SPEAKING TO THE 8TH CONGRESS OF THE PARTY, COMRADE ENVER HOXHA POINTED OUT: «OUR SOCIALIST LIFE GIVES OUR CULTURE, LITERATURE AND ARTS MORE VIGOUR, MORE DYNAMISM AND FRESHNESS, ENRICHING THEM IN CONTENT AND FORM.»

CULTURE, AS A SOCIAL PHENOMENON, CONSTITUTES ONE OF THE DISTINGUISHING FEATURES OF HUMAN SOCIETY BECAUSE IT IS CONNECTED WITH THE ENTIRE PROCESS OF MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY AND ALL SOCIAL ACTIVITIES OF MAN. FROM ITS EMERGENCE AND IN THE COURSE OF ITS DEVELOPMENT CULTURE IS SUBJECT TO THE GENERAL LAWS OF SOCIETY. BEING PART OF THE SUPERSTRUCTURE, IT NECESSARILY REFLECTS THE MATERIAL CONDITIONS OF SOCIAL LIFE AND RESPONDS TO THEIR DEMANDS, THOUGH NOT AUTOMATICALLY OR AS A PASSIVE PRODUCT OF THEM. ON THE CONTRARY, FROM ITS EMERGENCE IT BECOMES A VERY ACTIVE ELEMENT, WHICH ACCOMPANIES ALL SORTS OF ACTIVITIES OF MAN AND INFLUENCES, TO AN EVER GREATER EXTENT, HIS LIFE. CULTURE PLAYS AN IMPORTANT EDUCATIVE, POLITICAL-IDEOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL ROLE AND IS PARTICULARLY SUSCEPTIBLE TO THE LAW OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE.

The reactionary ruling classes of the exploiting orders, from the slave-owning and feudal down to the bourgeois order, have tried in flagrant opposition to the working masses to make the entire cultural activity and creation subservient to the interests of their own class, in order to justify their class oppression, exploitation and antagonism.

Despite these aims and efforts of the exploiting classes, the culture created in every country has not always served these aims. This is due to the fact that, like in all other spheres of ideology, in the field of culture, too, there are two main opposed trends which stand for diametrically opposed interests, that of the exploiting class and that of the working masses. The first trend is reactionary, whereas the second is progressive. In order to further their interests, all the exploiting classes have used reactionary trend in the field of culture, while casting into oblivion the progressive trend, in an effort to belittle and destroy it.

ZIJA XHOLI — Professor at the University of Tirana
The present analysis will be limited to only one question, that of the close connection existing between the socialist content and the national form of the new culture, and within this context will also treat the stand of the new socialist culture towards the national culture of the past.

The outstanding men of the Albanian Renaissance, who worked and created many progressive and revolutionary values of long-standing for the culture of our people, had a thorough understanding of the great role of progressive culture in the social emancipation of the nation. In this manner, the national Albanian culture of the period of the Albanian Renaissance, further enriched by the men of our Renaissance and expressed in the Albanian language and in the national spirit, served the purpose of arousing and inspiring the entire people in their efforts for the fulfillment of their aspirations to freedom, independence and social justice.

The progressive culture of any people assumes even greater significance in the conditions of the development of the socialist revolution and in the process of the construction of socialism. Indeed, its role in the conditions of the construction of socialism is by far greater than in the past. Only in the conditions of the existence of the dictatorship of the proletariat can the culture of any people develop freely and rapidly and its achievements in all fields and walks of life be utilized for the benefit of the entire society.

