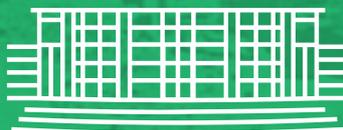
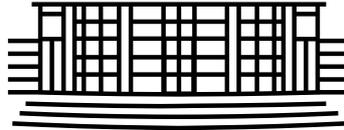


FRAMEWORK STUDY
**On prison system, internment
and forced labor during
communist regime in Albania
with a focus on establishing a
museum of memory in the former
internment camp in Tepelena**



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ISBN 978-9928-4553-7-6

Autoriteti për Informimin mbi Dokumentet e Ish-Sigurimit të Shtetit

Address: The Guard of Republic of Albania,
Street "Ibrahim Rugova", Tiranë, Albania

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Design

Grid Cartels

CIP Katalogimi në botim BK Tiranë

Autoriteti për Informimin mbi Dokumentet e ish-Sigurimit të Shtetit

On prison system, internment and forced labor during Communist regime in Albania with a focus on establishing a museum of memory in the former internment camp in Tepelena : framework study / Beqir Meta, Ermal Frashëri, Autoriteti për Informimin mbi Dokumentet e ish-Sigurimit të Shtetit.

– Ripublikim. – Tiranë : AIDSSH, 2019

... f. : me il. ; ... cm

ISBN 978-9928-4553-7-6

1.Burgje 2.Të burgosur politikë 3.Puna e të dënuarve

4.Kampe të përqendrimit 5.Persekutimi politik

6.Sundimi komunist, 1945-1991 7.Shqipëri

343.8(496.5) (091) (086)

323.281(496.5) (091) (086)

Authors thank UNDP and Authority for Information on Documents of former State Security for their support, collegiality and attention to this subject.



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The scope of this framework study on the prison system, internment and forced labor during the communist regime in Albania is to give an overview of the current state of the studies on this topic

I N T R O D U C T I O N

Scope and Methodology

A recent survey about the attitude of the Albanian society about the communist past produced a shocking result: most Albanians felt nostalgia for the totalitarian communist regime that ruled over them for 47 years. Although reasons for this nostalgia are multidimensional, it is appropriate to acknowledge that non-recognition of all historical landscape of that regime plays a key role in this uncomfortable situation.

Public discourse, during these 28 years after the collapse of the communist regime in Albania, has focused on the need for a balanced history where Albanian communism is given with all its colors, which is to be welcomed. However at the same time, tangible topics such as: denial of human rights, history of State Security, communist repression, the prison system, internment and labor camps have only recently begun to find a place in historical studies. Lack of detailed historical studies hinders the drafting of a national strategy on preserving the memory of this painful and unenlightened part of history of Albania.

In this context, the scope of this framework study on the prison system, internment and forced labor during the communist regime in Albania is to give an overview of the current state of the studies on this topic and to show ways how to deepen and develop the future studies, which will create the opportunity to set up a remembrance place in honor of people who suffered in prisons, labor and internment camps. In these study are included the literature published so far in Albania on this topic,, the evidence and memories of people who suffered in prisons and camps, as well as the archive documentation stored at the Central State Archive and the Information Directory Authority former State Security.

The framework study is divided into two parts. The first part contains five mini-pieces that give a general picture of Soviet totalitarianism, the model of all the leftist totalitarianism that settled in the Communist East after World War II, as well as a historical background on the “dictatorship of the proletariat” in Albania and the way it drew the “class enemy” figure. The study then stops on how internment and prison camps were organized, and provides data on difficult living conditions, violations of fundamental human rights in both these institutions of the state of “the dictatorship of the proletariat.” The second part contains a legal point of view on labor work and its conception by the communist regime by analyzing it in several plans: a) labor as a production factor, b) labor as a punishment, and c) labor as a tension location in the relationship between the party and the state. Finally, each section ends with a set of recommendations on further steps that can be taken in order to enable the establishment of a memorial on the prison system, internment and forced labor during the communist regime in Albania.

PART I

Historical Perspective on Totalitarian System in Albania

Common features of totalitarian communist regimes

Communism, in the viewpoint of those who promoted it, was destined to reform human society around the world¹ according to a model that emphasized equality as well as its permanent antagonism.. In political systems built based on this ideology, essentially totalitarian, reconciliation was impossible between those who believed in the principles of this ideology and among those who sought another pattern of governance.

The will to perpetuate communist regimes and leadership at their head created a system of violence and repression. Denial of fundamental freedoms and rights, social and political to individuals of a category of society was argued by official propaganda as a small price to be paid to touch the unfeasible dream of a society without class, without property and without poverty. The persecution of any individual considered dangerous to the power of communist leadership and the indoctrination with Marxist ideology and its derivatives to the rest of society is one of the major legacies of communism.

Communist regimes built a refined state mechanism of violence and terror. Violence was considered the only means of gaining power, while terror was necessary to consolidate and perpetuate the power and cult of the individual communist leadership. Since 1918, the “father” of the October Bolshevik Revolution, Vladimir Ilic Lenin would commission local communist leaders: *“Comrades! The rebellion of the kulaks in the five regions must be pressed without mercy. We need to set an example. 1) You need to publicly hang at least 100 notorious kulaks. 2) Publish their names. 3) Take away all of their grain. 4) Take hostages. This needs to be accomplished in such a way, that people for hundreds of miles around will see and tremble”*.²

His successor, Josif Visarionovic, Stalin, perfected the mechanisms of violence and terror of the Soviet state. During his government, Stalin’s name and communism become synonymous. Stalin entered the historical memory with the pipe on his lips as he gave the order *“Shoot at them!”* or *“Shoot the immediately!”*.³ New terms “proletarians”, “class struggles” were the agenda of his regime. The other terms used and embraced by all the communist dictators of Eastern and Central Europe would be

1. David Pryce-Jones, *The War that never was; the fall of the Soviet Empire 1885-1991*, London: Phoenix Press 1995, f. 1.

2. *Ibid*, pg. 11.

3. *Ibid*.

“revisionists,” “Trotskyites,” “kulaks,” “bourgeois,” “saboteurs.” All of these “discovered” terms from Stalin would be turned into “superstitions” for all communists and followers of the class struggle and the cult of the individual.

The elimination of opponents, political trials, the prison and internment system, the terrible Gulags were part of the state mechanism to intimidate, subdue and control the society. In this structure of violence, the most fearsome body for the defense of Soviet power and the exercise of violence and terror in the Soviet Union was the KGB (State Security Committee). It was assigned by the party to discover, pursue, and not rarely, eliminate “the enemies of the people.” All the secret services in the Communist East were set up according to this model. Its equivalent in Albania was State Security. There would be millions of people in the Soviet Union and thousands in Albania who would suffer the consequences of these fearsome regime structures, a story which until now does not have a proper scientific study. Denial and sacrifice of any human value by this repressive structure would actually be the “face” of these regimes.

It would be these mechanisms of violence and terror that would gradually transform these countries into closed and submissive societies. The Great Russian writer Alexander Solzhenitsin (Alexander Solzhenitsyn) concludes in his book “The Gulag Archipelago” that totalitarian communist regimes “state no longer exists as a ruling class, but as a slave-owner state”⁴. The new man, or as he called it “Homo Sovieticus”, whom the state imposed convictions, beliefs, tastes, daily life, could not be a free man. In prisons, labor and internment camps, human dehumanization took frightening proportions. Well-known Russian academician Andrei Sakharov has described “gulags” or labor camps as “*places where human life had no value and everything human ceased to exist*”⁵.

The elimination of opponents, political trials, the prison and internment system, the terrible Gulags were part of the state mechanism to intimidate, subdue and control the society

4. Ibid, pg. 23.

5. Jay Bergman, Meeting the demands of reason; the life and thought of Andrei Sakharov, New York: Cornell University Press, 2009, f. 308.

Albanian state of “dictatorship of the proletariat” as a reign of terror

Albania's liberation from the Nazi-fascist invaders on November 29, 1944, brought before the National Liberation Front an emergency situation. The country was almost completely destroyed. The new provisional government of Enver Hoxha, since October 23, 1944, in Berat, promised to hold free elections and constitution of the Constitutional Assembly, determining the form of the regime, and voting the Charter of the Constitution for the newly Albanian state coming from the Second World War.⁶ According to the provisional government, the damages suffered by the Albanian people in the war were enormous. According to the data from the provisional government, the losses of the Albanian people after the end of the war were: 28,000 killed, 12,600 wounded, 10,000 inmates and interned at concentration camps in Italy and Germany, 46,700 burned houses, financial damage to Albania according the provisional government was: 3.833.303.099 gold francs.⁷ These highly manipulated figures were used by the ongoing regime to justify its legitimacy, violence and grandeur.

Leaders of the CPA were clear about the importance of holding elections, but for them more evident the importance of winning in these elections. They would serve as a passport, not only to legalize their power but also to be free to take all the measures to establish and consolidate the communist regime in the future. In the period from December 1944 to December 2, 1945, CPA set itself some tasks that would help in winning the election.

The first task was to take measures to strengthen government positions. The policy followed by CPA leaders was very cautious. They tried to use the stick and carrot. On one hand, they took swift measures to overcome the many difficulties of a country fresh out of war. The goal was to win the confidence of the poorest classes of the population and to show them “that this is their power⁸”. There was a great deal of work to build public buildings destroyed by war. Social assistance commissions were created, which would help war-damaged families. On the other hand, given that assistance would be provided by the population rather than the state, commissions should develop propaganda to increase the degree of solidarity between the population.⁹ The constant message of the CC of the CPA was that every work of these commissions to be followed by propaganda among the people. In the wake of measures to increase people's confidence in the provisional government, there was also a campaign to reduce some taxes. Particular attention was given to the press controlled by the CPA,

6. Archive of Ministry of Foreign Affairs further on: AMFA, File further on: D]. 1, No. A-1/a, Year further on V.] 1944, fl. 1. Declaration of Democratic Government of Albania before the second meeting of N.L Anti-fascist Council of Albania. Article of com. Enver Hoxha in the newspaper Bashkimi. Speech of com. Enver Hoxha on the occasion of the Independence Day and the coming of the Democratic Government in Tirana.

7. AMFA, D. 2, A-3/a, V. 1944, fl. 47. Various documents of the pre-liberation period used in the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for 1944 (referring to the Anti-Fascist Liberation War of our people).

8. Throughout the correspondence of CPA leaders with the communists of the base, during 1944-1945, constantly repeated the phrase: “We should show to the people that this is their power”.

