



Albania's Diplomatic Relations with the Soviet Union during 1949-1960

Manjola Xhaferri

Universiteti "Aleksander Moisiu",
Albania

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Abstract

This paper corresponds to one of the most important periods of history relating to the national and international politics of the Albanian state, specifically the isolated political and state cooperation of Albania with the Soviet Union. The Albanian-Soviet relations were very important, as they determined not only the orientation of the Albanian internal politics but also externally the behavior that Albania had to maintain in the international arena, especially in its relationship with Western and neighboring allies. This paper specifically refers to the period from 1949, when Albanian-Soviet relations took their official form and capacity, until 1960 when these relations were destroyed. To better explain the reasons and causes for the establishment of these relations, many internal and external political situations have been touched upon, which go beyond the stated time limits of our study. The main goal of this paper is the analysis of the conditions in which these relations were established, and their unusual, bilateral cooperation in the political, economic, international, and military fields. Very important are the moments of establishing Albanian-Soviet relations, in their development and ending in the most peaceful way possible. According to Albanian-Soviet relations issues in the context of international relations and national security are very difficult, but on the other hand particularly interesting. As well as in the discipline of Security Studies, no writing is considered completely closed, because the past is related to the present, which determined the future. The purpose is enough and the three historical periods (past, present, and future) are quite well connected, without division. Our paper aims to approach this relationship from a new perspective of study, as to understand its true nature, which is also important in that, the authority that the Union Soviet exercised to oriented directly in the function of its interests. geostrategic, in investigating Albanian position. How much space was devoted to Albania in the international communist movement? How important was Albania for the Union Soviet? Not only the economic growth in the years 1950-1960, was an unusual phenomenon for the poor Albanian people, who came from a backward economic tradition, but also it was influential in the social development of Albanian society, housing, employment, health, the fight against illiteracy, Both education and culture, increased confidence in the communist government in Albania, which was part of perfect implementation of the Soviet model, not only politically but also socially. All the "Sovietization" of the Albanian state and society was away in the discipline of Security studies which, at that time, was used by the BS to realize its hegemony in the international arena. In conclusion, I would close with the phrase "Stalin was the political muse for Enver Hoxha this worship, who continued his policy until the end of his life and he refused to be destabilized. This turned out to be fatal both in relations with the Soviet Union and with all other countries and ended up in the greatest isolation of Albania until the regime fell in the year 1990".

Keywords: Albania's, Diplomatic, Relations, Soviet Union

1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to highlight the phenomena, phenomena, actors, and factors that determined the main features of relations between Albania and the Soviet Union in the period 1949 - to 1960. This is a study that aims to shed light on a very interesting period. and intense relations between Albania and the Soviet Union. It is one of the most intense periods in the diplomatic and political movement within these relations. There have been studies on the relations between Albania and the Soviet Union before, but since from time to time new documents and facts come to light about the issue in question, then no study would be enough to understand the obsession with Enver Hoxha's policy. detached from the de-Stalinization and following the examples of Eastern European countries for the reform and modernization of socialism. Anyway, I will try to shed light on the documents, the written press of the time, and of course, the many books that have been written about the Soviet Union and its behavior with other satellites of the communist bloc, on the spicy events step by step starting from the beginning of the establishment of relations between Albania and the Soviet Union, the death of Stalin and until the final transition of communist Albania to the side of distant China. But I will not leave without looking for the roots of the division and all other important developments further away, in the years after the Second World War, the creation of the Albanian Communist Party, the role of the Soviet Union in our relations with Yugoslavia, etc. At the center of the study is the way of doing foreign policy in a dictatorship, with a superpower, on which we have been completely dependent. This is also the most important topic and function of which this paper was written.

