
The death of Stalin, its impact in Albania and Nikita Khrushchev

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Abstract:

The purpose of this paper is to show the situation in Albania after Stalin's death, the atmosphere, the experiencing of this big loss for Enver Hoxha the communist leader of Albania. Also to describe the anguish of the Albanian leadership for the name of Stalin successor. The death of Stalin, the leader of the communist party of Soviet Union was a very bitter development for the Stalinist communist leader of Albania. The purpose of this paper is to describe the movement of all parts with the words of the testimonies, condolence letters, telegrams, etc. the published articles of the time etc.

Key words: Albania, Soviet Union, Stalin, Khrushchev, condolence

Objective of the study

This paper aims to bring to the reader the situation in Albanian in the first weeks of March 1953. How the Albanians experienced the death of Stalin? Which was the line that Soviet Union would follow after this loss. The changes in the ideological path and the big anguish of the communist leader of Albania Enver Hoxha about the man that would take the place of Josif Visarinovic Stalin. This paper aims to describe the real thoughts of the Albanian leadership and to bring just a little bit

of history of the beginning of the Albanian - Soviet relations and the reason why Enver Hoxha was so addicted to Stalin.

Introduction

The death of Stalin, the leader of the communist party of Soviet Union, was a very bitter development for the communist leader of Albania, Enver Hoxha. "The death of Stalin was the end of an era", stated American president Eisenhower, in a speech on March 16, 1953. The relationship between Enver Hoxha and Stalin, even if limited in a few meetings, seemed loyal, at least on the part of the Albanian leader. Enver Hoxha was a Stalinist leader and remained such until death. He enjoyed being a Stalinist.

In his book "The bending and Fall of the Albanian tyranny", Spartak Ngjela describes the situation in Tirana, the metropolis of the small country, very serious and tragic after the death of Stalin. As a witness of the time he writes that for three days, "the block" of the leadership, the big house of the central committee looked and felt very shocked: Stalin was dead. Stalin seemed had been the nightmare of the persons he considered loyal and his collaborators. Everyone waited with the heart throbbing, will wake up or not Stalin. Anyone for his own reasons. But numerous were those who wanted to take the power in his place. In the case of Enver Hoxha, things were different. He met Stalin for the first time in 1947. After this, the meetings were very rare, but the loyalty to Stalin accompanied Enver Hoxha until death. The first meeting, a formal one, happened along the hot summer of 1947, 16 July. Among the others, in the meeting was also present Koci Xoxe, known in the history as a loyalist of Yugoslavia and certainly in the first meeting between the Albanians and the soviets was the eyes and mind of Yugoslavia. The second meeting with Stalin would happen in 1949, two years after the split with Yugoslavia. Then followed three other meetings, the last in the

spring of 1951. Two years later Stalin would pass away. By the memories of one of the members of the delegation that went to Moscow on 16th of July 1947, General Rrahman Parrllaku, he says that Stalin was quite interested to know about Albania. Even, all the conversations focused more on his questions to us, reminds Parrllaku.

Enver Hoxha himself couldn't hold his speech in French as he was prepared. Stalin insisted that he wanted to hear the sound of the Albanian language. However, in his book "With Stalin", published in Tirana in 1979, Enver Hoxha through lines concludes that the interest of Stalin in general was not very big to Albania. Before the Albanian - Yugoslav split, the Soviet Union was the godfather of a certain merger of Albania with Yugoslavia at the time. Milovan Gjilas the special envoy of the Yugoslavs, in his book "Conversations with Stalin" writes that Stalin often meant that Albania could be a part of their federation. But what happened after? What happened, that Stalin changed his mind and moved the chess stones, in a way that led to the demolition of Albania's relations with Yugoslavia, and Enver Hoxha came closer to Moscow. Hamit Kaba, a historian, in a tv interview says that it was the will of the soviets that we split with Yugoslavs. From the late '47 to the early '48 Yugoslav - soviet relations deteriorated. Consequently, were held talks for which the Albanian leadership has not been informed. The first sign of rapprochement with the Soviet Union was exactly Hoxha's visit in Moscow in July 1947 which took place without the knowledge of Yugoslavia. According to the time's testimonies, Yugoslavia was announced at the end of the preparations for going to Moscow. It seems that Yugoslavia became jealous for what was discussed in Moscow and we can consider this moment in history as the beginning of the close relations between the Soviet Union and Albania. The signing of the friendship treaty and the mutual assistance between Albania and Bulgaria in 1947, was also a product of the soviet era policy. Which also

was not perceived very well by the Yugoslavs who considered Albania within a federation or their own republic in the future. Enver Hoxha adored Stalin. A statue of Stalin stood in the main square of the Albanian metropolis Tirana. And many of the local enterprises bore his name. He led Albania with a Stalinist style from which never gave up and never accepted that Stalin was a criminal, tyrant and a despot. The only period when Enver Hoxha criticized some of the features of Stalin was the spring of 1956. After the Khrushchev punch to the Stalin figure in the XX communist party of Soviet Union congress in 1956, Enver Hoxha, in an article published in the newspaper "The voice of the people" on 14th of April 1956 "Marxism-Leninism teaches us that the people is the creator of the history" and signed by Enver Hoxha, wrote for Stalin that he made many mistakes that soviet people and the socialist issue paid for them.