9. Main documents ..., pg. 295.

propagation of Agrarian Reform¹⁰. Its implementation was a promise made to the Albanians that after the declaration of independence, but never had come to life. Its implementation, despite the many shortcomings has demonstrated since its inception, or the long-standing interests of the Communists, served to increase the number of Front supporters.

The other task was to eliminate or neutralize all those who were an obstacle to the present and future plans of the Communists, namely political opponents. We can divide them into several categories. Some were members of Balli Kombetar and Legality armed units, who remained in the country and continued their resistance against communism with armed struggle. The other category of communist opponents consisted of a large part of the middle and rich classes of society. They were opposed to the social and political changes promised by the communists, as they saw the destruction of private property and free enterprise. Opponents of communism were also a good part of the intellectuals who were educated abroad and sought the installation of a liberal democracy in Albania. Many skeptics about the CPA and communism were the leaders and populations of northern Albania. Their being “conservative, firmly attached to the land and devoted to traditional customs and doctrines, including religion”¹¹ saw at communism, the risk of changing their lifestyle. From such an analysis we can conclude that the communists stood with their feet in the sand. Their supportive ground in Albanian society was not so solid.

At the Berat meeting, Enver Hoxha stated that “all those who deal with fascist or pro-fascist activities will be pursued”.¹² However in the concept of CPA leaders in the group of fascists and pro-fascists were all those who opposed the reforms undertaken by the provisional government.¹³ On December 15, 1945, the National Liberal General Council adopted a set of laws: on the saboteurs of war and power; civil mobilization of specialists, on requisition of various items and commodities etc. All these laws provided for severe punishments for their offenders “which ranged from one to 30 years imprisonment to life imprisonment, or death and confiscation of their movable and immovable property and permanent loss or temporary civil and political rights”.¹⁴ Another way of eliminating and

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10. Bernd J. Fisher, Albania during the War 1939-1945, Tirana: “Çabej”, 2004, pg. 328.

11. Arshi Pipa, Albanian Stalinist, Tirana: “IKK&Princi”, 2007, pg. 28.

12. Enver Hoxha, Veprat, vol. 2, Tirana: “8 Nëntori”, 1971, pg. 375.

13. Ibid

14. Documents of the High Revolutionary National Liberation Authorities (1942-1944) edition of the Institute of Party History at the CC of APL, Tirana, “8 November”, 1962, p. 321.,

intimidating political opponents were the War Crimes Trials.¹⁵ On December 15, 1944, two other laws were passed: on the confiscation of movable and immovable property of political fugitives, and the decision to create Special Courts for Major Criminals of War. In the circular sent across the country it was explained that in the category of war criminals, besides Albanians involved in the administrations of the Italian and German invaders should be included “those who had helped to mobilize the people against the enemy, the organizers and initiators of the organizations of the Balli Kombëtar, Youth Command, Gendarmerie, Legality, SS Skanderbeg Division”¹⁶. The list of war criminals could include those who had an economic relationship with the invaders.¹⁷ The purpose of power was the complete marginalization of this category of population, which in essence constituted not only the real political opponents of the regime, but also the traditional Albanian political elite. Violence against the category of war criminals was comprehensive. In addition to the establishment of Special Courts for their punishment, a number of measures were taken against them, such as seizure of property, deportation of their families from main cities, etc.

Another task that CPA/NLF had set for itself had to do with the strengthening and reformation of the Anti-fascist National Liberation Front. The Front was a large organization that included most of those who wanted to fight for the liberation of the country. But after the liberation, the CPA had managed to take full control of it and used Front for other tasks. The CPA, as during the war, continued to remain in legality. Most of the population did not even know or understand what communism and CPA offered. By staying hidden within the Front, it was easier for CPA to meet its strategic goals in a population of low cultural and political levels. Particularly, keeping the status of illegality within the Front, which was considered the most comprehensive organization in the country, the CPA prevented the delineation of other parties, both internally and externally.

In April 1945 took place the election campaign for anti-fascist national liberation councils. It served CPA to establish the local power bases across the country. The cleansing of wartime councils of suspicious elements was of primary importance for the CPA, as well as the establishment of the National Liberation Anti-Fascist Councils in areas that during the war had not supported the Anti-fascist National Liberation Front¹⁸. The campaign for the election of the National Liberation Anti-Fascist Councils was faced with the open opposition of the population in the northern part of the country, which since January 1945 organized what is known as Koplik uprising. Partisan units of the People's Defense, fearful of the armed reactions

15. The identification, arrest and punishment of war criminals was part of the process of Denazification of Europe after World War II. However, the Albanian communists used this process as a tool to eliminate political opponents, alongside true collaborators of the invaders and war criminals.

16. Xhafer Sadikaj, *Genocide on the Kulaks in Communist Albania, 1948-1990*, f. 21.

17. *Ibid*, pg. 22

18. Interesting is the evidence that comes from foreign missions located in Tirana on the conduct of elections for anti-fascist national liberation councils. Elections in the main cities of the country were held in neighborhood quarters meetings, where only supporters of the Anti-fascist National Liberation Front were selected. Voting for council members was made by open vote, so all participants lifted the coup. There were no cases when there was a proposal from the room for any alternative candidate, or a candidate dropped down.

of this population, undertook a broad disarmament campaign.¹⁹ Reports from CPA circuit committees in the north of the country clearly demonstrate the violence exercised in various areas such as: Peshkopi, Shkodra highlands, Mirday, Pukë, Mat to compel their inhabitants to obey the commands and power of the communists.²⁰ In relations to Mehmet Shehu, commander of operations in the North sends Enver Hoxha are clearly understood deaths by firing squad without trial, maltreatments and burning of northern highlanders houses. They also document the mass imprisonment and internment of this population. According to Mehmet Shehu, the motto of the operation would be: "The reaction should be eliminated. The people should be organized and mobilized. To whom to seek the weapon, either the weapon or the soul must be delivered."²¹ Similar situations were registered in 1946, when the disarmament operation extended to the south of Albania.

After securing the victory of the elections on December 2, 1945 and establishing the People's Republic of Albania, the regime began to show its intentions even more clearly. Starting from January 1945, a series of trials were conducted across the country which were directed against the Catholic clergy; social democrats, monarchists, landowners who opposed the application of the Agrarian Reform.²² Soon, at the dock, will be placed even people who had been part of the National Liberation Movement but clearly expressed dissatisfaction with the policy being applied in Albania.²³ The senior executives of the CPA, to support the consolidation of the totalitarian regime, also created the mechanisms by which the persecution, discovery and elimination of political opponents, whether they were real or imaginary, would be exercised.

The People's Protection Directorate and then the State Security would receive a terrible fame in Albania starting in early 1946 to further elaborate pro-memory on the political situation, the hostile work of the Catholic clergy and the "reaction" in general as well as the measures taken in this regard.²⁴ CPA, in order to challenge all the activity of the adversaries of the installed regime, but not yet consolidated, urgently needed to fill its ranks with loyal people in the State Security structures so that any resistance that could be made to be shattered from the beginning.²⁵

19. CSA, F. 14/ AP str, V. 1945, D. 2, fl. 7.

20. Ibid. The dossier includes reports of the CPA Circular Committees from the areas of Peshkopia, Kukes, Shkodra, etc., where they clearly show the problems faced by communist leaders in these areas and their fierce reaction against highlanders.

21. CSA, F. 14/AP (Str), V. 1945, D. 215, fl. 31. Order of Mehmet Shehu, Commander of Corps III, Shkodra for Brigade Staffs I, XI, XXIII, XXIV, February 12, 1945.

22. See: AIDSSH, F. 1, D. 1070 A, Rexho Plaku's investigative-judicial process, etc.

23. See: AIDSSH, F. 1, D. 2224, The investigative-judicial process Shefqet Beja, Selahudin Totos and 12 other people accused of hostile activity against the interests of the people.

24. CSA, F. 14/AP (Str), V. 1946, D. 62/1, fl. 46-52. Monthly Reports of the Party Committee of the Shkodra Region to the Central Committee about the political situation, the hostile work of the Catholic clergy and reaction in general, the measures taken to expose them, the party's organizational status, economic issues, organization issues measures, personel etc.

25. CSA, F. 14/AP (Str), V. 1946, D. 98, fl. 21, 138-139. Radiograms and correspondence between the Central Committee of the Party, the Party Committees of the regions and Military Departments for appointments in armed forces, defense and security.

“The reaction should be eliminated... To whom to seek the weapon, either the weapon or the soul must be delivered!”

It was not difficult for CPA, as it begun to gain broader information and, above all, being the most organized and armed nation-wide political force, to eliminate since their start attempts to counter the regime, the group of deputies, the organization “Albanian Union”, and above all the uprising of Postriba.²⁶ The People’s Protection Directorate initially was careful so people couldn’t know the ways, tactics, methods and tortures that were made to the opposing elements. Enver Hoxha and the CPA were aware that if in the beginning of their power such methods were known by the people, the effect would have been very negative, which would incite hatred and mistrust against the communist government of Albania. The regime called Political opponents as enemies, the leadership of the CPA provided the special directive to fight the “class enemy”. This directive was engraved in the draft status of CPA.²⁷

The problem of power consolidation was the main concern for Enver Hoxha and his regime. In the VIIth Plenum of the CPA held from 30 August to 1 September 1947, Enver Hoxha analyzing the internal situation stated that “... the work has proceeded. Achieved improvements have been made with a fierce fight against enemy elements. But these have not yet been discovered. Every day the enemies come out”.²⁸ “Apparently, the Albanian communist leader had not yet properly consolidated his power. The term “every day the enemies come out” says much about the continuity of installing the communist dictatorship in the country. At a meeting of the Politburo on February 12, 1947, Bedri Spahiu strongly demanded that, according to the Circular of the Ministry of Justice, the People’s Courts would be formed, which would spur the country from all the enemies.²⁹ Interestingly, Bedri Spahiu, seeing the

26. Demir Dyrmishi, “Activism of Political Adversaries and Uprising of Postriba (Jan.-Sept. 1946)”, in Historical Studies, no. 1-2, Tirana: Academy of Sciences of Albania, Institute of History 1999, pg. 110.

27. CSA, F. 14/AP (OU), V. 1946, D. 2, fl. 55. Minutes of Plenum Meeting (6th) Central Committee of the CPA on April 25-27, 1946, where the following issues were discussed: On preparations for 1st Congress of CPA to be held on May 25, 1946.

28. CSA, F. 14/AP (OU), V. 1947, D. 1, fl. 9. Manuscript notes of Com. Enver Hoxha as well as a record of the 7th Plenary Meeting of the CC of the CPA, 30 August - 1 September 1947.

