THE FORGETTING INSTITUTION

Memory and oblivion in the National History Museum in contemporary Albania

Julián Emiro Roa Triana
Master Thesis

Supervisor: Anna Bohlin PhD.

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ABSTRACT

National museums are institutions that exhibit historical narratives politically influenced by individuals, groups or governments. These actions are implemented inside the exhibition space of museums through the creation of specific projects of memory and oblivion that seek to convert historic memory in an ideological tool. In this dissertation, it is discussed the different aspects involved in the creation of these projects to subsequently make use of them in specific case studies inside a national museum. For this purpose, it was collected visual material from documentaries, books and photographs of five areas of the permanent exhibition of the National History Museum of Tirana in Albania showing the level of transformation of its spaces, since its construction in 1981 during the Communist regime until the subsequent transitional period to a Capitalist society. These cases were analysed to find the implications of the ideological influence of political regimes in the museum exhibitions. As a result of this analyses it was possible to discover heterogeneous political influences in the construction of the Albanian historic memory particularly influenced by different ideologies. Consequently, the case studies showed some ways in which the museum has dealt with constructed representations of history ranking from the glorification of past to the contesting of the Communist period in Albania. It was demonstrated through the findings and the subsequent discussion that some of the political projects of memory and oblivion implemented by the Communist regime in 1981 have been kept intact or transformed, thus, evidencing a heterogeneous response of the museum to the historical discourse that the former Communist regime implemented in Albania.

KEY WORDS: Museums, National history, Memory, Oblivion, Albania.

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Finally, I would like to dedicate this project to my mother, who always reminds me that the most important gift that she has ever given me is the passion for knowledge.

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'Here [at the chthonian oracle of Trophonios in Boiotia] he [the supplicant] must drink water called the water of Lethe (Forgetfulness), that he may forget all that he has been thinking of hitherto, and afterwards he drinks of another water, the water of Mnemosyne (Memory), which causes him to remember what he sees after his descent'.

Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 9. 39. 8 (trans. Jones) (Greek travelogue C2nd A.D.)

'Everything faded into mist. The past was erased, the erasure was forgotten, the lie became truth'.

George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949).

FIGURE 1. 2011: The National History Museum and Scanderbeg Square, Tirana, Albania. (Personal photograph).

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTEXT OF THE PROJECT

1.1.1 ANTECEDENTS

I would like to commence this dissertation by giving a brief background on the origin of this project. I consider it relevant to explain the context of how this discussion began, followed by a contextual background of my object of study. First of all, I will describe the role of the organization where I took part in the internship course necessary for the subsequent development of the final project of the Master's program in International Museum Studies of the University of Gothenburg. After this, I intend to briefly expound the context of the *Muzeu Historik Kombëtar* or National History Museum of Albania (MHK), which is the institution that I have chosen to conduct the proposed research of this dissertation. Finally, I will explain the aim of this project by giving a summary of my thesis statement, the theoretical framework and the set of questions that I intend to elucidate in relationship with my object of study.

In October 2011, I had the opportunity to come to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BIH) and participate in an academic internship with the Swedish Organization *Cultural Heritage without Borders* (CHWB)[1]. This organization is involved with several projects related to heritage at risk of being destroyed due to different factors such as war, natural disasters or neglect caused by poverty or other difficult social conditions. The regional office of Sarajevo, where I was initially assigned, works in close partnership with different institutions, mainly from the European Union, such as the *Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)* and several academic institutions in the region that comprises BIH, Kosova and Albania. Its main work has been focused on architectural restoration and in some degree the development of exhibition projects aimed to improve the relevance of cultural heritage among local communities that were affected by the *Yugoslav Wars* between 1991 and 1995 and other events such as the political unrest and transitional period of Albania after the fall of Communism in 1991. Since January 2012 I have been working with CHWB in the regional branch located in Tirana, the

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1   Cultural Heritage without Borders (CHWB), is a Swedish Non-governmental organization working to preserve cultural monuments endangered in various ways. The Organization was founded in April, 1995, in the spirit of the *Hague Convention* from 1954 to lend international support to cultural heritage at risk of being destroyed whether as a result of natural disasters, war or neglect because of poverty or political and social conditions. The overall goal for CHWB's work in Bosnia and Herzegovina is to strengthen the country's prospects to assume its own responsibility to restore, conserve and spread information about its common cultural heritage in keeping with established international conventions (CHWB, 2005, p.4).

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capital city of the Republic of Albania. In this branch, the main objectives of the organization are focused in the development of projects in the Unesco World Heritage Site of Gjirokastra in the south of the country. Although I have mainly worked on tasks related with the visibility of architectural restoration projects in that site, I was captivated with the exhibitions of the Muzeu Historik Kombëtar located in Tirana. The reason for that was the impression of an institution that initially seemed to be 'stuck' in time, something that, at a first glance seemed to be the case, judging from the structure and visual appearance of the exhibition displays. The reason to initially conjecture that was partly based on my background in arts and visual design, which allowed me to identify different technical elements within the exhibition that were widely used in museological projects during the 1980s. For instance, the use of dry transfer lettering and metallic and plastic molded types for the texts of the exhibition are still exhibited in some of the rooms. Thus, my initial question about the MHK, was to ascertain whether the museum was built during the Communist regime in Albania, which in turn led me to enquire why the exhibitions still kept a museological project from that period. The decision to analyze and discuss possible hypothesis regarding some explanations for that phenomenon began with the gathering of visual and archive data which was consolidated as the main body of research for the purpose of this dissertation. This body is composed of visual material taken from film documentaries, photographs of the museum and its exhibitions published in books during the Communist era, personal digital photographs of the current exhibitions, an interview with the curator of the museum and finally the original museological written project of 1980. After that initial gathering of evidence, I commenced a review of relevant literature that would give the theoretical framework to work with this material. That allowed me to link the object of my study with theories on human memory and its role in the construction of historic memory, which became the heart of my thesis. In the second part of this introduction I will explain this theoretical framework more in detail. First, however, I would like to explain a general context of the museum that should serve as a preface for the theoretical discussion and following analysis of the MHK.

1.1.2 THE *MUZEU HISTORIK KOMBËTAR* AND ALBANIA

Let me begin by stating that I do not intend to give a comprehensive account of Albanian history during the Communist period; it is not my aim to condense data in the form of a historical interpretation of the museum as an institution. Instead of that I will frame this contextualization of the MHK in two aspects that are definitive for the aim of this dissertation. First, I will develop the idea of isolation in relationship with the policies of the Albanian Government at the time of the construction of the Museum and second, I will attempt to contextualize this institution as one of the products of a resultant state's policy that some academic scholars call the 'Albanian Cultural Revolution'[2].

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2   For instance, Isa Blumi developed this subject in an article titled: *Hoxha's Class War: The Cultural Revolution and State Reformation, 1961 – 1971.*

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The origin of the Muzeu Historik Kombëtar as a functioning institution lies in a political decision of the Council of Ministers of Albania (Keshilli Kryeministrove, 1980). In fact, the period of the 'People's Socialist Republic of Albania', a name used from 1976 (Albanian Parliament, 1977) until the fall of the Communist regime in 1991-92, was the scenario for the planning and construction of the museum in the early 1980s. The existence of a 'isolationist' policy after the ideological and economic splits with Yugoslavia (1948), the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (USSR) (1960-61) and Maoist China (1976-1978), were a particular characteristic of the Communist regime in Albania under the leadership of Enver Hoxha (1944 - 1981) and briefly under Ramiz Alia (1985- 1991). They consisted of a series of actions aimed to protect the country from two different factors: an alleged risk of invasion of the territory and the influence of 'revisionist' ideas on the Stalinist ideology of the Albanian State. Indeed, Hoxha's writings and other literature coming from the state's propaganda apparatus (the '8 Nëntori Publishing House') constantly refer to Albanian Socialism as an impregnable fortress[3], thus reflecting the political mood during his rule. Galaty, Stocker and Watkinson suggest that this obsession of Hoxha to protect the country by all means from a foreign menace resides in the idea of constant invasion of the territory of Albania through history, which according to them 'is one of foreign occupation -by ancient Greeks, Romans, Bulgarians, Venetians, Ottomans, Italians, Austrians, Germans, Serbs, and modern Greeks'. (Galaty, Stocker and Watkinson, 2009, p.177). In that sense, the physical threat of being invaded was reflected in several military strategies that were carried out during the Communist period. For instance, the construction of nearly one million concrete bunkers that according to Rugg (1994) were built during the 1980's decade. He also notes the cost of this action in terms of resource wasting. In fact, BBC's reporter Daniel Howden (2002) made a comparison of the cost of these bunkers suggesting that they were twice as expensive as the Maginot Line in France and consumed three times the amount of concrete[4]. With this evidence, it is possible to have an idea of the human effort of the Albanian people at that time to satisfy the policies of Hoxha. Moreover, isolation is also seen in the state policies that sought to shield the country from foreign influence coming from Capitalist countries and also Socialist states, which, according to Hoxha, were considered revisionist of the Marxism-Leninism and the Stalinism ideologies. He denounced several Communist Parties of Europe and the 'Khrushchevite-Imperialist anti-Communist campaign against Stalin' in his book, and its title speaks by itself: 'Eurocommunism is Anti-Communism' (Hoxha, 1980, pp. 3, 8 & 43). Thus, it is possible to assert that the isolation of Albania in the decade when the museum was built is the

3   Hoxha and the propaganda constantly refers to Albania as a fortified country surrounded by enemies: 'With the Party at the head, with the united forces of an entire people, our socialist Albania has become both a great work site of production and creation and an impregnable fortress of socialism. (Hoxha, 1984, p. 577), 'We had to make Albania a country of free and happy people, an impregnable fortress against any enemy'. (Hoxha, 1984, p. 581) and 'Socialist Albania enjoys great authority and has a strong international position, it has many friends and well-wishers all over the world. Encircled and coveted by perfidious enemies, it stands up resolutely to the savage pressure and blockade of the Imperialists and revisionists' (anonymous, 1984, p.11).

4   These claim is analyzed and proved in: Stefa, E. And Mydyti G. 2009. Concrete Mushrooms: Bunkers in Albania. [digital book - draft] Milano: Politecnico di Milano. Available at: http://concrete-mushrooms.com/files/concrete-mushrooms-final.pdf [Accessed 30 April 2012]. P. 77.

product of Hoxha's determination to keep a Stalinist ideology as the policy of state[5]. With this isolation in the geopolitical context, Hoxha saw the 'menace of revisionism' as the biggest enemy of the Socialist Albania. In fact, as early as the 1960's, he posed the need for a new society that should be 'clean' from bourgeois influence, something that he asserted in his discourse:

> 'The complete construction of a socialist society will not be realized without building a new person with new ideas (...) the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois remnants in the consciousness of the people make a serious barrier to the complete victory of socialism in Albania' (Hoxha, 1961 cited in Blumi, 1999, p. 306)

In this speech given during the Fourth Congress of the Party of Labour of Albania (PPSH[6]), it becomes evident that he had the desire to implement a 'cultural revolution' that should breed the 'new men' needed for a 'new society' that would have broken, in some sense, with the past. However, the project of this cultural revolution can be seen as a two sided entity where the state implemented a historical rupture but also encouraged an idea of 'glorious ancient origins' of the Albanian people.

The break with the past in order to create a new society can be seen in Hoxha's regime declaration from 1967, which speaks of Albania as the first atheist state in the world, 'Nowhere else (...) was the pressure on religion so brutal and sustained' (Rugg, 1994, p.70). According to Galaty, Stocker and Watkinson (2009, p.179), an estimate 95 percent of 2169 churches and mosques were completely destroyed. Also, most of the remaining temples changed their ritual use to serve other functions (housing, cinemas or cultural centers). The complete control of the state over everyday aspects of individual's life can also be seen in the break up with the allegedly 'bourgeois' art in Albania. In a document from 1975 by the Council of Ministers entitled 'On the placement of the works of figurative art in locations and public spaces', the council orders several measures:

> *Due to an ongoing concern of the party* 'on the formation and education of our young people within the Marxist-Leninist world understanding and a taste for the aesthetics of the beauty of art, nature, work and life' *the council decrees* '1. That all instruments of culture and mass propaganda be used in an intensive way and qualified for the formation of taste in our socialist morality, and view that as an aspect of class wars on the ideological front. 2. Ministries and their central institutions and the executive committee of the people's councils of the regions take all measures to remove from spaces works of figurative art that are inappropriate and without ideological and artistic values and replace them with works imbued with content of an artistic level'. (Carçani, 1975).

So, this shows how the so-called 'Albanian cultural revolution' was consistently implemented in all aspects of social life ranging from the spiritual sense to the aesthetic taste of individuals and therefore the society.

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5   In this regard, Isa Blumi has written an extensive analysis of the political decisions that Hoxha took to hold in power: Blumi, I., 1999. Hoxha's class war: The cultural revolution and state reformation, 1961-1971. *East European Quarterly*, V. 33 (3), pp. 303-326.

6   Partia e Punës e Shqipërise (Party of Labour of Albania from 1945 until 1991)

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Moreover, the encouragement of a 'distant and glorious' past based in the Illyrian cultures to support the origin of the Albanian nation also characterizes the Albanian cultural revolution as an ethnic nationalistic project, despite the fact that it would clash with the intrinsic 'proletarian internationalist' nature of Communism. In that respect, Hoxha sought to justify the 'antiquity' of the Albanian people in this area of South East Europe by completely linking its 'ethnogenesis' and the origin of the Albanian language with the Illyrian culture (Galaty and Watkinson, 2004, p. 9). It is possible to argue that his insistence on finding a connection between this ancient culture and modern Albania was a geopolitical strategy to justify the existence of the country in a region surrounded by 'enemies' represented by the Slavic people in former Yugoslavia and modern Greeks in the south. Therefore, the Illyrian origin was possibly encouraged in order to support the existence of Albanian people in their modern territory, as well as in Albanian territories subjected to disputes such as the so-called Northern Epirus by Greece or areas with substantial Albanian population living in the former Yugoslav republics of Montenegro, Macedonia and especially Serbia and its former Autonomous Region of Kosovo. Thus, archaeological and anthropological research was encouraged by Hoxha's regime as a policy of state reflected in the extensive scientific production at that time to justify the struggle of Albania for territory. For instance, Muzafer Korkuti, the director of the Archaeological Institute at that time, stated in an interview that between 1978 and 1988 the institute had 20 projects working and there was a lack of skilled workers, but not money. Later he comments on the interference of Hoxha in the scientific research of that time: 'Look at the question of the Kosovar territory: we had to defend the idea that the Slavs arrived after the Illyrians. In this case Enver Hoxha permitted one opinion' (Korkuti cited in Galaty and Watkinson, 2004, p. 10). This extensive production is also corroborated by the curator of the MHK, Sali Kadria, who suggested in a personal interview (appendix a) how the costs and the size of the museum is the product of the isolation at that time in addition to the existence of a heavy nationalistic discourse coming from Hoxha's regime to show the 'magnificent' origins and the right for territory of the Albanian nation. In that sense, that corroborates the statement that Miraj and Zeco give: 'Where the past is such an important part of the political toolbox, funding, for the right sort of research becomes no problem' (cf Miraj and Zeco, 1993 cited in Galaty and Watkinson, 2004, p. 10). Moreover, the Albanian language is another issue that shows ideological manipulation during the cultural revolution. First, it is necessary to mention the existence of two different Albanian language dialects, Gheg and Tosk. Although there were attempts to unify these dialects through the production of dictionaries at the beginning of the 20th century. The Institute of Albanian Language and Literature, created in 1972, was in charge of the production of standardized dictionaries and grammars that sought to finally unify the language[7]. It is possible to suggest that this action represented the effort of the regime to suppress cultural differences that otherwise, would jeopardize the implementation of the Socialist state in different regions of the country. In the MHK's exhibition of Illyrian cultures the discourse emphasizes a single constitutive people that 'produced' the Albanian nation, putting less emphasis in different groups (Ghegs and Tosks included). In

7   For instance *Drejtshkrimi i gjuhës shqipe* (Orthography of the Albanian Language) (1973) and *Fjalori drejtshkrimor i gjuhës shqipe* (Orthographic Dictionary of the Albanian Language) (1976)

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that regard, Anderson (2006, p.67) suggests that part of the character of nationalisms in Europe between the 1820s and the 1920s resides in the 'central ideological and political importance' of national print-languages. Therefore, it is possible to suggest that the Communist regime followed a late nationalistic idea, basing the origin of the modern Albanian nation in ancient times and emphasizing in the importance of language as a political tool for the unification and revolutionary cultural shift that would create a 'new Albanian citizen' for a Socialist society.

In this context, the MHK was inaugurated in 1981. It is located at the northern end of Scanderbeg square in central Tirana. The museum is monumental in its visual character. Its entrance was designed to be extremely small in comparison to the main facade and the mosaic itself, which is just above the small entrance, a characteristic of certain types of museums that could be linked with ideas related to the moral elevation of art and history under totalitarian regimes. The proportions of the museum in relationship with the square reflects the importance of history and the arts in Albanian society during Communist times. As a consequence of the construction of the museum the former city hall of Tirana, built in a Neo renaissance style during the Fascist Italian period, was demolished. In that regard, Rugg states that 'relics of the past landscape are relatively few because the Communist regime tried to transform the city into a socialist landscape' (Rugg, 1994, p.67). Indeed, Scanderbeg square evidences the transformation of Albanian society during that time where some of the Stalinist principles of urban development were applied: 'emphasis on the political-cultural role of the capital city and central cores of cities at the expense of commerce, regulation of city size, importance of urban historic heritage, use of squares and boulevards as organizing foci' (Rugg, 1994, p.67). It is relevant to ask what was important for the regime in terms of heritage, taking into account that the construction of the museum implied the destruction of part of the cultural landscape of the square. However, although the urban plan of the square has been reshaped several times, it still conserves monumental volumes and spaces from the italian interventions in Tirana during the 1920s and 1930s, represented in the governmental buildings across the museum, and surprisingly the 18th century Et'hem Bey Mosque which, according to Sali Kadria, was closed, but protected as a monument during the Socialist regime after the suggestion of the Director of the Institute for the Protection of Monuments at that time (appendix a).

Having in mind this brief context of the socio political situation of Albania during the Socialist rule, the museum can be regarded as the product of the Albanian cultural revolution projects that sought to justify the origins of the Albanian people, as well as the need for the creation of a 'new kind of citizen' that would carry out the total implementation of a Socialist society. When the museum was inaugurated, on 28 October of 1981, a documentary-propaganda film was produced accounting the construction of this project and showing an institution that would, both physically and symbolically, replace the old and perhaps 'Fascist-revisionist'

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architecture of the main square of Tirana[8]. Thirty years have passed since that, and the Albanian society, as most of the former Eastern Bloc, experienced the fall of Communism in the beginning of the 1990s and the subsequent transitional period to a Capitalist democracy. But the city of Tirana still has the museum facing the square. Inside, its eight permanent exhibitions that range from prehistoric times until the Anti-Fascist National War of Liberation serve as evidence of the cultural project that Hoxha's regime implemented, but also it shows conceptual and structural changes that connote the work that the museum staff has done in the narrative of the exhibitions. As will be developed in the following chapter, this is the main focus that I will discuss in this dissertation: the national museum and its permanent exhibitions understood in the light of broader political actions.

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8   I based this idea on the min. 00:29 to 01:07 of the documentary *Me ndertuesit e Muzeut Historik Kombetar* (1981) (With the builders of the National History Museum)

1.2 AIM

1.2.1 THESIS STATEMENT

According to the ICOM statutes (2007, article 3), a museum is 'a permanent institution which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the heritage of humanity for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment'. However, this definition does not take into account the role of national museums as institutions that take part in political acts of memory and oblivion. Such institutions are particularly susceptible to these acts, due to the political influence of governments over the historical discourse that national museums exhibit. In this regard, the use of material culture of museums according to political ideologies becomes evident during a change of political regime, where national museums usually have to deal with a difficult, controversial or glorious past. In that situation, the existence of previous specific acts of memory and oblivion come into conflict with emerging political ideologies of a new regime.

Taking as my object of study the *Muzeu Historik Kombëtar*, I intend to discuss how this institution has taken part in such acts. First, I intend to define the concept of memory and oblivion, the role of historic memory and the idea of memory institution in a political context. Second, I will discuss the existence of what I call 'projects of memory and oblivion' in the permanent exhibitions of the MHK (The façade of the museum, the Illyrian room, the Independence room and the Antifascist National War of Liberation room), making a conceptual comparison between the museological project of 1981, when the MHK began to function as institution, and the current permanent exhibitions. My central interest in this comparison are the visual narratives of the exhibition areas that I consider as meaning carriers that make use of certain strategies to represent material culture under the scope of a specific political project that is shown to the visitors.

In order to do the above, I will focus my theoretical discussion on three major fields. First, my main interest with regards to *memory and oblivion* is to obtain a comprehensive 'set of conceptual tools' for understanding memory, oblivion and their components, which, as I will argue, take part in the creation of a 'historic memory' through national museums. In this manner, this dissertation will deal with a cluster of concepts to analyze the object of study (the permanent exhibitions that I have already mentioned) and to use them to discuss the *modus operandi* in which the MHK has constructed the museological discourse in these exhibitions. Second, on the subject that comprises the *creation of historic memory,* I will analyze three main topics: the role of several aspects of the process of remembering and forgetting, the relationship between historic memory

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and the idea of nation, bearing in mind that my object of study is a museum that intends to exhibit the national history of Albania, and the influence of political power and their authority to legitimize or condemn historic memory inside the museum. Finally, on the idea of *memory institutions*, and taking into account that museums belong to this category, I will analyze the relevance of political influence in existing theoretical definitions around the role of museums in society. In that sense, I will address the idea of national museums as institutions that exhibit politically biased projects of memory and oblivion emphasising the analysis of museums as 'public institutions'. I will discuss how that idea of 'public' is a characteristic of a constructed political space that is defined by the context in which the museum was opened to the visitors as well as its subsequent everyday functioning. In that case, the MHK falls under the political influence of a totalitarian regime and a transitional period to the current Capitalist democratic system of Albania. It is my intention to understand these particularities of the MHK in the political context of the country, in order to elucidate how this institution is still part of an ideological discourse that began during its creation in the Communist period. I want to demonstrate how, at the same time, it has been influenced by other political ideologies that changed the way in which the museum has implemented the projects of memory and oblivion of the permanent exhibitions.

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2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 OBLIVION AND MEMORY IN A POLITICAL CONTEXT

2.1.1 MEMORY PROJECTS

What is memory

I would like to commence this discussion by identifying a cluster of concepts that will be useful for my aim in this project. In order to do this, I will deal with the problem of human memory using several theoretical approaches. This exercise should produce a set of tools for understanding memory, its components, structure and its implications in the creation of historic memory.