As on many questions of social life, on the questions of culture and its relation with the revolution, too, the ideologists of the bourgeoisie and the revisionists cause much confusion with their utterly anti-scientific and reactionary views. For scores of years now, the ideologists of the bourgeoisie and the revisionists resort to the technical-scientific revolution in their efforts to negate the need for the socialist revolution, and in an openly distorted and counter-revolutionary way of reasoning try to prove that allegedly in the present conditions of the rapid development of science and technology, there is no need for the socialist revolution whose tasks can be carried out merely and simply by the technical-scientific revolution. This theorization is utterly anti-scientific and in flagrant contrast to the reality which shows the opposite. It shows that the technical-scientific revolution in the bourgeois-revisionist countries has failed to solve any of the problems plaguing this system of oppression and exploitation. On the contrary, as is only natural in the conditions of the domination of the private property, it has aggravated and made them worse. Any new invention, any application of science and modern technology in the capitalist enterprises not only is not to the advantage of the workers, but, on the contrary, leads ineluctably to the intensification of their exploitation, their mass unemployment, the worsening of their economic situation and the increase of profit for the capitalist owners. The development of science and technology cannot prevent the operation of or alter the objective laws of social development. Like in the time when the classics of Marxism-Leninism discovered them, today again the laws of the revolution and of the revolutionary transformation of society continue to operate with absolute rigorosity. The only road to the liberation of the working masses from oppression and exploitation today is the road of the socialist revolution and of the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Once the dictatorship of the proletariat is established and the society sets out decisively on the road of socialism as it did in Albania, then realizations in all fields of culture, including the technical-scientific revolution, go to benefit the working people, then the technical-scientific revolution becomes an indispensable organic part of the progress of the country.

The «theory» which makes the role of the technical-scientific revolution in society absolute, which substitutes the successes in the development of science and culture for the socialist revolution, is part of the bourgeois reformist «theories» which, in order to perpetuate the capitalist order, claim that the true progress of society cannot be achieved through the political and social revolution, but only through culture, through moral perfection and cultural development. An original exponent of this contemporary «theory» is the German-American philosopher Herbert Marcuse. The present society, Herbert Marcuse tries to make out, has allegedly succeeded in overcoming its internal contradictions, in reconciling the proletariat to itself and ruling out in practice the need for the socialist revolution! In the present conditions, he hastily concludes, there is nothing other left but to put the stress on the subjective factor, the development of consciousness, the creation of a new subject. The future society created by this new subject will be, in the opinion of Marcuse, a society in which man will be free from work, in which love and other instincts will find complete fulfillment without any restraint, life will be fanciful and a mere pay, and in which art — the production of imagination, will play a
primary role in the life of man and in his emancipation. These extravagant reasonings are devoid of any foundation and intended to produce a false picture of the present-day capitalist society and to distort the historical perspective of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat and the working masses.

The «theories» of Marcuse, like those of his bourgeois revisionist colleagues, are castles in Spain and none of them has resisted the test of reality. History has followed and continues to follow not the road Marcuse indicated, but the road Marx predicted and proved with argument. As Comrade Enver Hoxha has stressed in his work «Imperialism and the Revolution» and proved with many facts from the situation in the world today, the proletariat has been and remains the decisive force for revolutionary change and socialist transformations, while the socialist revolution through violence remains the main road for the overthrow of capitalism and the construction of the new society.

Although life has not proved the «theories» of Marcuse, he has many acolytes, who directly or indirectly endeavour to keep them alive. Completely steeped in bourgeois reformism, they continue to concoct new arguments and to propagate new «theories» to defend capitalism and to deny the need for the political revolution. This same role has been taken up today by the so-called «new philosophers» in France. They are participants or witnesses of the events of May 1968 in France. Like the former, they too pretend that allegedly they sum up the historical experience of contemporary world events and prescribe their remedies to heal the ills of society and save mankind. However, despite their great clamours, they too do not go further ahead than the notorious anti-proletarian and counter-revolutionary theses of the revisionists and the previous reformists. The «new philosophers» do not even try to conceal their negation of the socialist revolution, which emerges clearly from all their reasoning. They proclaim world-wide that they «will never be the leaders and the enlighteners of the peoples, will never be in the service of the insurgents».

They place culture on the same plane as the state and ascribe to both of them the same role — a role of oppression and reaction. Foucault, one of the «new philosophers», uses the following words to indicate the close connection between the state and culture, and their common reactionary role, «State power is invariably connected with knowledge, and knowledge, inversely, with state power: it is insufficient to say that state power needs this or that discovery, this or that form of knowledge. It is the exercise of power which creates the primary material for knowledge which gathers and uses information...»3 The «new philosophers» carry through to the end the idea of the common role of the state and culture as factors of oppression, reaching a conclusion which is utterly opportunist in its essence, that just as any state, all culture should be negated, a clean sweep should be made of all existing culture. The appeal for the «cultural revolution» has become something ordinary in the works of the «new philosophers».