29. CSA, F.14/AP (OU), V. 1947, D. 7, fl. 15. On trials and legality. On the Functioning of Military Courts and Civil Courts. Creating court courses.

underlying lack of credible element for this work, required the creation of special courses to form new judges loyal to CPA.³⁰

Following this policy, at the meeting of the Politburo of 14 May 1947, it was decided to arrest 10 MPs considered to be opponents of the regime.³¹ Through this act drops very simple value of each legal act in the country, where leading to the arrest of the person was not the court's decision, but that of Politburo. Interestingly, there is no accurate record in this meeting, but just a handwritten decision stating "those who will work right will be honored and those who work crooked will be punished. On this issue the party will be clarified by the process".³² The one who worked right and the one who was crooked; this was no longer defined by the court, but by the Party. Also this was no longer a matter of public opinion, but of the party which dominated and manipulated it.

The communist regime that was already installed in Albania required the closure of any door of cooperation with the Western powers. Such a fact is the Albanian Communist leadership's refusal to accept the invitation to participate in the Paris Conference, which was to be held on July 12, 1947, for approval the "Marshall Plan".³³ At the beginning Albania should depend by Yugoslav tutelage and then the Soviet Union for everything. On 5 September 1947, the Minister of Interior Koci Xoxe briefed the Politburo on the further hits given to "enemy elements, remains of fascism, various agents, participants in the group of MP's saboteurs".³⁴

The Albanian Communist Party was aware that power would have been compromised if it would allow the establishment of other political organizations. To make this impossible, in 1947, the Ministry of Internal Affairs issued a circular with formalities to be completed by various political organizations and cultural, scientific and professional associations, for approval and issuance of a permit to continue their activity³⁵

30. Ibid, pg.l. 17.

31. CSA, F.14/AP (OU), V. 1947, D. 15, fl. 1. Minutes of the meeting of the Political Bureau of the CC on May 14, 1947, where it was decided to arrest 10 MPs as well as Kadri Hoxha (which will be presented to the CC), as well as the clarification that will be made to the Party related with this, for the struggle against reactionaries and nationalist elements.

32. Ibid

33. CSA, F.14/AP (OU), V. 1947, D. 22, fl. 1. Minutes of meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the CPA on July 8, 1947, where it was decided not to take part in the Paris Conference (to be held on 12 July 1947 for the "Marshall Plan"). See also: Benn Steil, *The Marshall Plan; Dawn of the Cold War*, New York: Simon&Schuster, 2018, ff. 148, 193, 228.

34. CSA, F.14/AP (OU), V. 1947, D. 27, fl. 5. Minutes of the meeting of the Politburo of the CC of the CPA on September 4, 1947, where it was informed by Koci Xoxe on the development of the judicial process of the enemy elements, the remains of fascism, various agents, participants in the group of saboteurs MPs etc, and appointment of persons to be elected MPs. See also: CSA, F.14/AP (Str), V. 1947, D. 83.

35. CSA, F.14/AP (Str), V. 1947, D. 308/4, fl. 2. Circular of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

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Meanwhile, the state violence of the Albanian Communist Party did not focus solely on arrests and sentencing by farce trials of the opposing elements, but also on shooting without trials.³⁶ One of the methods of these shootings was kidnapping people from their houses in the middle of the night and then nothing was known about their fate until they got a notice from security bodies.³⁷ These security methods for the elimination of people without trial were certainly made on the orders of Koci Xoxe and with the approval of Enver Hoxha. But since the relations with Yugoslavia were in disrepair, the “Commander” had to come out clean from these wrongs and all responsibility had to go to the Minister of Interior. In this period there are countless information coming to the Central Committee of the CPA regarding the prevailing security situation on the “wrong” methods that were applied which were ordered by Koci Xoxe.³⁸

Koci Xoxe would be arrested and executed in 1949.³⁹ With the execution of Koçi Xoxes, for the state security organs begins a new era under the direction of Mehmet Shehu who will lead this body from the position of the Minister of Internal Affairs even more rudeness and brutality than his predecessor. Under his authority the investigative bodies will begin to apply the “lawfulness of the hit” where, according to a material drawn up by the General Prosecutor’s Office titled “In the light of legality”, would be justified (as far as it could be) maltreatment in prisons, arbitrary actions, etc., by the competent law enforcement authorities in the country.⁴⁰ It is not known who drafted this material and it is not signed.⁴¹

36. CSA, F.14/AP (Str), V. 1948, D. 167, fl. 2-4. The correspondence of the Political Department of the Army and the Party Committee of the Pukë district sent to the Central Committee of the Party that speaks of some persecution of persons without trial by the Security and People’s Protection bodies.

37. Ibid

38. CSA, F.14/AP (Str), V. 1948, D. 169. Relations, letters and information arrived at the Central Committee of the Party by Neste Kerenxhi and other companions on the situation of the Security Bodies after XIth Plenum XI and information on the wrong methods in the work of the State Security ordered by Koci Xoxe. See also CSA, F.14/AP (Str), V. 1948, D. 469. Captain Mit-hat Zaçe’s letter addressed to the Central Committee of the Albanian Communist Party regarding the secret arrest and execution of Skender Çela and Mark Toçi of Durrës by order of Koçi Xoxe.

39. CSA, F.14/AP (Str), V. 1948, D. 621. Relations and information from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, sent to comrade Enver Hoxha and the CC of CPA, as well as correspondence on these issues: On arrest and imprisonment of Koçi Xoxe, Pandi Kristo, Vaskë Koleci, Vangjo Mitrojorgji and Myftar Tare.

40. CSA, F. 14/AP (Str), V. 1949, D. 627, fl. 1-5. Material from the General Prosecutor’s Office entitled “In the light of legality”, which refers to: on obstacles and damages in the plans, illegal acts, mistreatment in prisons, arbitrary actions, lack of discipline by the departments in the preparation and submission of plans, implementation of circulars and orders by executive committees; and on negligence in the administration of state property.

41. Ibid No signature, fl. 5-10.

Life in camps and internment areas

Following the decisions taken in December 1944, a series of orders forced a certain category of people: landowners, merchants, former politicians to leave the main cities of Albania as: Tirana, Durrës, Korça, Shkodra etc. and live in other areas of the country. These individuals were denied the right to return to their homes, which were confiscated and used to shelter officials of the new regime, families of martyrs of the National Liberation Movement, etc. Since 1945, internment began to be used as another punitive measure against political opponents. The earliest information we have about the implementation of this measure is February 1945, when Mehmet Shehu ordered to deport those who accommodate refugees in the mountains, or “war criminals”, as well as those who refused to hand over the weapons.⁴² In the file that contains these orders, are also given the names of the inhabitants of Highlands of Shkodra, Puka and Mirdita who were deported. According to these documents, the internments were not carried out based on a special law. They served as a means of violence and pressure, with the sole purpose of subduing North residents who were not supporters of the Provisional Government of E. Hoxha.

Another category deported since the beginning of the communist regime in Albania was that of the families of persons who were condemned as “war criminals”. The research so far doesn't provide not much data on decisions for their deportation, but testimonies of many of them proves that they have been sent to internment camps since 1945.

In a general analysis 1945-1949 were the most severe years of implementation of this system for many reasons:

First, in these years, the system of barbed-wire internment camps was very similar to the concept of concentration camps. The site where the camp was positioned was a place surrounded by barbed wire and protected by armed guards on the main areas. Camps were placed in old buildings, warehouses or improvised barracks. Given that all these camps were not built to accommodate families, but they were quickly adapted as gathering or concentration camps, as Enver Hoxha often expressed in the Politburo meetings, basic living conditions, food, accommodation, hygiene, leave much to be desired. From March 1945 until 1949, there were two camps of this nature, in Berat and Kruja.⁴³ As a rule, internees from the North were sent to the Berat camp and to the southern ones in Kruja. This was a well-thought tactic, as it avoided the familiarity that could be established between the internees and camp guards. At the same time, this created difficulties for family members of the interned to take care of them and provide them with more opportunities for nutrition and hygiene.

42. CSA, F. 14/AP (Str), V. 1945, D. 215, fl. 31. Order of Mehmet Shehu, Commander of IIIrd Corps, Shkodra, for staffs of I, XI, XXIII, XXIV Brigades, 12 February 1945.

43. Kastriot Dervishi, Prisons and Camps of Communist Albania, Tirana: ISKPK, 2015, pg. 79.

Second, in the years 1945 - 1949 internments and evictions from settlements had no legal basis. **It is important to note that until 1949, the legal basis for this system is yet to be clarified. According to researcher Kastriot Dervishi, the communist-led government utilized the legislation of the Albanian Kingdom period in this regard. If this is true then a large part of decision-making on internments and deportations should be the attribute of the Council of Ministers. It turns out that most of the decisions have been taken by the military commands, or those of the People's Protectors, a precursor to the State Security.**

Thirdly, in these internment camps were not sent people who were guilty, but relatives of people unwanted by the regime: the fugitives abroad, those who were in mountains and were organizing resistance against the regime; political prisoners; of the partisans deserted by the communist army.

On January 10, 1949 it was adopted decree no. 649 which made legal "deportations and confiscations".. On 26 June 1954, this decree was revised and supplemented, avoiding some objections to the decree approved three months before titled: "On confiscations" and to better define legal terms on the notion of deportation-internment⁴⁴. The decree was passed by the People's Assembly on August 2, 1954, and ratified deportation-internment as an administrative measure for political opponents.

This decree allowed *de jure* closure of camps, but *de facto* they relocated as part of the prison system. Legislation on deportation-internment changed again in the 1960s, 1979s and 1986s⁴⁵.

The system of deportations-internments continued to be executed against the regime's opponents, those who presented escape tendency, or the family members of political prisoners, and against any person whom the regime suspected of "posing social threats." This meant that the deportation-internment measure could also be addressed to political prisoners who were

Since 1945, internment began to be used as another punitive measure against political opponents. The earliest information we have about the implementation of this measure is February 1945, when Mehmet Shehu ordered to deport those who accommodate refugees in the mountains, or "war criminals", as well as those who refused to hand over the weapons.

CSA, F. 14/AP (Str), V. 1945, D. 215, fl. 31. Order of Mehmet Shehu, Commander of IIIrd Corps, Shkodra, for staffs of I, XI, XXIII, XXIV Brigades, 12 February 1945.

44. CSA, F. 490/Council of Ministers, V. 1954, D. 1057, fl. 2. Minister of Internal Affairs, Mehmet Shehu's report addressed to the Council of Ministers regarding the draft decree, on deportation-internments, without a date.