Can we take for granted the relationship between national museums and memory? The answer to this question resides in the analysis of 'memory' as a human concept that implies a series of assumptions. When Lowenthal (1993), in his article about memory and oblivion, talks about the indispensable need for memory, he acknowledges the importance of this action for human beings. In fact, he states that a loss of memory is incapacitating and humans being ignorant of the past would have no future. 'Nothing done would link with anything learned' (Lowenthal 1993, p.171)- we have memory to be able to learn from experience. But what is the process that allows humanity to create memory? It is the difference between remembrance and memory the key factor in understanding the process of the latter? According to the Oxford dictionary remembrance is a 'memory or recollection'[9] (Oxford, 2010), however, remembrance is not the same as memory; remembrance is a part of a process that produces 'memories'. To understand this, first, I will define 'memory' as the result of a process where remembering is involved. Therefore, this concept is a component of human memory, not a synonym. Secondly, I will define the implications of forgetting as the other component involved in the creation of memory. Indeed, the implication of forgetting in the creation of memory might sound contradictory and therefore I intend to extend my discussion further in this chapter.

When *Hoxhaism* implemented an atheist state in Albania, the creation of memory involved this paradox where the politburo forced the Albanian society to forget their religious practices and beliefs for the sake of a 'new' society. However, this creation of a new memory implied the paradox of 'remember to forget', where re-

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9   Lexicography has historically supported the assumption of the concept 'memory' as a synonym of 'remembrance', for instance Johnson (1835) defines remembrance as 'Retention in memory; memory' in S. Johnson, 1835. *English dictionary, as improved by Todd, and abridged by Chalmers; with Walker's Pronouncing dictionary, combined; to which is added, Walker's Key to the classical pronunciation of Greek, Latin, and Scripture proper names.* Boston: Nathan Hale

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ligious sites and acts were systematically targeted, destroyed or forbidden. The engineering of memory under Hoxha regime shows the implications of remembering and subsequent official 'amnesia enforcement' for the manipulation of collective memory. In fact, this forced atheism created other collective memories; for instance, some rituals where villagers, during the Communist period, bound up with the destroyed remains of the church of Shëndelli, in particular with an archaeological masonry block used in its construction which served as a site for the *illegal* practice of religion at that time[10]. Another example of totalitarian regimes enforcing this kind of social engineering can be seen when Lowenthal (1993, p.177) describes how 'Polish memorial acts kept the 1940 Katyn massacre[11] from oblivion', even though Poland was under Soviet political influence since World War II and the massacre was subsequently denied by Soviet regimes. Lowenthal later adds that this confirms 'the almost mystical belief that nothing is forgotten, that no despotic system can instill collective amnesia'. Thus, following this line of thought, this forced forgetfulness aided the creation of 'memories of resistance' amongst some Polish people against the Soviet regime. One can see in these examples how the process of remembering and forgetting are enormously interweaved creating memory. However, is this process of forgetting and remembering a political conscious action? Connerton (2008) exemplifies, in his article about memory, how the process of creating memory is an action that involves selective forgetting of events: 'In 403 BC. The Athenian democrats, after having suffered defeat at the hands of the dictatorship, re-entered the city of Athens and proclaimed a general reconciliation. Their decree contained an explicit interdiction: it was forbidden to remember all the crimes and wrongdoing perpetrated during the immediately preceding period of civil strife' (Connerton 2008, p.62). Again, here one can find the paradox that corroborates the unavoidable action of remembering events to, in this example, forget them and carry on.

Furthermore, the idea of a selective process in the creation of memory involves the reflection on what should be remembered. Lowenthal develops this idea when he asserts that old need to give space to the new; he gives us a metaphor where 'Housekeeping demands clearing the decks, sweeping clean' (Lowenthal 1993, p.174) that implies the action of being aware of something that needs to be systematically converted. After all, housekeeping is a task that mainly involves ordering things with a clear purpose of making sense out of a mess. Another example of a conscious action of remembering and forgetting are some of the ideas from the modernist manifestos where one can find a constant consciousness over the issue of breaking with the past; According to Benton and Cecil (2010, p.18) the *Modernist* movement believed that the old styles of expression should all be

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10   This ritual have been extensively analyzed in Galaty, M., Stocker, S. and Watkinson C., 2009. 'The Snake That Bites, The Albanian Experience of Collective Trauma as Reflected in an Evolving Landscape' In: K. Brown Golden and B. Bergo eds. 2009. *The Trauma Controversy Philosophical and Interdisciplinary Dialogues,* New York: State University of New York. pp. 171-187

11   Indeed, the Katyn massacre consisted in the systematic assassination of 14500 Polish individuals during World War II. This massacre was a contested event that the former USSR encouraged to erase by all means. Some of the documents that prove these actions can be retrieved in Cienciala, Anna M., Lebedeva, Natalija Sergeevna & Materski, Wojciech (ed.) 2007. *Katyn: a crime without punishment*. New Haven: Yale University Press

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discarded to make way for something completely new, based on the reality of modern existence (Benton and Cecil, 2010, p.18). Therefore, these meditations over the implications of the past in their contemporaneity involved a systematic remembering and forgetting to create collective memories over the past in relationship with the present time (at least of their time). In this connection, when groups of people choose to forget and remember things they are creating collective memories. However, the concept of collective memory implies a political influence which is one of my main interests to elucidate in this dissertation. I intend to analyse how the issue of memory is influenced by political ideologies, therefore I will extend this subject in the following chapter about the creation of historical memory and the role of memory institutions. For now, let us bear in mind that collective memories are particularly susceptible to political influence or imposition.

In addition, the importance of forgetting in the process of memory creation has been overshadowed by its bad reputation as a concept. 'Much of the debate on cultural memory has been shaped by the view, commonly held if not universal, that remembering and commemorating is usually a virtue and that forgetting is necessarily a failing' (Connerton 2008, p.59) (Augé 2004). So, the negative aura of forgetting obscures its fundamental function in the creation of memories, Connerton extends his reflection on this by stating that 'we generally regard forgetting as a failure' (Connerton 2008, p.59), but if we were willing to accept this assumption, we would have to include the creation of human memories as part of a failure process. Hence, the obsession of most of the human groups with not forgetting has created an almost ubiquitous fallacy where *the process of memory involves remembering only.* I would like to sum up this part by stating that for the purpose of this dissertation 'acts of memory' are processes that involve selective remembering and forgetting. In the following part I intend to discuss how these two concepts also have an equally important role in the creation of acts of oblivion.

What is oblivion

Oblivion, *the state of being forgotten, the destruction or extinction* (Oxford, 2010); There is an inclination to define this concept within the frame of a negative aura. Probably, all the dictionaries and reference editions give a negative definition of oblivion. Moreover, the bad connotation of the word is ancient, 'as an *Old Testament* term for extermination, it suggests that anyone no longer named or remembered ceases to exist' (Lowenthal 1993, p.173). In fact, its etymology provenance is derived from the Latin word for forgetting 'oblivio' (Poole 2009, p.151). Poole also refers to the legal definition of an act of oblivion which is a synonym of 'amnesty' a word from classic Greek origin (ἀμνησία) that also stands for the idea of forgetting. However, the word oblivion does not share the pathological aura of 'amnesia': to have it means that one is ill and to have forgotten is the product of an accidental event. Following this idea, Lowenthal states that while amnesia is an involuntary loss which is pardonable, oblivion is outright erasure of unwanted memories (Lowenthal 1993, p.173). Along these lines it is possible to take in oblivion as a complex process that unlike amnesia is not accidental. Oblivion, like the creation of memory, is a complex process that happens on purpose, therefore it is regulated by selecting what to remember and what to forget.

Consequently, to obliterate events, acts or things it is necessary to remember them first. Again, like in the creation of an 'act of memory', this extraordinary paradox appears in the process of an act of oblivion. Indeed, it would be impossible to put into oblivion anything without having in mind the object that should be forgotten. As an example of that, Lowenthal asserts that there is an analytical component in the Christian ritual of confession where 'the penitent remembers so as to be allowed to forget' (Lowenthal 1993, p.175). So, in the process of this act of oblivion the aim is to remember sins in order to get rid of them. It is a purifying event where obliteration plays an absolving role. Another example of the importance of remembering in an act of oblivion is the French Royal Charter that restored the monarchy to France in 1814:

> 'All investigations into opinions and votes before the restoration are prohibited. Courts of law and individual citizens are commanded to practice the same oblivion' (French Royal Charter of 1814, Article 11 cited in Poole, 2009, p.150)

Poole unveils the contradiction that resides in this order; he enquires how it is possible to prohibit memories of the precedent regime among people if they have to, one way or another, remember them to subsequently 'practice the same oblivion'. Thus, people's will to forget 'can only be obeyed at the cost of disobedience' (Poole 2009, p.150) This endorses the idea of a selective process of remembrance and forgetting in the creation of acts of oblivion. Selective and analytical acts of oblivion -and memory also- are actions that have been used, since antiquity, in a political sense. For instance, historical evidence shows that it was a recurrent action during Roman times; Poole notes how the practice of *Damnatio memoriae* was 'a ritual procedure in which the memory of a disgraced statesman or general was condemned' (Poole 2009, p.153) In other words, any written record or depiction of the person should be 'deleted'. At first sight, this action would be understood as a systematic action of total erasing of any mention, action or representation of a person that has fallen in disgrace to, as Connerton mentions, 'make it seem as if he had never existed' (2008 cited in Poole 2009, p.153). However, this practice had an implicit objective of leaving traces that would remind people of the discredited person; an evidence of that is the painting of the Severan dynasty (FIGURE 2) that shows the Roman emperor Septimius Severus and his family. One of his son's face, depicting Publius Septimus Geta, was completely smeared out, supposedly because of the damnatio memoriae ordered by his brother 'Caracalla', a Roman emperor notorious for the murder of his brother in order to rule the Empire. So, the remaining traces in this case are the representation of Geta's body, his father, his mother and even his estranged brother. What was the reason to leave the absolute evidence that someone exists behind that scratched face? It is plausible that this would have been useful as a dissuasive tool for political opponents, a reminder -a help to remember through oblivion!- of what would happen to any political enemy of Caracalla's regime. A paradox if we take into account that one is able to know the history of Geta and the Severan dynasty today, even though someone tried to erase some memories. Let us examine a more contemporary example, and perhaps more relevant for the context of Albania's recent history, of an act of oblivion in a political context. The concept, however, is very different from the damnatio memoriae. In FIGURE 3 and 4 it is possible to see one of many pictures of Stalin where people who had fallen in disgrace of the regime were 'unpersonized' -in an Orwellian fashion- by the complete eras-

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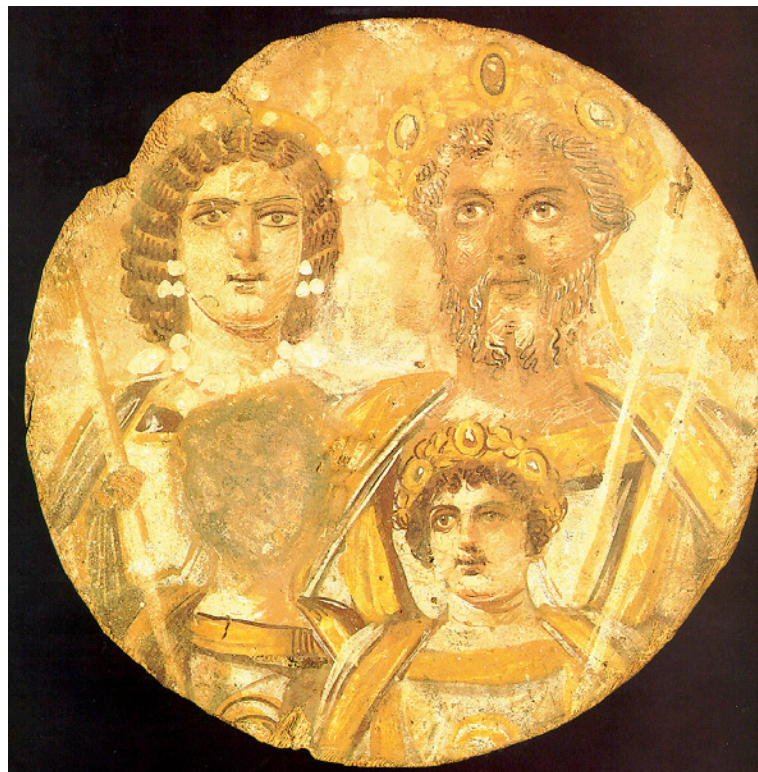
FIGURE 2. Tondo from Djemila (Algeria), probably AD 199 (G. M. A. Hanfmann, Roman Art, 1964, pl. XLVIII), Septimius Severus with Julia Domna and their sons: 'Caracalla' and Publius Septimus Geta (the face of the latter one was smeared out supposedly because of the damnatio memoriae ordered by his brother 'Caracalla', . Tempera on wood, Staatliche Museum zu Berlin.

ing of any trace of their physical presence[12]. In this photograph, Stalin is seen next to Nikolai Yezhov, one of Stalin's commissars, notorious for his leadership in the Great Purges that took place between 1936 and 1938 that cost the lives of 702,656 individuals out of 1.5 million that were arrested (Marc and Petrov, 2002). After he fell into disgrace of the Stalinist regime his image was erased from the photo, thus Stalin would not be seen next to him. In this example, it is not possible to address any of the possible hypotheses of Damnatio memoriae of 'traces as reminders or dissuasive political power'. The aim of this 'vaporization' of Yezhov from historical documents is not to remember or even forget his disgraceful figure; there is no selection or analysis of this action for the sake of the creation of an act of oblivion over Yezhov, it is a plain revisionism of history. The act of oblivion here resides in the ability of people to remember or forget the image of Yezhov and to judge his actions after the Stalinist era; as I quoted before, 'no despotic system can instill collective amnesia' (Lowenthal, 1993, p.177). After all, the documents that corroborate this revisionism of history survived one of the most violent and totalitarian regimes in history. Unfortunately, that does not apply to all revisionist acts. Taken into account the 'evil' or perhaps 'immoral' aura of damnatio memoriae and the systematic erasure of evidence by the Stalinist regime, it is unlikely to have an optimistic view over the implications of forgetting.

12   This issue has been extensively researched in King, David 1997. *The commissar vanishes: the falsification of photographs and art in the Soviet Union*. Edinburgh: Canongate

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Nonetheless, the fact that remembering and forgetting are interdependent in the process of memory and oblivion, could redeem this action in some sense; in this case in relation with the Museum.

FIGURE 3 AND 4. Before and after: Nikolai Yezhov is 'erased' from a picture alongside Josef Stalin. Ca. 1930.

I have discussed in the part about memory the bad reputation that forgetting involves. Connerton states that this proneness to condemn forgetting and oblivion has influenced the intellectual debate to the point of creating a dogma where 'remembering and commemoration is usually a virtue and that forgetting is necessarily a failing' (Connerton 2008, p.59). Despite that, forgetting and its role in the creation of act of Memory and Oblivion are redeemed by our vital need for it. It is virtually impossible to remember the whole amount of existence. A selective process where things are forgotten creates a path to carry on; for instance, Lowenthal mentions the decreed oblivion after the French Revolution in the name of 'freedom' (Lowenthal 1993, p.175) In that sense, there is a favourable intention there with an act of oblivion, a will to continue in spite of a difficult past. This is not a neutral process though; for instance, the declaration of political amnesties or 'acts of pardon and forgetfulness' after a difficult past are constantly challenged and sometimes used as a political tool. Therefore, I intend to discern the possible role of the Museum exhibitions in that possible political context of contemporary Albania. Moreover, this absence of neutrality allows to reflect upon what has been forgotten

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and remembered, and therefore some memories of traumatic events are retrieved even though there is a pro-hibition on doing so. 'Hideous mass memories (are) every day officially retrieved from oblivion' (Lowenthal 1993, p.173) showing the virtue of these acts of oblivion, where, due to its rational and systematic nature, it is possible to recover facts, memories, things and even people back to historic existence. This is a frequent phe-nomenon after the fall of a political regime, where people are able to retrieve crimes that were systematically forbidden from collective memory at the time of oppression, but that, thanks to contemporary 'damnatio memoriaes' stored in archives and perhaps museums can be retrieved to implement transitional and restora-tive justice. So, one way or another, societies are constantly dealing with forgetting and acts of oblivion which are not always negative.

Furthermore, what is the possible gain of rejecting remembering? Is a systematic act of oblivion a legitimate response from individuals, society, and even more importantly for my subject, from museums when facing a difficult or traumatic past? Some circumstances seem to be possible examples that support acts of oblivion as a positive reaction to changes in society. When Lowenthal addresses the issue of immigration, in a broad sense, he suggests that people coming to a different society understand the importance of performing acts of oblivion: 'To make new lives in new lands, immigrants must shun nostalgia and forget their pasts. (...) The re-jection of memory stemmed less from choice that from circumstance' (Lowenthal 1993, p.174); this statement can be controverted in many ways, after all the condition of being immigrant advocates remembering as much as it does forgetting. However, adaptation to new conditions does require forgetting things; for instance, a transition to a different society involves adapting to a different political system and a obligation to embrace a new political logic thus, forgetting old political customs. Therefore, this example about immigration can be a metaphor for the historical process that Albanian society and its institutions have experienced in the transition from Communism to a capitalist society. In other respects, the nature of acts of oblivion is het-erogeneous; Lowenthal claims that 'Efforts to shed memory vary in motive, form and intensity' (Lowenthal 1993, p.177). What is important about collective memories differs from individual to individual, no matter if a political entity imposes a single point of view over something, people still resist this oppression by remember-ing or forgetting in different ways. I have mentioned the case of the block from Shëndelli carefully analyzed by Galaty, Stocker and Watkinson (2009, p.179). There, the resistance of people against an imposed collective memory created different levels of understanding of religious rites during Hoxhaism. Another characteristic of the acts of oblivion is its creative side that Connerton (2008) reveals in two aspects: vocabulary and the creation of identity. The first one is a process of 'cultural discarding' where words are forgotten while others are created or recovered in a political sense. For instance, the ubiquitous vanishing of the Albanian word *shoku* (comrade) from the political discourse; after all, this word represents a 'political charge' strongly related with the Communist system. Connerton states that these phenomena happens 'in the interest of forming a new identity' (Connerton 2008, p.64) Similarly, other words made their debut after the fall of Communism (free market, ownership, multiparty system, etc) and others, already in use, got other meanings (democracy,

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president, congress). In the same fashion, other 'languages' such architecture and public space has experienced this cultural discard. I intend to address this subject in the chapter regarding 'the memory institution'.

The second aspect stands for the creation of identity. Vocabulary is a creative action where words are forgotten and remembered. However, when societies deal with a difficult or controversial past it is common to find shared silences. I have not done any academic field research on this particular topic, however, the reluctance of some Albanians when the *Communist days* are mentioned in a conversation gives us a clue of a possible shared silence over traumatic or difficult experiences. Connerton states that while these silences are not an absolute proof of a will for forgetting things, they work in an *autorepressive fashion* as an act of survival (Connerton 2008, p.67), in this case to overcome political unrest. So, the will to forget through silence plays a fundamental role in the construction of collective memory, where shared memories are accompanied by shared silences (Connerton 2008, p.63). Two decades later, a substantial distance after the fall of Communism in Albania, this act of oblivion through silence has created a different society that has possibly transformed the Muzeu Historik Kombëtar into an institution that does not simply store memories but is also there to enact acts of oblivion. In this manner Connerton supports this hypothesis by stating that 'societies where democracy is regained after a recent undemocratic past, or where democracy is newly born, must establish institutions and make decisions that foster forgetting as much as remembering' (Connerton 2008, p.62). It is that interdependence of memory and oblivion in the Museum that I intend to discuss, and as I mentioned in my aim, to analyse the details of the 'projects of oblivion' in the permanent exhibitions of the MHK (The façade of the museum, the Illyrian room, the Independence room and the Antifascist National War of Liberation room).

I would like to sum up this part by revising the process of remembering and forgetting as interdependent in the creation of acts of memory and oblivion. I have discussed how this interdependence is a conscious process that creates projects of memory and, of course, projects of oblivion. It can be seen in the *Damnatio memoriaes* of Roman times and their clear intention on creating a memory of political condemnation rather that plain erasure; this can also be seen in the creation and modification of the political vocabulary in the transitional period of Albania. So, as Poole states, about acts of oblivion, they should not be understood as the erasure of memory, but as the creation of specific memory projects (Poole 2009, p.155). Moreover, De Jong and Rowlands (2008, p.133) suggest the relevance of projects of memory in the attribution of new meanings to old, and therefore promoting the development of new memories in established places, an action that has been coined under the metaphor of *palimpsest*; the comings and goings of the block from Shëndelli is a good example of that. Thus, these examples show the existence of political projects of memory and oblivion which are the basis for the creation of historic memory. J. M. Trouillot discusses in his book in what resides the beginning of the life of a collectivity: 'We may want to assume for purposes of description that the life history of an individual starts with birth (...) At what point do we set the beginning of the past to be retrieved? How do we decide -and how does the collectivity decide- which events to include and which to exclude?' (Trouillot, 1995, p.16) subsequently he states ' The storage model assumes not only the past to be remembered but the collective sub-

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ject that does the remembering', therefore he acknowledges the role of these collective and politic projects of memory and oblivion in the construction of historic memory of societies. Finally, I would like to emphasize the fact that the creation of these projects, especially the ones that advocate the oblivion, does not mean the erasure or modification of the past events and acts; 'Any historical narrative is a particular bundle of silences, the result of a unique process, and the operation required to deconstruct these silences will vary accordingly' (Trouillot, 1995, p.27), so, following the idea of 'a possibility of deconstruction of historical narratives' one can see the big difference between a political act of oblivion and a totalitarian will to distort the past: The first one allows Kundera's most quoted statement to be possible: 'the struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting' (M. Kundera cited in Connerton 2008, p.60). Conversely, the second one chokes any possibility of human memory; this becomes part of Orwell's dystopia *Nineteen eighty-four* where the totalitarian state *mutates* the past (Orwell, 2008) thus, memories are distorted for the sake of political power, and lost forever. So, in the spirit of being able to deconstruct the Museum, the following part of this dissertation intends to address the subject of historic memory as a political project of memory and oblivion that can be analysed in order to have a theoretical base for an analysis of the exhibitions of the Muzeu Historik Kombëtar.

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2.2 HISTORIC MEMORY

2.2.1 HISTORIC MEMORY AS PROJECT

In the aim of this dissertation, I have stated my intention to define the concept of 'historic memory' as part of the *set of theoretical tools* that should help me analyze the ways in which the Muzeu Historik Kombëtar (MHK) takes part in acts of memory and oblivion. In this regard, this chapter deals with the theoretical discussion on the idea of historic memory. First, I will explain the role of different aspects of the process of remembering and forgetting in the construction of historic memory; next, I will discuss the relationship between historic memory and its implications on the idea of *nation*, which I intend to analyze from the scope of the political power on the creation of *projects of memory and oblivion*. Finally I intend to link this theoretical discussion with the role of *memory institutions* (museums in this dissertation) in the construction of historic memory.

