

Politics & Security of Albania

BALKAN POLITICS

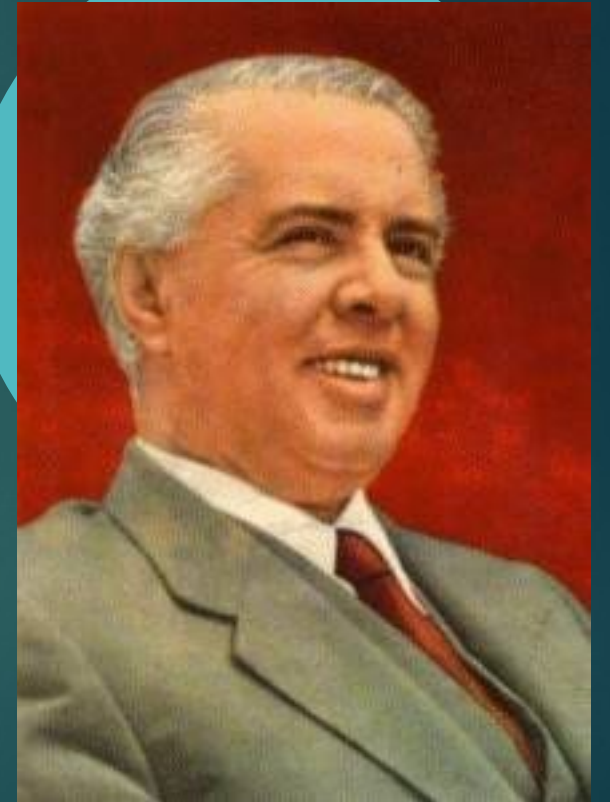
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Albania since 1945 in the hands of Enver Hoxha

- ▶ Until his death 1985, as the First Secretary of the Communist Albanian Party of Labour
- ▶ Cultural and ideological revolution
 - ▶ Abolition of religion
 - ▶ Isolation (fear of the outside world)
 - ▶ Repression of clan system and clan leaders
 - ▶ Radical change in the status of Albanian women
 - ▶ Stalinism, enverism, titoists (traitors)
 - ▶ Repression (Sigurimi)
 - ▶ Technological backwardness



Albanian Foreign Policy

- ▶ 1945 – 48 USSR, Yugoslavia Grand Balkan federation, Yugoslav satellite
- ▶ 1948 split Tito with Stalin so friend is Stalin
- ▶ 1956 destalinisation in USSR unlike in Alb so friends with China
- ▶ 1968 withdrawal from Warsaw Pact
- ▶ 1970s stagnation of relations with China, self-reliance
- ▶ 1971 normalisation of relations with Yugoslavia and Greece
- ▶ 1975 the only European country not present in Helsinki



Challenges for Albania in the 90s of the 20th century:

- ▶ Democracy for the very 1st time
- ▶ Total Isolation
- ▶ No independent courts, media, civic groups and associations
- ▶ Instabil region
- ▶ Geostrategical importance



Main Cleavage

▶ Gëgs in the north and in Kosovo, Macedonia and Monte Negro. In power till 1945, then since 1992. The society is regulated by Kanun.

- ▶ Honour (*Nderi*)
- ▶ Hospitality (*Mikpritja*)
- ▶ Right Conduct (*Sjellja*)
- ▶ Kin Loyalty (*Fis*)

▶ Tosks in the south. In power 1945-1992; 1997-2005.