45. See: Kastriot Dervishi, Prisons and Camps of Communist Albania, Tirana ISKPK, 2015, f. 33-37.

“Each day, the internees were required to sign up to a register at the Security Office or the police”

finishing their sentence. Since 1979 deportation-internment measure was also applied to children over the age of 14. The deported accused of escaping, or agitation and propaganda, were sentenced, deported from their homes and transferred to internment centers. Although under the law the period of deportation-internment was 3-5 years, Deportation-Internment Commissions were entitled to prolong this period indefinitely⁴⁶. In the archive fund of the Investigation Office, at the Archives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, under the administration of the Authority for Information on former State Security files today, there are hundreds of such decisions that indicate the postponement of internment. In many cases, the duration of internment exceeds 20-30 years. Families of former collaborators with invaders, leaders of Balli Kombëtar and Legality, deported since 1945 remained in internment until the fall of communist regime in 1991. This meant that 3-4 generations of these families were born and raised in internment without minimal rights of PRA/PSRA citizens.

Since 1949, within the Ministry of Internal Affairs, but under the strict control of the Central Committee, were established special commissions, which took decisions on the deportation-internment measure (Commission of Deportations and Confiscations (1949-1954); Commission on Deportations-Internments 1955-1976 and 1980-1990; Special Commission for Deportations-Internments 1977-1979; Central Commission on Deportations-Internments 1990). According to the official figures recently drafted by the governmental institutions responsible for providing compensation for the damage caused during the dictatorship period, the deportations by decision were 12,500, a figure that does not include juveniles, the children of the prisoners, etc. According to a report published in 2016 by the Institute for Crime and Consequences of Communism Studies (ISKK) in Albania, in the period 1944-1990 the internees were 59 009. According to the same report, the deceased because of the internment conditions were 7022⁴⁷.

46. AMPB, F. Investigation, V. 1949-1975.

47. The data was obtained from the official website of ISKPK.

A relatively mild measure of freedom limitation as a consequence of internment was that of expulsion, according to which a person or a family was ordered by the Central Commission to leave his home and be transferred to live in another area that could be up to 3 districts away. Unlike the internee, the expelled person could move in some districts (except that of origin) without having to pass the daily control at the operational or police officer.

There were dozens of sites across Albania identified as political internment centers. The typology of internment camps surrounded by barbed wire, continued until 1954, in which the internee life was very harsh. After 1954 there were no more closed areas as concentration camps, but were villages from which the internees could not leave without permission. Each day, the internees were required to sign up to a register at the Security Office or the police. The most renewed areas were the villages in the districts of Fier, Lushnja, Vlorë and Berat, but indeed all over Albania there were villages used for this purpose. The general criterion continued to be that the residents of the north were internally displaced to the south and vice versa, thereby eliminating contact with the territory of origin and old friendships. The internees mostly worked in agricultural cooperatives, but often engaged in public constructions or reconstructions as was the case with political prisoners.

A complete overview of the internments during the 1950s is reflected in a report by Interior Minister Kadri Hazbiu in September 1963. According to this report, the number of internees by Deportation-Internment Commission reached 1 103, which geographically were distributed in this way: “662 located in Lushnja district, 206 in Fier district, 71 in Thumana, Krujë, 66 in Borsh, Saranda, 30 in Berat District, 19 in Hajmel, Shkodra, 10 in Cërrik, Elbasan, 12 in Rreshen district, 11 in Zvërnec, Vlorë, 3 in Tepelena district, 4 in Lezha district, 5 in Vlorë district, 1 in Gramsh, 1 in Gjirokastra and 1 in Maliq, Korçë”⁴⁸. According to the social categories, internees were divided into: “103 internees as member of war criminals who do not benefit from amnesty (family members of Gjon Marka Gjoni, Prenk Previsi, Abas Kupi, Muharem Bajraktari, Qazim Mulleti, Hysni Demës, Fiqiri Dines etc.). These are located in Lushnja district, and mostly in Gradishtë. 2) 101 internees are chieftains, kulaks or members of their families, who have escaped abroad. 3) 292 internees have members of their families who have escaped abroad, who carry out espionage activity or enter as saboteurs in our country. 4) 239 internees have their family members escaped abroad and reside close to the border line (5 km from the border). 5) 271 internees for risk of escape”⁴⁹. The rest are convicted for ordinary causes.

48. AIDSSH, F. Directorate of State Security, V. 1963, D. 168. Report of the Ministry of Interior for the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, September 30, 1963.

49. AIDSSH, F. Directorate of State Security, V. 1963, D. 168. Report of the Ministry of Interior for the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, September 30, 1963.

Tepelena Camp (1949-1953)

The years 1949-1953 were undoubtedly the most difficult years for the communist regime in Albania. After the collapse of relations with Tito's Yugoslavia, despite its propaganda, the communist government faced difficulties both economically and politically. At the same time, the Albanian government faced a pressure coming from both the southern neighbor, Greece and the western states. In Greece, the Civil War was at its peak and the Albanian government was living in fear of a possible attack by Greece. Meanwhile, the United States and Great Britain launched a joint operation aimed at overthrowing communist regimes in Eastern Europe.⁵⁰ In the framework of these operations, they trained and sent in Albania groups of Albanian political fugitives. All these internal and external circumstances caused difficulties in the lives of Albanians, which led to growing dissatisfaction due to very difficult economic conditions⁵¹. Economic difficulties heightened the number of dissatisfied with the regime. Consequently, in these years, there is an increase in the number of fugitives outside the Albanian border, which increased the number of internally displaced families. The difficult economic conditions and the massive number of interned people had direct reflection on the extremely difficult living conditions in the Tepelena camp.

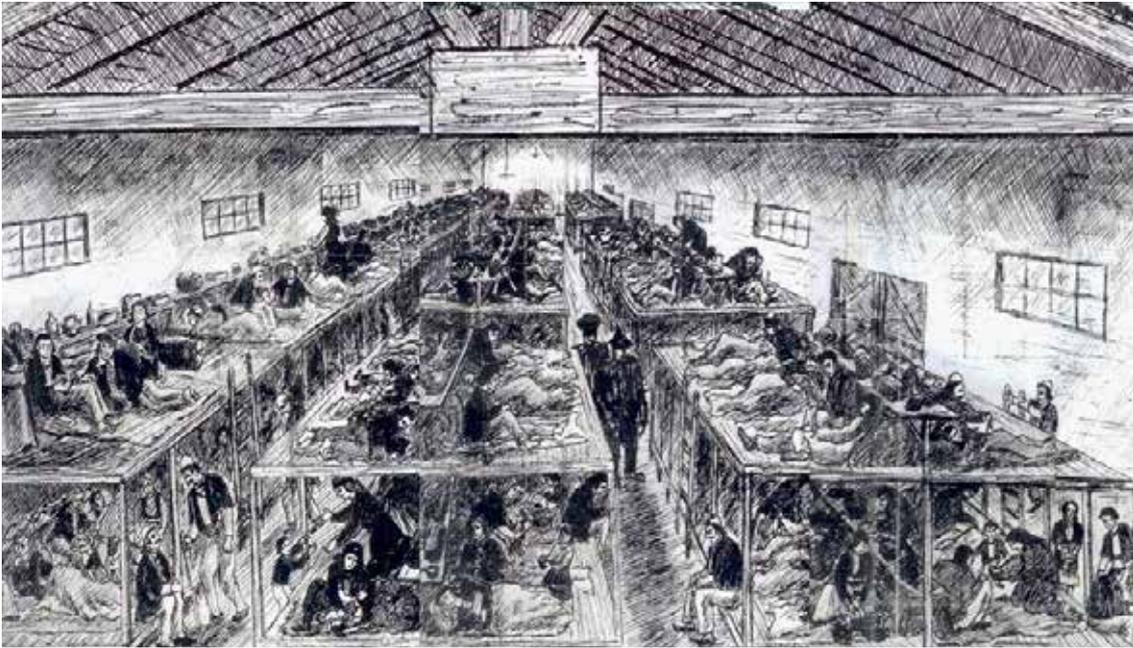
After the closure of the camps surrounded by barbed wire in Berat and Kruja, the internees were transferred to Tepelena. Originally, the villages of Turhan, Memaliajt and Veliqiot were used as internment areas and then moved to the vicinity of the city of Tepelena. We think that the reason why Tepelena was chosen as internment site was due to practical convenience. Tepelena was under the jurisdiction of the Internal Affairs Directorate of Berat, and there were six cabins remaining from the time of the Italian occupation, which were adapted as dwellings for the internees.⁵² In the camp of Tepelena were housed the families of Albanian politicians who were part of the occupation administration during the war, leaders of the Balli Kombëtar and Legality, the leaders of Dibra, such as: Gjonamarkaj, Kazazi, Bajraktari, Mirakaj, Kola, Kaloshi, Dine, Previzi, Kupi, Merlikaj, Petrela, Blloshmi, Mulleti, Biçaku etc. The camp of Tepelena was run by two commanders: Bektash Pogaçe (1949 –1952) and Haki Ibrahim (1952-1953), both with unfinished education⁵³. Lek Previzi, an internee at the Berat camp and then in Turhan and Tepelena recalls: *"The proposal [for the transfer of prisoners in Tepelena] came from Manush Mufti, a criminal soul. At the Berat conference, he had proposed that all of their opponents and their enemies be killed, from the age of 12 and above. Even, Enver was surprised. After the decision to transfer them from Berat, in May 1948, internees, about 2500 people, were loaded into 38 army trucks, departed at night on the bad mountain road of Këlcyra gorge. But*

50. Indeed, many scholars think that the West intended to keep the communist governments of Eastern Europe under pressure in order to prevent the spread of communist ideology in Western states, like Italy and France.

51. Documentary sources speak of extremely difficult economic conditions, especially in the northern provinces, which were facing a real hunger crisis.

52. Kastriot Dervishi, Prisons and Camps of Communist Albania, Tirana: ISKPK, 2016, f. 17.

53. Kastriot Dervishi, Prisons and Camps of Communist Albania, Tirana: ISKPK, 2016, f. 18.



TEPELENA CAMP, ILLUSTRATED BY LEK PERVEZI

what happened? In a bad turn one truck is overturned and there died a man and his wife, Petrela, and the baby they were carrying was thrown out, but was saved by a miracle. There were some injured and wounded. The trucks reached Tepelena, but they didn't stop there, continued to Turan, Veliçot and Memaliaj, where they unloaded the passengers as they were sacks of potatoes⁵⁴.