The bourgeois and revisionist ideologists and politicians often play with words, frequently they have in mind something entirely different from what they say in the terms they use. The revisionists, in China for example, spoke of the «cultural revolution» only to cover another reality which had to do with a fierce political struggle between the different revisionist clans over supremacy and power in China.

The «new philosophers» in France, too, speak of a «cultural revolution», but in their mouths this slogan has entirely different meaning and objective, indeed, quite the opposite of what it means in the revolutionary theory and practice of the proletariat. With their «cultural revolution» the «new philosophers» displace the centre to pass off the reactionary trend in field of politics to the field of culture, thus making the question of social progress a mere question of culture. Apart from this, in their imagination the «cultural revolution» is the result of the total liquidation of the old culture, of all the culture created by man-kind, and the starting of the entire process from the beginning. In fact, in the conditions of the preservation of the capitalist order, with their call for a «cultural revolution» they want to divert the proletariat and the working masses from the only road of liberation, to stop them from destroying the power of the bourgeoisie and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat which is achieved only through the political revolution. In addition to this, by wanting to liquidate all the culture created to this day they want to liquidate the great achievement of the human mind, Marxism-Leninism, with the aim of dispossessing the proletariat of their patrimony, the science which inspires them in their difficult struggle, which shows them the sure road to victory.

These «new philosophers» also have a distorted idea of the very process of the creation of the new culture. The new culture, or the «anti-culture», as they term it, which will lead mankind towards progress, cannot be created by liquidating the entire culture created by mankind. The genuine new culture, as Lenin pointed out, is the continuation and the critical selection of all the most valuable realizations made by mankind in centuries of its development.

As for the name «new philosophers», which is used by some to designate a number of writers and journalists in France, or which they themselves use to designate themselves, it is not difficult to see that these «philosophers» are not quite as new as they claim to be. This is clearly seen in the ideas they maintain and in the stands they take in their works. Their ideas of the creation of the new culture or «anti-culture» do not differ much from those of the supporters of the «proletarian culture» in the Soviet Russia, who sought to create an entirely new culture, without any connection with the previous culture created by mankind, and over which they were criticized by Lenin as anti-Marxists and counter-revolutionaries. If this problem is seen from a broader angle, with their boisterous claim that «Marx is dead»,4 with their attempts at refuting Marxism, they prove to be even more regressive than the former and
All the three directions, in which the radical change of the new culture of socialist society is expressed and realized, have their own characteristics and their own problems as well. The present analysis will be limited to only one question, that of the close connection existing between the socialist content and the national form of the new culture, and within this context, it will also treat the stand of the new socialist culture towards the national culture of the past.

The proletarian class partisanship, the socialist content and the permeation of socialist culture by the Marxist-Leninist ideology, these constitute the first fundamental demand the Party makes to every man working in the field of the development of the socialist culture. Any literary and artistic work, any element of culture must be inspired by the interests of the working class and assist in the realization of these interests. Hence it becomes evident that in these directions the new culture which is created in socialist society is different from, indeed is in total antagonism with, that part of the previous culture which served the exploiting and reactionary classes. Therefore, in the course of its creation it negates the negative, reactionary part of the former culture. Probably more evidently and obviously than in any other social phenomenon, in the process of its birth is felt the operation of the materialist dialectics, is applied its demand that the rising new is not a total negation of the old which, though negated, is not indiscriminately rejected in all its previous development only in its aspects and elements which hamper the process of development which means the preservation and adoption of those good and progressive aspects and elements of the old which assist progress. This is the dialectics which has guided the Party of Labour of Albania in its policy and practice over many years of work for the creation of the new socialist culture. Our Party and Comrade Enver Hoxha have instructed and proved that the culture of socialist society, no matter how new and revolutionary it be, must rely on the sounder and more progressive elements of the former culture created over the centuries by our people. «In our efforts for the dissemination of culture amongst the masses,» Comrade Enver Hoxha has stressed, «we considered all those sound, progressive and democratic traditions and spiritual values which our people had created in the centuries... However, the cultural legacy of the past alone could not satisfy the demands of the builders of a socialist society. It had to be complemented and raised higher through the development of a new popular culture.» The close relationship of the revolutionary socialist content with the popular spirit and the national form constitutes the basic feature of the new socialist culture, the foundation stone of its development.