Transition:

- ▶ 1985-1992 Liberalisation
- ▶ 1992-1996 democratisation and transition, Democratic party having power
- ▶ 1997 The Pyramid Schemes Crisis. Socialists in power
- ▶ 1998 assassination of Azem Hajdari, attempt for the coup d'état
- ▶ 1999 Kosovo
- ▶ 2001 Macedonia
- ▶ Since 2005 democrats back in power



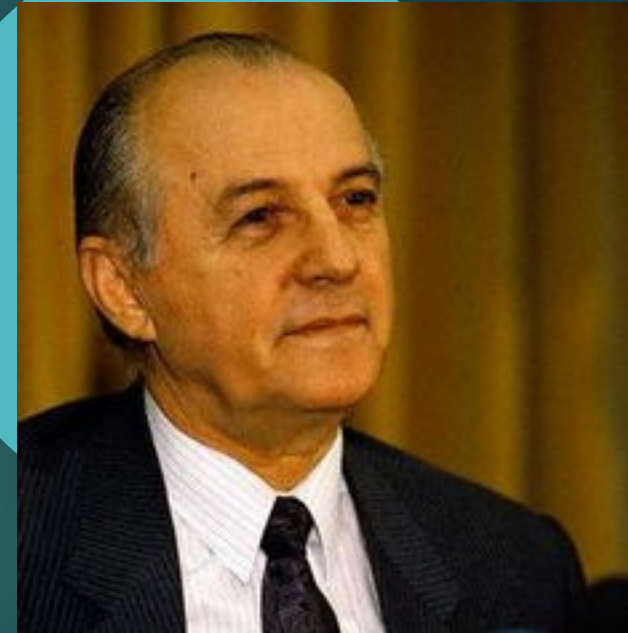
Beginning of the 90s:

- ▶ Albania was the last country for the revolution to happen
- ▶ Ramiz Alia started the slight political and economical reform in 1990 (travelling, religion, Ministry of Justice, visas for foreigners)



The Hoxha's Successor Ramiz Alia (other candidates either had been eliminated by the dictator himself or had died)

- ▶ allowed public discussions of Albania's societal problems
- ▶ the new leadership loosened some political controls
- ▶ general amnesties brought about the release of many long-term prisoners.
- ▶ better ties with the outside world
- ▶ A loosening of restrictions on travel and tourism
- ▶ more openness in the press



Main events for the demise of the regime:

- ▶ Crisis on the embassies (2.7.1990)
- ▶ Ismail Kadare asked for the political asylum in France (october 1990)



The emergence of the political pluralism:

- ▶ Semi-democratic elections 31.3.1991 won the Albanian Party of Labour
- ▶ crisis situation,
- ▶ the new government of national salvation was set up, reforms (privatisation, liberalisation of prices etc)
- ▶ The prime minister announced that the Albania has the food reserves only for 6 days which revoked the anarchism and looting.



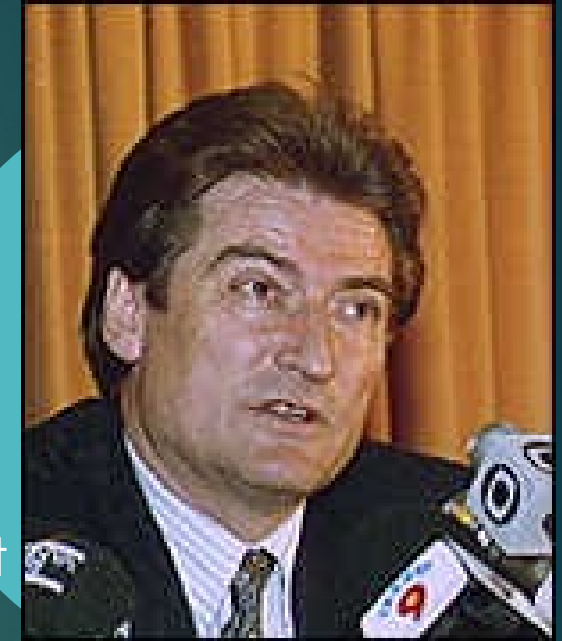
Elections of 1992

- ▶ Democratic party of Albania which stays in power till 1997:
- ▶ 100 MPS in single member districts, 40 proportional, 4% threshold
- ▶ The parties on ethnical ground were forbidden – the Greeks renamed Omonia
- ▶ The parliament elected Sali Berisha new president
- ▶ President designed new premier Alexander Meksi



Transition towards democracy or authoritarian rule???