The Tepelena camp continued to be a site surrounded by barbed wire, in which internees were controlled by armed soldiers. According to researcher Kastriot Dervishi, who gave an overview of prisons and internment camps in Communist Albania during 1949-1953, in Tepelena from 1950-1952 were interned from 600 people (1952) to 1405 people (August 1950): men, women, elderly and children.⁵⁵ Tepelena was not the only internment site in Albania. Other camps were those of Porto Palermo (1949-1951), Kuçi of Kurvelesh etc. However Turan and Tepelena camps are the two camps that remained in the indelible memory of those who had the misfortune to live in them. Tepelena is remembered for the extremely difficult living conditions and the lack of food, the lack of hygiene, the heavy work that men, women and children over the age of 12 were forced to do, as well as children who lost their lives from illnesses or mines left from the time of World War II and surrounded the camp territory.

54. <https://kujto.al/si-u-krijuan-e-si-funksionuan-kampet-e-internimit-ne-diktaturen-komuniste-ne-shqiperi/> visited on 25.6.2018.

55. <https://kujto.al/dokumenti-i-1950-kampi-i-tepelenes-dhe-mizorite-mbi-femijet/> visited on 24 April 2018.

The loss of human lives, especially of children, is what makes Tepelena camp a special place of memory and reflection. Although research on archival documents is not profound and needs further research, they show that during the years 1949-1950, deaths from dysentery are reported. Meanwhile, from October 1950 to December of that year, the number of children decreased by 285. This big difference in figures can be explained by an order to allow young children to stay with relatives who were not interned. This change came after a discussion at the Political Bureau of the situation at the Tepelena and Valias camps. Enver Hoxha claimed that "it is not good to keep children in concentration camps" adding that "there may be children up to 2-3 years old who need their mothers"⁵⁶.

Over the number of children who lost their lives in Tepelena, we have many testimonies, which do not always converge. Researchers' attention should focus on defining their exact number and still is a need for research either in the documentary resources that have been partially exploited and much remains to be overwhelmingly explored, as well as to cross match them with testimonies of survivors from Tepelena Camp.

This is how Lekë Previzu recalls his life in Tepelena: "*Tepelena internees, men and women had turned into animals carrying heavy weights, such as wood, logs, stone tiles, etc. To compliment this testimony, with the murder of Bardhok Biba in August 1949, in Tepelena were added 500 families from Mirdita composed of 2500 people, elderly people, women and children, where the problems and deaths included them also, mainly children. With the arrival of Mirdita people, internees were around 5000. Because of lack of place in the four barracks with beds, they were sheltered in two empty barracks without scaffold, straight into the cement. In November 1951, there was a small child release, because the families had no where to send them. However, on this occasion some people from Mirdita and some men were released. Therefore, some space was freed and all the internees were gathered in four barracks with wooden scaffoldings. There were no more mass deportations. Occasionally they bring families or individuals. They started to bring prisoners that have finished their sentence, and they were Catholic clerics and some intellectuals from Shkodra. In the spring of 1952, they brought dozen families and men from Tirana, with various pretexts.*"⁵⁷. Another painful testimony is that of Gjelë Gjikota, who lost her daughter in Tepelena. The girl was born the day that Gjikota's husband, along with his brother and 60 highlanders, fled to Yugoslavia. Gjikota and her sister-in-law were arrested. Her sister in law bore the child on the road. Both unlucky women, together with their newborn children, had spent four months in the investigator and then interned at Tepelena. Gjikota recalls: "*Beqir Balluku arrived. He made the appeal. We were 3 thousand, and became 6 thousand people. 3 thousand more people were interned. They were brought there...I don't know how I am alive today, do you understand! Tepelena was: we ate oak leaves, acorns, nettles ... We boiled and ate them. We lived and we came ship ... They gave us two Lek bread just to keep us alive, from today until tomorrow same time. They gave us also some beans, in those oil barrels, that were not eatable. We were too many people, we were 6 thousand people.*"

56. CSA, F. 14/AP OU, V. 1950, D. 70, fl. 16. From speech of Enver Hoxha in the meeting of Politburo, November 22, 1950.

57. <https://kujto.al/si-u-krijuan-e-si-funksionuan-kampet-e-internimit-ne-diktaturen-komuniste-ne-shqiperi/> visited on 25.6.2018.

“The proposal [for the transfer of prisoners in Tepelena] came from Manush Mufti, a criminal soul. At the Berat conference, he had proposed that all of their opponents and their enemies be killed, from the age of 12 and above”

The memories of Lek Pervizi

Layers, layers, layersin Tepelena! Ah Tepelena, what do I remember! How many people have died there, god was the only hope! Useless. Three thousand people deported without any reason, because Bardhok Biba was murdered. We were 3 thousand people, became 6 thousand and... there is shortage of bread, shortage of food, just burying people every day, each day. I would never forget. Only one murdered him (Bardhok Biba) not all Mirdita! They interned all Mirdita. Vehicles with internees coming, endless. Children dying, so many that history cannot recall! So many children died there.... Children from Highlands of Shkodra died the most. To a woman from Shkodra, Theresa was called, three grandchildren died of typhus as our daughters: 14 years, 12 years, 6 years. She left her three granddaughters dead and was released at the same time with me, and she had no one to get into her home.”. The night when Dila, three years old, died asking for water ...¹⁵⁸

Some scholars believe that it was precisely the high mortality of children in the Tepelena camp and the need to consolidate the deportation system that forced senior communist leaders to make the decision by the end of 1953 to close the Tepelena camp and, in general barbed wire camps.

58. <https://kujto.al/gjele-gjikola-ne-kampin-e-tepelenes-lashe-shpirtin/> visited on 24 qershor 2018.

Living in prisons and forced labor in camps next to them

The number of arrested persons, especially in the years 1945-1947 was considerable, as shown by documents reviewed so far from the archives of Ministry of Interior and CC of CPA / APL⁵⁹. Existing prisons in 1944 were totally inadequate to withstand the arrests of all the aforementioned categories. The government led by Enver Hoxha used private homes and other public institutions, as detention and torture centers. In the years 1944-1946 political prisons were under the People's Protection Directorate, then an operational structure of the Ministry of Defense. In 1947, all the prisons went under the control of the Interior Ministry that was responsible for internal security, while outer perimeters were controlled by compulsory service soldiers, taking care to select the most loyal ones.⁶⁰ The eight existing prisons before-World War II were reserved for political prisoners who were designated as "enemies of the people," seven prisons for detainees defined as "ordinal" and three prisons were mixed. During this period, besides the prisons, begun the operation of labor camps for prisoners⁶¹. Labor camps were places where sentence was served by doing forced labor such as reclamation, public works construction, mining, agriculture etc.⁴ They were often built near the place where prisoners were supposed to work. Such camps were temporary (built with tents or barracks, surrounded by barbed wire and strictly controlled by armed soldiers), while in other cases were located in permanent form, especially near the mines.

All political prisoners were forced to work in these labor camps. The first labor camps for prisoners were those of Juba, near Durrës (1946); that of Maliq, near Korça (1946); Beden and Lekaj, near Kavaja (1948), Valshuk, Berat (1948) and many others. The internment sites during this period had also the characteristics of the labor camps. All the internees, whether they were men, women, elderly or infant, lived in sites surrounded by barbed wire and were forced to do extremely heavy work. Such labor camps for internees were in Tirana, Tepelenë, Cërrik etc.

During 1951-1990 the regime created mechanisms to continue class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat as the only way to keep up the regime. Repression became more structured and systematic. While until 1949, life in prisons and internment site were not yet formalized through laws and decisions, the system has become more solid and operated on a clear legal basis. From the preliminary research we conducted in the archives, it turns out that there are still undiscovered documents that give evidence of the lives of the inmates and the interned during this period. Thus, at the Council of Ministers' Fund at the Central State Archive there are a number of documents referring to the prisoners' and internees' food rates as well as their payment modalities. Although research needs for further insights, it turns out that the life of prisoners was extremely difficult even in the eyes of senior communist leaders. The prisoners working in the labor camps were rewarded on the basis of

59. A more in-depth study would be needed in order to determine the exact number of arrests and sentences of this period.

60. Kastriot Dervishi, *Prisons and Camps of Communist Albania*, Tirana: ISKPK, 2015, f. 79.

61. *Ibid.*



TEPELENA CAMP, ILLUSTRATED BY LEK PERVEZI

the rate. However the remuneration from their work was 85% goes for the state budget and only 15% was sent into the budget of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and would be benefited by the prisoners, but this was not in monetary value, but for clothing and work equipment.⁶² In 1950, there was a reduction in the prison rate of prisoners and labor camps. According to documents of the Council of Ministers' Fund at the Central State Archives, the calories of non-working political prisoners were 1803 per day, while for prisoners in labor camps they would receive 2347 calories per day. Most calories would come from bread (900 g), rice, pasta and only 100 g. meat⁶³.

62. CSA, F. 490/Council of Ministers, V. 1953, D. 1093, fl. 4. Minister of Internal Affairs, Mehmet Shehu's report addressed to the Council of Ministers on the Draft Decree on the Remuneration of Prisoners Working for State Enterprises and Entities, June 12, 1953.

63. CSA, F. 490/Council of Ministers, V. 1950, D. 704, fl. 21. Council of Ministers Decision No. 657, data 21.8.1950 on food rations for MIA personnel, prisoners and interned.

Over the years the regime opened new prisons in all major centers, always distinguishing those reserved for political prisoners from the prisons destined for ordinary prisoners. The official purpose of detaining political prisoners was “re-education and rehabilitation” through suffering and labor

Over the years the regime opened new prisons in all major centers, always distinguishing those reserved for political prisoners from the prisons destined for ordinary prisoners. The official purpose of detaining political prisoners was “re-education and rehabilitation” through suffering and labor, so that, in addition to prisons (which were isolated and fenced with barbed wire and soldiers, within which the prisoners served out their sentence without working), the regime began building labor camps. There were only two prisons in communist Albania not used as working camps, while all others had this function. Almost all inmates who were able to work were assigned to these camps and, over the years, the number of labor camps exceeded that of prisons. The largest public works in Albania during the communist years were realized through the forced labor of prisoners (both political and ordained prisoners) and interned, who were forced to serve in these works also to maintain themselves.

Even in this period most of the prisons were conceived as a labor camp in which living conditions were very difficult. In the early 1950s, especially after Stalin's death, there was a change in the direction of improving the living conditions of prisoners. On November 10, 1953 was discussed a

draft decree on the remuneration of prisoners working in state enterprises and entities. Different from the previous period, prisoners would be paid on the basis of the rate. Now prisoners would receive 35% of their salary in the form of clothing or work tools and camps, over time, would be treated as part of the hozrashot system⁶⁴. According to the report submitted by the Minister of Internal Affairs, the interneers had been left out of this law, as they had an administrative sentence. “The interneers would be placed in different jobs and they would not be granted (shared) anything of their labor income, but with those they will secure their livelihoods. Those interned will not be paid anything from the state, while for those who are not in work will be provided food, clothing and sleeping clothes as it is today”⁶⁵.

