

Fjalor Enciklopedik I Gruas Shqiptare (Encyclopedia of Albanian Women).
Zenepe Dibra, Camaj-Pipa, Shkodër, 2009, 760pp. Reviewed by Antonia Young.

The result of several years' work, Dr. Dibra has gathered voluminous accessible information pertaining to the contribution of women to Albanian society through the ages, from antiquity to present day. Included in this volume are entries from her earlier *Bijat e Rozafes: gra të shquara të hapësires shkodrane (Daughters of Rozafa: Women who have made Contributions to Shkodran Life)*, which was published in 2004. In the current volume, approximately 2,000 entries relate to women (mostly Albanian) whose distinctions cover all the arts (including intellectual and academic), diplomacy, religion, the military, sports, political activism, and heroism.

Although the book is in Albanian it has many illustrations (including some in colour), one for almost every entry; the concise text can be, at least partially, usefully accessed even by non-Albanian speakers. Besides hundreds of entries on individual women, there are also narratives on women's conferences, movements, and actions as well as crafts and women's garments (e.g. the *xhubleta*—a northern dress). There are also several non-Albanian women included whom Dr. Dibra ranks as contributors to Albanian culture; for example Madeleine Albright for her negotiations before, during and after the Kosovo War of 1999. Isadora Duncan merits an entry, having spent eight months, with her brother, in Saranda at a crucial and tragic period of her life. Following this, Duncan wrote a book, *My Life* in which she alerted the dire situation in Albania following the Turkish War, but also of the beauty of Albania.

Four pages cover the life of Illyrian Queen Teuta, who reigned in the region, around 230BC, and on whom many myths are based. Nënë Tereza commands five pages. Under Women's Voting Rights worldwide, whilst New Zealand was the first state to grant this right (in 1893), Albania had to wait until 1945. Women's emancipation is demonstrated historically by giving examples of various exceptional women throughout Albanian history. Other entries cover such diverse topics as *Mikpritja* (hospitality), *Menopauze* (menopause), Prostitution (but not trafficking), Patriarchy and *Mis Albania* (Miss Albania).

A later section of the Encyclopedia features younger Albanian women who have recently earned world fame in the creative and performing arts. Another short section lists 30 women or women's groups who have performed outstanding arts of

Central and Eastern European Review

defiance against the oppression of women. Dibra concludes the sizeable volume with short portraits of various foreign women whose work has benefitted Albania.

The modest price of only 15 Euros should further ensure rapid sales of this tome, amongst those who can pick it up in Shkodër! (or contact the author direct to find out the cost and method of payment, including mailing: Zdibra@yahoo.it)

Antonia Young is author of the annotated bibliography *Albania* (ABC-Clio, 1997), also the essay 'Kosova' in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (2010), as well as 'Bloodfeud Mediation' and 'Peace Parks' in the *Oxford International Encyclopedia of Peace* (New York, 2010). She is Honorary Research Fellow in the Department of Peace Studies at the University of Bradford.