The mode of acquiring and subsequent organization of knowledge in relationship with the museological project of a museum, serve as an epistemological tool to understand what 'historic memory' means for different generations of a society. Following this idea, the concept of historic memory should be retrievable from the analysis of evidence that shows the different ways to acquire and exhibit an 'official' historic memory in the museum. It is my intention to analyze, trough the material evidence that I have found for this dissertation, how projects of memory and oblivion are a fundamental factor in the construction of historic memory inside a museological space.

Let me begin by addressing the idea which resides in how the relationship of memory, oblivion and history is underpinned by the existence of *silences* in the process of historical production; in this regard, Trouillot (1995, p.26) describes four moments where silencing happens: on the making of sources, on the making of archives -in our case museums-, on the making of narratives and finally in the making of history. Indeed, this silencing that is ubiquitous to any construction of historic memory[13] is one of the reasons to acknowledge the role of projected acts of oblivion in the construction of history. In that respect, the MHK, being part of the institutional machinery of Albanian society, has played a role in the construction of historic memory by a conscious process of remembering and forgetting according to the epistemological shift that has happened from a Hoxhaist ideology to a Capitalist society. Another idea to take into account when dealing with his-

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13   It is ubiquitous in the sense that no human action of remembering and forgetting is neutral.

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toric memory is the fact that 'the past does not exist independently from the present. Indeed, the past is only past because there is a present, just as I can point to something *over there* only because I am *here*' (Trouillot, 1995, p.15), So the problem in the construction of historic memory also resides in the way that societies 'point' to the past, an example of which is the existence of what it is called 'difficult past' vs. 'glorious past' according to the values of each society; Poole (2009, p.152) talks about a cognitive component that resides in claiming things that happened in the past during the performance of memory. However, he adds that the difference between memory and history is the *conative function* of the last one, that stands for an impulsive reaction or as he states 'it bears on what we should do now'. Therefore historic memory is the combination of a cognitive and a conative functions that serve to make sense of events that happened in order to deal with present events.

On top of that resides the fact that remembering and forgetting is a process that involves a *distance* component. In fact, ideology and the institutional machinery are often more interested in influencing acts of memory and oblivion of recent events, something that I intend to demonstrate through the evidence of the MHK. In this regard, Trouillot asserts, about the professionalization of history, that it is in the hands of the distance that lies between the sociohistorical process and its knowledge, therefore it is easier to claim a 'scientific' professionalism over older processes (Trouillot, 1995, p.5). I intend to demonstrate that by showing how the MHK has transformed some rooms dealing with the conformation of the contemporary nation but at the same time keeping whole rooms related to *ancient times* intact and just as it was in the beginnings of the Museum (1981), thirty years ago. Furthermore, Benton and Cecil (2010, p.20) write in their article about heritage and public memory that documentary evidence is not sufficient to understand some aspects of historical events, such as the feelings or motivations of individuals experiencing extreme stress or emotional ecstasy. According to the authors, such reactions can not fully be grasped using documentary data. Hence, memory is seen as an 'antidote to official history' where documents and their interpretation lie in the hands of political powers which can acquire and organize historic memory as a project that involves specific acts of memory and oblivion altered for ideological reasons.

Although the role of acts of oblivion in the construction of memory seem to be at first a major contradiction -oblivion vs memory- they can be understood as epistemological components of a conscious process involving societies taking part in the construction of historic memory. in fact, some political theories on national identity and nationalism of the 19th century acknowledged the role of forgetting and remembering in the definition of modern nations: 'the essence of a nation is that their citizens have forgotten many things' (Renan, 1882 cited in Poole 2009, p.154). Moreover, Lowenthal (1993) confirms this idea by suggesting that during the 18th and 19th centuries the political turmoil in Europe established a 'rupture' with generational memories and more important for this discussion, transformed traditional modes of remembering (and forgetting). Therefore, this epistemological shift developed a different understanding of the past, 'a realm of nostalgic fantasy, memory an obsession of poets and painters, philosophers and psychologists, from Rousseau and Musset to Ribot and Freud. *For the first time, knowing oneself meant knowing what one had been*' (Lowenthal 1993, p.172)

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(my italics). So, the relationship between political events and acts of oblivion is one of the possible factors that contributes to the creation of historic memory. I have discussed how acts of memory and oblivion are influenced to different extent by ideologies. Political bodies such as governments also have interests in the creation of historic memory to justify their political actions. Therefore, it is possible to see how projects of memory and oblivion are influenced by power relations; in this regard, Trouillot criticizes the lack of importance that positivism (a specific epistemology) gives to the relation history-power, where 'the role of the historian is to reveal the past, to discover or, at least, approximate the truth. Within that viewpoint, power is unproblematic, irrelevant to the construction of the narrative as such. At best, history is a story about power, a story about those who won' (Trouillot, 1995, p.5). If we consider that point of view, historic memory is heavily influenced by power in the sense that specific political acts of oblivion and memory are chosen to take part in the construction of an 'official' historic memory. For instance, the constant controversy over the concept of national identity is not only between self representation and outside representation (Steiner 1995, p.4); on the contrary, disagreements between national individuals or within groups about the nature and content of self-images are a possible evidence of the struggle for power in the construction of historic memory. In order to do this, individuals, groups or institutions, plan, create and encourage acts of oblivion and memory that influence the creation of historic memory, according to the political power that they boast. An example of this is the capacity that government institutions have in the 'erasure' of legal responsibilities of individuals and groups during the declaration of political amnesties. I have mentioned in the first chapter the case of the French revolution decreeing an act of oblivion in the name of 'Freedom' (Lowenthal 1993, p.175) or the 'acts of pardon and forgetfulness' after a civil war for the sake of rebuilding the social fabric. Also, Steiner mentions how 'in some rare, but fascinating cases, the state uses representations of history not to glorify its heritage by association with the past but rather through repudiation of its own past'. (Steiner 1995, p.5) In that sense, this institutional repudiation could be interpreted as a political act that confirms the role of power in remembering and forgetting, thus influencing the creation of acts of memory and oblivion that later form part of the historic memory of that society.

Having analyzed the possible facets surrounding the concept of historic memory, it is possible to have a clear idea of the concepts that I intend to discuss about the MHK. I intend to make use of historic memory in this dissertation as a concept that has its base in acts of memory and oblivion, which are transformed by specific epistemological views over the construction of history. The influence of political power on historic memory serves as an example of this, making relevant the role of political ideologies in the creation of possible silences through institutional decisions. In that regard, the creation of historic memory can be seen as an interpretation of political actions. Tzvetan Todorov states that 'there is nothing new even in the claim that everything is an interpretation, except the euphoria that now surrounds the claim' (Todorov, 1991, cited in Trouillot, 1995, p.5) However, Trouillot also quotes Appadurai, who suggests that there is no place where history is completely subjected to invention; Still, there are some 'formal constrains that universally enforce that credibility and limit the character of historical debates: authority, continuity, depth and interdependence' (Appa-

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durai, 1981, cited in Trouillot, 1995, p.8). So, it is possible that the credibility of historic memory is related to epistemological concepts that lie in this case in the Museum (authority, continuity) and their everyday work (depth and interdependence). For that reason, I believe that it is important to discuss how the Museum has taken part in the creation of the idea of the Albanian nation through the construction of political projects of memory and oblivion in its exhibitions, involving stories of power, silences, ideologies, but also of an specific epistemology that lies in its responsibility as a scientific authority.

2.2.2 A GLORIOUS PAST (NATION AS PROJECT)

What are the implications of memory and oblivion in relationship with the idea of nation? I have mentioned how museums are within the political sphere of this or that government; thus, taking into account that they are institutions highly sensitive to political decisions, have they supported the idea of 'Nation as a project'?. In this part I intend to discuss how museums, and their construction of historic memory, deals with the concept of nation, a subject which I consider relevant for this dissertation taking into account that I intend to elucidate the ways in which the MHK, a museum of the *national Albanian history*, deals with acts of memory and oblivion in the permanent exhibitions of the façade of the museum, the Illyrian room, the Independence room and the Antifascist National War of Liberation room- key stages in the museological narrative of the exhibitions of the Museum that refers to the construction of historic memory of the *Albanian nation*.

The action of remembering and forgetting involved in the construction of acts of memory and oblivion are the basis for the formation of a historic memory; this whole process is influenced by political actions coming from individuals, groups and governments. Therefore, the idea of nation is based on political projects of memory and oblivion that individuals share. Benedict Anderson states that a nation is an *imagined* political community because not even the individuals of the smallest nation in the world would have the possibility of meeting and sharing a common sense of their *inherently limited and sovereign community*, however, they share in their minds an 'image of communion' (Anderson, 2006, p.6); In this regard, it is possible that part of this 'image' of a nation lies in the capacity of people to have a collective sense of historic memory. In fact, Lowenthal suggests that *collective memory* is the sustainer of races, religions and nation states (Lowenthal 1993, p.172). For this reason, the idea of historic memory and nation forms part of the universe of what it is called collective memory, that is the 'image' or 'imagination' that a group of individuals share, in this case of Albania. This shared political action, composed of acts of memory and oblivion, is the base for the concept of nation. Taking into account the political power of governments, I wonder if that shared concept is censored, encouraged, contested, accepted or rediscovered by them. That is one of the questions that I intend to unravel through evidence from the exhibitions of the MHK: it is possible to find insightful examples of historic memory that has been glorified regardless of political ideologies, that has been transformed according to the transition from a Communist to a Capitalist system or rediscovered to become a fundamental part of the idea of the Albanian nation.

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The concept of historic memory finds its 'feedstock' in the act of remembering and forgetting involved in the construction of acts of memory and oblivion. I have mentioned how historic memory is based on those acts under a specific epistemology. Moreover, it is possible to evidence how historic memory has changed through time according to epistemological shifts. Also, the role of the acts of memory and oblivion are possible components of epistemological processes and diverse views on the construction of historic memory. Another relevant factor involving this concept is the influence of political actions that come from individuals, groups and governments. This influence over different processes, such as remembering and forgetting, produces political acts of memory and oblivion that serve as the basis for a historic memory that supports a collective idea of nation. Therefore, a 'memory institution' such as the Muzeu Historik Kombëtar and its exhibition spaces become the natural scenario of political acts of memory and oblivion that support a historic memory among individuals of Albania. 'The glorification of past and future -or what may be called "forward-looking" versus "backward-looking" regimes of representation- often co-exist, complement, and even contradict one another in the nationalist agenda of state museums' (Steiner 1995, p.5). It is indeed a contradiction, when the Museum which holds an epistemological mandate of being a scientific institution, also becomes a tool for the political representation of historic memory and nation (at least in its exhibition rooms). This is what Jacques Derrida would call an 'autoimmune reaction', a biological term that 'refers to the body turning its immune reaction on itself' (Derrida, 2005 cited in Mensch 2007, p.41), For Derrida, all political structures (the Museum included) suffer this fate in their attempts to preserve themselves: the Museum defends its reason of being, as the custodian of historic memory of society, by threatening itself with the representation-interpretation in the exhibitions of a glorious or difficult past. That is a matter that I intend to discuss in the next chapter of this dissertation.

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2.3 MEMORY INSTITUTION

2.3.1 MUSEUM AND POLITICAL INFLUENCE

The metaphor *memory institution,* which involves archives, libraries and museums, implies the idea, as I discussed in the preceding two chapters, that constitutes part of a process where remembering and forgetting shape the historic memory of a society. However, the political aspects of acts of memory and oblivion involved in this process are less evident in some of the attempts to define the role of national museums. In this chapter I intend to discuss some of the theoretical issues that scholars and institutions have proposed regarding the definition of 'museum', often showing a tendency to explain it as a neutral place which serves as repository of material culture and a *custodian* of historic memory of society, leaving aside the political uses in the construction of historic memory. Indeed, the issue of *political* acts of memory and oblivion in relationship with museums is my main interest and should serve as a theoretical tool for the analysis of the exhibitions of the Muzeu Historik Kombëtar (MHK).

Lowenthal (1993, p.178) argues that museums play a definitive function *hiding and revealing,* making it possible to analyze how material culture and their stories have been hidden, erased or forgotten; the analysis of political aspects in museums can evidence how these institutions are subjected to implicit political acts of oblivion. Let's take for instance Connerton's discussion on 'repressive erasure', where he suggests that this does not always take malign forms (that would involve violent or evident erasing of historic memory); on the contrary, it can be implicit in some areas of the museum that seem to be less relevant than the explicit nature of images, objects and perhaps texts; he says: 'consider (…) the way in which the spatial disposition of the modern art gallery presents the visitor with nothing less than an iconographic programme and a master historical narrative' (Connerton, 2008, p.60). Also, the relevant role of political acts in the museum can reside in the clear necessity of a Nationalist ideology inside institutions in order to support themselves. This underpins the idea that political acts in the construction of historic memory inside the museum are a fundamental part of its purpose as a memory institution. In that regard, museums can serve as an ideological platform for a regime, a case which is described by Rubie Watson and Tamara Hamlishin; there, they argue that some of the material culture of the National Museum of China was used by the modern state to draw authority and power; the interesting issue is that these are the same objects that the traditional political powers of China used for the same purpose due to their magical and cosmological properties (Watson and Hamlish cited in Steiner 1995, p.4). So the ideological view of Maoism set their political power in former material culture of the 'old regime' (by the way, is it possible not to picture Tiananmen square and the Forbidden city alongside

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the giant portrait of Mao Zedong?). However, despite the fact that it is possible to find several examples of political influence in memory institutions, the International Council of Museums (ICOM), a worldwide association that works for these institutions, does not acknowledge the role of political acts of memory and oblivion inside its definition of museums. The ICOM statutes state:

> *Museum.* A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment. (ICOM, 2007, Article 3)

Although this paragraph seeks an universalizing definition of museums[14], it clearly states the purpose of them: to educate, to research and to enjoy; a neutral position that allows to question the purpose of educating a society or what 'development of society' means in the mission of a national museum, when it is susceptible to political acts and ideologies of individuals, associations or governments. These can be relevant questions if we take into account that this dissertation, in part, seeks to discuss how the MHK is an institution where the role of political influence in the creation of historic memory has been used 'for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment' in the exhibitions. Following this line of thought, the MHK needs to be analyzed from the perspective that it is an institution that exhibits political acts of memory and oblivion, which are relevant in order to understand their role in the Albanian society.

Having in mind this analysis proposal, it is essential to enquire if the influential position of political acts of memory and oblivion are taken into account outside the universalizing definition of the ICOM. In one of the chapters of *A companion to Museum Studies* Kaplan suggests that museums are 'now widely understood as secular sites of contestation and representation, and as places where groups vied with each other to define and redefine "themselves" as nations' (Kaplan, 2006, p. 152). At first glance, the political act is evidenced here, when he mentions the idea of 'contestation', 'representation' and the term 'redefinition'; but he also implies that this is a fully inclusive process, where any group can take part in these political acts, perhaps, not having in mind that some political projects of memory and oblivion involve not just remembering and forgetting events and objects, but individuals and groups too. An example of that are the ideological positions of the Albanian Communist regime that did not take into account the existence of a non-partisan resistance against the Nazi occupation of Albania, at least in the exhibitions of the Museum[15]. In order to do this, that regime and its ideological influence on the museum forebade the space for several groups of freedom fighters to be part of the historic memory of that event. Furthermore. In another definition, Crane (2006) mentions that museums are supposed to counteract the loss of social memory, but later he suggests that forgetting is a natu-

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14   The International Council of Museums (ICOM) being a worldwide association, uses this definition for any kind of museum.

15   In fact, the whole exhibition narrative revolved around the exclusive participation of the Communist Party and their members in the 'War of liberation' against the Nazi and Fascist Italian Armies. These can be retrieved from the Museological project of 1980 in (Keshilli Kryeministrove, 1980 b, p. 98).

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ral process that the museum disrupts. Thus, Crane does not take into account the fact that the museum is not just disrupting a natural process of forgetting by remembering, but it is also an institution that is constantly forgetting, as part of political acts of memory and oblivion, thus disrupting what he calls 'the natural flow of time' (Crane, 2006, p.100). Perhaps, that idea of a 'natural flow' contradicts another aspect that I have mentioned before: the *conative* side (impulsive, desiring, striving) that implies a political act of memory and oblivion. When Lowenthal mentions the virtual blank in the Stockholm's Historical Museum between Sweden's imperial 16th and late 18th centuries he confirms that conative aspect of 'museum's making' by saying that 'What they avoid is public stress on a now discredited past, a heritage unworthy to be showcased' (Lowenthal 1993, p.178), which is an implied desire or impulse that resides in that political act of oblivion. Poole states that 'the development of new emotions and commitments as part of a transformed understanding of identity' (Poole 2009, p.155) is highly relevant in the process of creating historic memory. In this regard, the conative aspect of political acts could also be seen in museums where the desire or impulse to remember and forget can be interpreted as the emotional aspect of historic memory represented in the museum exhibitions.

Out of the diversity of definitions and approaches over the idea of memory institutions, the conative aspect is constantly implicit in their 'desire' for interpretation or re-creation; museums as human knowledge institutions are constantly reviewing their role in the society. It is a dynamic action, where perhaps the institution tries to keep up with the times, in other words with the *zeitgeist*, a German concept which is defined as the 'spirit of the age' (Clark, M. & Thyen, O. Eds. 2005) that fits in the conative action of museums. Let's take, for instance, one of the major contemporary concerns, constantly discussed in relationship with memory institutions, which is the relationship with the concept of 'community'. In fact, Crooke states that this concept is leading the museum to revise its identity, role and social worth (Crooke, 2006, p.183). Later he adds that the idea of community participation is linked with an intention of democratizing history and the museum space. This 'spirit' that seems to be an ubiquitous tendency in most of the contemporary museums is an example of the will of museum professionals to open them to new perspectives in the interpretation of its exhibition and spaces. In that sense, the intention of encouraging a more democratic museum is a response to a society with a democratic ideology, an aspect that would explain a political project of memory and oblivion, where memory institutions seek to achieve an *universal knowledge* of history where not a single story is forgotten. It is arguable that this very same *spirit* can be seen in the origins of the modern museum during the 18th and 19th centuries, where the 'zeitgeist' of scientific institutions sought to collect and classify the whole knowledge of nature and humankind. Following this line of thought, contemporary definitions of the museum as a democratizing institution would still dismiss the inevitable process of selective memory and oblivion that happens in every political act inside museums. For this reason, Crooke also emphasizes that 'for some, community has not been a positive experience and the emphasis on cherishing, fostering, or recalling it is misplaced (...) it is important not to forge a community that bonds itself tightly against those who are perceived as non-members' (Crooke, 2006, p.183). Thus, by not taking into consideration the fact that museums do not just encourage projects of memory, but also of oblivion, the idea of democratizing could potentially be a negative experience where, one

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way or another, someone is going to feel excluded. In that regard, Trouillot (1995) acknowledge, perhaps in a more realistic way, the political power that memory institutions bear in the construction of history. He suggests that the heterogeneous nature of the creation of facts is the result of a production of traces, where the silences are equally produced; therefore, narratives about what happened in the past depend on the relationship of concrete traces (he gives the following examples: buildings, dead bodies, censuses, monuments, diaries, political boundaries) and the political will of the individuals during the production of historical narratives. Consequently, 'this is one of many reasons why not any fiction can pass for history: the materiality of the socio-historical process (historicity 1) sets the stage for future historical narratives (historicity 2)'. (Trouillot, 1995, p.29). Thus, in that order of ideas, the national museum is an institution where, despite the fact of having evidence of material culture, the construction of historical narratives in the exhibition space mostly depends on a political action of forgetting and remembering. Perhaps, that is the reason why even the 'newest' strategies that museums use in their exhibitions, have that 'exclusive' factor that Crooke mentions when dealing with the inclusion of communities in museums. Political projects of memory and oblivion are the base for the construction of a historic memory in the exhibitions of the museum; it is a place with silences and exclusions that disproof the idea of having a 'universal' space where everything and everyone is taken into account. The museum does not erase the past, nor does it distort it, but it plays a role in the selection and interpretation of what should be exhibited and, more importantly, in which way. Those political actions are also part of the conative side of memory institutions.

Another aspect that is relevant in the definition of national museums as political institutions is the concept of *distance*. That refers to the possible interval that exists between the conception of 'past' and the political construction of historic memory; a fluctuating concept that involves time, transition, memory and the distance from a political act itself. This concept can be a definitive factor that influences the creation of projects of memory and oblivion inside the museum. First, lets take the idea of time and distance. When the issue of a recent or distant past appears, it comes with the idea of a level of authority over the construction of historic memory. As I mentioned before, the distance in time serves as a 'neutralizer' of the past, thus the idea of a glorious or difficult past is partially dealt with by the museum in relation to the proximity of events. It is more likely to have contested areas, where there exists a possible 'memory antidote' in official history, whereas a distant past tends to be addressed from an exclusive scientific methodology that relies more in the material evidence than in the acts of memory and oblivion of individuals or political groups. Moreover, the idea of time also determines, in some degree, the conative aspect of the memory institution that projects historic memory in its exhibitions. As an example of that, Lowenthal argues that 'maturity meant coping with memories we might prefer to forget' (Lowenthal 1993, p.172), there is an implied sense of passing of time alongside reflecting over the past, which would result in a 'mature' ability to deal with a difficult past. When the Lithuanian artist Konstantinas Bognadas was interviewed by a local newspaper on the art production during the soviet era of his country, he asserted that 'you can't reject those 50 years because intelligent people made art and it's still art, whatever its flaws are' (cited in Benton, 2012, p.129), so only over 20 years after the fall of the

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soviet regime in Lithuania, Mr. Bogdana's statement implies that there is a sense of distance that allows to rethink the art produced during the soviet era and include it in the historic memory of Lithuanian society. In the same sense, an specific political act of oblivion can trigger the reinterpretation of a glorious past that for some reason was suppressed. Lowenthal suggests that 'oblivion stimulates self-regard in new nations. To retrieve a prideful past they must retrieve memories of continuity that had been suppressed or allowed to decay' (Lowenthal 1993, p.175) So, the idea of 'time distance' acts like a bridge to obscure a recent contested past and it puts a project of historic memory in the events that were systematically forgotten during a specific regime.

Another aspect that involves distance and museums is the conative aspect of retrieving suppressed memories, directly linked with political shifts and therefore also with transitional periods. The existence of these periods seek to establish a distance from a 'difficult' or highly contested past. The role of memory institutions in defining this transitional distance is definitive in order to construct a different society from the 'disasters' of a former political regime. Lowenthal asserts that it is commonly accepted that the passage of time sets a distance with 'bad' events, thus allowing the possibility of retrieving them to be reinterpreted (Lowenthal 1993, p.176). Conversely, museums, as part of a set of political institutions, play a conative role that establish transitional periods of time, thus disturbing this 'natural' passage of time with political projects of memory and oblivion. The need for a transition resides in the distance needed after traumatic episodes where the social fabric was damaged or broken. Poole exemplifies that with the French Wars of Religion during the 16th century. There he suggests the impossibility of erasing the horror of the clashes between Catholics and Protestants from individuals, thus he argues that the origin of a 'French sense of nation' needed a political project able to locate firmly in the past the struggles and their emotional component of the sides engaged (Poole 2009, p.154). As a result of that, nowadays, the history of these wars can be seen in contemporary France not as events that were tearing the country apart, but as a successful overcoming of national unity over religious struggles. So, the emotional side of memories of civil unrest, massacred people and winner and losers sides was somehow suppressed by a political project of memory and oblivion that through a transitional distance turned these events into milestones of the history on the conformation of the French nation.