An improvement is also noted in the food rations given to the inmates who worked. According to the report accompanying the Council of Ministers' decision on the food ratios of inmates working in state-owned enterprises and entities, it was reported that by 1954 prison rates for food were down to almost 50% and, as a result, their work has undergone a significant decline. There was deterioration in their health status and an increase in the number of patients.⁶⁶. According to this decision, prisoners would be treated as follows::

64. CSA, F. 490/Council of Ministers, V. 1953, D. 231, fl. 1. Report of the Minister of Internal Affairs, Mehmet Shehu on the Council of Ministers on the remuneration of prisoners working in enterprises and state institutions, November 10, 1953.

65. CSA, F. 490/Council of Ministers, V. 1953, D. 231, fl. 1. Report of the Minister of Internal Affairs, Mehmet Shehu on the Council of Ministers on the remuneration of prisoners working in enterprises and state institutions, November 10, 1953.

66. CSA, F. 490/Council of Ministers, V. 1954, D. 205. Minister of Internal Affairs, Mehmet Shehu's report to the Council of Ministers on Food Ratios of Prisoners Working in State Enterprises and Entities, April 10, 1954.

Bread	900 g/day
Colonial (?)	120 g/day
Meat	100 g/day
Sugar	10 g/day
Oil	15 g/day
Salt	15 g/day
tea or coffee	respectively 1 and 2 g/day ⁶⁷

For the prisoners working at the Bulqiza mine, the daily food ratio was slightly higher. They, in addition to the aforementioned foods, were supplied with 16g of cheese/day, 36g of marmalade and 7 egg per month.⁶⁸ The study on the work rates of these prisoners and the daily amount of food consumed remains to be deepened.

Among the prisons destined for “the enemies of the people,” the most notorious are those of Burrel (1946), considered a super prison, from which it was impossible to escape and where political prisoners lived in inhumane conditions; Spaç (1968), remained open until 1990 and exploited the work of prisoners for the extraction of copper and pyrite ore in inhumane conditions. Life in communist prisons, as well as in labor camps, was very harsh: political prisoners, often accused on false evidence base, or the extract confessions through torture by security, if not sentenced to death, often died because of sickness, hunger, or difficult working conditions.

In the archives of the Ministry of Interior until 1990 resulted as convicted 25 thousand political prisoners, but since the lacks of statistics for prisoners of the period from 1945 to 1946 and sentenced to minor penalties, it believed that in Albania political prisoners were between 30,000 and 34,000. According to a report published in 2016 by the Institute for Studies of Crimes and Consequences of Communism (ISKK) in Albania, political prisoners were 26,768 men and 7,367 women; the dead prisoners in prison because prison conditions were 984, and 308 others lost their mental ability. According to the same source, 5,577 men and 450 women were sentenced to death and were killed. The bodies of prisoners executed or died in prisons due to forced labor or diseases, were not returned to their relatives.

67. CSA, F. 490/Council of Ministers, V. 1954, D. 205. Decision No. 61 of Council of Ministers on food ratios for prisoners working in state enterprises and entities, April 10, 1954.

68. CSA, F. 490/Council of Ministers, V. 1954, D. 205. Decision No. 61 of Council of Ministers on food ratios for prisoners working in state enterprises and entities, April 10, 1954.

“Forced labor is widely used in Albania since the communist regime came into power in November 1944. A number of laws and decisions that legitimize forced labor ”

The Report of the State Department to the United Nations in 1955

A State Department report to the United Nations in 1955 expresses concern about the use of forced labor in prisons and internment camps in Albania. According to it, “forced labor is widely used in Albania since the communist regime came into power in November 1944. A number of laws and decisions that legitimize forced labor and the new Albanian Criminal Code adopted in May 1952, based on Soviet Criminal Code, masterfully foresees “corrective work” and interment of citizens in concentration and labor camps. Even children who have reached the age of 12, accused for crimes against the state, are accountable to the measures in “corrective work” camps. In the last 10 years, some 40 political prisons and concentration camps have been operating in time, over which 80,000 men, women and children have passed, of which 16,000 have been lost. Now there are data that some 10,000 people are serving in political prisons and beside them 10,000 to 15,000 are in concentration camps. In addition to the ones sentenced with forced labor, there is a large number of people in Albania, especially young, who are constrained to work “voluntarily” (currently under obligation). Almost all industrial projects and road and railway constructions undertaken by the present regime since 1944 were built by those sentenced with forced labor and “volunteers”

Particularly after 1948, to the typology of the “enemies of the people”, were added also those people that held important leadership positions in the party and state structures of the regime. Such punishment occurred when the regime had to justify ending of an international alliance, or when it needed to justify the failures of its economic, cultural and military policies. These punishments increased the general insecurity and fear of the entire population. In that regime nobody was safe and untouchable.

Recommendations for further research

After conducting this preliminary framework study we may recommend undertaking these further steps to build the Tepelena Camp Museum and deepen the study on forced labor during the communist regime:

- Complete study of all archival funds related to forced labor. From the preliminary study it turns out that such basic archives should be included, as: The Albanian State Archive (ASA), the former Archive of Central Committee of the CPA (APL); Archive of the Ministry of Internal Affairs; State Security Archive; Archive of the Commission of Deportation-Internments; Foreign archives that are in the funds of the Tirana Institute of History such as: Archive of MFA Rome; National Archives of Great Britain (London); The United States National Archives (Maryland, Washington D.C.), Diplomatic Archives of the Foreign Ministry of France (Paris) etc.
- Study of all Albanian historiography and memorial literature and foreign literature on forced labor during the communist regime in Albania and the communist regimes in the world. This will also serve to create a clear comparative picture of this phenomenon in Albania and other communist countries.
- A complete and detailed study of communist-era legislation that has directly or indirectly addressed the forced labor and its specific aspects.
- Compilation of a comprehensive study of the history of forced labor in Albania and the complete history of the Tepelena Camp. The primary purpose of this study is to serve as a documentary and narrative basis for the design and construction of the Tepelena Camp Museum as a typology of forced labor in Albania.
- Initiate as soon as possible a systematic campaign based on scientific criteria for collection of memories and evidence from survivors or descendants of those who have served in prisons and concentration camps, focusing on gathering evidence of forced labor.
- Further, this study will be published as a complete and genuine scientific work in Albanian and English languages.
- The construction of the Tepelena Camp museum as a typological museum of forced labor during the communist regime.
- Opening of several exhibitions within the country but also abroad with artifacts and basic historical evidence of forced labor in Albania.
- Organization of several national and international scientific conferences on the problems and history of forced labor during process of construction of the museum and after its completion.
- Organization of open classes on this topic in Albanian universities and in some foreign universities.
- Development of television and radio shows on this topic and on discoveries to be made during research work in archives, libraries and along the campaign for gathering historical evidence.
- Creating a profiled working group to continuously and systematically publish in social media results and the most spiked and fundamental evidence of the researches and memories of the survivors.
- A well-argued proposal for the Ministry of Education to include in the curricula of the different levels of pre-university education one or several teaching hours on this topic.

PART II

An Overview on Legal Regulations of Labor for the period 1944 - 1991

Introduction

Labor, as well as other life factors and aspects during the communist regime, such as capital, land, underground assets, means of communication, waters, foreign trade, natural resources, postal services, banks, ideology, cultural and social norms, could not be an independent subject of the relationship between individuals or individuals and institutions, both public and private.

In contrast to the liberal democracy systems, where labor has vocational treatment, apart from it as a production factor, and where one can talk about choosing a profession in accordance with the interests and desires of the individual, in totalitarian systems, labor is mainly treated as a production factor. The role of the individual in society, as its constituent unit, is suppressed by the aggregate concept of society's interest and the position given to the collective to dictate human destiny. As a consequence, individuality is minimized, the individual loses its uniqueness and becomes an aid to the realization of a general purpose.⁶⁹ The maximum space given to the individual, according to this instrumental approach, is to aspire and act in the function of fulfilling the general will.

A distinctive feature of the totalitarian regimes, where Albanian version of communism is also part, is the treatment and regulation of life and production factors to the limit, and in this context, it was normal for that system to treat labor as the other factors of production - such as land, capital, enterprise - which were regulated and collectivized for the purpose of building socialism. So when these other factors were adjusted to the extreme, labor relations could not be an exception to the standard. It is worth pointing out that such a conclusion is reached even by the recent judiciary, according to which it was not possible for an individual to be unemployed at the time of the communist regime.⁷⁰ In the matter at issue by the court, where the plaintiff was seeking to receive the salary owed by the agricultural cooperatives, it was considered that the employment relationship was not a free relationship, but a

69. See also the work of Sonila Boçi, "Guilty without guilt: punishment of engineers at Maliq swamp as part of justifications for the communist regime's failures", to establish the idea of social pressure, mobilization of human resources, and arbitrariness in the judgment of individuals from the communist regime.

70. Appeal Court of Tirana, Case No. 1935 Act, No. 2307 Decision (2013).

This paper aims to create a research framework on the concept of labor by dealing with the treatment of labor from constitutions of the socialist republic of 1946 and 1976, the Criminal Code, and the political documents of the Labor Party

relationship of obligation.⁷¹ The court continues its reasoning by saying that according to the laws of the time, every person was obliged to participate in the work, and otherwise he could face the consequences of the law on parasitism.⁷²

In addition to the labor dimension as a production factor, during the communist regime, labor was framed as a way and means of punishment for acts considered criminal acts or offenses. Not without reason is the inclusion of the form of forced labor punishment in almost half of offenses and criminal offenses, according to the Criminal Code of Time (1977). The regime conceived forced labor as a way of re-education for the individual, just like the deprivation of liberty, fines, social reprimands, deportation and internment. Also, another labor dimension can be drawn in the context of the report that the Labor Party had with the state - the bureaucratic apparatus, where labor, in the form of staff turnover, was used as an instrument of resistance, pressure, and sanctions that the Party exercised over state bureaucracy to keep the latter submissive.

