

## CHURCH AND STATE IN ALBANIA IN THE YEARS 1945-1990

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### **Abstract**

In the history of the communist movement of the twentieth century, the Party of Labour of Albania adopted and implemented a rigorous version of dogmatic Marxism - Leninism. During the mid and late 1960s, simultaneously with China, Albania began what dictator Enver Hoxha would call "ideological and cultural revolution". One of the most significant and unique aspects of the Albanian version of this movement was coordinated to attempt the destruction of the country's religious organizations and to delete all religious influence in the country. Hoxha's efforts to eliminate religious institutions and practices were larger for the range and intensity than those used by the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries party. In actual practice, the new Albanian regime sought to destroy the role and influence of religion and religious national organizations. During 1945 and 1946, the state outlawed religious schools and private religious schools that closed were left and the religious institutions lost the right to keep the land from the Agrarian Reform Law of 1946. Consequently, between 1947 and 1949 the regime began to purge the leadership of the nation's religious groups associated with resistance to directives of state and religion on the basis that they had collaborated with Axis occupiers during World War II. During 1940 and 1950 the state had ruthlessly purged clergy and religious personnel of all denominations. Regime directed his efforts with greater severity against the Catholic Church. In the religious front, the end of summer 1967, all the churches in Albania were closed. Albania declared itself "an atheistic state" in the world. When the winds of change blew in Albania in the late 1980s, there were demands for the return of religious freedom. The Albanian government in May 1990 agreed to allow public and private practice of religion. These initiatives marked the end of the war against religion.

**Keywords:** *dictator, communism, regime, religion, ideology.*