I would like to sum up giving a definition of the concept of distance in relationship with memory institutions and their projects of memory and oblivion. There is a distance of time that acts as a healing and reflexive component in the construction of historic memory. In that sense, the museum is an institution that can be part of an 'institutional apparatus' that constructs a different project of memory and oblivion. During a transitional period that project is able to establish that necessary distance between the past and the construction of a different political project around history. So the existence of a 'transitional distance' can be seen as a break up of society and its individuals with political acts of former regimes. In the following part of this chapter, I would like to discuss one of the relevant aspects of the MHK that can be understood as a political project of former regimes in Albania: the concept of space in a totalitarian state.

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2.3.2 MUSEUMS AND POLITICAL SPACE

How important is the concept of space in a theoretical discussion about museums? I have discussed the relevance of different concepts in the construction of political acts of memory and oblivion inside museums such as distance and the implicit conative aspect in the construction of historic memory. If we take into account that the objects that I intend to analyze in this dissertation are the exhibition rooms of the Muzeu Historik Kombëtar and its façade, the concept of space becomes relevant to examine the possible ways in which this aspect becomes part of political acts inside the museum. Therefore, I intend to discuss the relationship between museums and public space, arguing that memory institutions fall within the category of 'public institutions' and how that idea of 'public' reflects a constructed political space, which in the case of the MHK and the People's Republic of Albania was a 'totalitarian space'. In this regard, this theoretical discussion should give a set of conceptual tools to analyse the museum under a specific space configuration that has been part of different political projects of memory and oblivion.

Space, and urban space especially, can be an implicit piece of evidence of a political configuration of a given society. In fact, the analysis of phenomena that take place in urban space can demonstrate how human values are used, interpreted and embraced by individuals. Benton (2010. p.130) states that buildings 'are very weak carriers of meaning compared to sculptures', however he acknowledges the political relevance of them that becomes evident when there is an ideological change or shift in society. An example of that are the particular actions that 'new' political configurations take when dealing with buildings from old regimes. When the Louvre Palace was opened to the public, in 1793 after the French Revolution (Abt, 2006, p.272), a 'glorious cultural heritage', in the past reserved for the royalty, was made accessible. Conversely, the process of denazification of public spaces, that was carried out after the Second World War all around Germany and other countries, is a particular example where the meaning of several spaces is a definitive evidence of a 'difficult cultural heritage'. Benton exemplifies the difficulties in taking any action over Albert Speer's buildings and spaces in the city of Nuremberg: 'they have no credible meanings or uses in a democratic society, except for the reflection on political horror' (Benton 2012, p. 135)[16].

One of the human values that political changes or ideological shifts tend to address constantly is the idea of *freedom*. It is almost a paradigm that revolutionary political processes declare either the establishment of a 'political freedom', freedom of thought or even 'economic freedom'. What is, therefore, the relationship between space and a sense of freedom?. This link is based in the ancient Greek idea that free man was dependent on others to exercise that freedom (Mensch 2007, p.31). The *agora*, the market-place and the *polis* became the political space, in other words, the *public space* to exercise freedom. Additionally, Hannah Arendt asserts that public space is an 'sphere of equals', where each citizen are linked by a principle of equality, thus anyone is able

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16   Benton refers to specific architectonic configurations such as the *Reichsparteitagsgelände* (Party Congress Grounds) used by the Nazis for their 'political' rallies.

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to attend and listen the other, turning the space, in her words, into 'agoristic' space. Later she adds that public space is 'public' as long as it has political freedom, that is the possibility of manifestation or political action coming from citizens (Arendt, 1995 cited in Abensour 2010, p.155). Following these ideas, it is possible to frame the definition of memory institution in that conception of space. The museum is a public space where individuals exercise their political freedom. Take for instance the ICOM statutes, where they define museums as 'open to the public' (ICOM, 2007, Art. 3) and consequently, it is possible to envisage that that 'openness' is a possibility of accessibility not just in physical terms, but also in the conceptual sense of the space, which is influential in the creation of political projects of memory and oblivion in exhibitions. Mensch adds another characteristic to this concept by saying that individuals use public space to see and be seen, while they take part in public affairs (Mensch 2007, p.31). The emphasis on 'seeing' can be replaced by hearing, showing or speaking to include these aspects in the definition of museum exhibitions. Can the construction of historic memory also be one of these aspects?, I believe that the MHK has several examples that show how public space would be relevant in its analysis, showing the implications of political acts of memory and oblivion inside the MHK, so let us keep in mind for now that the museum is also a public space for the collective subject of historic memory.

Another aspect that makes the relationship between museums and space relevant is the idea of political power and its practice which stems from the possibility of exercising public freedom. Mensch mentions that power 'grows from agreement and combination. It involves individuals working together on common projects' (Mensch 2007, p.41), therefore, the action of a group working speaks for the necessity of a space, where individuals are able to listen and be listened to. The direct relationship between the existence of a public space and political power comes from these activities. However, this creates the paradox of political power that is based on public freedom: the agreement to exercise power constrains the actions of other individuals, and therefore it limits the public freedom of individuals. For instance, the discourse of national museums in general inside their exhibitions enforces a political agreement on history that usually emanates from governments and their ideologies. So, museum managers and their agendas or curatorships and their power to interpret and represent history in the exhibitions, are in charge of this enforcement task. It is an action that comes from individuals, who, in some sense, decide the degree, of other individuals and groups, to exercise political power. Thus, that action determines what it is worth to be exhibited as historic memory. At this point, it is relevant to ask whether the museum can be an institution that would undermine public freedom. After all, this discussion puts museums in the category of institutions that deal with political power. I have mentioned the metaphor that Jacques Derrida used for this political phenomena, an 'autoimmune reaction' that summarizes how any political power struggles to preserve itself whilst undermining its base, which in this case, resides in public freedom: 'democracy protects itself and maintains itself precisely by limiting and threatening itself' (Derrida, 2005 cited in Mensch 2007, p.41). Moreover, Mensch emphasizes that public space is excessive in ideas, points of view, discussions, manifestations, opinions, demonstrations, and changes. That characteristic makes it possible to keep public freedom in that space and therefore control political power coming from individuals or

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groups. That implicit characteristic of plurality in public space is one of the first freedoms that a totalitarian state undermines for the sake of total power. When Mussolini stated 'All within the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state' he was giving an accurate definition of a complete unbalance between public freedom and political power. Power for the sake of state power, not even the power of 'Il Duce', but the power of a political configuration called a Fascist state. That Fascist ideology is the base for understanding the actions of Totalitarianisms when dealing with public space. It consists of the complete control of it and its subsequent annulation as political space. Taking into account that the MHK was created under the rule of a totalitarian state, I believe that a significant factor here is the lack of balance to discuss how its exhibitions, or at least part of them, still show the excessive political power that undermines the possibility to be a real public space; a political space where individuals 'see but also are seen'. In order to do this, the analysis of different levels of political power inside the MHK, can demonstrate how the public freedom of individuals has been compromised by the political power of other individuals, an organization or the state. The museum has different kinds of spaces that perhaps show how memory institutions are particularly susceptible to specific political projects of memory and oblivion and of course different ideologies. In the case of the MHK, a totalitarian regime left its mark when the institution was under the state control of the PPSH.

So, What is a totalitarian space? Is it the conceptual opponent of public space? I intend to analyze the historical context in which the museum was built in order to understand the political influence of a totalitarian regime in the spaces of the museum, and consequently, put on display traces of an ideological discourse in the museum spaces, as well as demonstrate how that has changed in specific cases to be consequent with a transitional period and an idea of distance from its original museological discourse. I consider it relevant to define the idea of a totalitarian space as opposed to a public space to find a theoretical approach to analyze the material evidence, which shows how the museum has taken part in projects of memory and oblivion.

I have discussed how the idea of public space is related to political freedom. When the museum was built in the early 1980s, the Republic of Albania was under the totalitarian regime of the PPSH. The question is: how do we define this regime as a totalitarian power? Is it possible to elucidate this through the analysis of the 'public' spaces surrounding the MHK and the architectural volumes inside and outside the museum building? Michel Abensour suggests several conceptual approaches to understanding the characteristics of 'public' spaces under Totalitarianisms. First of all, he does not emphasize in the ideological differences of two ideologically opposite totalitarian regimes: a Fascist state and a Communist state. Instead of that, he suggests that these kind of regimes share a paradoxical logic which seeks to suppress the 'political' concept from individuals (Abensour 2010, p.160), thus, a totalitarian power has a 'total' control over every societal aspect, including spaces. I have mentioned before how Totalitarianisms undermine any political freedom for the sake of power. That is also reflected in the configuration of spaces that totalitarian states have projected and built. In general terms, these configurations of volumes and spaces do not fit the 'human scale' of citizens as political participants of society. On the contrary, its objective is to crush any conception of political individualism by turning

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them into 'masses' without political initiative. In that regard, it is possible to find several examples of places of the 'massification' of human beings: the *Reichsparteitagsgelände* (Party Congress Grounds) of the Nazi party and its extensive space for the 'perfect' marching coordination of the Wehrmacht (Armed forces of Germany from 1935 until 1945); or the construction of *Arengarios*[17] during the Fascist rule in Italy. These are architectural volumes directly related to the need for a space aimed to 'unify' the political discourse during the Fascist rule, in a way that its head 'Il Duce', Benito Mussolini, is highly visible up to the point that he is almost deified. Or finally, the characteristics of the *Stalinist Brutalism* style in Governmental Buildings (including museums and cultural centers) that sought to impose a 'crushing' concept on individuals by making the disproportion of the spaces in relationship with the size of other urban structures evident. That would symbolically express the unity of the Party and its members (FIGURE 5).

FIGURE 5. Ca. 1990: Panoramic view of Scanderbeg square and the Muzeu Historik Kombëtar in Tirana. The museum volume denotes a disproportion in relationship with other urban elements of the square and the city. Picture from the cover of the book *Tirana* (Gegprifti et al., eds., 1990).

As a consequence, the 'public' space loses its plurality of perspectives, its 'excessive nature', as Mensch (2007) defines it, to become an 'uniform' space for the masses. Later Mensch explains further how a totalitarian state quells any possible alternative for the exercise of political freedom: 'They severely limit publicly expressed perspectives (...) they should not present to one another the content of their freedom, but rather be restricted to

17   Stages that Benito Mussolini used to address the nation (Strabucchi, 2003, p.52)

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receiving this from the state. Thus, the ideal of this state is a populous that thinks, acts and, hence, discloses its world according to a limited number of state-approved projects' (Mensch 2007, pp.43). One of this projects, that I mentioned at the beginning of this dissertation, is exemplified by the existence of a document from the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Albania named 'Subject: On the deployment of works of art (figurative art) in interior and public spaces' (Carçani, 1975) which gave specific instructions on how art should express the ideology of the Party to the 'masses'. This document was one of the state documents that needed to be followed during the planning and construction of the museological discourse of the MHK. In this regard, that obsessive state control underpinned the idea of an 'art' that was obliged to reflect the state's political ideology, making it a clear example of what Walter Benjamin defines as an 'aesthetization of politics', where art and architecture become part of the state machinery to impose a political ideology; in this case, making memory institutions part of a propaganda machine that the totalitarian state needed for keeping a 'political uniformity', thus eliminating the concept of public space.

Is it possible to find evidence of that suppression in the Muzeu Historik Kombetar? I believe that the museum shows specific characteristics which would serve to understand the configuration of spaces where the exhibitions are located. Based on that, it is important to define a set of concepts that are distinctive of a totalitarian space. Abensour suggests that ideas such as the monumentality, the colossal nature of buildings and spaces and the excessive space[18] are a manifestation of totalitarian power (Abensour 2010, p.154). Due to the imposing nature of totalitarian spaces, the political power of the state is legitimized, but is also a deterrent for individuals to express their public freedom, in other words to manifest their political rights in a public space. Thus, architecture and urbanism become tools to theoretically imply the totalitarian dogma that Mussolini used to constantly address: 'All within the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state'. That idea of massiveness and monumentality that permeates the architectural space is a factor that can be evidenced in the urban configuration around the MHK in Tirana, where different styles used by totalitarian regimes were implemented. Massive governmental buildings in a renaissance style (Robinson, 1941, cited in Rugg, 1994, p.67) from the 'Fascist Italian influence' share the extensive area of Scanderbeg square, alongside the monumental Stalinist architecture of the opera house and the museum itself. On this note, it is relevant to define the nature of the totalitarian space as a conception that does not use a specific architecture or urban style, but as a conceptualization of an ideological space that seeks to impose a single political vision through volumes and urban planning. Paul Nizan corroborates this definition by stating that Soviet Architecture is 'a monument to Socialism that will express the profound unity of the masses (...) a socialist public building serves to the unification[19]' (Nizan, 1934 cited in Abensour 2010, p.164). Thus, the MHK, as part of this totalitarian logic, becomes part of a political project of unification that paradoxically seeks to eliminate any political action coming from individuals. The political acts of memory and oblivion of the museum become 'apolitical' in the sense that

18   Not 'excessive' in the sense of 'plurality of political perspectives' but in a spatial sense.

19   My translation

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they do not evidence a public freedom but a political unity imposed by the total power of the state. All the acts of remembering and forgetting, the conception of acts of memory and oblivion and therefore the sense of a historic memory with the concepts that it implies, are included (nation, ideology, class, ethnicity, etc) and are fully controlled by the state. In that scenario, individuals become a 'spectatorial' mass that is restricted to see but not to be seen, in other words, they are restraint by this or that totalitarian regime of participating in the construction of historic memory inside the museum space. Abensour summarizes these ideas by asserting that architecture is a constitutive key part of a totalitarian regime that deploys a particular 'arché', 'an order' that implements a concept of space which does not have any public or political sense. So, totalitarian regimes seek to constitute a submitted mass in the fullest sense of the word (Abensour 2010, p.160). It is my interest to 'untangle' that conceptual 'web' of the Muzeu Historik Kombëtar in order to understand how this institution has kept part of that 'order' in its exhibitions and how the existence of a recent 'excessive' and political, and therefore public space, has transformed the way in which Albanian society implements projects of memory and oblivion in this particular institution.

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3 METHOD

elow follows some notes on the method that I used to approach the Muzeu Historik Kombëtar (MHK) as my object of study. First, I will describe the type of material that I collected to consolidate my research corpus. Second, I will briefly describe my visits to the museum to finally explain how I will approach the MHK in relationship with my theoretical discussion.

At the beginning of the project, I had a stroke of serendipity when I found out about the existence of the Film Archive of the former *Shqiperia e Re* (The New Albania) film studio which was founded in 1952 as part of the state propaganda apparatus during the period of Communism in Albania (anonymous, 1984, p.125). There, I discovered the existence of two short documentaries about the museum. The first one *Me ndertuesit e museut historik kombetar* (With the builders of the National History Museum) (1981) was an account of the building of the museum during the years 1980-81. The other one, *Muzeut Historik Kombetar* (The National History Museum) (1982), comprised an account of the everyday functioning of the museum in its first year as an institution. These two visual documents contained a narrative dimension, through the voiceover of each film, which could be analyzed to find possible implications of the museum as a political project of the Communist regime. In addition to this, I compiled documents from the repositories of the Albanian State's Archive, not only related to the construction of the museum, but also to the influence of the Communist ideology on the exhibition of public art (Carçani, 1975) and the antecedents of the museum, that go back to the decade of 1920s with the creation of the Directorate for Museums and Libraries (Ministria e Arsimit, 1923). In spite of this, the documents from the Communist regime insist on the absence of any museum or cultural heritage institution before the Communist regime came into power, due to the backwardness of the country (anonymous, 1984). It is worth mentioning that all this research work in archives and film materials was located and translated for the purpose of this dissertation thanks to the kind aid of Albanian and American colleagues, whom I have already mentioned in the acknowledgements of this dissertation. With this consolidated corpus and an initial literature review, I made several field visits to the museum. They consisted on a search for possible political influences in the museum. At this point, I decided to focus my attention on the frontal mosaic of the museum (The Albanians) and the permanent exhibition rooms related to Illyria, the independence of 1912 and the Achievements of Socialism. This involved photographing the museum displays and its material culture contents to examine the different transformations that the museum has experienced since its construction. Having carried out this work, I decided to make visual comparisons between the exhibition spaces, supported with the material available from the Archives, to elucidate how and why the museum has under-

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gone a heterogeneous transformation, where some of the rooms still keep a museological discourse from the Communist period, whereas others have experienced constant transformations.

My interest in the MHK was focused on the *visual narratives* of the exhibition areas, consequently I did not choose to discuss other aspects of the Museum such as the acquisition, storage and documentation of material culture. The reason for that was not just a personal interest in permanent exhibitions but also a framing of the subject in a highly contested area of museology: the interpretation of material culture in an space that is visited and seen by individuals. Consequently, the museum's task of acquiring and cataloguing appeals to a scientific objectivity (specific epistemological approach) that perhaps needs to be addressed in relationship with the production of narratives for visitors in another master's dissertation. While the task of documenting material culture implies a scientific method that is not accessible to the regular visitor of most of the museums, the exhibition itself is a contested and influential place for individuals, where the interpretation of material culture it is not just subjected to the scientific methodology but also to other interests related to the concepts that I intended to address: political acts of oblivion, memory, ideology, historic memory and the construction of nation. For good or for bad, the idea of a historic museum was mediated by these concepts. Therefore, this provided me with the basis for discussing the issue of political projects of memory and oblivion in relationship with the research corpus that I collected. It thus serves as a starting point for the discussion on the modus operandi in which the Museum had constructed the museological project of its exhibitions and how it evolved from its origins as an institution, to its role in a contemporary transitional period between a Communist system and a Capitalist Democracy in Albania.

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4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter, I would like to analyse five cases on how the museum exhibitions represent Albanian history, in order to examine the particularities on the implementation of different political projects of memory and oblivion. The cases have been selected because they are representative of the ways that the museum has taken part in these political acts in relationship with the representation of a historical discourse. To be more precise, I examine these cases in order to assess how a change of political regime in Albania has driven the MHK to deal in different ways with a difficult, controversial or glorious past, which is the product of the existence of previous specific acts of memory and oblivion that have come into conflict with emerging political ideologies, or in the contrary has been assimilated by, in contemporary Albania.

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4.1 A GLORIOUS PAST

4.1.1 A MAP OF ILLYRIA
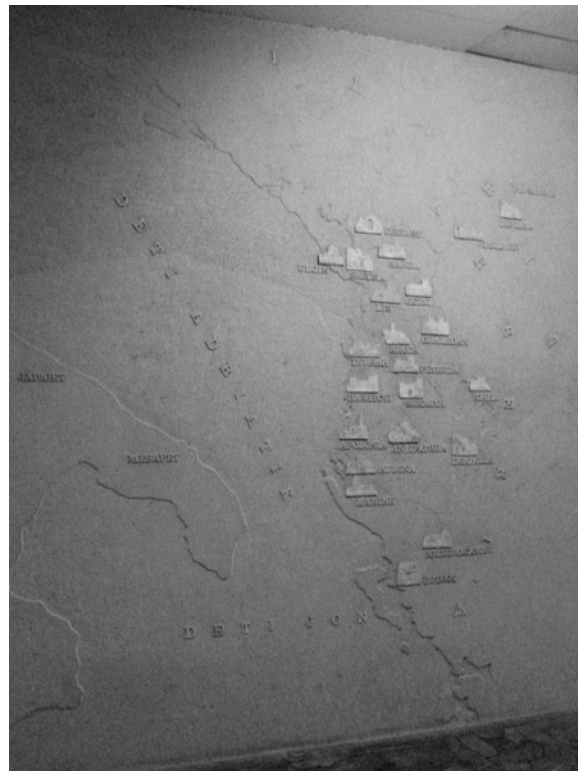
FIGURE 6. 2012: Ground floor of the Muzeu Historik Kombetar, Map of Illyrian settlements in the entrance of the exhibition room 'Antiquity of the Albanian people' (Personal photograph).

A visit to the Muzeu Historik Kombëtar begins with in the main hall that in 1981 used to house the statue of Enver Hoxha saluting the visitors. As an obvious symbol of the Communist years the statue now lies dismantled in a storage room of the third floor, away from the eyes of the flocks of tourists and students that come to the museum these days (FIGURE 7 AND 8). However, the space is still a reminder of the *arché* that the totalitarian regime of Enver Hoxha deployed in order to eliminate any public or political sense; following the ideas of Abensour, it is a space to submit the masses to a political regime (Abensour 2010, p.160). The place is overlooked by the relief in stone of a massive Albanian flag and its coat of arms that go up from the floor until the ceiling which is at least nine meters high, giving it that distinctive nature of buildings and volumes from Totalitarianisms and its characteristic monumentality (Abensour 2010, p.154).

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FIGURE 7. 1982: Main hall of the Muzeu Historik Kombetar, on the right, the statue of Enver Hoxha. (Muzeut Historik Kombetar, 1982, min. 27.49).

FIGURE 8. 2012: Main hall of the Muzeu Historik Kombetar. (Personal photograph).

After this first impression, the exhibition begins on the left hand side with a map of Illyrian settlements. It is engraved in the stone (3 x 2 meters approx.) (FIGURE 6) at it dates back to the beginning of the museum. In the Project for the contents of the National History Museum (1980 a) it is possible to find the following description of the general objectives of this exhibition:

Antiquity of the Albanian People

(From the beginning until the sixth century AD)

For this theme there is a wealth of material available, consisting mainly of archaeological, architectonic and artistic objects a part which is proportionally high.

Materials well displayed placing large objects together (in hallway or in a courtyard) rather that on the side of the display cases and graphic materials on boards.

The themes have as their goals to document the land Albanians have been living on since the most ancient times, as Albania is a land with an ancient culture and as the Albanian peoples is one of the oldest in Europe. Built on a base of an autochthonous elements, having formed an Illyrian ethnicity and culture with clear and defined features.

Stoping at the southern Illyrians as the ancestors of Albanians (…) (Keshilli Kryeministrove, 1980 a) (my italics)

This document exemplifies the decision of the Communist regime to implement in the project of the MHK a political act with a nationalistic platform aimed to demonstrate the antiquity of Albanian people in the region. Through the exploitation of ancient remains, the regime sought to support a discourse in 'material culture that is grand and lasting, and more likely to be found by archaeologists' (Paynter and McGuire cited in Galaty, Stocker and Watkinson, 2009, p.174). Also, the memories that function as an 'antidote to official history' (Benton and Cecil 2010, p.20) are not possible to be found due to the lack of written registries from Illyrian times. The idea of a Southern Illyrian region with defined borders, almost equivalent to contemporary Albania, is a myth well embedded in collective memory despite the fact that material culture shows that this is a fallacy. In fact, Illyria is understood by archaeologists and historians as a group of cultures that lived on the coast of Southeast Europe, comprising the geography of contemporary countries such as Slovenia, Croatia, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Albania and Kosova.

