

Albania: in Perpetual “Revolution”

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Albania at the beginning of this year lived a very frightening situation, and this was not the first time in which the country found itself in such a situation; nor will it be the last one! And it was a frightening situation because the present crisis was neither just created by the present government, nor was it a crisis that blew up unexpectedly. In fact, it is a perpetual crisis which gets aggravated every day. This crisis is the result of the policies implied by the “neo-liberal consensus,” i.e. the ideological justification used by the transnational elite for the institutional changes required by globalisation, namely, the opening and deregulation of *capital, commodities* and *labour markets*. It is not therefore surprising that the present crisis began after the fall of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

We will explore briefly the perpetual crisis in Albania starting from the past policies and their integration into the present ones, which has led to a state where the symptoms are continuously and disgracefully aggravated.

The “Neo-liberal” consensus: a silent war!

Albania, with a population at about 4 million, and separated into various religious groups (Muslims, Christians and Bectashians —a sect of the Muslim’s empire— plus the latest invasions by other anglicised sects, such as Mormonism and Judaism) and at the ethnic level divided into pieces throughout neighbouring countries (mainly in the former Yugoslavian Federation), has not any *common* “national” spirit! After the fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Declaration of Independence in 1912, despite the fact that it was the last kingdom of the Balkans to achieve such “independence,” it entered a period of social instability.

The aftermath of the second world war, found Albanian politics in the Soviet Block, which was a block characterised by centrally planned economies, aiming to establish a rational society on the basis of Marxist economics and socialist principles, as opposed to those of Western countries, which based their policies on liberal economics and principles leading to a capitalist market economy, and consequently to a “growth economy,” which is defined by Fotopoulos, as the system of economic organisation whose basic aim is the maximisation of economic growth, whether this aim is “objectively” determined (as in the case of the capitalist market economy, like the present one, whose dynamic inevitably leads to it), or not, as in the case of the ex “actually existing socialism,” where the development of productive forces was an ideological aim.^[1]

It was the dynamic of the capitalist market economy which as Fotopoulos concludes, has led to the present concentration of economic and political power and to a multi-dimensional crisis —a symptom of which is the present urban monstrosities called cities. Thus, as Albania, adopted similar policies to those of all other countries of the West, it is on the same road with

them: in the midst of a multi-dimensional crisis. So, following the fall of the previous regime, and the integration of Albania into the internationalised market economy, we were led, through continuous political, economical and social tensions, to the present social explosion.

Economic failure: the root cause of the insurrection

The burst of the recent “revolution” was not simply a consequence of wrong government policies, but, mainly, of the established capitalist market system in a peripheral country like Albania. Thus, the governor of the central bank, Ardian Fullani, who meets regularly with the representatives of the transnational-elite and spends a lot of time and tax-payer’s money on his journeys (!), has applied the so called “macro prudential” policies in order to soften the present crisis. He also used counter-cyclical policy in the form of fiscal expansion aiming at ensuring a macroeconomic stimulus, and establishing in this way a Central Bank’s *lesson* for future crisis!^[2]

However, as one may expect, the post-communist Albanian governments have failed in creating a stable economic environment with high levels of income and employment for the population. Neither the former “socialist” party nor the present “democratic” party have been able to successfully manage the Albanian economy and, in fact, they could never do so under the present economic model which is, in Fotopoulos’ words, an “*export-led growth economy*”. Broadly defining it, this is an economy which bases its growth on the external market, rather than on the domestic one, as is also the case with all those countries which have been integrated into the internationalised market economy through institutions such as the IMF, WB, WTO and the rest. Indeed, our world’s economy is coerced into being integrated into these institutions!

The present “corruption” as the catalyst for the insurrection

However, we live today in a world where economic and political decisions are being taken by a transnational elite whose *verdicts* are expressed through the G7, the European Commission, IMF, WTO, etc, and then *rubber-stamped by our parliaments and “representatives”*; and of course our democracies have nothing in common with classical democracies such as Athens, or that of Thales!^[3] Thus, what changed in Albania in recent years —as regards our “democracy”— was simply the method of applying the rules of it, not its essence.

The symptoms of chronic corruption are many and well-known to Albanians. Such symptoms are : the case of Lulëzim Basha, the ex-Minister of Transport, who ignorantly was trying to manage the “*borrowings*” of Berisha’s government to use them “rationally” into Albanian’s roads and who grossly mis-carried this enterprise for the sake of his insatiability, accused repeatedly by the opposition party for corruption; or that of Fatmir Mediu, ex-Minister of the Army, who, in 2008, killed 26 labourers in the Gërdeci’s explosion, in co-ordination with American businessmen, who were trying to sell arms to Afghanistan; or, finally, the case of the Foreign Minister, Ilir Meta, who was recorded by his ex-assistant and co-founder of their “movement,” Dritan Prifti, making possible for all citizens to witness Meta’s exposition in discussing corruptive policies! In fact, it was this case which filled up the cup and took the people on the roads.^[4]

Today, people witness their government desperately trying to protect and *cover* those

corruptive policies. Not surprisingly, no one has been punished or imprisoned because of such policies! Subsequently, the Albanian government, despite the fact that it has killed four innocent people (one died afterwards in hospital, in Turkey!), as well as more than 30 injured (on the excuse that the police had to shoot across and to protect the prime-minister's building)[5], it paid its guards more than four wages as a reward! Indeed, the present government, under Sali Barisha, has lost its capability to manage the situation, who *spoute off* his moral deficiencies on politics and knowledge. Proponents of the government, as in previous cases, had been trying to use every argument in order to persuade the people that what they saw on television was not true, but "a film of *truquage*"[6].