The demand of basing the development of the new socialist culture on the sound cultural patrimony of the past and giving it a distinctly national physiognomy does not stem from morbid nostalgia, or from a desire of exclusiveness and self-isolation. On the contrary, this demand is connected with many important and deep-going reasons of a cultural character, but more especially of an ideological and political character. While stressing that «the imperialist bourgeoisie has always tried to disparage or altogether liquidate the cultural traditions of the smaller peoples, the national spirit of their art and culture», and that «this is one of the roads for the realization of its cultural aggression and subordination of the peoples», Comrade Enver Hoxha raised the task that «in these conditions the struggle for the preservation of the nationalphysiognomy of art, of the cultural wealth of our people, becomes even more imperative for us.»

The great and decisive importance of the national patrimony and tradition to socialist culture is also connected with the fact that this culture can advance and develop only by relying on the national language of its own people. The national language is one of the principal elements which gives socialist culture its distinguishing national form. However, language alone is insufficient to give socialist culture its national character. This it receives from the mentality, the psychological formation, traditions, customs and the special distinctive characteristics of a people created and developed in the
centuries. In this manner, the national character, as an essential feature of culture, is indissolubly linked with its socialist content, forms a unity with it.

A literary and artistic work satisfies the requirements of the Party of Labour of Albania and the people when its heroes and the events described in it are seen and analyzed not only from the standpoint of the Marxist-Leninist proletarian ideology, but also when this analysis takes into consideration the mentality and patriotic feelings of the Albanian formed in the centuries of his existence and efforts for freedom, self-assertions and social justice. Comrade Enver Hoxha has said, «Our art of a socialist and revolutionary content has its own national stamp, expresses the consciousness of our people in the great historic moments we are living. This art is preferred by the masses and is a spiritual nourishment for them.» Therefore it is important that the artists, the writers, the men of culture know and are imbued with the Marxist-Leninist ideology, just as it is important that they have a thorough knowledge of the people, of their history, of their struggle, and a correct idea of the national cultural tradition.

The national character of art and culture is a complicated element, on which is felt the influence of all social processes all the class relations which have brought about the emergence and consolidation of the nation. The nation, as is known, does not emerge from nowhere and unexpectedly. It is the continuation and consolidation of the ethnos and, later, of the nationality, which exists even in the conditions of feudalism. The processes which accelerate and condition the formation of the nation are those connected with the development of capitalism, therefore the classes created on its basis are just those which emerge from this process — the bourgeoisie and the proletariat together with the peasantry and the other working masses. As we stressed in the foregoing, as long as antagonistic classes and the exploitation of man by man exist, two opposite and antagonistic trends will always continue to exist, namely the progressive trend and the reactionary trend, in the spiritual formation of the nation, and in its culture. The progressive trend has always voiced the interests of the broad working masses, whereas the reactionary trend has always voiced the interests of the exploiting reactionary classes. This antagonism was in Lenin's mind when he said that in the bourgeois order and in the national culture there are two cultures, in all traditions there are two traditions: one which is connected with the landowner and bourgeois reactionary ruling classes and another which is linked with the exploited working class and masses.

The reactionary ruling classes try to pass off the reactionary trend in culture as the only national culture, try to strengthen the idea of the existence of a national culture outside classes. They go the whole length to ensure that this kind of culture remains the dominant culture in society. On the other hand, their stand towards the progressive trend, which in fact constitutes the genuine national culture of all people, is scornful and restricted, and whenever this culture is directed openly against the existing exploitative order and inspires the masses to its overthrow, they strike up another attitude, this time aggressive and destructive. In the period of the tzarist rule, the Russian reactionaries, for instance, described loyalty to the Tsar, faith in God and reverence for the Church to be elements of the tradition of the Russian nation, of its national psychical character and formation. The German reactionaries and nazis described the «purity of Arian blood», the exclusiveness of the German nation, its superiority over all other nations, to be the distinctive feature of the tradition of all the German nation, of its psychical character and formation. The representatives of the reactionary camp in Albania, like Kolqi and Fishta, considered patriarchalism and the Albanian's loyalty to everything old and outdated to be the distinctive feature of the Albanian nation.