Brackette Williams argues that ideas over ethnicity, race, gender and class are involved in the construction of the idea of nation (Williams, 1989 cited in Steiner 1995, p.3). It is possible to see ideological views on ethnicity as part of the project of the MHK consolidating an Albanian nationalistic representation inside the museum. The map of Illyria shows how the places that the museum acknowledged as Illyrian archaeological sites are located in the actual territory of the former People's Republic of Albania; the south coast of the former Yugoslav Republic of Montenegro, The shore of the Ohrid Lake in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo[20] , which at the time of the construction of the Museum were part of Yugoslavia. On the other hand, the map does not show any of the Illyrian archaeological remains in other places of the former Republic of Yugoslavia, such as Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, or northern Montenegro. Therefore, it is possible to infer here that the exhibition sought to represent a link between Albanian ethnicity and a geographical interpretation of the Illyrian culture. In that order of ideas, the overwhelming political power of the Communist regime that created the museum helped to turn a fallacy, such as the exclusive relationship of Illyrian cultures with Albanian ethnicity, into a well embedded story among individuals in Albania. It is not difficult to find the word 'Illyria' in the contemporary public image of Albania.

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20   It is important to state here that this region in former Yugoslavia have a majority of ethnic Albanian population.

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4.1.2 AN UNCOMFORTABLE IMAGE
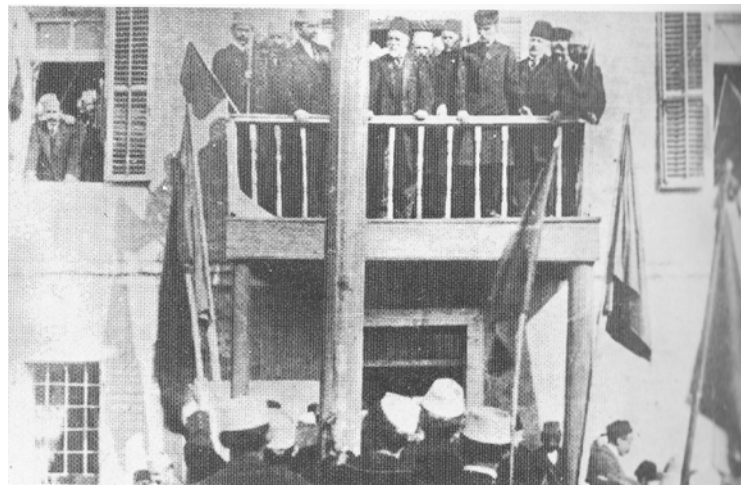
FIGURE 9. 1982: The Independence room: 'Ismail Qemali solemnly proclaims the National Independence to the people of Albania'. (Personal photograph of the image displayed in the exhibition).

On the first floor of the museum, the room of the Albanian Independence depicts a political representation of this event through the eyes of the Communist regime and its subsequent transformation after the fall of that regime. In fact, the room has experienced some changes, such as the exclusion of evident Marxist-Leninist references (FIGURE 10). However, the space still conserves the same displays from the initial project.

FIGURE 10. 1982: The Independence room: On the top, a display with a picture of the Soviet leader 'Lenin' and a quote from him, subsequently removed from the exhibition. (Muzeut Historik Kombetar, 1982, min. 18.15).

In addition, the museum staff has added a new room that exhibits the process of gaining independence from a complete different perspective. In this case, the post-Communist project consists of different historical events of the configuration of the modern Albanian state that were censored and forgotten by the former regime, due to ideological views on historic memory. An example of that is the exhibition of a picture of 'Xhemil Bej's mansion'

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where the Assembly of Vlora, a significant moment in the process of achieving independence of Albania from the Ottoman Empire in 1912, was held (FIGURE 11).

FIGURE 11. 2012: The Independence room - new room: 'The house of Xhemil Bej, where the Assembly of Vlora was held'. (Personal photograph of the image displayed in the exhibition).

According to the new exhibition, in this mansion on the 28 November 1912 representatives from the four *vilay-ets*[21] agreed on the complete independence of the 'new' Republic of Albania from the Ottomans. In spite of the relevance of this place, the Communist regime decided to emphasize the photograph where the representatives appeared on a balcony of Ismail Qemali's house, one of the representatives, and 'raised Scanderbeg's emblem as its national flag' (Sherer, S. and Senechal, M. 1997) (FIGURE 9). The significance of this political act resides in the emphasis that the Communist regime believed that the idea of the process of gaining independence was closely related to the class struggle doctrines of Marxism-Leninism, even though there is no historical registry of a single Communist ideology in the configuration of the Albanian independence of 1912. This political project of memory and oblivion can be retrieved in the following excerpts from the *Project for the contents of the National History Museum*:

'In order to illustrate this item the theme will be shared, from the point of view of the construction of the museum in five sub themes:

1. Formation of the Albanian nation

The drive behind this sub theme will be an illustration of the process of the formation of the Albanian nation according to the scientific Marxist-Leninist concepts regarding the territorial community, language, economic life and culture, as objective factors which during the 19th century became increasingly more consolidated'. (Keshilli Kryeministrove, 1980 a)

and

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21   An Ottoman administrative entity from the mid nineteenth century. At that time the actual territory of Albania and some areas of Greece, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia were divided in four vilayets: Kosova, Scutari, Monastir and Janina.

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'Part on the revolution 1912 to 1976

In this part of the museum there will be reflected three thesis: Preparation of the Revolution, the war of Anti Fascist national liberation and the Socialist construction as integral parts of a revolution in progress, which closely unite dialectically with each other'. (Keshilli Kryeministrove, 1980 b)

Thus, the ideological views of the Communist regime shaped the exhibition of the Albanian Independence of 1912 with a heavy discourse on class struggle, which modified the relevance of a place within the historic memory of that event. The house of Qemali became a symbol of popular uprising portrayed in the picture of the representatives raising the Albanian flag in front of the 'people' who during the Communism were considered 'masses'. Conversely, Xhemil Bej's mansion was completely obliterated due to the symbolic relationship of the mansion with the wealthy class of that time. Still, the emphasis on the Independence history resides in the house of Qemali, which since then became the only exclusive iconic place related to the declaration of independence.

4.1.3 ZOG AND THE ROYALISM REGAINED

FIGURE 12. Second floor of the Muzeu Historik Kombetar: Permanent exhibition about king Zog and the former Albanian royal family (2012). In the lower left corner of this image is possible to see that the displays of the exhibition 'Achievements of Socialism', from the Communist period, have been re-used to install the new panels of the exhibition about the Albanian royal family. (Personal photograph).

There is a small room between the Albanian Independence and the Anti-Fascist War of Liberation exhibitions that acts as an interval and it is now committed to the Former Albanian Royalty. It is a collection of

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posters and several personal objects relating to the life of Ahmet Muhtar Bej Zogolli, his family, as well as his reign in Albania between 1928 and 1939. (FIGURE 12) During the Communist regime, Zog was a definitive figure to exemplify the 'menace' of the external influence of Fascist Imperialism in Albania. In fact, Enver Hoxha followed an isolationist policy after several splits with other Socialist countries. In that sense, the figure of Zog was interpreted as the personification of the influence of 'revisionist' ideas that would jeopardize the implementation of Socialism in Albania. In his writings, Hoxha constantly mentions the 'glorious' resistance against the Royalist regime of Zog as a one of the milestones in the creation of the Socialist revolution in Albania (Hoxha, 1984 pp. 9 – 196). Consequently, it is possible to find evidence of this in the *Project for the contents of the National History Museum*:

> '6. The democratic Communist worker's movement against the Zogist regime and Fascist Imperialism.
>
> The idea that will traverse this theme is the struggle of the popular masses for democracy against the Zogist regime and Fascist Imperialism in the years 1925-1939. This framework will reflect the various democratic and anti-Zogist movements, which were the result of the grand worsening of the social and political economic situations of the popular masses and for the first time widely shows the worker's, Communist and anti Fascist movements, the attempts for a democratic culture as well as the stand against state Fascism and Fascist aggression'. (Keshilli Kryeministrove, 1980 b)

This theme has completely disappeared from the actual permanent exhibition. The MHK now supports an official historic memory that acknowledges the royalist period at the beginning of the 20th century in Albania, while during the Communist period, the same subject was exhibited as the Imperialist and pro-Fascist Zogist regime. Besides, it is not one of the objectives of this dissertation to discuss the economical restraints of the MHK, or the technical quality of the exhibitions. However, it is possible to notice that the displays where the new exhibition texts and photos are installed, date back to the Communist period. That is evidenced by the remaining plastic letters behind the new posters, partially readable, which give evidence of the fate of the exhibition about the 'Achievements of Socialism'[22]

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22   In fact, it is possible to read in one of the displays the following text: 'and 797 km of regional roads' (in reference to the construction of roads during the Communist period) (FIGURE 12).

4.2 A CONTESTED PAST

4.2.1 *THE ALBANIANS* AND THE STARS

FIGURE 13. 2011: Front façade of the National History Museum and the mosaic *The Albanians* (1981). (Personal photograph).

The landscape of Scanderbeg square is dominated by the eye-catching facade of the museum and its massive mosaic which is about 5 x 16 m. Located above the main entrance *The Albanians*, as it is called, faces the square with its Social-realist depiction of the Albanian history. In it, it is possible to see the 1975's mandate of the Council of Ministries, which orders 'that all instruments of Culture and Mass propaganda be used in an intensive way and qualified for the formation of tastes and our socialist morality, and view that as an aspect of class war on the ideological front' (Carçani, 1975). This political project on arts and especially on the formation of 'art taste' is reflected in the massive figures with 'ideological and artistic values' in accordance with the Socialist state requirements. In the middle of the mosaic, *Mother Albania*, an allegory of the Albanian nation, walks alongside a partisan soldier and a worker, dividing the ancient 'history' of the Albanian people, on their left depicted by six characters that represent the origins of the Albanian nation, and the revolutionary partisans that represents the modern socialist na-

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tion on their right. Sali Kadria notes how the mosaic reflects the ideology of the Albanian cultural revolution, where the ancient past until the independence of 1912 occupies the same amount of space as the depictions of the revolutionary and Socialist state, a period that was not longer than fifty years (Appendix a) (FIGURE 13). After the fall of the Communism, the museum decided to make a significant change in the mosaic. As Galaty, Stocker and Watkinson (2009, p.183) write, 'Obvious symbols of Communism, such as statues have already nearly disappeared' and the mosaic experienced a partial disappearance when the museum decided to erase the big red star that was located next to *Mother Albania* (FIGURES 14 AND 15). A remarkable detail is that the right side of the mosaic, which depicts four partisans with red stars on their caps, was kept intact.

FIGURE 14. 1982: Front façade of the Muzeu Historik Kombetar, Mosaic *The Albanians* (detail). (Muzeut Historik Kombetar, 1982, min. 01.30).

FIGURE 15. 2012: Front façade of the Muzeu Historik Kombetar, Mosaic *The Albanians* (detail). (Personal photograph).

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4.2.2 RITUALIZED HATRED

FIGURE 16. Ca. 1984: Second floor of the Muzeu Historik Kombetar. 'A cross section of the history of the Albanian people. A hall of the Museum of National History, Tirana' (Anon. 1984, p.118). Picture taken from the book *40 Vjet Shqiperi Socialiste, 40 years of Socialist Albania*.

There is a whole area on the second floor of the museum that is currently closed to visitors. During the Communist period, the rooms that were located there used to lodge the exhibitions on the 'Achievements of Socialism'. Through visual evidence from the documentary *Muzeut historik kombetar* (1982) and the book *40 Vjet Shqiperi Socialiste, 40 years of Socialist Albania* (1984, p. 118) it is possible to see the range of subjects that the former exhibition used to display: The liberation of the country during WWII by the Communist partisans, the subsequent organization of the Communist state and several rooms showing the achievements of Albania after the implementation of Communism such as heavy industrialization, agriculture, land reorganization, education, culture, healthcare and housing development. This subjects, constantly presents photograps of Enver Hoxha giving discourses, visiting facilities and opening new projects which can be interpreted as a cult of personality around the figure of the former leader of Communist Albania (FIGURE 16 AND 17). It is worth mentioning that by the time of the inauguration of the MHK, Hoxha was still the head of the politburo of the PPSH. Additionally, in the *Project for the contents of the National History Museum* there is a range of milestones in the configuration of the Communist state that are not longer open to the public:

'The central moments and culminating points of this part will be: Foundation of the PPSH (November 1941), The conference of Peza (September 1942), The first state conference (March 1943), The creation of the general staff and organization of UNCL. (July 1943), The Congress of Permet (May 1944), The historic victory of 29 November 1944, Proclamation of the People's Republic of Albania and the approval of the constitution (January-March 1946), the First Congres of the PPSH (November 1948), Third Congress of the PPSH (May 1956), The Fourth Congress of the PPSH (February 1961), The year 1966, The Seventh Congress of the PPSH (November 1976) and finally the RPS constitution of Albania'. (Keshilli Kryeministrove, 1980 b)

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FIGURE 17. 1982: Second floor of the Muzeu Historik Kombetar, Exhibition 'Achievements of Socialism'. In the center of the image, a picture of Enver Hoxha. (Muzeut Historik Kombetar, 1982, min. 23.30).

Based on this excerpt, It is possible to assert that after the fall of Communism in the early 1990s the institution found its museological narrative irrelevant, full of Albanian history, interpreted through the lens of class wars and Marxist-Leninist ideology. Therefore, most of the exhibitions related with historical events on the development of the Communist state were either retired from the permanent exhibitions or closed. Nowadays, there is not a permanent exhibition about the Communist period of Albania. Besides, an exhibition named 'The Communist genocide' which is mentioned in *A Guide to Albanian Museums* (1996) has also ceased to exist. However, the MHK recently opened (on February 2012) a new permanent exhibition named *Terrori Komunist në Shqiperi* (Communist terror in Albania) that exhibits documents and objects related to different stories and places related with the repression of the totalitarian regime against Albanians. There, the curator of the Museum made a decision to make use of the space of the former 'achievements of the People's Republic of Albania' from 1981, holding the new exhibition that serve as a confirmation of the totalitarian policies of the regime that Enver Hoxha and the Politburo held from 1944 until 1991[23] (FIGURES 18 AND 19). The Albanian history represented in this room becomes a part of what Lowenthal defines as 'ritualized hatred' around horrific memories that obsess whole nations (Lowenthal 1993, p.176). The interesting point here is that this 'ritualized hatred' supports a contemporary political power where some leaders of the Albanian government, such as the incumbent Prime Minister, Sali Berisha, are depicted as ferrous opponents of the socialist period. Conversely, there are no personal memories in the exhibition, a fact that confirms that official historic memory in Albania still lacks the 'antidote' that is memory, as Benton and Cecil (2010, p.20) suggest.

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23   That comprises: political persecution, illegal executions, restriction of liberties and thought and the total control of the state over any action taken by individuals.

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FIGURE 18. 1982: First floor of the Muzeu Historik Kombetar, Exhibition 'Antifascist National Liberation War like a great popular revolution under the leadership of the Comunist Party of Albania'. (Muzeut Historik Kombetar, 1982, min. 20.02).

FIGURE 19. 2012: First floor of the Muzeu Historik Kombetar, Exhibition 'Communist Terror in Albania'. (Personal photograph).

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4.3 DISCUSSION

I would like to discuss the findings on the previous cases by linking some of the concepts that I explored in the theoretical framework with the evidence that I gathered, for the purpose of this dissertation.

The map of Illyria is a case where the idea of a glorious past find its origin in the political manipulation of a distant past that unlike other examples, does not have traces of memories. Something that is reflected in the lack of written registries from Illyrian times. This circumstance, allowed the Communist regime to support its ideological needs by shaping the process of what to memorize and what to obliterate, turning history into an instrument to sustain its political structures and power, as well as an specific view on the construction of the idea of nation. In other words, the power of the Communist regime, which in this case resided in the Council of Ministers of Albania and the project for the creation of the Museum, carefully shaped the historic memory discourse to construct the idea of the Albanian nation at that time based in the 'noble Illiryan origins'. That was a political decision, at the time of the construction of the museum, where the idea of Albanian nationality was based on ethnicity. This corroborates what Anderson defines as 'the objective modernity of nations to the historian's eye vs. their subjective antiquity in the eyes of nationalists' (Anderson, 2006, p.5). Interestingly, the alledgedly 'neutrality' of the archaeological past, which is supported by the absence of a clear link between a distant past and Communist ideology, has given as a result that the Museum project, which was based on a biased epistemological view of historic memory and conceived under a specific Communist-nationalist ideology, had survived in some rooms, like Illyria. Thus an act of memory with an implicit ideological discourse from the Communist period still survives in the permanent exhibition, supporting an idea of the Albanian nation where it is possible to forget that contemporary boundaries, geographical names, languages and institutions did not always exist.

The case of the pictures of the Independence of 1912 reveals how the ideological views of the regime managed to turn the permanent exhibition regarding this historical event in a discourse on class wars through the modification of the relevance of places (a house and a mansion) in the whole story. This political action is, perhaps, one of the most evident ideological influences of the Communist government of Albania over historic memory, and therefore on the creation of the Albanian idea of nation in the museological project. In this case, the museum, as an institution that formed part of a specific political power, changed the interpretation of historic memory through the discourse of 'class struggle' to break with controversial wealthy figures involved in the fight for Independence of Albania. After all, the idea of a 'wealthy capitalist-revisionist' people struggling for

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the creation of the modern state of Albania was in complete contradiction with the ideological interpretation of history as a matter of class wars. Thus, the exhibition had to reflect the 'heroic struggle of the masses for independence' even though there was no 'mass' in the strict sense of the word. Following this line of thought, the political project of the Communist regime and its subsequent interpretation of history from a Marxist-Leninist perspective, has made the exhibition of the Albanian Independence one of the first contested places in the contemporary museum, where the images and texts are constantly reconsidered or transformed showing the *conative aspect* of some political acts of memory and oblivion that seek for a constant interpretation and representation of the museum. Thus evidencing an institution that somehow it has manage to become a dynamic place for the exhibition of history in opposition to the former totalitarian influence over the historical discourse. 'What is certain is that in the case of "bad" memories, above all, heritage prompts multiple responses. It is how buildings and places are used and thought about that determines their heritage value' (Benton 2012, p. 152), therefore, it is about political acts of memory and oblivion in constant action where, as I suggested in the theoretical discussion, memories can be seen as an antidote to official history.

Zog and the Royalism regained is an example of what I discussed in the theoretical framework of this dissertation, when I mentioned how some political acts of oblivion trigger the retrieval of a suppressed past (p. 35): 'oblivion stimulates self-regard in new nations. To retrieve a prideful past they must retrieve memories of continuity that had been suppressed or allowed to decay' (Lowenthal 1993, p.175). The discourse of the Communist ideology present in the former exhibitions of the museum, adressed the issue of king Zog as a pro-Fascist regime, making him an 'antipatriotic' element that were widely used by Hoxha and the Politburo as an excuse to justify the menace of revisionism and division inside Albania at that time. Consequently, after the fall of Communism, the monarchy in exile tried to claim the Albanian throne, again after almost fifty years. Despite the fact that royalism is a highly contested subject in contemporary Albania[24], the political act of retrieving that historic memory in an exhibition of the Museum advocates the idea of retrieving a distant glorious past that supports a museological discourse partly based on prideful stories. In this regard, Steiner makes a relevant question for this discussion: 'Does the nation-state draw authority and power from the recreation or, as Agbenyega Adedze puts it, the invention of a glorious past? Or does the state project its image into the future? (Steiner 1995, p.4). In regard to this question it is necessary to have in mind that the museum is still under the political influence of the Albanian governments. After all, the institution makes part of the budget and bureaucratic quota of the State. Following that idea, it is possible to suggest that the creation of an exhibition about Royalism is a political act to draw authority from a glorious past. So, that conative aspect of retrieving suppressed memories censored during the Communist period is directly linked with a transitional period of Albania where the idea of a recently retrieved past that is somehow seen as prideful and glorious,

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24   For instance, a referendum held in the year of 1997 to reestablish Monarchy raised controversy among Albanian Society; A British Broadcasting Corporation article reminds of the unrest during that referendum, when the heir to the throne came back to Albania in 2002: 'The return of Leka Zog, the son of former King Zog, was made possible by an amnesty granted this month for his part in unrest during a referendum five years ago on the future of the monarchy'. (BBC, 2002).

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becomes a tool to establish a political ideology in contraposition with the Communist period. An action of political power based on historic memory and its core: memory and oblivion. That is the possible reason why the MHK, despite the fact that is not up to pace with the 'latest' museological tendencies or impressive amounts of visitors, is a place that the political establishment understands as politically relevant: the Prime Minister Sali Berisha and his entourage come to pay a visit to the exhibitions and society is informed about that through the evening news of most of the Albanian tv channels and newspapers (FIGURE 20).

FIGURE 20. First floor of the Muzeu Historik Kombetar: exhibition 'Communist Terror in Albania', The incumbent Prime Minister Sali Berisha is 'registered' by the Albanian media while he leaves a note in the visitor's book of the museum (February 2012). (Në inaugurimin, 2012).

The mosaic *The Albanians,* which it is also a permanent exhibition, faces Scanderbeg square as an implicit evidence of a political configuration from the former Socialist state of Albania. After the fall of Communism, when this political project stopped being relevant and the museum staff removed the biggest star from the mosaic, an obvious symbol of Communism disappeared. From the theoretical perspective, the systematic erasing of 'socialist stars' from public buildings in Albania is an action that dealt with an 'uncomfortable' cultural heritage of a former regime. Despite the fact that these actions are not as 'symbolically visible' as, for instance, the fall of statues[25], they embody the importance of space for political changes in societies. With this political action of oblivion, the museum symbolically turned the space of the square into a necessary public space for a Democratic society in transition from a totalitarian regime. The mosaic without the star is

25   Take for instance, the constant repetition in media of videos showing the toppling of statues during the 1990s in Eastern Europe: Lenin, Stalin, Hoxha, as a symbol of the fall of Communism.

now a symbol of Albanian history without the political innuendo of the former regime. Moreover, the thread of creating a distorted past transforming material culture, as Stalinism used to do with photographs, is not relevant in this case. The evidence of little red stars in the caps of the group of partisans in the mosaic suggests that the erasing of the big star is not an attempt to make a contemporary 'revision' of history aimed to erase any participation of the Communist partisans in the World War II. Indeed, the keeping of the stars on the caps proves the political intentions of the museum staff in relationship with the symbolism of the mosaic. They established a political project of memory and oblivion aimed to erase obvious symbols of Communism without denying the existence of a Communist resistance during WWII which would *mutate* the past. On the contrary, it is a contemporary Damnatio Memoriae, where obvious signs of Totalitarianism are smeared out, thus the museum becomes a possible public space with all its excessive aura to exercise a different political power. Then, the political act of oblivion implemented in this mosaic becomes an example of the theoretical discussion where I argued that the museum is a place that excludes and silences without erasing or distorting the past. Conversely, it plays a selective and interpretative action which make part of the conative side of memory institutions in order to construct a discourse on historic memory inside the exhibitions.