The conventional wisdom: the enemy of the people!

Ordinary people were divided into those who supported the insurrection, and into those who opposed it. The former are of course the people who feel that there is no future, nor any improvement in their country, and they just find themselves spontaneously onto the streets fighting the present Junta. Not surprisingly, those people who were on the streets, demonstrating their oppression, famine and poverty, were blamed by the government, as usually, as terrorists!

Meanwhile, the leader of the socialist party, Edi Rama, has adopted a very angry language, and he insisted on the need to continue the struggle against the present parliamentary junta. So, he organised a second demonstration on Friday (28-01-2011), which, according to the leader, should be peaceful, with people dressed in black to pay tribute to those who fell in the battle against the government's corruption, under *Mozart's Requiem*. Furthermore, a similar demonstration was supposed to take place every Friday (according to Erjon Veliaj, coordinator of the peaceful demonstrations, who is a puppet of the socialist party, which in turn is a puppet of Soros's foundation), but without any obvious political objective! It should be noted that the leader of the opposition, according to his supporters, was threatened by government's people, for his life, and during the demonstration he was protected by a huge team of bodyguards, despite the fact that this was a demonstration full in emotion for the blameless killed people!

Fear was everywhere present. People were very angry with the decisions taken by the government, which were anti-popular and disgracefully anti-democratic. But unfortunately, the socialist party is like the other European genetically modified "socialist" parties, which see a future only within the European Union, i.e. the "union of capital". Similarly, the "municipal [emotional] elections," which took place on 08 May 2011, were ridiculously manipulated by the government. The main manipulation of the results, however, took place in the municipality of Tirana, where the leader of the "socialist" party, Edi Rama, was confronted by Lulëzim Basha (a puppet of the "democratic" party), in favour of course of the latter, once it became obvious that the former had "won" with a narrow difference of 10 (*purchased*) votes! This has led to a political crisis with the "socialist" party threatening revolts and further destabilization of the country (after having repeatedly failed, in the court, in their action against the government for manipulations) and proposing new elections in those areas where they feel so —always, of course, at the expense of the tax-payers money! However, this is just part of the political game i.e. to keep the country under fear and the people in need of domestic powers, without any understanding of the institutional framework within which such powers operate.

For, no one in Albania has the mental capacity to see that other countries of the present Union have collapsed exactly because of their membership to this Union, notably next-door Greece.^[7] None of these, academics or not, can see that the future of our country, is simply in our own hands. They cannot deliberate either through historical, radical or rational analysis to ponder that, for a community to survive, it has to control its domestic production in one way or in another and not leave it to the 'market forces' and those controlling them for their own interests!

In conclusion, all Albania's professional politicians and academics, have adopted a silent attitude towards the neo-liberal consensus. No one dares to oppose such ideology. The people of Albania are at a crossroad, and with the propaganda imposed on them, by both parties, they will find themselves in a painful future. And this is because, although "Parliamentarian Democracy," provides for revolts in case the Constitution is violated it does not provide for direct participation. But whenever *revolts* are part of a constitution that is not a *demo-cracy*, but a *revolt-cracy*!

[1] See Takis Fotopoulos, "Is sustainable development compatible with present globalisation? The Chinese Case," *The International Journal of INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACY*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (October 2008): http://www.inclusivedemocracy.org/journal/vol4/vol4_no4_takis_chinese_case.htm

[2] See Ylli Përmeti, *Phronetic and Demotic Manifesto*, Chapter Two, Beyond an Autonomic Democracy: Economics vs. Phronesis, the Greek and the Albanian Case, in which I analyse and *refute* both cases; the former with reference to Fotopoulos, and the latter, with the help of various other references, pp, 154-163.: <http://phroneticanddemocracy.blogspot.com/>

[3] See Ylli Përmeti, "Laws & Constitutions: Transcending Naturalism & Towards a Democratic Constitution," under *Constructing Constitutions: Towards a World Empire*, Under Publication.

[4] For references see on my blog: <http://phroneticanddemocracy.blogspot.com/>. Some of them have been publicized under the titles: "Democracy or Corpocracy?," "Towards a Global Fascism", and "The Power of Fear," published as well on our Newspaper: www.gazeta.levizjaperdrejtesi.com and www.gazetac.com.

[5] This is According to Berisha's repeated declarations with which he continually tries to cover his own mistakes and the corruption of his apparatus.

[6] I used the French word *truquage*, which in English could be translated "special effects," because professional politicians apart from being always on fiddle, they also try to cover their mental deficiencies by using non-understandable words by ordinary people!

[7] See Takis Fotopoulos, "The Latin-Americanization of Greece and the lessons for the European South," *The International Journal of INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACY*, Vol. 6, No. 2/3 (Spring/Summer 2010): http://www.inclusivedemocracy.org/journal/vol6/vol6_no2_takis_latin_americanization_greece_south.htm