1.1 *The hypothesis of the paper*

A very important fact in this paper is the hypothesis study, which is presented in the form of research questions. This study offers two key hypotheses:

The first and main hypothesis of the paper is: The Soviet Union did not have any great political or economic interest in Albania, as the communist regime itself expressed at the time. On a documentary basis, it is clear that the Soviet Union's rapprochement with Albania came about mainly due to the breakdown of relations between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia as well as the breakdown of Albania's relations with Yugoslavia. Without economic and political support, Albania found itself under this great power with the support it needed to fill the vacuum created by the break-up of Yugoslavia.

The second hypothesis of the paper comes with the argument that: Albania's relations with the Soviet Union never came out of the tutelage of dependence and preferences. Although within the same ideological context Albania's relations with the Soviet Union reflected the relationship of power and for this reason, they were always dominated by pressure, blackmail on one hand, and humility and obedience on the other hand. So Albania was never able to secure a strong and peaceful position between itself and the Eastern Communist Bloc.

2. Methodology

The research model on which the paper is based in this case study, focuses on the context of international relations in a period of formalization of relations between the two states Albania-Soviet Union, strengthening positions between them and breaking relations. This is a period that coincides with the years 1949-1960.

Research strategy is combined in two forms: Evaluation research and Comparative research.

– Evaluation research focuses on:

Assessment of the period (1949-1960) through the identification of key indicators, their values, and the impact on the analysis of this case study.

Assessing the implications of relationships in internal and international contexts through analyzing the behavior of actors, their discourse, and strategic documents.

This model is mainly used to answer the questions and the second hypothesis of the paper.

– Comparative research

This research has helped provide answers to the first and third questions and hypotheses of the paper, which relate to the factors that determine the context of issues in some cases and some other cases not, despite similar problems.

Comparative research consists of ascertaining the similarities and differences between different phenomena, in this case, to better understand and interpret the behavior of states (Albania and the Soviet Union) and their certain policies, in this case regarding the relationship between the two countries. Comparisons can be made between different

fields, factors, and actors or even between different states or organizations.

In terms of literature, well-known world works have been considered which have described and analyzed the model of the Stalinist dictatorship in Albania and the behavior of the dictator Enver Hoxha in the international arena. We can say that academic publications on this topic are numerous and with enough material. A special place is occupied by the documents of the central committee of the ALP, as well as the Enver Hoxha works which include valuable documents. In addition to the qualitative method, the quantitative method also helped us in this paper. For the processing of quantitative data we focus on total documentation, and the impact of indicators in contemporary trends which are combined with other quantitative data such as economic and cultural indicators. Thus we realized our conclusions based on numerical data that are presented in the form of statistics. Quantitative data analysis is developed through a combination of statistical analysis and an analytical approach. Qualitative data, important documents for this paper, vary from the strategic documents of the main actors to their statements. The ground of this research work was to do research in the study of these documents, which are testimonies of the protagonists as well as not only based on national literature but also foreign literature on the problems related to the Eastern bloc in the 1949 – 1960 years.

The methodological limitations of the paper are related to the difficulty of balancing the documentation available to us due to the different perspectives between the parties, on the documentation of the Albanian-Russian relations. Russia continues to be quite conservative in publishing documentation for this period. The Albanian materials that we have available and belong to this period (1949-1960) have strong ideological and propaganda terms.

3. Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this paper is to highlight the phenomena, actors, and factors that determined the main features of the relations between Albania and the Soviet Union from the period 1949 - to 1960.

This goal is intended to be achieved by analyzing:

- The impact of relations between a small and weak country like Albania with a superpower like the Soviet Union in the internal and external context of the country.
- The benefit of Albania's relations with the Soviet Union in recent years.
- Dependence on economic relations between Albania and the Soviet Union.
- The reasons that led to the breakdown of relations between Albania and the Soviet Union?
- Was Yugoslavia the main reason for the separation between Albania and the Soviet Union?