- ▶ Economical reforms
- ▶ Reforms in Justice and the State of Law
- ▶ The socialists imprisoned (Some got amnesty or the sentence was reduced afterwards, e.g. Nexhemije Hoxha, some charged with financial affairs)
- ▶ Opening of the Sigurimi files
- ▶ 1993 controversial media law (couple journalists imprisoned and charged with the detection of the state secret, the government kept the media control)
- ▶ The constitution guaranteed the parliamentary democracy – in practice we could talk about the hybrid semi-presidential system
- ▶ The justice was not separated from the executive power
- ▶ The human rights violation, police abuse, nonlegal practices continued
- ▶ No political culture, corruption, financial affairs
- ▶ Support for the pyramid schemes

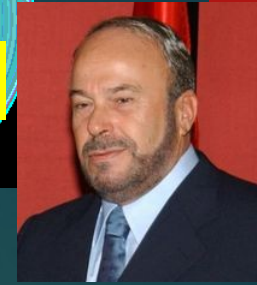


The foreign policy

- ▶ NATO, EU
- ▶ islamic world
- ▶ neighbours



Party system – bipolar, two main political parties: Socialist Party of Albania



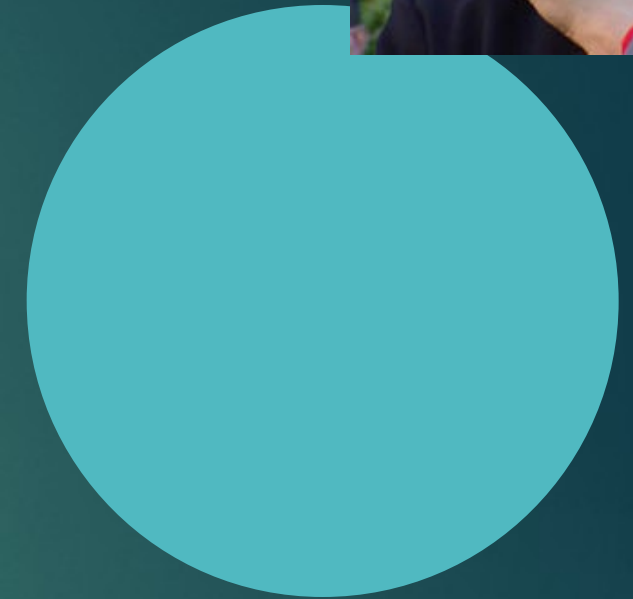
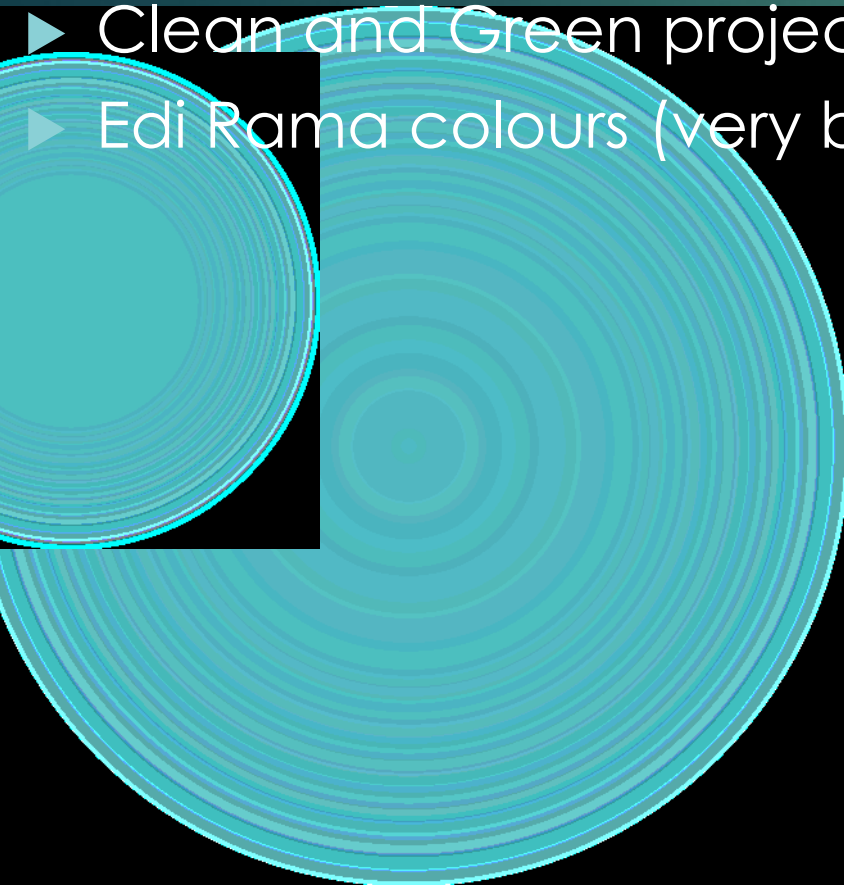
- ▶ legal successor to the Albanian Labor Party
- ▶ Fatos Nano.
- ▶ Edi Rama.