Nevertheless, despite the efforts of the reactionary exploiting classes, and especially the imperialist bourgeoisie, to describe the progressive trend in the culture of the peoples, especially the smaller and colonial peoples, as a superseded phase of their development, they never succeeded in liquidating this progressive trend in their culture, which constitutes the real national ground of the culture of all the peoples. The working masses of all countries, as the creators and carriers of this progressive culture have always fought to preserve and develop it, because they are aware that without this culture all possibility of their existence as a nation is out of the question. These lofty motives have had a decisive influence on the existence of the Albanian people all along their centuries-old history. They preserved, kept alive and developed their progressive national culture although their country was successively occupied by the Romans, Byzantins, the Slavs, the Ottomans and the Italian-German fascists. Today the Albanian population of Kosovo and the other Albanian territories of Yugoslavia are putting up a staunch resistance for the preservation of their sound national progressive culture and traditions, which the Great-Serb chauvinists threaten with liquidation.

The Party of Labour of Albania preserved, developed and enriched this centuries-old national culture of the Albanian people, gave it a new, socialist content and placed it in the service of the socialist construction of the country.

It is interesting to note that in the national culture of the Albanian people, and not only in their folklore, as well as in what their various artists and writers created individually, the non-progressive and reactionary elements are scarce. This is a typical phenomenon of the national culture of the Albanian people which sets it apart from the culture of many other peoples. In which the influence of religious obscurantism and the mediaeval parasitic spirit are strikingly apparent. Comrade Enver Hoxha shows this typical and original phenomenon in the national culture of the Albanian people and discloses the deep causes of it, which stems from the fact that our culture of the past has been closely connected with the people, who during the centuries have always been guided by their progressive aspirations to freedom, have fought for self-defence in just struggles against the oppressors,
well as against the predatory imperialist ideologies of the foreigners. During their history the Albanians have never exploited or otherwise oppressed any other people. Nor have they ever attacked or occupied the land of any other people. Such being the historical circumstances of their existence, from the hearts and minds of our people could emerge only the patriotic ideas about their own country and feelings of fraternal friendship for the other peoples. The artistic and philosophic writings of the best Albanian writers of the past, from Barletius to the brothers Naim and Sami Frasheri, from Çajupi and Asdreni to Noli and Migjeni, together with the entire artistic creativeness of our people, speak of this original feature of our national culture and the psychical formation of our people in the past. These outstanding writers enrich the national culture of the Albanian people with so many progressive works because they expressed the sufferings and problems of the people, treated major themes bearing on the life of the nation and its future, and this they did not from the class standpoint of the landowners, but from the standpoint of the people, of their just struggle, and their revolutionary aspirations to freedom.

Another problem which emerges in the analysis of culture and cultural tradition, a problem of great theoretical and practical importance, is the connection and interaction between the national character and form of culture and its popular spirit. National form and popular spirit, these are two features of culture existing in close connection with each other. The more profound the popular spirit of culture and the more pronounced its democratic spirit, the higher the degree of participation of the masses in the creation and development of culture, the stronger is its national physiognomy, because in this manner it expresses the interests, the consciousness and the state of mind of the majority of the nation.

Regardless of the fact that the connection between these two features of culture is quite close and evident, in the exploiting orders in general, there exists quite a number of obstacles to its complete realization. This is due to the reactionary ideology of the ruling class, the imperialist bourgeoisie, whose interests, being in opposition to those of the working masses, cannot tolerate a comprehensive mass development of culture by the masses themselves. On the contrary, the imperialist bourgeoisie serves the masses a standardised kind of culture which is in contrast with the aspirations of the masses and is intended to keep them under the yoke of capital. This is why the working masses in the bourgeois-revisionist countries today are more and more boycotting or simply deserting cinemas and theatres, exhibitions and libraries, even the TV screen, in which pseudo-art and pseudo-culture, with hardly distinguishable popular or even national features, predominate.