Albania's relations with the Soviet Union are still completely undiscovered as long as many documents found in Russian archives are not available for study. However, just like any study or work done in different periods, this one cannot set the last stone in terms of these relationships. Maybe it could be an attempt to identify or an attempt to clarify something in this relationship that has had a lot of light and shadow. The documents of the Albanian Central State Archive (CSA) do not provide an impartial panorama of the situation as they have been completed with an ideologically communist spirit. Publications about Albanian-Soviet relations have been numerous in Albania but not in Russia. There are very few studies on this part of the history of the Soviet Union. The Russians have written a lot about relations with many countries in the world (not only with superpowers) but there is a marked lack of clarification of relations with our country.

The facts show that economic relations were very valuable. Albania also took a place in the international arena thanks to the contribution of the Soviet Union. There is no doubt that without their support, we were a bankrupt country as we emerged from our friendship with Yugoslavia. Why is all this happening? Probably because of Albania's geographical position. The construction of the Pashaliman naval base and the enchantment of the Soviet leadership towards the bay of Vlorë was an indication of this. However, the Soviets cover this country without much fuss, even though in the years it was proclaimed in Albania that we were quite coveted by the Soviets because of their geostrategic goals.

The reasons for this separation are multiple. On the one hand, Yugoslavia back returned the Soviet-Yugoslav relations, which played a very important role in the progress of relations between Albania and the Soviet Union. But we cannot say that Albania and the Soviet Union would have maintained their friendship if these relations had not been recovered. Or if Albania had not lined up in favor of China. But even this line in this paper I have seen in the light of the return of the Soviet Union's relations with Yugoslavia. Because just when it felt threatened by this return, Albania turned a blind eye to China, and vice versa. China found that it could have little support in eastern Europe.

From the analysis of the whole time frame, when the Albanian-Soviet relations took place, it turned out that we can divide these relations into two stages: the Albanian-Soviet relations within the development of the Albanian-Yugoslav relations and their Albanian-Soviet relations during the officialization.

In the first stage, the Albanian-Soviet relations were of a hidden form, due to the Soviet foreign policy itself and its goals in the international arena. After World War II, Albania's political situation took on a new political direction, bringing a new regime to the country. This regime began with the establishment of close Albanian-Yugoslav relations, which laid the foundations for Albania's journey towards the Socialist Country Camp, led by the Soviet Union.

– **The role of the Soviet Union in Albanian-Yugoslav relations**

Cooperation with Yugoslavia began with World War II when the Yugoslav Communist Party charged its two emissaries with the task of founding the Albanian Communist Party in 1941, to seize power in the country. Albanian leaders welcomed the Yugoslav initiative, which stemmed from the foreign policy of the international communist movement, which aimed to spread communism in European countries. In the years 1940-1941, the official influence of the Soviet Union in Albania was minimal, this is evidenced by the fact that the Albanian Communist Party in these years had no cell of its own that was trained by the Soviet Union, and, for this, the Albanian friendship was used by the Yugoslavs.

Due to the international political situation, but also the internal situation of Albania, the Albanian government that was created on March 22, 1946, came as a result of the provisional government, which was created in October 1944, in Berat. This coincides with the period of intensification of relations between Albania and Yugoslavia, which had a great influence on the creation of the political atmosphere, suitable to establish, then, the Albanian-Soviet relations.

Yugoslavia had the approval of the Soviet Union to intervene in Albanian politics, but on the other hand, it also nurtured its ambitions for Albania. It aimed to take over the leadership of the Balkan Confederation, where Albania would be its seventh republic.

With the establishment of the socialist regime in Albania, a new stage began for Albanian politics, the Albanian state, and its society. The new regime paved the way for political, economic, and social reforms that radically changed the Albanian way of life, and turned it into a faithful example of the model of the Soviet state and Soviet society.

All these changes defined Albania's position in the international arena, where Yugoslavia played a very important role in the context of Albania's foreign policy adviser. Since Albania failed to obtain the recognition of its government by Western allies, all its steps or correspondence with these countries were carried out through Yugoslavia.