Edi Rama – new figure on the political scene – artist or politician??



- ▶ internationally recognized visual artist.
- ▶ the mayor of Tirana as an independent candidate supported by the Socialist Party of Albania.
- ▶ Clean and Green project
- ▶ Edi Rama colours (very bright yellow, green, violet).

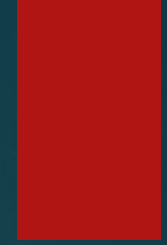
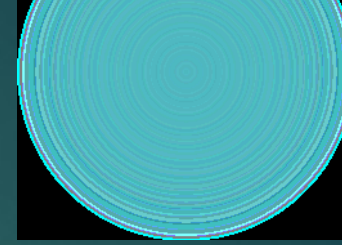


Party system – bipolar, two main political parties: Democratic Party of Albania

- ▶ center-right political party
- ▶ Sali Berisha
- ▶ The government resigned in 1997 after a civil war nearly broke out and its socialist rivals gained power.



Ethnic parties



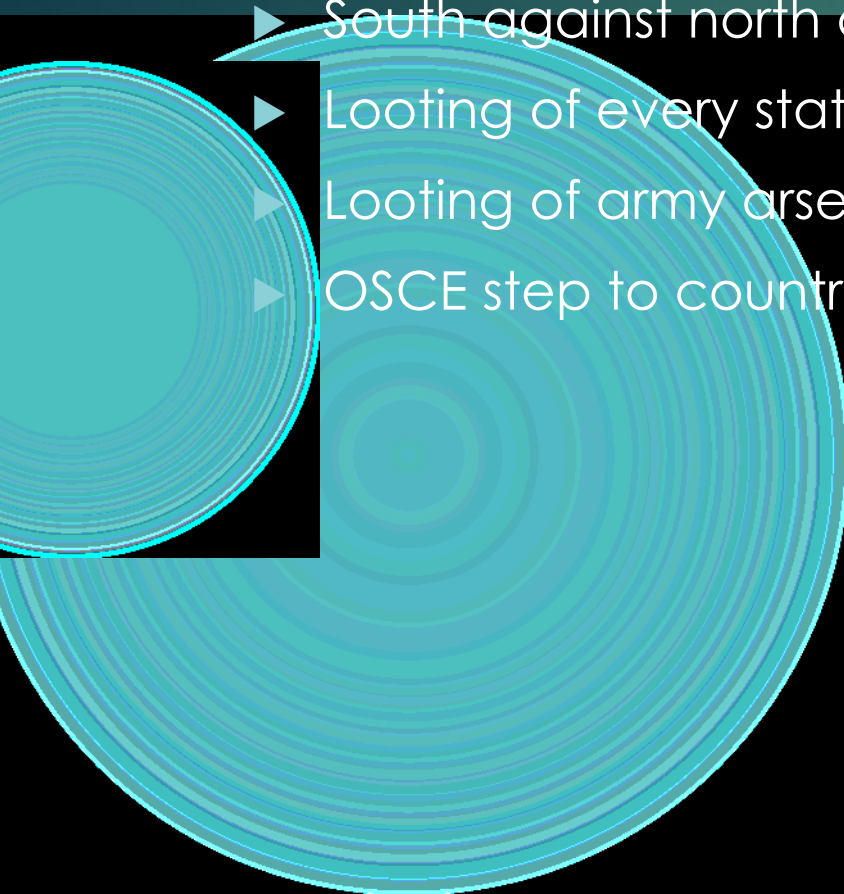
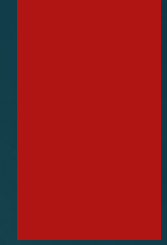
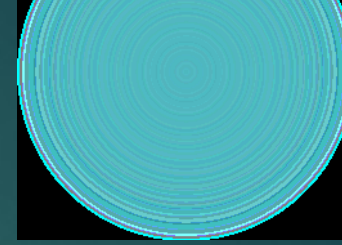
- ▶ The **Unity for Human Rights Party** is a centrist, more or less liberal party
- ▶ ethnic Greek population as the continuation of the Democratic Union of the Greek Minority (Omonoia).