Finally, the closure of the spaces of the *Achievements of Socialism* which I described in the case *Ritualized hatred*, suggest that this action of closing part of the museum is based in the existence of a distance between society and an specific political act of memory and oblivion that were encouraged by the Communist regime. Moreover, it is linked with the idea of transition and time distance in the museological project of the MHK where there is a break with the Communist past in Albanian society; After 1991, the exhibition became irrelevant for the necessary transition of the Albanian society into a Capitalist Democracy, something that is also suggested by the curator of the museum, Sali Kadria in an interview: 'the fall of Communism represented a big challenge for the museum (...) People were fed up with the discourse of Communism and their leaders. The museum changed the most sensitive exhibitions and with the time we have transformed most of the spaces'. (Appendix a). For instance, the irrelevance of the Communist discourse in the exhibitions, after 1991, can be seen in the *Project for the contents...* (1980) which shows the name of one of the 'future' rooms of the museum:

> Foreign policy of the Worker's Party of Albania (PPSH) and the People's Republic of Albania (RPSH)- Active component of International relations. Unmasking of the Chinese Revisionism' (Keshilli Kryeministrove, 1980 b, p.148)

This room has completely disappeared from the contemporary museological narrative due to the heavy ideological discourse on Communism. Moreover, this disappearance is an explanation of the distancing of Albanian society from a specific political project of memory and oblivion. There is a complete break from the representation of the past here. The relevance of the foreign policy of the PPSH, the PPSH itself, the abbreviation 'RPSH', the 'active component' of these two and the will for 'unmasking Chinese revisionism' became completely obsolete and irrelevant for a society in transition into a Capitalist Democracy. It is possible to forecast that at some point the museum will address the 'Chinese revisionism' as part of a past that has be-

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come history, instead of emotional memory. So, with this example, it is possible to understand what Steiner (1995, p.3) identifies as a 'central contradiction in national museums: namely, the tremendous distance which can be felt between the symbols of national representation and the nationals who are supposedly being represented'. If the Communist regime sought to 'forge' a national sense in the Albanian people through the analysis of this historical event[26], the contemporary distance established with this kind of museological narratives is the result of a total break-up of the Albanian society and its individuals with a Communist political project of memory and oblivion. Trouillot (1995, p.24) asserts that a 'a strike is a strike only if the workers think that they are striking. Their subjectivity is an integral part of the event and of any satisfactory description of that event'. Consequently, history is history only if society thinks that it is history; something that was imposed by the state during a totalitarian regime. Therefore, the Socialist achievements, the personality cult of Enver Hoxha and the Marxist-Leninist interpretation of Albanian history fade away with the transition to a society where the totalitarian space disappeared to give way to a public space in the museum exhibitions. There, it becomes a different project of memory and oblivion, which represents history in the museum space according to different political interests related with a Capitalist Democratic system.

That difference in the role of political power is demonstrated in the transformation of some of this closed spaces: In the exhibition *Terrori Komunist në Shqiperi* (Communist terror in Albania) it is possible to see how the MHK, an institution that is under the administration of the Government of the Republic of Albania, still has the political power to influence the historic memory of the country by encouraging a specific act of memory (the repression) and oblivion (achievements of socialism). Following that line of though, it is possible to suggest that the museum's interpretation on material culture in this exhibition and the creation of an Albanian historic memory is still mainly subjugated to the political power of the government. It is worth mentioning that the book of visitors for this exhibition has given the opportunity for some people who experienced the socialist Albania to record their memories. The issue with this lies in the question of the degree of significance of the political influence on those writings in the construction of historic memory. Is it highly influential? Or is this book just another visitor's book that will stay in the museum's archive? I infer that these issues show how the concept of political power is definitive in the creation of acts of memory and oblivion that construct historic memory. After all, the actions of the museum depends on the impulsive or conative reaction of individuals and political groups which rely 'on what we should do now' (Poole 2009, p.152).

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26   It is worth to mention that the breakup of Hoxha's Albania with Maoist China happened in the 1970s, less than ten years after the construction of that museological discourse.

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5 CONCLUSION

I would like to summarize this dissertation by giving a concrete perspective on the 'set of conceptual tools' that I have addressed and discussed to analyse the Muzeu Historik Kombëtar. In the first part of the theoretical framework I discussed the implications of remembering and forgetting as a constitutive part of a project of memory and oblivion. I considered the dialectical nature of this process as the core of any conscious action of memorization or obliteration. Moreover, it was relevant to emphasize the idea that this process was not aimed to erase or 'mutate' the past, explaining the difference between a process of selective memory and oblivion, through the examples of the Roman Damnatio Memoriaes, and the revision of history that resided in the arbitrary alteration of the past, like on the erasures of people from photographs during the Stalinist era in the USSR. Also, I identified several concepts that play a significant role in the shaping of historic memory inside the museum, such as ideologic influence, epistemological shifts and the conative aspect. The analysis of several definitions of the idea of 'museum' suggested that the use of projects of memory and oblivion is one of the factors that corroborates the political role of memory institutions in society.

Through the use of these conceptual tools, it was possible to understand the exhibition panorama of the MHK in relationship with a sense of an 'Albanian historic memory'. The findings illustrated several examples of the creation of a 'glorious past' and the existence of a 'contested past' in the different periods that the museum experienced as an institution: Since its construction under the totalitarian regime of the PPSH in 1981 and the subsequent period of transition after the fall of the Communism in the 1990s until its transformation as an institution that is now under the state control in a Capitalist democracy. Thus, the variety of political changes in Albania in the last 30 years (changes that the MHK has also experienced as an institution) served as a background against which the concepts of political acts of memory and oblivion could be understood. These acts were central to the construction of an Albanian historic memory in the museum exhibitions, as the museum seeks to be a place for the exhibition of the Albanian national history. However, it is possible to suggest that the transformations inside the exhibitions of the museum were just the result of pragmatic needs, such as the upgrading of some displays and exhibition posters, rather than a conscious political action. Then, it is necessary to have in mind the interview with Sali Kadria, the curator of the museum, where he corroborates the existence of a political aspect in his work by stating that 'the museum changed the most *sensitive* exhibitions' (Appendix a) (my italics). Thus, the use of the adjective 'sensitive' (in the sense that it offends or upsets something or someone) suggests that the changes inside the exhibitions are not the result of an accidental pragmatism during the everyday work of the staff.

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During the theoretical discussion on historic memory and the possibility of understanding this concept as a political project of memory and oblivion, a recurrent issue was the concept of distance as the determinant of the dual interpretation of the past in relationship with the representation in the museum exhibitions; a contested or difficult past that is more recent in time than a glorious past. Let me quote again Trouillot's statement where he asserts that the professional level of a historical discourse is in the hands of the distance that lies between the sociohistorical process and its knowledge, making it easier to claim a 'scientific' professionalism over older processes (Trouillot, 1995, p.5). This assertion is clear when the recent past of Albania is taken into consideration in the exhibitions of the MHK. Indeed, that is the reason why, the term 'difficult past' is used when the museum deals with contested events such as the Communist period, its collapse and the political unrest of the 1990s. On the other hand, the distance from a 'glorious past' of Albania that resides in exhibitions, such as the one about Illyrian cultures, tends to be less controversial and accepted as a dogmatic origin of the Albanian nation regardless of political ideologies. In fact, the MHK has transformed some rooms dealing with the conformation of the contemporary nation, but at the same time it has kept whole rooms at the beginning of the exhibition intact, just as they were in the first years of existence of the Museum (1981). This heterogeneous creation of projects of memory and oblivion was linked in the findings discussion to epistemological changes in the way that the MHK interpreted and exhibited material culture. Moreover, based on the fact that the MHK was a project from the Communist period, it was possible to elucidate how some events in Albania were arranged in a way that fitted this or that ideology. Following this line of thought, the possible epistemological shift that the creation of historic memory experienced since the creation of the museum can be found in the five cases of the findings, where implicit and explicit aspects of the exhibitions showed the theoretical implications regarding political projects of memory and oblivion.

It was possible to analyse these five cases, from a critical perspective, as political projects in the exhibitions of the MHK. The division in two different categories (a glorious and a contested past) was the result of a conceptual analysis where the political acts that were carried out in the museum suggested that dual component of memory and oblivion playing a definitive role in the representation of historic memory inside the exhibitions. The retrieval of a glorious past in the map of Illyria, the Xhemil Bej's mansion during the independence process of Albania and the king Zog's story revival indicate a similar political action of forgetting and remembering things with the contested past of *The Albanians* mosaic and the former 'Achievements of Socialism' exhibition. In this regard, despite the fact that one of the museum aims is to be a 'scientific' institution, it has also played a role in the selection and interpretation of what should be exhibited and how. Thus, these constant transformations through political actions, analysed in this dissertation, that seek to memorize and forget things, shows a conative aspect, as was outlined above, which can be linked with the idea of an 'aesthetization of politics', a concept developed by Walter Benjamin, where politics (therefore, political acts also) become aestheticized, representing political ideologies in several aspects of society such as space, architecture, cultural heritage, history, etc. This desire or impulse to remember and forget becomes the emotional aspect of historic

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memory represented in the museum rooms, where the scientific method (epistemology) is partly replaced by a biased space that glorifies, condemns, remembers and forgets events of Albanian history.

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7 APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Sali Kadria. 2012. The Muzeu Historik Kombëtar. Interviewed by Julián Roa Triana. [written transcript] Tirana, 25 april 2012

JULIÁN ROA: We are in the lobby of the museum, and the area of this space is one of the aspects that catches the most my attention. What do you think it was the reason to carry out a project of this size in a relatively small country like Albania?

SALI KADRIA: I understand your interest for this aspect of the museum and let me tell you that after reading your proposal I got interested in your assumption that this museum was the product of a cultural revolution in a similar way than the chinese one. However, I have another idea regarding that matter; I do not think that the museum is the result of the influence of Maoist China and its cultural revolution ideology. Instead of that I think that the origin of this museum resides in a complete isolation of the country from any foreign influence at that time. Hoxha and his regime wanted to show the Albanian people that everything in Socialist Albania was perfect, that the Communist ideology had developed the country and that we were the most advanced nation, at least in the Balkans. So, under that fraudulent propaganda of the regime, it was necessary to show people how great the achievements of socialist were and how great Albanian history was. The size of the museum is a response to the need of showing that magnificent idea of the Albanian nation.

JULIÁN ROA: That is another idea that I intend to address in my work, the nationalistic discourse in some of the exhibitions, particularly the one regarding Illyrian times. It is so interesting how an Stalinist regime like Hoxha's regime were so interested in forging a classical nationalistic interpretation on the origins of the modern Albanian people...

SALI KADRIA: Yes! It is important to have in mind the implications of Nationalism in this area of the world. The Balkans have a long tradition of ethno-nationalistic ideas and the regime of Hoxha was also part of that. We need to have in mind that this exhibition, based in the work of historians and academics on Albanian studies, was used by the regime as a justification for the existence of the Albanians and that we were living here before the Slavs tribes came from the East. I believe that Hoxha needed to show that, after the split with Marshall Tito and Socialist Yugoslavia; he had an obsessive idea that there was a big risk of Albania being invaded and becoming the seventh republic of Yugoslavia or being invaded from Greece and the Adriatic sea

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by the Western bloc. This idea of an invasion of Albania by foreigners pushed him ahead to turn the country in a "bunker country" which became a constant during the whole Communist regime.

JULIÁN ROA: And also the defense of Albanian presence in Yugoslavia, that can be seen in the introductory map to the permanent exhibition in this lobby...

SALI KADRIA: Yes, in some sense, the justification for a map linking Archaeological sites from Illyrian cultures with the areas in Albania and Yugoslavia with a high presence of Albanian people was a nationalistic political statement during Communist times to defend Albanian state interests. There is a fact: Ethnic Albanian people lived in Yugoslavia, a fact that was used by him to show to the former Yugoslavian state, that before the invasion of part of the Albanian territory, there was an Albanian population in Kosova which doubled the force of Albanians. So, the obsession of Hoxha to show the link between Illyria and modern Albania is a classical nationalistic response to a modern geopolitical problem. Perhaps, we have inherited Illyrian cultural traces, that is highly possible, but Hoxha tried to justify that creating a fully nationalistic discourse, for example, he encourage research stating that the Albanian language came from Illyrian languages.

The Albanian language, from my point of view, is highly believed that it is derived from an Illyrian origin, this is based on studies. But the inhabitants of Albanian territory used the same language with some small phonetic changes through time. In 1462, it was discovered "The Albanian Baptist formula" sentence in Latin letters used by priests in churches. Their own language was based on an oral component more than a written one. Besides the first registries of Albanian languages were made with latin and greek alphabet, for religious purposes.

JULIÁN ROA: Talking about religion, it seems really interesting to me how Hoxha encouraged the destruction of so many religious places for the sake of his state atheism but at the same time you can find inside the museum, religious art that were exhibited during Communist times.

SALI KADRIA: Hoxha encouraged the destruction or transformation of religious buildings, but we have to mention that faiths and religion remained in the mind and the hearts of Albanians. The ideology of the Communist regime was 'to make a new man', which posed the imminent collapse of the identity, culture and tradition of Albanians. Cultural Heritage of this country survived because of two reasons. First, the deep traditions that Albanians kept by centuries despite the fact that they were heavy damaged but managed to survive. And second, some of the cultural heritage experts and directors of the Institute for the Protection of Monuments at that time were really wise persons in a troubled time. They managed to persuade the regime to protect some religious buildings and art, simply because it was our cultural heritage! Even though we were living in the most extreme Communist state in history, it was ridiculous to destroy some outstanding churches and mosques. There were intelligent people defending our heritage at that time also.

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JULIÁN ROA: It seems to me so interesting this use of material culture for the sake of a totalitarian regime. Writing this dissertation I have found so many aspects of the manipulation of history, cultural heritage and art to justify the Socialist state of Hoxha. If that manipulation is not relevant anymore, why do you think that the museum still conserves some of the exhibitions as they were at that time?

SALI KADRIA: Look, we have a museum with a staff that somehow is divided in the old generation and the new generation. And it is understandable that the old generation defends the exhibition as it was before, after all, they have been in charge of taking care of the museum for a long time and there is a emotional side in all that work. People in this museum understand the importance of all this objects. They have protected them, even risking their lives during problematic moments. Unfortunately the museum faces Scanderbeg square which make it vulnerable to political manifestations that become violent. In addition to this, we are passing a transition period from an isolated country to an open society. Moreover the MHK has a permanent problem as maybe most of the museums, we don't have enough money to undertake a complete renovation. This is another important factor that explains why the museum still conserves some of the exhibitions as they were at that time.

JULIÁN ROA: That is true, however the amazing thing is that some of the exhibitions are still like in the Communist times but others either disappear or completely changed...

SALI KADRIA: Yes, and the reason for that is that the fall of Communism represented a big challenge for the museum. A whole floor was committed to the Communist period of Albania, the cult of personality of Hoxha and the history of the Party. After 1991, most of Albanians did not want to see that. People were fed up with the discourse of Communism and their leaders. The museum changed the most sensitive exhibitions and with the time we have transformed most of the spaces.

JULIÁN ROA: Talking about that tiredness of people with Communist discourse, What do you think about the socialist mosaic "the Albanians' that is above the museum entrance?

SALI KADRIA: It is interesting that you mention that mosaic. Probably you know that it has been transformed after Communist times by taking out the red star next to 'Mother Albania', but I find it really appropriate in this discussion to exemplify the level of manipulation of the Communist regime: half of the mosaic is used to represent history from Illyrian times until the independence of Albania and the other half to show the Communist period from WWII until 1981. It is a complete lack of proportion and accurate representation of our heritage.

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APPENDIX B

Cami, Tefta, 1979. *Letter to Comrade Manush.* [paper document] Nr. i fondit 490, Viti 1980, Dosjet 617/1, page 151. Tirana/Albania: Albanian State's Archive

Shoku Manush,

Në diskutimin që u zhvillua me datën 13.10.1979 nga komisioni i përmbajtjes së Muzeut Historik Kombëtar për pjesën e "Luftës për liri e pavarësi" (pjesën e parë) u bënë këto vërejtje parimore:

1. Në temën e parë "Lashtësia e popullit shqiptar" nuk del qartë prejardhja e shqiptarëve, lidhja midis pellazgëve dhe ilirëve dhe vazhdimësia iliro-shqiptare. Paraqitej populli grek më i lashtë në Ballkan.

Për këtë periudhë kanë punuar shokët: Selim Islami, Skënder Anamani, Myzafer Korkuti e Aleksandra Mano.

2. Në temën e dytë "Formimi i kombësisë shqiptare" nuk del qartë vazhdimësia iliro-shqiptare, autoktonia e shqiptarëve, shtrirja e tyre si treva, mbasi jepen në mënyrë të papërcaktuar.

Viset shqiptare deri në vitin 1912 nuk paraqiten si unitet (është fjala për trevat shqiptare që sot ndodhen jashtë kufijve të RPSSH).

Lufta e shqiptarëve kundër serbëve, malazezëve, grekërve dhe bullgarëve nuk del me fakte dhe e dokumentuar.

Për këtë pjesë përgjithësisht ka punuar shoku Kristo Frashëri. Në grup kanë punuar edhe shokët: Selami Pulaha, Stavri Naço e Ligor Mile.

Për këto vërejtje nuk pati asnjë kundërshtim.

Tiranë, më 20.10.1979

Tefta Cami

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Comrade Manush,

In the discussion that took place on the date October 13th 1979 by the commission of the content of the National History Museum for the part of the 'war for freedom and independence' (the first part) the bellow comments have been made:

1. On the first theme 'Antiquity of the Albanian People' the origination of Albanians did not come out clearly, connection between 'pellazgeve' and Illyrians and the Illyro-albanian continuity. Demonstrate the greek people as the most ancient in the Balkans.
For that period work is been performed by comrades: Selim Islami, Skënder Anamani, Myzafar Korkuti and Aleksandra Mano.
2. On the second theme 'the formation of the Albanian nationality' there was a lack of clarity on the Illyro-albanian continuity, the nativeness of Albanians, the extension of their territory, perhaps provided in an indeterminate manner.
The Albanian land up until the year 1912 did not demonstrate unity (it says something about the albanian territory that today is located even outside the borders of the RPSh)
3. The Albanian war against the Serbs, the Montenegrins, The Greeks and the Bulgarians did not transpired with facts or in a documented fashion.
For that part, generally, work has been done by Comrade Kristo Frasheri. In the group were also working Comrades: Selami Pulaha, Stayri Naco e Ligor Mile.

No objections for these comments will be allowed,

Tirana October 28th 1979

Tefta Cami

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APPENDIX C

Carçani, Adil, 1975. Lënda: *Mbi vendosjen e veprave të arteve figurative në lokalet dhe ambientet publike (On the placement of works of figurative art in locations and public spaces).* [paper documents] Nr. i fondit 490, viti 1975, dosjet 528, page 12. Tirana/Albania: Albanian State's Archive

REPUBLIKA POPULLORE E SHQIPËRISE   Tiranë, më __18.8.___ 197_5__
KËSHILLI I MINISTRAVE

Nr. 2140

Lënda: Mbi vendosjen e veprave të arteve figurative në lokalet dhe ambientet publike.

GJITHË MINISTRIVE DHE INSTITUCIONEVE TË TJERA QENDRORE

GJITHË KOMITETEVE EKZEKUTIVE TË KP TË RRETHEVE

Partia jonë i ka kushtuar një kujdes të vazhdueshëm formimit dhe edukimit të njeriut tonë të ri, me botëkuptimin marksist-leninist, me koncepte e shije të shëndosha ideoestetike për të bukurën në art, në naturë, në punë dhe në jetë.

Sukseset e derisanishme në krijimtarinë letrare e artistike dhe në artet figurative kanë qënë një kontribut i madh për ngritjen në një shkallë më të lartë të ndërgjegjes së masave punonjëse dhe për edukimin komunist të tyre. Piktorët e skulptorët, të udhëhequr nga mësimet e Partisë, kanë krijuar vepra të frymëzuara nga realiteti ynë, me brendi të shëndoshë socialiste e me nivel të lartë artistik, duke i bërë ato një ushqim shpirtëror për njerëzit tanë.

Por, megjithë sukseset e arritura në këtë drejtim, vihet re se akoma në shumë lokale publike, në salla pritjeje, në restorante, në hotele, në zyra, në shtëpitë e kulturës në fshatra e gjetkë, gjen të varura në mure kuadro e piktura të ashtuquajtura artistike, por që janë të papërshtatshme dhe pa vlera ideore e artistike.

Në ndonjë rreth gjenden të ekspozuara piktura të këqia, me përmbajtje impresioniste, me motive të përgjithshme, të karakterit intim, të zymta e pa jetë, bile edhe vepra pseudoromantike të autorëve të huaj apo disa të ashtuquajtura vepra arti që tregtohen privatisht. Vepra të tilla gjenden edhe në ndonjë nga dyqanet që tregton artikuj zbukurimi.

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Megjithë porositë e dhëna për heqjen e këtyre pikturave banale e pa ide dhe zëvendësimin e tyre me **vepra të reja me për-** mbajtje të shëndoshë ideologjike dhe me nivel të lartë artistik, nga të dhënat që kemi, ky problem nuk po vlerësohet si duhet politi- kisht dhe ideologjikisht dhe, nëpërmjet këtyre pseudoveprave, lejo- het të depërtojë ideologjia borgjeze-revizioniste.

Duke patur parasysh vendimet e Plenumit IV të Komitetit Qendror të PPSH dhe detyrat që shtroi shoku Enver Hoxha në fjali- min e mbajtur në Sekretariatin e Komitetit Qendror të Partisë më 20 dhjetor të vitit 1974, Këshilli i Ministrave porosit:

1. Të gjitha mjetet e kulturës dhe të propagandës masive të përdoren në mënyrë intensive dhe të kualifikuar për formimin e shijeve dhe të moralit tonë socialist, e të shihen këto si aspekt i luftës së klasave në frontin ideologjik.

2. Ministritë e institucionet e tjera qendrore dhe komitetet ekzekutive të këshillave popullore të rretheve të marrin të gjitha masat për të hequr nga ambientet veprat e arteve figurative që janë të papërshtatshme e pa vlera ideore e artistike dhe të zëven- dësohen me vepra të shëndosha në përmbajtje e në nivel artistik.

3. Pranë komiteteve ekzekutive të këshillave popullore të rretheve, nën drejtimin e seksionit të arsimit e të kulturës, të ngrihen komisione të posaçme të përbërë nga artistë dhe kuadro me formim të shëndoshë ideologjik që të shikojnë dhe të vendosin një për një për veprat e papërshtatshme që duhen hequr dhe të marrin masa për zëvendësimin e tyre vetëm me vepra që janë ekspozuar në ekspozitat kombëtare dhe të rretheve ose nga ato që mund t'u bëhen porosi piktorëve. Për këtë komisionet të hartojnë programin e punës dhe të caktojnë afatet e vendosjes së veprave, në përshtatje me karakterin e vendit dhe ambientit ku do të vendoset vepra.