Labor as a production factor, as a form of re-education, and as a location where tension was expressed in the Party-state relationship, are three of several dimensions of its overall regulation during the communist regime 1944-1991. This paper aims to create a research framework on the concept of labor by dealing with the treatment of labor from constitutions of the socialist republic of 1946 and 1976, the Criminal Code, and the political documents of the Labor Party. As such, this paper tends to serve as a platform for conducting at a second stage in-depth studies on the way of organizing labor through other legal-administrative mechanisms, the discipline of the individual and society through it, and the way the state conceives and uses the right to control a social phenomenon and human vocation such as labor. Section I of this paper focuses on constitutional treatment of labor, Section II provides a general overview of the involvement of forced labor as a form of punishment from the Criminal Code, Section III focuses on treating labor as a location where the tension in the relationship between the Party and the State was expressed and is based on several key APL documents, and Section IV contains some conclusions and further steps for research in this regard.

71. Id.

72. Id.

Labor as a production factor under constitutional view

The constitutional regime was formalized through two constitutions: a) Statute of the People's Republic of Albania adopted by the Constitutional Assembly in 1946 and amended in 1950, and b) Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Albania of 1976.

Even a simple reading of these two primary documents of the legal order in Albania is sufficient to distinguish the evolution and consolidation of the communist regime in the country over a period of 30 years.

The 1946 statute acknowledges the private initiative, as well as the state role in the country's economic development, as it recognizes land ownership and its extent.⁷³ The Statute also takes a number of measures that can be classified as social rights that are given to the individual, but at the same time intertwines them and with a conceptualization of labor as an individual's task. Thus, for example, Article 10 of the Statute protects employed persons by ensuring the right to organize, regulating and limiting the working hours and the minimum wage.⁷⁴ At the same time, it provides support for annual vacations through social security and guarantees special protection for juvenile delinquency.⁷⁵

Whereas Article 22, the Statute stipulates that labor in the People's Republic is also an honor.⁷⁶ Here we begin to see clearly disciplining of working relations in the function of building socialism, and it is seen for the first time the idea of an individual's obligation to society and the socialist economy, and the use of labor for the settlement of this obligation. Even in this article, perhaps to mitigate the impact of the first sentence, it is envisaged that every citizen has the right to be rewarded according to work and ability, and to receive from society as much as it gives to it.⁷⁷ This treatment is evolving or aggravated by the amendments to this Statute in 1950. The latter bring the concept of labor within the economic life. Concretely, Article 13 stipulates that work is the basis of the social order of the People's Republic of Albania.⁷⁸ Likewise, this article stipulates that labor for every citizen capable of work is a duty and honor according to the principle: "Who does not work, does not eat".⁷⁹

In this institutional context, it seems strange that the state, while framing labor as a production factor, also tends to provide the guarantee of freedom of scientific and artistic work, protection of copyright,

73. Art. 10, Statute of the People's Republic of Albania, adopted by the Constitutional Assembly, 1946.

74. Id.

75. Id.

76. Art. 22, Statute of the People's Republic of Albania, adopted by the Constitutional Assembly, 1946.

77. Id.

78. Art. 13, Constitution of the People's Republic of Albania, July 1950.

79. Id.

and support of science and art in order to develop culture and the well-being of the people.⁸⁰ However, not long after the adoption of this constitution, the Party would set its seal on science and art, thus extinguishing any illusions that could be created by reading the constitutional provisions of 1946.

Unlike a somewhat liberal approach, or perhaps cautious of international sensitivity to the constitutional wording of the 1946 Statute, followed by the separation between what was on paper and what really existed in reality, the 1976 Constitution does not leave room for doubts or pretensions of the existence of a progressive spirit. Totalitarianism felt comfortable at that stage of its development to formalize its practices that did not tolerate alternative thinking or action by the local interpretation of Marxist-Leninist ideology.

This Constitution, in its preamble, uses a triumphalist tone to declare that the place of private property and multifaceted economy was occupied by social property over the means of production and the only system of the socialist economy in the city and the countryside.⁸¹ According to it, exploiting classes and exploitation of men by man were finished. While the free work of the people, which ironically considered it free, had become the decisive factor of socialist bloom, as well as the growth of general well-being and of every human being.⁸²

Article 29 states that the entire economic and social life of the country has labor in its foundations.⁸³ According to it, labor is the main source of livelihoods for every citizen.⁸⁴ The state, according to this concept, works to narrow the differences between the mental work and physical labor, between labor in industry and work in agriculture.⁸⁵ Moreover, the state cares for and takes measures for the protection at work and for the qualification of the employees, as well as for finding work for the citizens (Article 44).⁸⁶ According to this last arrangement, the individual did not actually have the right to determine the professional vocation himself, but the state had the obligation to assign a job to the individual by giving priority to collective interest over personal interest.

In the 1976 Constitution totalitarianism felt comfortable at that stage of its development to formalize its practices that did not tolerate alternative thinking or action by the local interpretation of Marxist-Leninist ideology

80. Art. 27, Statute of the People's Republic of Albania, adopted by the Constitutional Assembly, 1946.

81. Preamble, Constitution of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania of 1976.

82. Id.

83. Article 29, Constitution of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania of 1976.

84. Id.

85. Id.

86. Id. See also Article 44, Constitution of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania of 1976. Article 44 provides that in the People's Socialist Republic of Albania citizens have the right to work, which is guaranteed by the state. This article preserves the wording of the constitution of 1946 that labor is a duty and honor for every citizen capable of work. According to it, citizens have the right to choose and exercise their profession according to their ability and personal inclinations and in accordance with the needs of society.

“The state organizes and guides the development of science and technology in close relation to life and production, serving the advancement of society and the defense of the homeland”

Article 34, Republic of 1976.

The constitution goes further by establishing the socialist principle, “by each one according to the skill, each according to the work”, and sanctioning the exercise of state control over the work and consumption.⁸⁷ In the same measure, attention is paid to guaranteeing formal equality of work and reward, according to which “for equal work is guaranteed equal pay.”⁸⁸ Substantial material reward, moral significance and incentives take priority in promoting work to deliver more results.⁸⁹

Labor, as a production factor and a fundamental element of building socialism, plays an educational role. For example, Article 33 states that education in the Socialist People’s Republic of Albania is organized and guided by the state and combines learning with productive work, and physical and military education.⁹⁰ In this spirit, Article 34 reveals that the state organizes and guides the development of science and technology in close relation to life and production, serving the advancement of society and the defense of the homeland.⁹¹

These constitutional provisions serve to give us an idea on the foundations of labor regulation, which were then further detailed with the Party’s policy documents, other legal and sub-legal acts, as well as administrative practices. It is enough to raise the concept of labor as an individual’s obligation to society that party and state organs lead to the extreme use of state violence to subjugate the individual.

87. Article 30, Constitution of the People’s Socialist Republic of Albania of 1976.

88. Id.

89. Id.

90. Article 33, Constitution of the People’s Socialist Republic of Albania of 1976.

91. Article 34, Constitution of the People’s Socialist Republic of Albania of 1976.

Labor as punishment under Criminal Code view

As stated above, in addition to labor dimension as a production factor, re-education through forced labor has been used as a punishment for offenses and criminal offenses. The Criminal Code of 1977 provides for about 100 offenses and criminal offenses, where for 200 of such, foresee, inter alia, the re-education of the individual through labor. Article 20 of the Code defines re-education through labor as an obligation of a guilty person to work for a period of one month up to one year at a workplace determined by a court decision or in the places designated by the executive organs.⁹² Convicts with re-education through labor are held for the benefit of the state by up to a quarter of the reward for their work.⁹³

Article 209 of this Code, or as otherwise known in society as a precaution against parasitism, sanctions that the failure by the parasites of the decision of the state organs for placement at work, committed more than once, is punished by re-training through labor or deprivation of freedom for up to two years.⁹⁴

According to the legal framework established by this Code, crimes against socialist property such as the purchase of socialist property resulting from a crime or its admission (Article 66), the destruction or damage of socialist property by negligence (Article 68), crimes against the socialist economic system economy (for example, making of bad quality products) (Article 69), careless use or storage of machinery and technical equipment (Article 70), damaging irrigation works and drainage (Article 71), smuggling (Article 72), cheating in weights and measures (Article 74), the sale of higher priced goods (Article 75), violating the provision on currency and gold (Article 77), the damage by negligence of roads and communication facilities (Article 79), the violation of labor discipline in transport (Article 80), the violation of road traffic regulations (Article 81), damage to cables and lines (Article 82) provide for re-training through labor.

Crimes against the person, such as flesh-wound (Article 93), careless treatment (Article 96) includes re-training through labor as one of the forms of punishment.

Committing crimes in the exercise of duties, such as abuse of office (Article 106), careless attitude on duty (Article 108), bribery (Article 109), and falsification (Article 110) also includes punishment through labor.

Crimes against the administrative order, as opposition to the State representatives (article 118), stroke because of duty (Article 119), insult of person because of their position (Article 120), forgery of the documents or getting them to be used (Article 121), loss of documents (Article 123), avoidance of civil protection obligations (Article 125), unlawful behavior in society (Article 129), violation of the protection at work rules (Article 130), violation of the technical order (article 131), violation of rules in the performance

92. Article 20, Criminal Code of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania (1977).

93. Id.

94. Article 209, Criminal Code of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania (1977).

of works (Article 132), violation of production rules (Article 133), preparation or sell of narcotic and poisonous substances (Article 134), are also punishable through labor..

Some of the military crimes, such as the failure to execute the order (Article 142), the opposition and the coercion to violate the duty (Article 144), the destruction of military property by negligence (Article 148), provide for re-training punishment through labor, among other forms of convictions. In general, the majority of criminal offenses, including acts in the family sphere, offenses in the field of economy and against property of citizens, violations of right of choice, offenses against justice, administrative order, violations in the field of defense, against social insurance, health offenses, social morality (gambling), military criminal offenses, foresee all re-education through labor as one of the measures that can be taken against the individual.⁹⁵

This comprehensive approach of labor as a form of re-education of the guilty individual that breaks social norms serves to root a work character as something that serves more collectively than as an expression of individual human preferences.