The setting out of an entire people on the road of socialist construction, their adoption of a way of life and social organization along socialist lines, brings about qualitative transformations in their culture as well. With the liquidation of the political power of the bourgeoisie and private property, with the liquidation of the exploiting classes and the exploitation of man by man, the socialist society creates new and extremely favourable conditions and premises for all-round qualitative development of culture in breadth and depth. At this stage the national culture purges itself of the reactionary trend which expresses the interests of the exploiting classes. All the remaining part, the progressive part, of culture is preserved, enriched and further developed in close connection with the new culture created in the course of the socialist construction, and serving the cause of socialism.

In this manner, in the socialist society, in which the exploiting classes have been liquidated and the power is in the hands of the working class in alliance with the labouring peasantry, all cultural activities, all the cultural treasury is placed in the service of all the working masses. Hence, culture which has now a proletarian content is at the same time culture of the entire people and socialist proletarian content and its popular spirit are realized in an entirely national form.

This organic connection between the socialist content, national physiognomy and popular spirit of the new culture in the socialist society is created through the carrying out of the correct Marxist-Leninist line of the Party.

In this connection another question arises: What does the new socialist culture take from previous national culture and in what manner?

When we say that the new socialist culture relies on previous national culture, the question is only about its progressive part which expresses the deepest feelings, aspirations, and interests of the people.

The Works of Comrade Enver Hoxha shed new light not only on the question of the powerful support which the new socialist culture should seek in the progressive national culture of the past, but also on the assessment of the cultural patrimony of our nation and its characteristics. In opposition to the negative or disparaging stands of the internal and external enemies towards the progressive national culture of the Albanian people, Comrade Enver Hoxha points out that the Albanian people have a rich national culture, that with their transition to socialism this treasury has been enriched and further developed, that their socialist culture was not a gift from abroad, but the natural continuation of the great spiritual wealth of the Albanian people, created in the centuries and handed down from generation to generation. «How correct has been the line of our Party", writes Comrade Enver Hoxha, «for the preservation of the great wealth of our people and Homeland, of that great spiritual wealth which has supported the very existence of our nation through storm and stress, How correctly have our Party and the men of our popular art and culture fought to eradicate the evil weeds which smothered this flourishing garden and to bring it to the light of day, and on its basis, following in the footsteps of a beautiful tradition, created its natural continuation, the culture of a socialist country based powerfully on the national soil and sources and preserving its fine form and adding to the beauty of its content, gave it a socialist revolutionary content. They developed its revolutionary content, because this revolutionary content did not descend from heaven, nor was
it brought in suitcases from abroad, but was inherited from our ancestors.10 (underlining ours — Ed.)

Evidence of the sound values of the Albanian national culture, of its patriotic and popular spirit are the works of the writers and thinkers of the Albanian people, especially those created by the outstanding personalities of the national Renaissance and National Independence. However, the progressive national culture, the popular tradition, is not found only in the works of cultivated arts and culture. It is much broader and richer. It comprises, as its important component part, the art, the songs and dances, and the whole folklore of our people. Comrade Enver Hoxha, speaking of folklore as part of the national culture, teaches that it should not be reduced to some songs and dances, but must be seen in a more comprehensive manner, in all its varied wealth. Comrade Enver Hoxha writes: «Folklore is very broad, as broad as the life of the people. Folklore is the song, the labuta, the pipe, the drum, the Laberia song, the Myzqeqe song, the Devoll song, the Dibra song, the Shkodra song, etc. On the other hand, folklore should not be separated from folk verses and tales, wedding and mourning ceremonies or from the multi-coloured folk costumes of various patterns, or from the folk handicraft in national taste, just as it should not be separated from the canons, written and unwritten laws of our people, etc, etc.»11

The wealth, artistic strength and originality of the folklore of the Albanian people has its own strong reasons which stem from the circumstances of their existence, from the historical conditions in which they had to live, work and fight. The extremely hard conditions of the Roman, Byzantine and especially, Ottoman occupation, when our people were subjected to a ruthless campaign of assimilation and Islamization and was threatened with liquidation of their national identity, made the setting up and work of the Albanian schools and cultural institutions very difficult. The occupiers impeded the development and cultivation of written Albanian by all imaginable means. However, these difficulties did not discourage the Albanians, did not narrow their mind. They continued to exist in full possession of their feelings, and their creative faculties, indeed in a degree never seen before, struggling with the events and difficulties through which their national existence developed. And whatever they could not put down in writing they expressed in their songs, verses, tales, and wise sayings, which going from mouth to mouth, became the patrimony of the whole people. They expressed their artistic talent in their dances, costumes, and handicrafts. By means of their original and creative folklore our people were in a position to maintain their fighting and cultural traditions alive in the centuries, to display their abilities and to affirm themselves in the field of artistic creativeness.

