

THE STORY OF XHELADIN NUSHI

Excerpt from the long interview with Pajazit Nushi

My family, before I was born of course, was a big family, apparently a relatively big and rich family. My father, or better to say when my father was young and not married, was given the wife of one of his deceased brother. He had died, and according to tradition the wife was transferred to my father. But she came into my father's house with a Xheladin Nushi, whom I don't know, obviously I wasn't born at that time... who was educated, he continued his studies.

They separated at one point and she moved to Tirana with Xheladin Nushi. I had the impression that they separated because he [Xheladin], being already grown up, did not want his mother to marry my father. I have this impression, but I don't know those times, I haven't lived them. I've heard from my mother that this may have been one of the causes of their break up and their move to Tirana. He continued his studies, he finished Economics at the University of Graz, where he got a doctorate in economics. He then returned as an advisor to the royal court of Ahmet Zogu. Meanwhile, he got married with a woman from Vienna. She came to Tirana, and she taught at the school Nënë Mbretëreshë. That is how it was called at that time, Nënë Mbretëreshë, a popular school, I later heard of it. They had a girl, she's still alive and her name is Shpresa. But in the meantime, because they had to run from Enver Hoxha's regime, her mother and she, while they were in Vienna where she was born, changed their names to secure a life. From her point of view... her name today is, she has an Italian name, but I can't remember it. Her real name, she even says it, "I'm Shpresa," but her last name of course, when she got married, she had to change it.

With the intermediation of the Yugoslav Embassy, I've searched for her during the 70s in Vienna, but I've searched for her under the name Nushi, Shpresa Nushi. While I was at a UNESCO meeting with the Yugoslav delegation, the Yugoslav Embassy told me that there was no Nushi family in Vienna. Since then, I gave up.

Suddenly, one day, I was in my house, I think it was 1999, a friend of mine from Vienna called me. "More," he said, "I have a woman here who says she's Shpresa, first name Shpresa and surname Nushi. She wants to know which Nushi are you, and from which Nushi she's from." "Yes," I said, "I know her but she doesn't know me, she is from our family." I explained her origin and I connected with her and now we're in touch. She was at my house a few times, her last visit was three-four months ago. We communicate on a regular basis, not every evening but once a week yes, via email and telephone etc. etc. She has two daughters and a son, she is a grandmother of course, she is older. She used to be a Professor of English at the University of Vienna, now retired.

And in this perspective, I encountered some political obstacles. I didn't dare mention the name Xheladin Nushi here. I didn't dare because he was, or he had been, a Zogist [supporter of Ahmet Zogu] and an anti-Communist plotter. He had been following Communists, he had been following Fadil Hoxha and Xhavit Nimani, high-ranking leaders of the Communist Party in Kosovo, because he was a student of the Normale. They were let go just because they were Communists. The people here, Fadil Hoxha for example, tried to find information about my relationship to Xheladin Nushi, and I have told him that I wasn't related to him, I didn't know him and I never had family connections to him. He said, "The only person who followed us, was Xheladin Nushi."

His daughter also told me that Enver Hoxha and of course his people, did almost everything to get him

out of the royal court and take him to Tirana. But he replied to Enver Hoxha, “Until you are connected to the Soviets, I’ll never step foot in Albania again!” He didn’t return to Tirana because everyone who returned was executed, killed and so on. But I think he didn’t have much luck with the royal court either, I think he argued with the royal court in London. The royal court, the five daughters of Ahmet Zogu, Ahmet Zogu along with his children, with his family, with his companions, went to Cairo in Egypt. He didn’t accept to go to Egypt so he remained in London. He suddenly died from a heart attack, and an Albanian held his eulogy.

His daughter told me that in his grave it is written, approximately, on one side in Albanian and on the other side in English, “Who dies as honest as Xheladin Nushi is happy.” I have been tracking this, I have written about this, I have gathered material about this man. I have noticed that he was a notable man, I have noticed that he was a bright man. I also noticed he was an anti-Communist, I have noticed he was a great Zogist, he had huge affection for Zogu.

However, to my great astonishment, despite my efforts to get direct informations from the royal court, and despite a conversation I had with Leka, the one who died recently, the son of Ahmet Zogu, and with and the others, they didn’t give me any information.

The information that I possess now, I have from some of his friends, or from different readings or different documents. It seems there was a serious conflict between him and the royal court in London, so they... I was promised that documents can be found when the archive of Ahmet Zogu arrives from South Africa. But I don’t believe that they will give me those documents, though I am keeping track of all the documents so I can know more about him. I want to show his personality, the personality that the documents tell, not as I wish, because I never met him, even if I wanted to, I was never able to meet him.