4. Ministritë dhe institucionet e tjera qendrore, komitetet ekzekutive të këshillave popullore të rretheve, qendrat e punës

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AQSH f 490 v 1975   D 522   13

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dhe të prodhimit, kooperativat bujqësore, shkollat, institucionet
kulturore, repartet ushtarake dhe gjithë institucionet e tjera, për
të zbukuruar ambientet e tyre, të blejnë vepra arti në mbështetje
të vendimit të Këshillit të Ministrave Nr.380 datë 8.9.1956 dhe të
kritereve të caktuara nga Ministria e Arsimit dhe e Kulturës.

Deri më 31 tetor 1975 të na dërgoni një njoftim lidhur
me masat që keni marrë në këtë drejtim.

ZV/KRYETARI I PARË I KËSHILLIT TË MINISTRAVE
(ADIL ÇARÇANI)

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(...) 1. On the placement of the works of figurative art in locations and public spaces.

Our party has evaluated an ongoing concern on the formation and education of our young people with the Marxist-Leninist world understanding with a taste for concepts full of the aesthetics of the beauty of art, nature, work and life.

The successes up to now of literary and artistic composition and of figurative art has been a big contribution for the raising up to a higher level of consciousness of the working masses and their communist education.

Painters and sculptures under the leadership of the party's teachings have created works inspired by our reality with the content imbued with socialism and of a high artistic level making this a spiritual exercise for our people.

But despite the achievements in that direction, starting of a new there are still in many public locations, in waiting rooms, in restaurants, in hotels, in offices, in the cultural centres of villages and elsewhere, there can still be found hanging on the walls framed so called artistic pictures which inappropriate and without ideological or artistic value.

In some regions, there can be found bad exhibited pictures with impressionist content, with general motives, intimate characteristics, gloomy and without life and even a pseudo romantic works authored by foreigners or several so called artworks marketed privately.

Such works can be found even in several shops that sell decorative articles.

Although orders have been given to remove these banal pictures and replace them with new works imbued with ideological content at a higher artistic level, of the data that we have that problem is not being value as it should politically and ideologically and, via those pseudo works, are allowing for the infiltration of the bourgeois-revisionist ideology.

Having in mind the resolution of the fourth central committee of the PPSh's plenum, and the responsibilities added by our comrade Enver Hoxha in his reasonable address to the secretariat of the central committee of the party on december 20th 1974 the council of ministries orders,

1. That all instruments of Culture and Mass propaganda be used in an intensive way and qualified for the formation of tastes and our socialist morality, and view that as an aspect of class war on the ideological front.

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2. Ministries and their central institutions and the executive committee of the people's councils of the regions take all measures to remove from spaces works of figurative art that are inappropriate and without ideological and artistic values and replace them with works imbued with content of an artistic level.

3. Alongside the executive committees of the regional people's councils, under the direction of educational and cultural sections, will be formed special commissions consisting of artists and 'cuadro' with ideologically imbued forms to be seen and decided one by one for inappropriate works which should be removed and to take measures for their replacement only with works that are displayed at national and regional exhibitions or from those which can become painting guidelines.

For this, the commissions will map out a work program and establish the terms of the installation of the works, in accordance with the characteristics of the places and settings where the works will be placed.

4. The Ministries and their central institutions, executive committees of the regional people's councils, centres of work and production, agricultural cooperatives, schools, cultural institutions, military departments and all other institutions, in order to decorate their surroundings, buy works of art in keeping with the decision of the council of ministries number 380 dated september 8th 1956 and the specified criteria from the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Starting from October 31st 1975 we will send you a notification linked with measures you can take in this regard.

Signed,

Adil Carçani

first vice director of the council of ministers

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APPENDIX D

Keshilli Kryeministrove, 1980 a. *Projekt i Përmbajtes së Muzeut Historik Kombetar -Pjesa e Luftës për Liri e Pavarësi- (Project for the contents of the National History Museum -Part of the War for Freedom and Independence-).* [paper documents] Nr. i fondit 490, viti 1980, dosjet 617, page 3. Tirana/Albania: Albanian State's Archive. (excerpts: pp. 1, 10, 11, 12, 26, 27, 47)

PROJEKT I PËRMBAJTJES SE MUZEUT HISTORIK KOMBETAR

— Pjesa e Luftës për Liri e Pavarësi —

Kjo pjesë do të përfshijë periudhat kryesore të historisë mijravjeçare të popullit shqiptar deri më 1912, duke i parë ato si pjesë përbërëse, të lidhura dialektikisht njera me tjetrën, të luftës së tij për liri e pavarësi.

Çështje kryesore e momente kulmore mbi të cilat do të vihet theksi i veçantë, do të jenë : gjeneza e popullit shqiptar, epoka e luftes kundër agresionit osman nën udhëheqjen e Skënderbeut, epoka e Rilindjes me fitoren e pavarësisë kombëtare me 28 nëntor 1912.

Shënim paraprak : mendohet që nëntemat të përbëjnë unitete ambientale më të vogla, që qëndrojnë më vete brenda sallave që trajtojnë tema të mëdha.

Tema I

LASHTËSIA E POPULLIT SHQIPTAR

(nga fillimet deri në shek.VI E.R)

Për këtë temë disponohet një material mjaft i pasur, i përbërë kryesisht nga obiekte arkeologjike, arkitektonike dhe artistike, një pjesë me përpjestime të mëdha. Materialet do të ekspozohen duke i vendosur obiektet e mëdha më vete (në sallë ose në oborr) si dhe me anë vitrinash dhe materialet grafike në stendë.

Tema ka për qëllim të dokumentojë se tokat shqiptare kanë qenë banuar qysh në kohët më të largëta, se Shqipëria është truall i një kulture të lashtë, se populli shqiptar është një nga popujt më të vjetër në Europë. Mbi basën e një elementi autokton, u formua etnosi dhe kultura ilire, me tipare të qarta e të përcaktuara.

Duke u ndalur tek ilirët e Jugut si paraardhës të Shqiptarëve, do të vihet në dukje niveli i zhvilluar ekonomik-shoqëror dhe poli-

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10.

dorimi dhe stolie, dëshmojnë për vazhdimësinë e traditave vendase,
që dalin tani e gjallërohen në kulturën materiale dhe artistike
dhe dëshmojnë për formimin e një kulture materiale e shpirtërore
unitare, prodhim i një popullsie vendase homogjene si entitet etnik
-kulturor, vazhdues të të cilës janë shqiptarët.

Tema II: Formimi i Kombësisë Shqiptare

(Shek. VII-XII)

Përmbajtjen e kësaj teme e përbën çështja me rëndësi të madhe
e formimit të kombësisë shqiptare, të gjuhës e kulturës së saj, me
tiparet e veta të dalluara e përcaktuar mirëfillit qysh në mesjetë.
Etnogjeneza e popullit shqiptar si formacion i ri etnik, është një
proces i gjatë që i ka rrënjët në kohën antike dhe zhvillohet në
periudhën e mesjetës së herët. Ai krijhet mbi një territor mjaft të
gjërë të zonës perëndimore-qëndrore të Ballkanit, mbi bazën e vazhdi-
mësisë etno-kulturore iliro-shqiptare dhe njëkohësisht të zhvillimit
ekonomik-shoqëror dhe politik-kulturor që arrin vendi ynë me kalimin
në feudalizëm. Me këtë do të hidhen poshtë konceptet antishkencore
që e konsiderojnë popullin shqiptar thjesht si një relikt arkaik
të pazhvilluar.

Kjo temë ka 3 nëntema. Ajo do të ilustrohet me materiale doku-
mentare, harta e skica e diçka më pak me objekte. Këto të fundit
nuk kërkojnë vitrina me përpjestime të mëdha.

Nëntema 1: Zhvillimi ekonomik-shoqëror i vendit.

Synohet të tregohet se formacioni i ri i feudalizmit, që për-
bën bazën ekonomike-shoqërore të periudhës mesjetare, karakterizo-
het nga tipare të reja më të përparuara në marrëdhëniet në prodhim,
që sjellin me vete zhvillimin e mëtejshëm të forcave prodhuese e të
diferencimit klasor dhe fenomene më të përparuara politike-kulturore.

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11.

Me këtë duhet pasqyruar ideja se procesi i etnogjenezës së popu-
llit shqiptar nuk u zhvillua mbi një sfond prapambetjeje, por
zhvillimi të përgjithshëm të popullit tonë.

Në ballë të sallës do të vendoset një citat nga veprat e
shokut Enver mbi rëndësinë e kësaj periudhe të formimit të popu-
llit.

- Një stendë me një hartë do të paraqesë vendgjetjet arkeo-
logjike të kësaj periudhe, që flasin për rritjen e tokave nën
kulturë dhe dendësimin e popullsisë në trevat shqiptare.

Një hartë e dytë do të paraqesë zhvillimin e rjetit të
qytezave e të qyteteve (duke dalluar themelimet e vjetra që
v azhdojnë dhe themelime të reja. Pranë stendës do të qëndrojnë
2-3 makete të këtyre qyteteve që paraqesin vazhdueshmërinë iliro-
shqiptare (Berat, Shurdhak, Lezhë) edhe pse një pjesë e mirë e
tyre u agrarizuan, u kthyen në qendra ushtarake ose të administra-
tës kishëtare.

- Në një vitrinë do të ekspozohen vegla pune bujqësore e
zejtare, skica parmendash faksimile të zmadhuara miniaturash që
paraqesin fshatarë duke punuar tokën dhe veglat e tyre të punës
(parmenda, kosore etj.).

- Do të jepet në maket një varr i tipit të Komanit me paji-
sjet e veta e pranë tij do të qëndrojë një vitrinë me objekte
të kulturës së hershme të Arbërit (keramikë, stoli metalike e xha-
mi, armë e vegla pune) të cilët dëshmojnë zhvillimin në krahasim
me periudhat e mëparshme.

- Një tryezë-vitrinë do të paraqesë monedha të shekujve
7-12, që dëshmojnë për vazhdimësinë e qarkullimit monetar edhe
në kushtet e rudhjes së jetës së qyteteve dhe të ekonomisë së
tyre. Pranë saj do të qëndrojë një hartë, në të cilën do të shëno-

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12.

hen rrugët dhe vendgjetjet e monedhave që tregojnë se qarkullimi
monetar kishte përfshirë edhe viset e brendshme malore.

2) Formimi i kombësisë shqiptare.

Do të tregohet se procesi i etnogjenezës së popullit shqip-
tar u zhvillua në Ilirinë Jugore, mbi një bazë etnike autoktone,
por në kushtet e reja të feudalizmit, kur u shkrinë e kapërxyen
një varg ndarjesh të lashta fisnore. Kjo kombësi e re karakteri-
zohej nga bashkësia territoriale, gjuhësore dhe kulturore-shpirtë-
rore. Trualli i saj etnik ishte në mesjetë më i gjerë nga treva
ku, në kushte të vështira historike, u tkurr më vonë elementi
etnik shqiptar.

- Në një hartë të madhe murore do të shënohen toponimet
antike historike të zonave qendrore e perëndimore të Gadishullit
Ballkanik, të cilët me evolucionin e tyre fonetik tregojnë se
kanë qenë pandërprerje në gojën e një popullsie shqipfolëse. Këto
treva të gjera përbëjnë vatrën ku u mbrujt populli shqiptar qysh
në antikitetin e vonë. Po në këtë hartë do të shënohen edhe vend-
gjetjet e kulturës së hershme mesjetare t'Arbërit, e cila me tipa-
ret e saj unitare flet për një zhvillim unitar kulturor të treva-
ve shqiptare në Mesjetë.

- Në një vitrinë do të ekspozohen rreth 15 objekte të ndryshme
(vegla pune, armë, vathë, unaza e stoli të tjera) të kulturës së
tipit të Komanit, duke u vënë pranë për krahasim objekte të ngjashm
me të kohës antike ilike dhe të kulturës së sotme popullore. Në
një stendë pranë do të jepen fotografi e skica të smadhuara kra-
hasuese të ornamentikës së këtyre objekteve.

- Në një vitrinë do të ekspozohen veshje e objekte (5-6 co-
pë) me prejardhje shumë të lashtë mesdhetare që janë në përdorim të
popullit tonë gjer në ditët e sotme (xhubleta, fustani i burrave

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shkaktuara nga inkursionet grabitqare etj. Me fotokopje dokumentesh
e citate nga burimet do të ilustrohen format e ndryshme të rezisten-
cës së masave popullore duke filluar nga kundërshtimi i regjistri-
meve, mospagimi i detyrimeve, braktisja e vendbanimeve e deri në
vrasjen e feudalëve turq dhe në kryengritje të armatosur. Për
ilustrim do të përdoren edhe fotografi të fshatrave të përmendu-
ra në dokumentet për qëndresën e tyre.

        - Mbi muro do të qëndrojë një citat i madh bashkë-
kohës mbi shpartimin e papërkulur të shqiptarëve dhe nën të do të
skaliten emrat e vendeve të zonës së pushtuar, ku u zhvilluan
kryengritjet, bashkë me datat: më 1428-30 në zonën Dibër-Mat de-
ri në Dot, më 14.. në zonën Labëri-Gjirokastër dhe në vitet
1432-1436 në Shqipërinë e Mesme Jugore dhe luginën Devoll-Shkum-
bin. Në një stendë do të gjepen dokumente që përshkruajnë ngjar-
jet. Do të dalë aty qartë iniciativa luftarake e masave popullo-
re, të cilat tërhoqën në luftë edhe disa nga sunduesit.

        - Një stendë me dokumente do t'u kushtohet jehonës
ndërkombëtare që patën këto kryengritje dhe traktativave diplo-
matike për të ndërmarrë, duke pasur si bazë kryengritjet në
Shqipëri, një kryengritje të përgjithshme në Ballkan. Një vend
do të zënë edhe faksimilet e kronikave turke që u bëjnë jehonë
këtyre ngjarjeve.

    2. Bashkimi i popullit shqiptar nën udhëheqjen e Skën-
       derbeut . Forcimi politik e ushtarak i shtetit
       shqiptar (14..-14..)

    Qëndresa kundër agresionit osman, me gjithë karakterin
e saj masiv e popullor, nuk arriti rezultate. Ajo ishte ende e
shpërndarë, me karakter krahinor, mbi bazë principatash të ve-
çanta. Mungesa e një udhëheqjeje unike, e një bashkërendimi të
luftës në plan kombëtar e ndërkombëtar, mungesa e organizimit

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politik-ushtarak me kuadrin e një shteti të përqendruar, bënë që keto kryengritje, pas sukseseve të para, të shtypen.

Situata e krijuar në Shqipëri shtronte si kërkesë objektive pikerisht forma të tilla të reja organizimi politik e ushtarak. Kthesa që bëhet në këtë drejtim qysh nga viti 1443 dhe Lidhja e Lezhës dhe vjen duke u zhvilluar gjithnjë e më tej duke çuar në forcimin e shtetit të përqendruar feudal shqiptar, është baza e fitoreve historike që korri populli shqiptar nën udhëheqjen e burrit të shtetit e komandantit të shquar ushtarak, Skënderbeut.

– Një hartë me relief, e vendosur në mure, do të jepë në vija të mëdha drejtimet e veprimet e kryengritjes së për-gjithshme që shpërthen në tokat shqiptare dhe kalatë e vendet e çliruara, në muajt e fundit të vitit 1443. Mbi të, në mur, do të qëndrojnë fjalët e Skënderbeut: "Lirinë nuk ua solla unë".

– Nën këtë do të jetë një stendë me një hartë dhe me dokumente, ku do të pasqyrohet gjendja në Shqipëri në vitet e fundit para kryengritjes së përgjithshme në tetor-nëntor 1443 si dhe veprimtaria politike-ushtarake që u zhvillua nga udhëheqësit shqiptarë brenda vendit dhe në plan ndërkombëtar për çlirimin e saj. Këtu do të tregohet kontributi që dhanë shqiptarët në luspera-tën e Kunjadit dhe në fitoren e Nishit në nëntor 1443. Mbi të, në mur, do të qëndrojnë konturet e kalasë së Krujës që bëhet tani kryeqendra e luftës, si dhe të portretit të Skënderbeut në datën 28 nëntor 1443 – Çlirimi i Krujës – bashkë me një citat nga fjalimi i Skënderbeut.

Nën këto, në një stendë, do të paraqitet në hartë rruga që përshkoi Skënderbeu nga Nishi, nëpër Maqedoni, Dibër e deri në Krujë. Dokumentet e citatet do të ilustrojnë gatishmëri-në, në të cilin-mbast e mbështetn fillimin e kryengritjes si

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47.

gjatë fazave të ndryshme të Rilindjes; dinamika e luftës për bashki-
min kombëtar të popullit shqiptar, për forminin e shtetit shqiptar
të pavarur dhe për mbrojtjen e tërësisë tokësore të Atdheut; momen-
tet kryesore të luftës kundër zgjedhës shekullore osmane, kundër
ndërhyrjes së Fuqive të Mëdha dhe kundër lakmive shoviniste fqinje;
sukseset e lëvizjes kulturore patriotike dhe iluministe shqiptare
kundër obskurantizmit feudal të përfaqësuar nga shteti osman dhe nga
institucionet fetare.

Për të ilustruar këto çeshtje, tema do të ndahet, nga pikëpamja
e ndërtimit muzeal, në 5 nëntema :

1- Formimi i kombit shqiptar

Boshti që do të përshkojë këtë nëntemë do të jetë ilustrimi i
procesit të formimit të kombit shqiptar, sipas konceptit shkencor
marksist-leninist mbi bashkësinë territoriale, të gjuhës, të jetës
ekonomike dhe të kulturës, si faktorë objektivë të cilët gjatë
shek. XIX erdhën përherë e më tepër duke u konsoliduar.

a) Trojet etnike shqiptare - Do të dominojë më mirë një hartë
me dimensione të mëdha e trojeve shqiptare, me kufijtë e 4 vilajeteve,
të ndarë në sanxhake dhe kaza, me qytetet dhe fshatrat shqiptare, të
cilat do të dallohen nëpërmjet ngjyrash nga qendrat e banuara jo
shqiptare; në një stendë do të jepen të dhëna për numrin e popullsi-
së shqiptare dhe jo shqiptare të vilajeteve, sanxhakeve dhe kazave
të marra në dy momente të periudhës së Rilindjes (për shembull më
1844 dhe 1912).

b) Bashkësia gjuhësore shqipe - Nëpërmjet një harte të vendosur
në sfond, me kufijtë e të folmeve kryesore të gjuhës shqipe do tra-
shëguara nga periudha mesjetare, do të ilustrohet me materiale të
vendosura në një stendë rruga e afrimit të dialekteve drejt shkrir-

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Project for the composition of the MHK

Part about the war for freedom and independence

This part will include the central period of the millennial history of the Albanian people until 1912, having as its component parts, linking dialectically with each other, its war for freedom and independence.

The main items of the climatic moments on which will be placed a special emphasis, will be: the genesis of the Albanian people, the époque of the war against the Ottoman aggressors under the leadership of Skanderberg, the époque of the renaissance with the victory of national independence on november 28 1912.

Preliminary note: It is thought that the sub themes should constitute the smaller environments, which stay themselves within the halls that deal with the larger themes.

Theme 1
Antiquity of the Albanian People
(From the beginning until the sixth century AD)

For this theme there is a wealth of material available, consisting mainly of archaeological, architectonic and artistic objects a part which is proportionally high.
Materials well displayed placing large objects with themselves (in hallway or in a courtyard) rather that on the side of the display cases and graphic materials on boards.

The themes have as their goals to document the land Albanians have been living on since the most ancient times, as Albania is a land with an ancient culture and as the Albanian peoples is one of the oldest in Europe. Built on a base of an auctoctonous elements, having formed an Illyrian ethnicity and culture with clear and defined features.

Stoping at the southern Illyrians as the ancestors of Albanians, (...)

(...) Theme 2
Formation of the Albanian nationality
(7th through the 12th centuries)

The composition of this theme consist of items with a great importance for the formation of the Albanian nationality, its language and culture, with distinguished and specified authentic features until the mediaeval era. The ethno-genesis of the Albanian peoples as a new ethnic formation, is a long process that has its roots

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in ancient times and developed in the early mediaeval period. It was created across a fairly wide territory of the west central zone of the Balkans, across a base of ethno-cultural Illyro-Albanian continuity and at the same time a socio economic and political-cultural developments that reached our land with the passage of feudalism. With that we will throw down the anti scientific concepts that consider the Albanian people simply as an uncivilised archaic relic.

This theme has three sub themes. They will be illustrated with documentary materials, a map, sketches and something a bit more with objects. That final one does not require a display case of large proportions.

Subtheme 1:
The socio economic development of the region (...)

(...) Subtheme 2:
Formation of the Albanian Nationality

It will show the process of the ethno-genesis of the Albanian people that developed in south Illyria, across an autoctonous ethnic base, but in the new conditions of feudalism, when (blank...) a chain of disparate ancient tribes. This new nation was characterised by territorial integration, language and cultural spirituality. Their ethnic land was in the mediaeval era wider than the territory where, due to historical difficulty, the ethnic Albanian elements later contracted.

On a large wall map the ancient historical topography of the central and western zones of the Balkan Peninsula will be marked, which with their phonetic evolution show how there has never been a break in the tongue of an Albanian speaking peoples. That wide territory consists of the blank where the Albanian peoples were moulded until late antiquity. And on that map there will be marked also the locations of the earlier mediaeval culture of the Arberit, which with its unitary features spoke of a unitary cultural development of the Albanian territory in the mediaeval era.

In a display case there will be about fifteen different objects exhibited (small tools, arms, vathë and other ornamental jewellery) Out the Komani cultural type, placed alongside for comparison similar objects of the ancient Illyrian times and today´s contemporary popular culture. On a nearby stand there will be place comparative ornamental photographs and enlarged sketches of those objects.

In a display case there will be exhibited clothing and objects (five to six pieces) with a very ancient mediterranean origin which are in use by our people in this contemporary times (the jubleta, the men's dress 'fustane burrave') (...)

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(...) 2. The unification of the Albanian people under the leadership of Scanderbeg. The political and military strenghtening of the Albanian state (1443 - 1453??)

The resistance against Ottoman aggression, with all of its characteristics of the popular masses, did not achieve results. It was also spread out, with a provincial character, over the special principality basis. The lack of the unique leadership, a national and international plan of military coordination, a lack of a political-military organisation with the framework of the concentrated state, caused that uprising, after the first successes, was suppressed.

The resulting situation in Albania created the precise situation that was necessary for the particular political and military organisation that arose. The turn that was made in that direction starting back in 1443 and the Lezhë accord increasingly developed and led to the strengthening of the concentrated feudal Albanian state, is the base for the historic victories that were won by the Albanian people under the leadership of the outstanding leadership of the man commanding the state forces, Scanderbeg.