Extremist (anti-system) parties marginal

- ▶ The **Movement of Legality Party** - monarchist political party in Albania,
- ▶ **National Front** - nationalist political party

1997 state of anarchy

- ▶ Armed rebellion after the fall of the pyramid schemes
- ▶ South against north and Berisha
- ▶ Looting of every state agency
- ▶ Looting of army arsenals
- ▶ OSCE step to country and organises elections

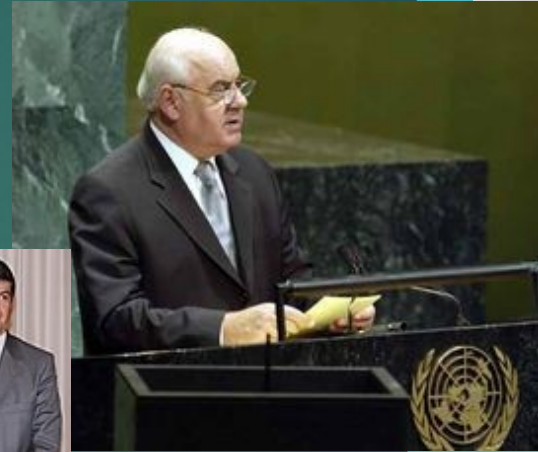


1998 another unrest?

- ▶ Prominent politician Azem Hajdari was assassinated.
- ▶ The democrats accused the socialists from the assassination.
- ▶ Provoked coup d'état by Berisha??
- ▶ several demonstrations, some of them violent.