Yugoslavia's position had the approval of the Soviet Union, to the point that Yugoslav intervention in Albanian domestic and foreign policy did not attract the attention of Western allies. Stalin did not want Western allies to realize that the Soviet Union was using Yugoslavia's influence in Albania to bring the latter under its influence.

This would be contrary to the Yalta Agreement, to the division of spheres of influence, and could provoke a conflict between Western allies and the Soviet Union, which, in turn, preferred to pursue a policy of indirect influence with Albania. The Soviet Union decided to exploit Albanian-Yugoslav relations until 1948 when it broke off relations with Yugoslavia and formalized close cooperation with Albania, which de facto marked Albania's entry into the Eastern Bloc.

The disruption of Soviet-Yugoslav relations affected the progress of Albanian-Yugoslav relations. As a result of many international attitudes and situations, Soviet foreign policy also changed its foreign policy priorities. At first, Yugoslavia was the most obedient satellite of the Soviet Union, but in 1948 their relations were severed and Yugoslavia was expelled from the Socialist Camp.

Albanian leaders took advantage of this development and accepted with closed eyes the rapprochement with the Soviets, whose policy towards Albania had strategic reasons. With the departure of the Yugoslavs, the Albanian leadership became closely linked to the Soviet Union and the Socialist Camp. The breakdown of Soviet-Yugoslav relations prevented the annexation of Albania by Yugoslavia.

On the other hand, with the institutionalization of Albanian-Soviet relations, a new stage began not only in Albanian political life but also in social life, because they had a profound effect not only on politics and economics but also on Albanian social life. The pursuit of the Soviet model of life also transformed Albanian social life.

The figure of Stalin began to be promoted and exalted, as a great value of the time, but in the meantime, free speech was denied, human rights were violated, those who came out against the regime were persecuted, and they were called "enemies of the people."

Of course, all this had the approval and consent of the Albanian government, which the Soviet model of society served to consolidate its power over the Albanian people.

– **Albanian-Soviet relations during the years of their officialization**

In the second stage, we have the formalization of Albanian-Soviet relations that came as a result of the loss of Soviet influence in Yugoslavia. The Soviets saw Albania as a very suitable place in the Balkans, to turn it into its most loyal satellite. Albania's geographical position and its communist regime provided the best opportunity to achieve the geostrategic goals of Soviet foreign policy, mainly toward the Western bloc.

In the early postwar years, Stalin had decided to set up an elaborate system of controls, which, in addition to the normal party leadership channels, consisted of Soviet advisers stationed in all important governmental and military organizations governing important sectors of the country. economies of satellite countries. However, this system of control remained only during the early period, when satellite parties, for their political survival and the technical assistance needed to rebuild their economies, depended almost entirely on Moscow. The system was about the so-called "Sovietization" of Eastern Europe.

The Albanian leadership had no other choice, it chose to be part of Soviet policy, thus accepting the implementation of the process of Sovietization of Albanian life, a new initiative of the BS, to politically identify all satellite countries with it. Albanian life underwent this process, and the Albanian state model became a copy of the Soviet model. The Sovietization process was a policy of the Soviet government, which was addressed to all European countries.

Hoxha's leadership declared the party "the leader and conductor of all life in the country." The realization of all national hopes depended on the political, ideological, and organizational revolution, as well as on the style and manner of work. An indifferent attitude to these demands. was considered a threat to the party's objectives.

In addition to this fact, it should be noted that Albania's enlistment in the Socialist Camp was not a sudden event, as Enver Hoxha was the leader of the Albanian Communist Party, which during the war had prepared the ground for being, after liberation, the only leading force, and, for this he had fought, by any means, the protagonist of any political element in the matter of anti-fascist resistance or the question of the nation. Hoxha thought that the West did not want his regime and that he tried from time to time to overthrow it.