- A relief map, placed on the wall, will show with large lines the directions of the general appraisal actions which exploded on the Albanian land and the local liberated castles, in the final months of the year 1443. Above that, on the wall there will be placed the words of Scanderbeg 'It was not I who brought freedom'.

- Beneath that there will be a stall with a map and documents, which will reflect the situation in Albania in the final years before the general uprising of October-November 1443 as well as the political-military activities that were developed by the Albanian leaders within the state and internationally for the uprising's explosion. Here will be shown the contributions made by Albanians in the ---- of Kunlad and in the victory at Nis in November 1443. Above that, on the wall, will stay the contours of the castle of Kruja which now became the central point of the war, as well as a portrait of Scanderbeg from the date 20th November 1443 - The Liberation of Kruja- together with a quote from the words of Scanderbeg.

Beneath that, on a stall, will be presented a street map which Scanderbeg had described from Nis, through Macedonia, Diber and up until Kruja. Documents and quotations will illustrate the readiness with which the masses supported the beginning of the uprising (...)

(...) In order to illustrate this item the theme will be shared, from the point of view of the construction of the museum in five subthemes:
1. Formation of the Albanian nation
The drive of this sub theme will be an illustration of the process of the formation of the Albanian nation according to the scientific Marxist-Leninist concepts regarding the territorial community, language, economic life and culture, as objective factors which during the 19th century became increasingly more consolidated.

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a. The ethnic Albanian lands - It will best be dominated by a large dimension map of the Albanian Lands with the borders of the four vilyets, divided into sanjaks and kaca, with Albanian cities and villages which will be distinguished by colour from the non Albanian inhabited centres; On a stall, data about population numbers of Albanians and non Albanians of the vilyets, sanjaks and kacas will be given at two instances in the period of the Renaissance (for example in 1844 and 1912)

b. Unification of the Albanian language - Via a map placed in the background, with borders of the main Albanian dialects inherited from the mediaeval period, and illustrated with materials placed on a stall the paths of the proximity of the dialects (...)

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APPENDIX E

Keshilli Kryeministrove, 1980 b. *Projekt i Përmbajtes së Muzeut Historik Kombetar II -Pjesa e Revolucionit 1912 - 1976- (Project for the contents of the National History Museum II -Part of the Revolution 1912 - 1976-).* [paper documents] Nr. i fondit 490, viti 1980, dosjet 617, page 84. Tirana/Albania: Albanian State's Archive (excerpts: pp. 1, 9, 15, 16, 34, 54, 61, 65, 67)

PROJEKT

I PËRMBAJTJES SË MUZEUT HISTORIK KOMBËTAR

II

(Pjesa e Revolucionit 1912 - 1976)

Në këtë pjesë të muzeut do të pasqyrohen tri fazat: përgatitja e revolucionit, Lufta Antifashiste Nacionalçlirimtare dhe ndërtimi socialist si pjesë përbërëse të një revolucioni në zhvillim, të cilët lidhen ngushtë, dialektikisht me njëra tjetrën.

Momentet kryesore dhe pikat kulmore të kësaj pjese do të jenë: Themelimi i PKSH (nëntor 1941), Konferenca e Pezës (shtator 1942), Konferenca I e vendit (mars 1943), Krijimi i Shtabit të Përgjithshëm dhe organizimi i UNÇl.(korrik 1943),Kongresi i Përmetit (maj 1944), fitorja historike e 29 nëntorit 1944 shpallja e Republikës Popullore të Shqipërisë dhe miratimi i Kushtetutës (janar-mars 1946) Kongresi I i PKSH (nëntor 1948), Kongresi III i PPSH (maj 1956) Kongresi IV i PPSH (shkurt 1961), Viti 1966, Kongresi VII i PPSH (nëntor 1976), Kushtetuta e RPS të Shqipërisë.

TEMA I- THEMELIMI I PARTISË KOMUNISTE TË SHQIPËRISË

(1912 - 1941)

Në këtë temë do të pasqyrohet një periudhë e rëndësishme e historisë së re e të sotme të popullit shqiptar në të cilin do të spikasin në radhë të parë përpjekjet e masave popullore për bashkimin kombëtar, për mbrojtjen e pavarësisë dhe tërësisë tokësore të shtetit shqiptar kundër synimeve e veprimeve të huaja imperialiste e shoviniste të shprehura me një forcë të veçantë në Kongresin e Lushnjës dhe në Luftën e Vlorës. Një aspekt me rëndësi i kësaj periudhe është ai i rritjes së pakënaqësisë popullore dhe i lëvizjeve revolucionare gjithnjë në ngjitje të cilat fillojnë me lëvizjen fshatare të viteve 1914-1915, vazhdojnë me lëvizjet revolucionare demo-

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- Një bust kushtuar Bajram Currit.

- Një stendë do të përmbajë veprimtarinë e Qeverisë së Nolit dhe reformat e dobësitë e saj si dhe rëndësinë e Revolucionit e arsyet e dështimit. Këtu do të vendosen fotografitë e personalite-teve kryesore si Noli, Gurakuqi, do të jepen pikat e programit qeve-ritar, pjesë nga projekt ligji i reformës agrare, masat e zbatuara në politikën e jashtme.

- Në një stendë tjetër me anë të dokumenteve e pjesëve nga shtypi do të jepen kërkesat e fshatarësisë për konfiskimin e tokave çifligare si dhe letra e 18 fshatarëve të Myzeqesë drejtuar Qeverisë për zbatimin e programit. Këtu do të tregohen metingjet popullore dhe përpjekjet e "Bashkimit" për të shpurë Revolucionin deri në fund. Me tekst e me ndonjë dokument do të jepen veprimet e reaksionit kun-dër Revolucionit dhe shtypja e tij. Në stendë mund të vendoset edhe citati i Dimitrovit për rëndësinë ballkanike të Revolucionit të Qershorit.

- Një një vitrinë do të vendosen dokumente e pjesë nga shtypi mbi veprimtarinë revolucionare të masave popullore gjatë Re-volucionit të Qershorit.

- Një bust kushtuar Fan Nolit.

6) Lëvizja demokratike punëtore e komuniste kundër regjimit zogist dhe imperializmit fashist.

Ideja që do të përshkojë këtë nëntemë është lufta e masave popullore për demokraci kundër regjimit zogist dhe imperializmit fashist në vitet 1925-1939. Në këtë kuadër do të pasqyrohen lëviz-jet e ndryshme demokratike dhe antizogiste të cilat ishin rezultat i keqësimit të madh të gjendjes ekonomike shoqërore e politike të masave popullore e në radhë të parë do të evidentohen gjerësisht lë-vizjet punëtore, komuniste dhe antifashiste, përpjekjet për një kul-turë demokratike si dhe qëndresa kundër fashistizimit të vendit dhe agresionit fashist.

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- Në mur do të ekspozohen të zmadhuara pjesë nga rezolucioni, ku vihen në dukje bazat ideologjike dhe organizative të Partisë si dhe programi i Partisë për periudhën e Luftës.

- Në mur një citat i shokut Enver Hoxha me gërma bronzi mbi rëndësinë historike të themelimit të Partisë Komuniste Shqiptare.

- Një vitrinë ku do të ekspozohen rezolucioni i mbledhjes së Grupeve Komuniste për themelimin e Partisë dhe thirrja e I e KQ të Partisë.

- Një fotografi e zmadhuar në mur e lagjes ku ndodhet kjo shtëpi.

- Një kënd i veçantë për projeksion, ku vizitorët do të njihen me aspekte nga jeta dhe aktiviteti revolucionar i shokut Enver Hoxha deri në themelimin e Partisë.

- Një hartë me ndriçim e Shqipërisë që do të pasqyrojë ngritjen e komiteteve qarkore dhe të organizatave bazë të Partisë. Këtu do të vihen dhe fotografitë e shtëpive ku u krijuan komitetet qarkore të Partisë.

- Një vitrinë me thirrjet dhe traktet e para të komiteteve qarkore të Partisë (prej themelimit të Partisë deri në qershor (1942).

- Një vitrinë me objekte të përdorura nga shoku Enver Hoxha gjatë veprimtarisë ilegale të tij në Tiranë (si kominoshet, revolveri, letra njoftimi falso, etj).

TEMA II - LUFTA ANTIFASHISTE NACIONALÇLIRIMTARE, SI NJË
REVOLUCION I MADH POPULLOR NËN UDHËHEQJEN E PKSH.

Duke iu përmbajtur rendit kronologjik të ngjarjeve të mëdha historike të njohura do të spikatin çështjet kardinale që e bëjnë Luftën Nacionalçlirimtare një revolucion të madh popullor, siç janë: Bashkimi i popullit shqiptar në Frontin Nacionalçlirimtar

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rreth Partisë; organizimi dhe zhvillimi i kryengritjes së përgjith-
shme të armatosur popullore dhe krijimi i UNÇSH si armë e revolucio-
nit; lindja, organizimi dhe forcimi i pushtetit të ri revolucionar
të Këshillave Nacionalçlirimtare, diferencimi i thellë politik dhe
gërshetimi i luftës kundër pushtuesve me luftën kundër tradhtarëve
që përfaqësonin klasat kryesore shfrytëzuese çifligaro-borgjeze,
karakteri revolucionar, internacionalist i luftës sonë në marrëdhë-
niet me pjesëtarët e koalicionit antifashist dhe me popujt fqinjë,
lufta e Partisë për të përgunuar dhe zbatuar një vijë të drejtë re-
volucionare marksiste-leniniste.

    1) Konferenca e Pezës

        Në këtë nëntemë, Konferenca e Pezës do të trajtohet si pikë
kulmore duke nënvizuar se bazat e bashkimit të popullit shqiptar u
hodhën nga Partia Komuniste e Shqipërisë në zjarrin e luftës kundër
pushtuesve e tradhtarëve mbi bazën e mjesëmarrjes në Luftën Antifa-
shiste Nacionalçlirimtare të të gjithë shqiptarëve patriotë.

        - Një vitrinë ku do të vihen trakte, thirrje, parulla, ku
do të pasqyrohet puna politike e Partisë për ngritjen e masave në
luftë si thirrja e KQ të PKSH e Prillit 1942, etj.

        - Një stendë me fotografi të aktivistëve të parë të Partisë
në terrene të ndryshme, midis të cilave fotografia e Mustafa Mato-
hitit duke i folur popullit.

        - Një vitrinë me dokumente të armikut mbi Lëvizjen antifa-
shiste të rinisë shqiptare.

        - Një tablo Mbledhja për themelimin e Rinisë Komuniste të
Shqipërisë.

        - Një maket i shtëpisë ku u themelua Rinia Komuniste Shqip-
tare, në anët e së cilës, në formë unaze mund të shtjellohet një
montazh diapozitivësh me grupe të rinjsh antifashiste nga gjithë
vendi

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TEMA III - NDËRTIMI I BAZAVE TË SOCIALIZMIT (1944-1960)

Në këtë temë do të pasqyrohet gjendja e vështirë e vendit menjëherë pas luftës, masat e marra nga Partia për vendosjen dhe forcimin e diktaturës së proletariatit që kurorëzohet me miratimin e Kushtetutës së RPSH, hovi i madh revolucionar i masave popullore të udhëhequra nga Partia për rindërtimin e vendit dhe vënien e tij në rrugën e socializmit, lufta në plan kombëtar e ndërkombëtar kundër mbeturinave të reaksionit dhe ndërhyrjeve të shteteve imperialiste e shoviniste, roli i Kongresit I të PKSH si moment kulmor për zhvillimin politik, ekonomik, shoqëror e kulturor socialist të vendit dhe realizimet e mëdha në vitet 1948-1960 në të gjitha fushat që çojnë në një pikë tjetër kulmore në Kongresin III të PKSH që e shpalli Shqipërinë vend bujqësor-industrial.

1) Vendosja dhe forcimi i diktaturës së proletariatit. Miratimi i Kushtetutës së RPSH.

Këtu do të jepet një tablo e shkatërrimeve që la lufta dhe e prapambetjes së përgjithshme dhe vështirësitë që duhej të përballonin Partia, pushteti popullor e masat punonjëse për ndërtimin e Shqipërisë së re si edhe aspekte themelore të ngritjes dhe forcimit të diktaturës së proletariatit deri në zgjedhjet e Asamblesë Kushtetuese dhe miratimin e Kushtetutës së RP të Shqipërisë që shënon një pikë kulmore e që do të zërë një vend të dukshëm si për nga përmasat ashtu edhe për nga mënyra artistike e paraqitjes.

Në hyrje të sallës do të vendoset një ansambël skulpturor me përmasa relativisht të mëdha që do të simbolizojë idenë e ngritjes së Shqipërisë së re nga gërmadhat e luftës.

- Në një tekst në mur do të karakterizohet në mënyrë të përmbledhur gjendja e rëndë e vendit të shkatërruar nga lufta

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në mënyrë të veçantë në përkrahje të luftës së popujve të Koresë,
Laosit
Vietnamit, Kamboxhias/dhe popujve arabë.

TEMA IV- LUFTA PER NDERTIMIN E PLOTË TË SHOQERISË SOCIALISTE

(1960 - 1976)

Do të trajtohet thellimi i revolucionit socialist në
fushën e ekonomisë në kushtet e rrethimit imperialisto-revizionist,
zhvillimi i industrializimit socialist të vendit dhe mekanizimi a
modernizimi i metejshëm i bujqësisë që çuan në forcimin e mëtejshëm
ekonomik të RPSH e në ngritjen e mirëqënies së popullit; lufta
e PPSH kundër revizionizmit sovjetik dhe revizionizmit modern në
përgjithësi në arenën ndërkombëtare , kundër agjenturës së tyre
brenda vendit; etapa e re e revolucionit ideologjik e kulturor
për formimin e njeriut të ri dhe lufta kundër shfaqjeve të huaja,
(burokratizmit, liberalizmit etj.); revolucionarizimi i mëtejshëm
i gjithë jetës së vendit për përsosjen e metejshme të diktaturës
së proletariatit. Në këtë nëntemë do të përfshihen edhe Kongresi
VII i PPSH dhe miratimi i Kushtetutës së RPS të Shqipërisë, momen-
tet kulmore të kësaj etape.

- Një tekst, citat nga Raporti i sh. Enver Hoxha në Kongre-
sin e IV të Partisë mbi fillimin e etapës së ndërtimit të plotë
të shoqërisë socialiste i shoqëruar me një fotografi të madhe të
shokut Enver duke folur në këtë Kongres. Pranë fotografisë do të
jepen direktivat themelore të Kongresit IV,V dhe të VI të Partisë
për ndërtimin e bazës materiale-teknike të socializmit.

1) Zhvillimi ekonomik e shoqëror i vendit dhe ngritja e
mirëqënies së popullit në vitet(1960-1975)

Do të paraqitet politika e Partisë për zhvillimin e indus-
trializimit socialist, mobilizimin e masave popullore e konsulti-

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– Një stendë me fotografi e dokumente e të dhëna stati-
stikore do të paraqesë nismat revolucionare të punonjësve në
përgjigje të Letrës së hapur të KQ të Partisë dhe rezultateve
të arritura në luftën kundër burokratizmit, përmiresimit të për-
bërjes klasore të organeve shtetërore me rritjen e pjesëmarrjes'
së punëtorëve, kontrollit punëtor etj.

– Një stendë do të përmbajë me gërma të mëdha pikat më të
rëndesishme të Plenumit të IV të KQ të Partisë mbi luftën kundër
liberalizmit.

– Një stendë do t'i kushtohet jehonës së vendimeve të
Plenumit IV të KQ të Partisë nismave revolucionare për luftën
kundër liberalizmit, rezultateve të arritura .

4) Zhvillimi kulturor

Këtë nëntemë do të përshkojë ideja e revolucionarizimit
dhe masivizimit të mëtejshëm të sistemit arsimor, të kulturës
dhe te shkences në frymën e orientimeve të Kongresit V të Parti-
së, fjalimit programatik të shokut Enver Hoxha të marsit 1968
dhe vendimeve të Plenumit VIII të KQ të Partisë. Do të vihet në
dukje forcimi i lidhjeve të shkollës me jetën dhe ndërtimi i
gjithë procesit mësimor edukativ mbi bazën e tri komponentëve që
përshkohen nga boshti ideollgjik marksist-leninist, lufta për një
kulturë dhe art të realizmit socialist me partishmëri proletare,
me përmbajtje revolucionare e frymë kombëtare.

– Një tekst nga fjalimi i shokut Enver Hoxha në mars
1969 mbi përmbajtjen e revolucionarizimin e mëtejshëm të shkollës

– Një stendë me fotografi, dokumente e të dhëna statisti-
kore mbi diskutimin e madh popullor për revolucionarizimin e
mëtejshëm të shkollës dhe mbi vendimet e Plenumit VIII të KQ
të Partisë. Fotografi nga veprimtaria e shkollës për realizimin
e tri komponentëve: mësim (pamje nga procesi mësimor dhe aksio-

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- Një stendë ku do të jepen në mënyrë të përgjithësuar me shifra e diagrame rezultatet e luftës kundër armiqve të brendshëm e të jashtëm në vitet 1944-1975 (numri i provokacioneve ajrore detare e tokësore kundër vendit tonë, i bandave, grupeve dhe organizatave klandestine të zbuluara dhe asgjësuara, numri i dëshmorëve të rënë në luftën për mbrojtjen e fitoreve të revolucionit.

- Buste ose portrete të "Heronjve të Popullit" të rënë në luften për mbrojtjen e fitoreve të revolucionit.

7) Politika e jashtme e PPSH dhe RPSH- faktor aktiv në marrëdhëniet ndërkombëtare. ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ Demaskimi i revizionizmit kinez.

Do të pasqyrohet politika e drejtë, e çiltër parimore e revolucionare e Partisë dhe e RPSH në arenën ndërkombëtare, lufta e tyre e papajtueshme kundër imperializmit dhe social-imperializmit, për mbrojtjen e interesave të Shqipërisë Socialiste, të lëvizjeve revolucionare e nacionalçlirimtare në botë. Kjo nëntemë do të verë pastaj në dukje forcimin e rolit dhe autoritetit të PPSH në lëvizjen komuniste marksiste-leniniste botërore, në kalitjen ideologjike dhe politike të kësaj lëvizjeje si edhe demaskimin e revizionizmit modern dhe të politikës hegjemoniste të RP të Kinës kundrejt Shqipërisë dhe në arenën ndërkombëtare.

- Një tekst nga fjalimi i shokut Enver Hoxha më 1974 para zgjedhësve mbi politikën e jashtme të RPSH.

- Një tekst me fotografi e dokumente mbi rrezikun e politikës hegjemoniste të SHBA dhe B.S., mbi demaskimin e kësaj politike nga perfaqësuesit shqiptarë në OKB, mbi agresionin sovjetik në Çekosllovaki dhe denoncimin e Traktatit të Varshavës etj.

- Një tablo:"Denoncimi i Traktatit të Varshavës" V.Kilica.
- Një stendë me fotografi e dokumente e të dhëna për forcimin e pozitës ndërkombëtare të RPSH, zgjerimin e marrëdhënieve

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- Një stendë me dokumente themelore të Partisë e të shtetit tonë mbi demaskimin e teorisë së "tri botëve" dhe të politikës hegjemoniste të revizionistëve kinezë si edhe mbi veprimet armiqësore të tyre ndaj Shqipërisë.

- Një vitrinë me letra nga populli që mbështesin PPSH në luftën kundër revizionizmit kinez dhe nismat revolucionare për të kapërcyer vështirësitë e krijuara nga prerja e ndihmave të RP të Kinës.

8) Kongresi VII i PPSH dhe miratimi i Kushtetutës së RPS të Shqipërisë (1976).

Kjo ndtemë do të mbyllë muzeun. Në të do të dalin në pah idetë e mëdha të Kongresit VII të Partisë dhe të Kushtetutës së RPS të Shqipërisë të shoqëruara me fotografi e makete të veprave më të mëdha industriale.

- Në mur një fotografi e madhe e shokut Enver Hoxha duke folur në Kongresin VII të Partisë dhe në sfond salla e Kongresit.

- Në një mur anësor të sallës do të paraqiten të skalitura shifrat e të dhënat e realizimeve themelore të RPS të Shqipërisë në vitet 1944-1976 në fushën politike, ekonomike, shoqërore, kulturore, ushtarake etj.

- Poshtë do të vendosen fotografi e makete të mëdha të katër gjigandëve të industrisë-hidrocentralit "Drita e Partisë", kombinatit metalurgjik "Çeliku i Partisë", Kombinati i Autraktorëve "Enver Hoxha" dhe uzina për përpunimin e thellë të naftës në Ballsh. Në një kënd do të vendoset traktori i parë shqiptar.

- Në murin tjetër anësor do të jepen të skalitura me gërma të arta në mur nenet themelore të Kushtetutës së RPS të Shqipërisë.

- Tri-katër vitrina me dhuratat më karakteristike të dhëna nga populli shokut Enver Hoxha.

- Në mes të sallës do të vendoset një vepër e madhe skulpturore që të shprehë unitetin e çelniktë Parti-Popull.

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Project for the composition of the MHK II

Part on the revolution 1912 to 1976

In this part of the museum there will be reflected three thesis: Preparation of the Revolution, the war of Anti Fascist national liberation and the Socialist construction as integral parts of a revolution in progress, which closely unite dialectically with each other.

The central moments and culminating points of this part will be: Foundation of the PPSH (November 1941), The conference of Peza (September 1942), The first state conference (March 1943), The creation of the general staff and organization of UNCL. (July 1943), The Congress of Permet (May 1944), The historic victory of 29 November 1944, Proclamation of the People's Republic of Albania and the approval of the constitution (January-March 1946), the First Congres of the PPSH (November 1948), Third Congress of the PPSH (May 1956), The Fourth Congress of the PPSH (February 1961), The year 1966, The Seventh Congress of the PPSH (November 1976) and finally the RPS constitution of Albania.

Theme I
Foundation of the Communist Party of Albania (1912 - 1941)
This theme will reflect an important period of the new and contemporary history of the Albanian people in which for the first time features the efforts of the popular masses for national unity, for the defence of independence and territorial integrity of the Albanian state against the aims of the activities of foreign chauvinist imperialists expressed with special force at the Congress of Lushnje and the Battle of Vlorë. And aspect with significance for this period is the rise of popular discontent and increasingly active revolutionary movements which began with village movements of the years 1914-1915, continue with the revolutionary democratic movements (...)

(...) 6. The democratic communist worker's movement against the Zogist regime and fascist imperialism.

The idea that will traverse this theme is the struggle of the popular masses for democracy against the Zogist regime and fascist imperialism in the years 1925-1939. This framework will reflect the various democratic and anti Zogist movements which were the result of the grand worsening of the social and political economic situations of the popular masses and for the first time widely shows the worker's, communist and anti fascist movements, the attempts for a democratic culture as well as the stand against state fascism and fascist aggression.

§

INTER AVLAS ACADEMIÆ QVÆRE VERVM