With its progressive, patriotic and popular values the national culture of the past, expressed in the works of our artists and writers, as well as in folklore, had great importance in the historical moment when it was created. Thanks to the solicitude of the Party of Labour of Albania for keeping these values alive and further enriching them, this culture continues to preserve its educational, patriotic and fighting qualities to this day, it is an inseparable part of the life and struggle of the present generation which builds socialism. The best works of our writers of the past preserve their instructive and educational values to our days, while folk songs, dances and costumes continue to be heard and seen with pleasure and interest and add to the national pride of the man of our socialist society.

The progressive national culture of the past, the artistic creativeness of the people preserve incalculable values today, amongst other things, also in another sense, in it that it has become a source of inspiration, both in content and form, for the artists and writers of socialist realism. Outstanding writers and artists of socialist realism in Albania have achieved success not only because they have placed the great themes of our people in the centre of their creative activity, but also because their creations have a clear national physiognomy, have preserved everything beautiful and valuable which the Albanian people have contributed to the literature and the arts. The socialist content, closely connected with the national form and the popular spirit, have enabled our socialist culture to acquire those original features which easily distinguishes it from the cultures of the other peoples. Its original features, the values it adds to the world progressive culture and its high level of achievement have caused our socialist culture to spread beyond the borders of our Homeland, to arouse the interest and win the sympathy of many readers and spectators abroad. In connection with the great value of our national patrimony and the demand that our writers and artists should draw their inspiration from the creativeness, work and aspirations of the people, Comrade Enver Hoxha has pointed out: «If you detach yourselves from this soil you do not serve your people, and the other peoples have no reason to value you since you bring nothing new to the common treasury of world progressive art.»12

A correct stand towards the national culture of the past and the healthy popular tradition, the efforts to give the arts and literature of socialist realism a clear national physiognomy, belong to problems broader than these of mere artistic creativeness; they are acute political problems. By preserving and developing all the healthy and progressive elements of the national culture of the past and of the popular tradition the artists and writers of socialist society create the art the people need, enhance their pride in the cultural and artistic values of the nation, assist the Party in the communist education of the masses, in preparing them to cope with the imperialist-revisionist ideological aggression.

Like the national language, the best and most progressive features of national culture may be considered the identity marks of a nation. They are closely connected with its very existence. Therefore, the working class and the other working masses, together with their revolutionary representatives, try at all costs to preserve and further develop their finest national traditions. Of this, however, the aggressors, the imperialists and the revisionists, the chauvinists of every hue, are well
aware. It is common knowledge that the resistance of the peoples is conquered more easily and rapidly when their faith in their own forces and their own values is broken, that the peoples can be reduced not only by the force of arms but also by means of cultural aggression, through the degeneration of the progressive and revolutionary content of their sound culture and its replacement with the regressive imperialist culture and ideology. The slogans about the internationalization of culture and the arts, the free circulation of ideas and cultures, the accusations of «nationalism» and «narrowness» the imperialists, revisionists and chauvinists hurl at those who preserve their popular culture and their sound national tradition, have no other aim but to snuff out everything of value the peoples have contributed through their culture and art, and impose the anti-popular decadent culture on them.

In carrying out their Great-Russian policy to the detriment of the peoples and populations of the Soviet Union, the Soviet revisionists have raised the negation of the tradition and national culture of the different republics of the Soviet Union to principle. They have publicly declared that «the development of the culture of the peoples of the Soviet Union cannot be achieved with the 'preservation' of this and that element of a given culture under the banner of its originality. This would lead to narrow nationalism, to 'national provincialism'.» Essentially similar are the aims of the Serb chauvinists in Yugoslavia, who call the aspirations and efforts of the Albanian population in Kosovo and other regions of Yugoslavia to preserve and develop the treasury of their nation, their national language and patriotic traditions, «outdated romantic nationalism and reprehensible chauvinism.»

