremony of flagraise, before eating breakfast in the common canteen. At 6:30, the young people go to the trucks and after half an hour of travel in difficult mountain streets, they start working. They come from different country sides. The head of the construction site notices the fact that the majority of the youth tend to come from the most undeveloped areas of the country, in this way by being in contact with peers of a very different mentality, they gain new good experiences in order to fight intimidation and to fight old prejudice. There is also a library in camp,

which tries to fulfill the expectations of youth, mainly with political books, but also artistic and literary (“The book, the arms, and the pickax”, 1973).

“A small country, but a big agriculture comune” is the title of the article in the Japanese newspaper “Asaki Shimibun” authored by journalist Honda Katsuiki. By presenting the geographic position of Albania, the author highlights that this country is unknown to the Japanese. Only after the diplomatic war of Albania to accept China at the UN, in the Japanese press showed interest to write about this small and so far-away country. During the travel from the airport to the capital, the tourist group notes the vineyards and fields planted with corn. In the luxurious “Dajti” hotel, there was an obvious presence of Asian Chinese. The group visited the factory of electric wires, built in 1965, which task was to produce electric wires by using red copper as raw material, which was present in a high number in the country. Machinery, almost each of them a Chinese brand, were installed in the factory, and there the Japanese specialists give their contributed to train and specialize the local specialists. Electric wires are used in the country, but also they get exported in Europe and Asia, where exports supersede imports. During a visit to an agriculture farm, the head of the team informed tourists about the working time. Work started at 6:30 am and lasted up until noon, and after a half an hour break, it restarted again up until 5 p.m. Men worked from age 16 years old to 60 years old, while women from 16 years old to 55 years old. If a woman had more than six children, she could retire at the age of 40 (Katsuiki, 1972).

The visit continued with the tractor factory, where the tractor parts were assembled, built in 1966, with about 1500 workers. The average worker’s age was 26. Out of 40 engineers, half of them had studied at the University.

The Romanian newspaper “Skentea” published an article by Eugene Jame entitled “The City of a thousand stairs” on 11 January 1973. With propaganda notes, the author writes that everyone who visited Albania is surprised by the latest changes. The route towards Gjirokastra went through the picturesque valleys of the Drinos River, in order to arrive at the city located in the very heart of the mountain. Gjirokastra is considered a museum city, for the special values it presents. The group supervisor, A.Llapa, editor-in-chief of the local magazine had good knowledge about the old and new city history. Starting from the hotel’s terrace, one can note the industrial area of the city (Jame, 1973).

Conclusions:

The Albanian Government, during the years of Communism, had no special interest in relation to tourism, although as it was mentioned in this research, it had an administrative chain of tourism, enterprises, buildings, working sectors, and also some bars that at the time simply had the name tourism. Part of this tourist network was also the guesthouses, which were present almost in all parts of the country that were considered tourist spots and beyond. These guest houses were not rarely used to host delegations of Marxist and Maoist groups as well as different scientists who came to international congresses, to display the luxury and prosperity of our country.

Overall, tourists came mostly from communist countries, with which Albania had political and economic exchanges, but there were also tourists from Western countries as well. From the West, the preference was for members of left-wing ideas and the ones who still believed that Albania had built a communist model of a happy, equal, and prosperous life for the people.

In order to visit Albania, the foreign tourists had to own a visa, which lasted for one month. Concerning their prices of baggage, foreign tourists were allowed to get cameras with them, radios, and other objects if they declared them within Albanian borders.

The State Security Authorities made sure that tourists visited, heard, saw, and took pictures of things that were convenient, not of real life. The promotion of Albania abroad was necessary in order to show the world that by itself and all its effort, Albania did achieve to have a strong economy and provide a happy living for its population.

From what was provided to them, the foreigners believed in an equal life and maybe they were surprised by the insisting work of workers in plans, and fields, by the happy and enthusiastic people appearing in front of them, although in reality, this was only a camouflage of the miserable life.

This kind of propaganda in the 60s-70softhe XXth century was very famous and was extended up to Asia because Albania, after ruining its relationship with the Soviet Union, at the beginning of 1960, was very close with Communist China.

Nevertheless, our country would not keep for too long the masque, which got even dustier, and thinner, and finally, it got removed, got ripped, and was thrown away, from the foreigners that one could count with the fingers of one hand. This was the case of the two French photographers, who visited Communist Albania in the middle of 1975-1990. They fixed the Albanian's life, away from the propaganda noise. This was the French photographer Jack Gayard, who in 1975 captured around 45 photos of the Albanians, in Korca in 2014. In such photos, the life of Albanians under the dictatorship regime was presented in different cities such as Korca, Durres, Fieri, etc. Under Gayard's captured photos, the sequences from everyday life have been registered; including its best and its worst, thus trying to avoid the ideology of the time. While showing these pictures to the public, Yack Gayard said "...My aim as a photographer was since the beginning to photograph people, because this was of much more interest to me, and not the achievements of Socialism at the time. I have photographed many children because the children enjoy being photographed, but at the same time, I have photographed the elderly, grandmothers, and grandfathers. Also, we went to villages to photograph the life of villagers, but also to photograph the workers as they worked in factories during that period..." ("French photographer opens the exhibition Communist Albania", 2014).

At the same time, another French national, around 5-6 years later, through his photos presented the true panorama of the life of Albanians during Communism. French photographer Michel Setboun in his famous photo taken at the beginning of 1980, without filters and changes, presented the penury and poverty, hidden by state propaganda. However, it could not hide the deep economic, social, and moral crisis experienced by the state. Through 60 emblematic and powerful photos, a dramatic itinerary was offered to the wide public by showing the life of the Albanian society during the period of economic poverty, as well as the political and moral pressure Albanians had to experience during the '80s, the long journey of sufferings until the big exodus, the pluralist election of 1991 and the confrontation of Albanian people with the capitalist regime. This is the decade symbolizing the fall of Communists and the emergence of Capitalism.

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