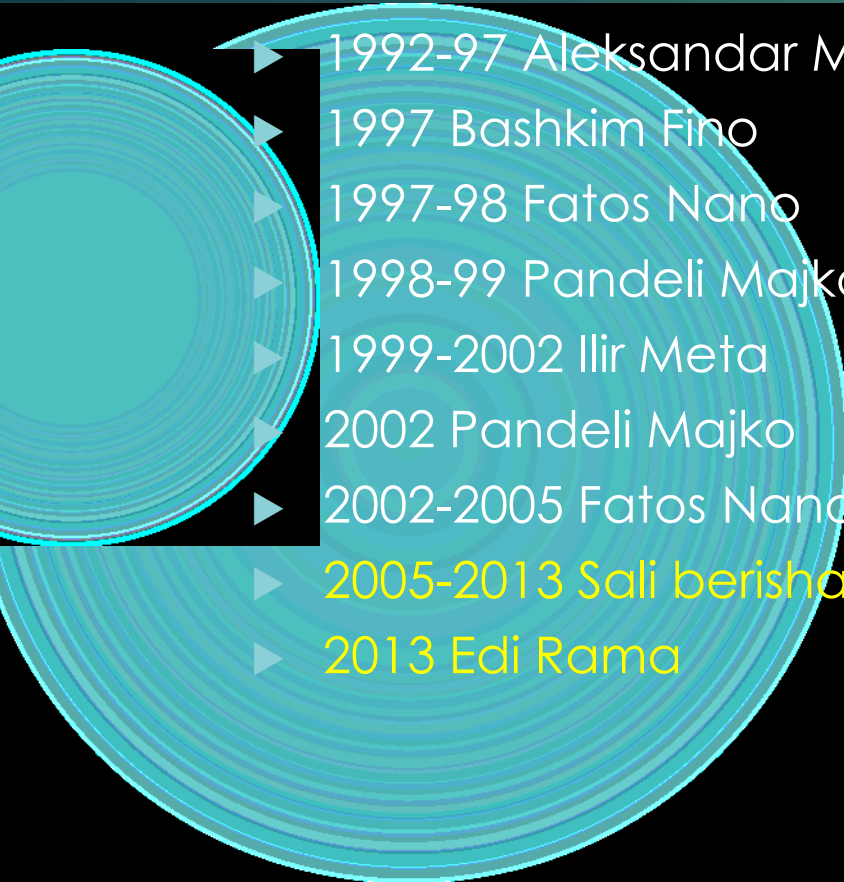
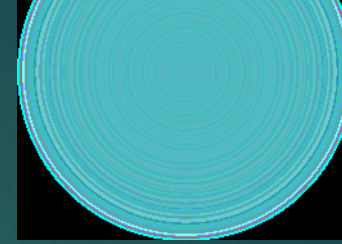
Presidents of Albania – elected by the 3/5 all MPs of the parliament, 5 years 1 re-election

- ▶ 1992-97 Sali Berisha
- ▶ 1997 – 2002 Rexhep Qemal Meidani
- ▶ 2002-2007 Alfred Moisiu
- ▶ 2007-2012 Bamir Topi
- ▶ 2012-2017 Bujar Nishani
- ▶ 2017-2022 Ilir Meta
- ▶ 2022 Bajram Begaj



PM of Albania - instability

- ▶ 1991 Fatos Nano, Ily Bufi
- ▶ 1991-92 Vilson Ahmeti
- ▶ 1992-97 Aleksandar Meksi
- ▶ 1997 Bashkim Fino
- ▶ 1997-98 Fatos Nano
- ▶ 1998-99 Pandeli Majko
- ▶ 1999-2002 Ilir Meta
- ▶ 2002 Pandeli Majko
- ▶ 2002-2005 Fatos Nano
- ▶ 2005-2013 Sali Berisha
- ▶ 2013 Edi Rama

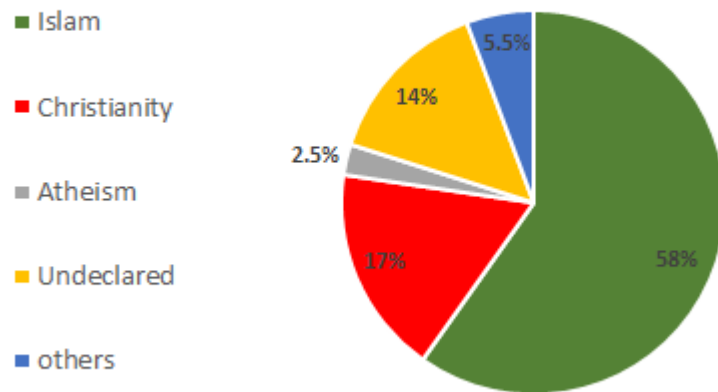


Religion in Albania

- ▶ Religious tolerance
- ▶ Radical vs secular islam



Religion in Albania



Current Albania

- ▶ Not fully democratic, still democracy better than neighbouring countries
- ▶ Great leap
 - ▶ Corruption, media, justice
 - ▶ NATO and USA big brothers
 - ▶ Path towards EU
 - ▶ Kosovo issue



Role play

- ▶ Group n. I.: Construct the most totalitarian state in the world (geography, politics, economics, society, symbols, language, religion, culture etc. , elect leader and write his inauguration speech)
- ▶ Group n. II: Think of the most important things you have to deal with after the fall of tough totalitarian regime. What first, what next...