On the 5th of March, 1953, Stalin died. His statue in the center of the main square of Tirana "Skanderbeg square" became a place of pilgrimage. Everyone lined in front of the statue of Stalin honoring the remembrance of the great leader of world communism. Enver Hoxha declared 14 days of mourning and with this, we were in the avant-garde also with Soviet Union that mourned a few days less than Albania according to the documents of that time. But the death of Stalin brought his successor dilemma. Molotov, Malenkov or someone else? The chairman of the burrial committee was Nikita Sergejevic Khrushchev and with him were three, the names that were slandered to occupy the chair of Stalin for leading the communist party of the Soviet Union. In his memoirs, Nikita Khrushchev enlightens the developements after the Stalin death. But one of the persons that describes sincerely and emotionally and fearfully the death of Stalin is Stalin's daughter, Svjetllana Aliljeva. She describes in details the situation in the house, the moment when she was announced that her father had suffered brain hemorrhaging, she describes the people in the

house, their behaviour, how they moved or reacted. While speaking for the room where was Stalin, she recalls: "...only one person was there, behaving in a very ugly manner, Beria. He was terribly shocked. His disgusting face even in the best moments, seemed distorted from the pain, the hate, the jealousy, the harshness, the cunning, and the will for power, or something more".

On 4th March 1953, the central committee of the Party of Labour of Albania, and specifically Enver Hoxha, sent an emotional letter addressed to the communist party of Soviet Union. He wrote about the information of Stalin's serious decease and the anxiety that had caused this news in the hearts of the leadership but also of the Albanian people. In a note of the Albanian Telegraph Agency (ATA) dated 6th March, 1953, allegedly Tass informs with deep pain that the chairman of the council of the ministers of the USSR the general secretary of the central committee of the communist party of the Soviet Union Josif Visarionovic Stalin died on 5th March at 09:50 P.M. after a serious illness. Urgently at 6 am, on march 6th Enver Hoxha gathers PLA central committee and the council of the ministers to communicate and discuss the serious event, the death of Stalin. In his speech among others Hoxha couldn't hide the insecurity and the panic. "That is an extraordinary loss, a serious punch for us", said Enver Hoxha.

In this meeting Nexhmije Hoxha proposed that Enver Hoxha must speak to the people through the radio to communicate this great loss. Immediately, the mourning was declared through the country and all theatrical, cinematic, artistic and other entertainments were canceled. The national flag was raised at half-mast and was halted immediately the work in all the offices, schools etc. An Albanian delegation would take part in the funeral of Stalin. The delegation headed by Spiro Koleka, deputy prime minister and member of the politburo of PLA central committee. It also consisted of Beqir Balluku, chief of staff in the popular army and politburo

member, Liri Belishova, also a politburo member and a member also of the presidium of the national assembly, Ramiz Alia member of PLA central committee and the first secretary of BRPSH central committee, Abdyl Kellezi, Minister of Finance ,and Vasil Nathanaili, special envoy and full power minister of PRA in Soviet Union . According to the Albanian Telegraph Agency (ATA) the council of the ministers of the Popular Republic of Albania in its first meeting on 7th of March 1953 to perpetuate the name of the great leader of soviet people, the genius teacher of all progressive humanity, the best friend of our people, Stalin, decided that the main boulevard of Tirana which begins from the building of the defence ministry and ends to the street that goes to the train station, would be nominated "Stalin Boulevard".

It seemed that Hoxha had already begun to reckon who would be the successor of Stalin. He was not satisfied with sending condolence telegrams to the central committee of the comunist Party of Soviet Union. He hastened to send a letter to Malenkov too, who for the moment was the president of the council of ministers of the USSR. He was discussed frequently in Tirana that could be the successor of the great Stalin. After Malenkov, Enver Hoxha sent a condolence letter to Molotov with his signature.

Molotov was also discussed as one that will take the place of Stalin. By order of the central committee of PLA was decided to hold mourning rallies in many albanian cities. For many days the newspaper " Zëri i Popullit" opened with bombastic headlines about Stalin. The newspaper of friday 6th of March 1953, opened with the big headline: " Josif Visarinovic Stalin, died". On Saturday 7th March, "Zëri i Popullit" opened with the headline: " In centuries will live the glory of the great Stalin" and on the front page there was a call that Enver Hoxha led to the Albanian people and also a condolence telegram sent to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and to the council of the

ministers also. This newspaper on Sunday 8th March wrote: "Everlasting glory of the memory of Josif Visarinovic Stalin" and "Stalin lives in our hearts. His teachings will lead us to new victories".

But life would be continued even with the burden of this great loss for the communism world. Although with the anguish of the ideological and the political line that Soviet Union would follow, Enver Hoxha would continue to send praises to this big country, and to call it a great source of inspiration for further achievements. And although the rumours in Tirana never mentioned his name, Nikita Sergeyeovich Khrushchev was the one that followed Stalin. Later in his book "Hrushovianet", published in Tirana in 1980, Enver Hoxha writes that when Stalin died, the Soviet leadership, during the mourning shared the power with each other. Khrushchev ascended the stairs of the power. Enver Hoxha was impressed by the way the death of Stalin was announced and how his funeral was organized. He had created the impression that the death of Stalin was eagerly awaited by many of the members of the presidium of the central committee of the communist Party of USSR. In the pages of his book, Enver Hoxha expresses his assumptions mixed with desire, that the first secretary of the central committee of the communist party of USSR would be Molotov, the closest collaborator of Stalin, the older Bolshevik, the matured, the most well-known inside and outside Soviet Union.

Then, Enver Hoxha writes: "...but it was not so, Malenkov was placed on the top, Beria joined him. Behind them, a little bit in the shadow, stood a cougar that was preparing to swallow and to liquidate the two others, this was Nikita Khrushchev". After the first weeks of March, which were accompanied by a prolonged mourning in our country, the main concern was Stalin's successor. Enver Hoxha and many other senior Albanian officials thought about a lot of names, but never minded Nikita Khrushchev, the most invisible and maybe

the most silent of all. The person who divided Enver Hoxha from the Soviet Union.

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