These claims of the present-day chauvinists and revisionists are in flagrant opposition to the Marxist teachings of Lenin and Stalin on the national question. The Party of Labour of Albania has exposed and rejected the revisionist distortions over this question and followed a clear-cut Marxist-Leninist line in the theory and practice of the creation and development of socialist art and literature in our country, Comrade Enver Hoxha writes, «The bourgeois and revisionist ideology assails us from all quarters. Our enemies, the enemies of Marxism-Leninism, would like to see us weighing things on 'golden scales', engaged in academic dispute and letting the wolf into our fold. But we shall close the door to the wolf and put a bullet into its head. Let them call us savages, because the drum and the bag-pipe are played on our stage, or because we have given pride of place to dances of men in wide breeches and woollen caps. For us the important thing is to defend the Homeland, to defend the people, Marxism-Leninism and socialism. And these we defend when we defend everything which is national in form and socialist in content.»

In the ideological struggle, too, as in all the other fields of the class struggle, the external front is co-ordinated with the internal front and form one single front. In working out a correct Marxist-Leninist policy in connection with the attitude of the new, socialist culture towards the national culture of the past, in carrying out the ideological and cultural revolution, our Party has had to wage a stern ideological struggle against the revisionists and the enemies of the Party within the country. All the deviators and traitors have scorned the progressive national culture of the past and the healthy traditions of the Albanian people, have tried to divorce the new, socialist culture from the previous culture of the Albanian people, in order to make them accept the decadent bourgeois-revisionist culture. This anti-socialist and anti-national stand was more manifest in the view and stands of the enemies of the Party Fadil Pacrami and Todi Lushnja. Revealing and exposing their anti-Party activity in the field of culture, Comrade Enver Hoxha said: «These elements have placed themselves in opposition to the brilliant past of our people, to their ardent patriotism in every period of their history. They denied and hated the ancient culture of our people and their splendid progressive customs, they denied and hated their songs, their music, their folklore, describing them as 'the gangrene' of the culture they sought to introduce into our socialist country. They were cos-mopolitans of the most degenerate kind.»

The 37 years of socialist construction in Albania have been years of a great and persistent work of the Party for the creation of a new socialist culture, for the socialist education and the cultural and ideological formation of the youth and all the working masses. This process has been carried out together with the constant discovery and re-assessment and enrichment of all the progressive qualities of our national culture of the past, of the progressive traditions and customs of our people. The most important events in the history of our people, the most outstanding personalities of their history and culture, their centuries-old experience expressed in their language, their songs, their dances, their wise sayings and their customs, all this has been made the object of study and research, has entered the golden fund of the present socialist culture and the spiritual wealth of the Albanian people. And this not in a passive manner, as a mere testimony of the past, but in an active manner, as a creativeness which arouses aesthetic pleasure in the readers and spectators even today, assists their patriotic, cultural and artistic education and formation, and inspires the artists and writers in the composition and writing of their new works.

The practice of the cultural revolution in Albania proves that socialist culture cannot make progress and develop on the road without relying on, without critically assessing and adopting the soundest and most progressive elements of the national culture of the past, the popular tradition, while on the other hand, this tradition is valued, preserved and given new life in the conditions of the socialist cultural revolution.

If our socialist culture has reached its degree of development of today, if with its values it has gone beyond the boundaries of our Homeland and has been well received by the peoples of the other countries, this is due to the fact that our men of culture, artists and writers, inspired and guided by the Marxist-Leninist ideological and aesthetic orientations of the Party of Labour of Albania and by the teachings
of Comrade Enver Hoxha, have always placed the great and important themes from the life of the people in the centre of their creativeness, execution and interpretation have treated them in keeping with the national tradition and popular spirit, always preserving the socialist content pure and sound. Proceeding on this road our socialist culture will flourish still more and enrich itself with still more beautiful and powerful works.

1 Enver Hoxha, Report to the 8th Congress of the PLA, p. 135, Eng. ed.
2 H. Bernard Lévy, «Le barbarie au visage humain», p. 211.
6 Enver Hoxha, Ibid., p. 391-392.
13 Voprosi filozofii, No. 8, 1976, p. 19.
15 Enver Hoxha, Ibid., p. 465-466.