95. These include the appropriation of socialist property found (Article 161), the violation of the provisions on foreign trade (Article 162), the concealment of objects that are subject to smuggling (Article 163), the practice of prohibited trade (Article 164), the practice of profession without permit (Article 165), forgery of seals of measuring units (Article 166), violation of construction rules (Article 167), damage to cables and lines (Article 168), the invasion and exploitation of land (Article 169), the unauthorized use of the property (Article 169), violation of the provisions on plant quarantine (Article 170), violation of veterinary provisions (Article 171), negligent treatment of livestock (Article 172), illegal cutting of forests or their damage (Article 173), illegal fishing (Article 174), intimidation (Article 184), insult (Article 185), defamation (Article 186), violation of the secrecy of correspondence (Article 187), violation of the rights of women (Article 188), juvenile engagement (Article 189), remuneration for marriage (Article 190), coercion or restriction of cohabitation or marriage (Article 191), forbidden coexistence (Article 192), keeping marital relationships with two partners (Article 193), violation of family obligations (Article 194), abuse of wealth (Article 195), the acquisition of property found (Article 196), the falsification of documents (Article 197), the acquisition of property of citizens resulting from a crime or its admission (Article 198), destruction or damage of citizens property because of negligence (Article 199), prohibition of exercising the right to vote (Article 200), falsification of election documents (Article 201), false testimony, expertise or translation (Article 202), the non-appearance of a witness, expert or interpreter (Article 203), opposition to state representatives (Article 204), opposition to social activists (Article 205), the person resentment because the duty (Article 206), threat because of duty (Article 207), acquisition of title or position (Article 208), avoidance of parasites from work (Article 209), self-judgment (Article 210), obstruction of enforcement of judgments (Article 211), preparation of seals, the stamps or false forms (Article 212), not showing the name of the vessel by its captain (Article 213), failure to provide assistance in the event of a collision of ships (Article 214), acquisition, destruction or damage of archival material (Article 215), damage or destruction of culture monuments (Article 216), avoidance of military records (Article 217), avoidance of military service (article 218), avoidance of animal, tools or equipment delivery (Article 219), unauthorized entry into military zones (Article 220), infringement of provisions over the use of radio installations (Article 221), removal or destruction of topographical signs (Article 222), the production, possession, purchase or sale of weapons (article 224), violation of the provisions on weapons (Article 225), violation of rules on explosives (Article 226), violation of rules on toxic substances (Article 227), violation of the rules of the protection at work (Article 228), violation of the rights of employees (Article 229), violation of production rules (Article 230), violation of rules in the works (Article 231), violation of rules for fire risk insurance (Article 232), unlawful exercise of medicine (Article 233), preparation and sale of food products that are hazardous to health (article 234), environmental pollution (Article 235), gambling (Article 236), unauthorized departure of a soldier (article 237), failure to appear on the ward or at the place of service (article 238), unauthorized departure of those called in training (Article 241), the non-setting guards (Article 243), violation of guardianship rules (Article 244), damage to the armaments because of negligence (Article 245), misappropriation, destruction or damage to clothing articles (Article 246).

Labor as pressure location in report Party-State

While the two previous sections focus on the legal arrangements of the concept of labor as a production factor and form of punishment, this section focuses mainly on labor as a location where the tension in the relationship between the Party and the state is expressed and is based on some elements of the main political documents of Party of Labor. This section highlights how different aspects of organizing work were dealt with, such as district staff circulations, in the broader framework of the struggle against bureaucracy, a war that defines the tension the state and the Party itself have in rapport with each other.

The way of linking the Party with the State, subject to a dedicated scientific paper, suggests that the relationship between the two was not easy. The party really needed state apparatus to realize its vision of the social order, and especially the use of dictatorships to exert violence. But as much as the state apparatus was needed, the Party still was afraid of its strengthening. This fear was manifested by the Party through the struggle against bureaucracy, which contained the fight against formalism coming from the legal and administrative system, and the systemic shocks that were given to cadres working in state bureaucracy using for this effect the circulation on the base. These measures against the formal system by the State Party itself were taken to create a systematic sense of insecurity in the system, to punish individuals whom the Party considered as a danger to it, and to continuously weaken the state apparatus that the latter was always dependent on Party.

Consequently, the concept of labor cannot be considered in isolation from the political documents of the APL. The latter contain the norms, expectations, and directives about the different phenomena of social life in the country, which were then translated into legal and administrative acts that created binding norms for citizens and state bodies. It should be noted since the start that the focus of this paper was not to end the review of APL documents related to the concept of labor, as this is intended to be done in subsequent studies together with the filtering of legal acts, bylaws, and practices of dictatorship bodies, but rather has been pointing out some legal and political approaches on the concept of labor, to create an idea of further research steps that can be taken in this direction.

In the midst of a myriad of internal and public acts of APL, the APL Central Committee decision of January 1966 for the movement of personnel contains elements that often find their place in the future documents.⁹⁶ The decision seems to be an act that more recognizes a bottom-up situation than a situation that is run by the senior organs of the APL. According to it, many cadres, specialists and employees of state apparatus and of the Party, from the center and the districts have expressed their will to move from the offices directly to production.⁹⁷ The Central Committee instructed all

96. Decision of the central apl committee on the patriotic initiative of administrative employees to be sent in production, january 1966.

97. Id.

other structures to make the people aware of this initiative of the cadre and instruct the Council of Ministers, all central and local state organs, as well as the Party committees in the districts, to be particularly interested in solving all the problems that arise right now in front of the workers who go into production.⁹⁸ They should be in direct contact with volunteers on the production front, interested in agricultural cooperatives and work centers to provide them with work, housing, and other supplies in order to create the conditions to start working right away.⁹⁹ At the same time, the Central Committee called on agricultural cooperatives to accept as their members, with all the rights and duties according to guidelines, all the specialists and administration employees who would go to the agricultural cooperatives, and provided housing, whenever possible, or assisted state bodies with their means and forces to arrange or build new dwellings needed for sheltering their employees and their families in agricultural cooperatives.¹⁰⁰

A year later, in 1967, the Politburo did not stop only in the greeting of the staffing initiative for circulation at the base, but adopts an orientation according to which the systematic circulation from the center to the base and vice versa is a very necessary and useful measure for both labor and cadres themselves.¹⁰¹ Some of the criteria for staff circulation include: a) the need for the circulation of all those who had never been in the bases who did not have the experience of war and life in the base but had come to the central apparatus directly from the schools, b) the need for staff turnover which, although previously sent to the base, had over 10 years in central offices; and c) the need to move from work where they would be assigned or to return to the center without completing a probation of three years.¹⁰²

It is understood that hitting the cadres through circulation in the field could not be motivated with the resistance and struggle that the Party has to undertake against the state to preserve its superiority at any time. It was often framed in the struggle against bureaucratization, the need to revolutionize and emancipate the society. But, there were these extra-state elements that betrayed the true interest of the Party.

The tension that the party had with the state can be extended to the report it takes with the society. In this context, the main political documents of the APL also talk about the emancipation of women as well as the private work. For the sake of the overview at the concept of work, it is worth to briefly bring it to the attention. In the 1960s, the question of women's emancipation and its involvement in the working masses enters into the political focus that is later followed by a campaign of awareness on the ground and concrete measures for the implementation of the new policy. A report by the Politburo on Women's Emancipation, in June 1967, expressly states that work, social production, is the basis of

98. Id.

99. Id.

100. Id.

101. General orientations of APL CC Politburo on Circulation of Cadres, April 28, 1967.

102. Id.

the existence of mankind and the development of society. The report quotes Enver Hoxha, according to whom the labor factor is a major factor for the economic, ideological and political liberation of women.¹⁰³ This instrumental approach embraces emancipation fundamentally with the organization of labor and mobilization of women towards industrial and agricultural production and can be interpreted as one of the tools used by the APL to stimulate social change in function of its interests.

But circulation and emancipation were not the only phenomena that were organized from the center. As an emblematic event of totalitarian regulation of social relations, the Central Committee through a letter to the core organizations of the Party declares war to practicing the profession as a vocation independent from the state. In this letter, the Committee expresses that a greater struggle should be done against those exercising the profession in private.¹⁰⁴ Private profession is stigmatized. According to the Committee, “private affairs are practiced by unskilled people at work, some of whom have turned into real swindlers, those who do seasonal jobs, as well as many specialist workers who work privately after working hours, mostly with state goods that are stolen in different forms.”¹⁰⁵ The Committee emphasizes that “the problem of practicing the profession in private must be seen broadly as a lack of conscience of those who exercise it, but also as a serious weakness of those citizens who accept to perform private-sector jobs, who by their own actions become promoters of this bad phenomenon.”¹⁰⁶ In this way, “the fight for the prevention of these behaviors should include the latter, on which fall and the consequences of the unhealthy tastes of those who practice illicit occupations.”¹⁰⁷ By giving cultural dimension to labor as an inseparable phenomenon from social moral of the new man provides an added weight to oversight that the totalitarian regime had over the individual activity, aiming at a kind of dogmas internalization of ordinary man.

Complexity of labor concept and setting it in the center of country development through industrialization and collectivization of agriculture, shaping of new man and development of class struggle is evident in the variety of issues raised by the APL in its materials and forums . In a number of documents, it is noteworthy that the APL oversight did not save either labor standards, rewards, scientific qualifications and training, university admission, and pedagogical bodies, foreign apparel as well as increase productivity at work. All of these were handled in view of increasing production, maintaining the APL monopoly on the social and political order in the country, and the constant pressure over the formal state apparatus.

103. Report of apl politburo on deepening the struggle for full emancipation of women and increase of their role in socialist society, june 15, 1967.

104. Letter of central committee of apl to all party base organizations for deepening the struggle against foreign behaviors, october 1st, 1980.

105. Id.

106. Id.

107. Id.

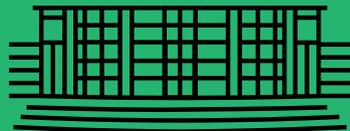
Recommendations for further research

When the concept of work is put into the subject of the study, subsequent research may take different directions to understand its dimensions and modes of regulation in the totalitarian regime. On the one hand, labor could be treated in a general way to understand how that regime regulated it down to a level below constitution through labor legislation and administrative practices, as well as through political documents to better understand the attention and the approach taken by the APL to it.

On the other hand, labor can be treated in the prism of the individual's obligation to the state, either as a "free" citizen and as a form of punishment. In this second context, it is worth highlighting the criminal and administrative regulation for the labor as a location where the class struggle was manifested. Examining the functioning of labor camps or internments, individual files, and guidelines of dictatorship bodies are potential directions for later research in this area, combined with criminal and administrative legislation.

Also, as mentioned above, another way could be a breakdown of the use of state of the law on labor and establishment of a bureaucratic apparatus for the control of relations in society. This perspective helps shape the understanding of the role the administration has as an integral part of the state in controlling the latter and ultimately in defining the relationship that the bureaucracy has with the individual.

It is understood that these directions are more potential research pathways that serve to illustrate future work, and encourage the stimulation of thoughts and discussions on other aspects or directions that scientific research may take in this field.



AUTORITETI PËR INFORMIMIN MBI
DOKUMENTET E ISH-SIGURIMIT TË SHËTËTIT