In line with its militant orientations, the Albanian Communist Party stressed the importance of "Stalin's instructions" regarding the party's composition. According to the Soviet leader, workers were the dominant element in the party and life. Emphasizing the importance of having workers in leadership positions, in his speeches, Hoxha often cited examples of the "bad turn" that had taken place elsewhere in Eastern Europe, where parties had "degenerated into revisionism" because their bodies leaders were depolarized, filled with technocratic specialists, intellectuals and bureaucratic officials.

Close Albanian-Soviet relations began to feel their oscillations with Stalin's death and the coming to power of the new Soviet leader, Khrushchev, who brought a new spirit to Soviet domestic politics by striking at the cult of Stalin, but also at Soviet foreign policy as a result of changes in interests in the international arena.

Stalin's death also brought a new phenomenon to Soviet politics, but also to the Socialist Camp, the aggravation of the Soviet Union's relations with China, a situation in which Albania was also involved. The new Soviet policy towards Yugoslavia led Albania to a connection with China. On the other hand, China, after the strained relations with BS, was also interested in the connection with Albania. Yugoslavia's rapprochement with the Soviet Union impressed the Albanian leadership.

From the analysis of the Soviet-Albanian relations, since the establishment of the Albanian Communist Party, in 1941, it is clear that the disagreement between the two countries originated from the Soviet-Chinese controversy, which had important implications for Soviet control of the movement and international communism.

The broad branch of the Soviet strategy on the policy of coexistence, including relations with the West, was not very perceptible to the Albanian leadership, which began to support the Chinese in both ideological and international affairs.

Such an attitude came because the Albanian leadership did not agree with the new Khrushchev's policy on two points: destabilization and rapprochement with Yugoslavia.

The years 1960-1961 were the years when Moscow made public the disputes with Albania and their official termination. After a bitter experience with Yugoslavia in 1948, compared to the success achieved in Poland in 1956, Khrushchev may have hoped to find a solution to the dispute with Albania, as by 1960 these disputes had been carefully overcome. but when Albanian leaders began to support China in the latter's disagreements with the BS, Moscow was forced to react.

Similar to the case of Yugoslavia, in 1948, even with Albania, Moscow showed weakness in exercising its control over Albania and in conditioning its leadership to pursue Soviet policy.

All this damaged the international communist movement, because the case of Yugoslavia at first, China, and then poor Albania, gave the countries of the Socialist Bloc an example of good resistance to Soviet leadership.

On the other hand, Albania's exit from the Socialist Bloc warned of problems in the Balkans. Albania was surrounded by states that nurtured direct interests in it, and leaving the Soviet tutelage could encourage them to react. Such actions were destabilizing for the region and the West, and resolving the situation would require new political costs.

Seen in analogy, it seems as if the case of Yugoslavia with that of Albania has been exchanged: at first, Yugoslavia left the Socialist Country Camp and Albania joined the Soviet Union, while, later, Albania left the Socialist

Country Camp and Yugoslavia left and again reunited with the Soviet Union

4. Conclusions

Albanian-Soviet relations included all areas of the Albanian state: economy, culture, army, etc., and when they were discontinued later, in 1960, any kind of Albanian-Soviet cooperation ceased to exist and developed in all these areas.

- Thanks to the Soviet Union, Albania was admitted to the Reciprocal Economic Assistance Council and the Warsaw Pact. Through loans, Albania managed to have a satisfactory standard of living. Improvements were felt in the fields of education, industry, agriculture, culture, science, etc.
- Albanian-Soviet relations brought the modernization of the Albanian Army and equipped the latter with the latest weapons of the time. Seen in the context of national security, the whole range of Albanian-Soviet relations had its importance in the security of the political regime, military security, social, economic security, etc. The construction of a Soviet naval base in Albanian territory was, of course, a demonstration of force against neighboring countries, which had not abandoned their claims.

The study of Albanian-Soviet relations is very important because in the archives of Albanian institutions there are still a large number of unclassified documents, which, after meeting the time and legal deadline to be declassified, will be a contribution of great in accurately reflecting many political situations during the period of development of Albanian-Soviet relations

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