



Biografi: A Traveler's Tale

Lloyd Jones

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In 1991, with communism in tatters throughout Eastern Europe, Jones journeyed to a most unlikely destination: Albania. What he found was a relentlessly bizarre world of half-truths and fictions, a world where your status and sometimes your life hinged on your biografi. Named one of Publishers Weekly's Best Books of the Year. Map.

Biografi: A Traveler's Tale Details

Date : Published November 14th 1994 by Mariner Books (first published 1993)

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Author : Lloyd Jones

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From Reader Review Biografi: A Traveler's Tale for online ebook

Adam says

Has the writer really discovered the Albanian dictator's Enver Hoxha's double???

PS: I visited Albania during the last year of Hoxha's life.

Sharon says

Taking it to the used book store. It's too much of a chore to finish.

Betsy says

Dense, impressive, different--a New Zealander's take on Communist and Post-Communist Albania. Informative, frustrating, jumbled--a fever dream/nightmare of a book of a beleaguered people in a fallen country.

Cynthia says

ALBANIA

Anne says

BIOGRAFI by Lloyd Jones is a interesting travelogue comprised of observations and conversations with Albanians who lived through the Communist era and regime of Enver Hoxha. Once unrest turned to demonstrations and to the overthrow of the communist stranglehold on Albania, ordinary citizens were now free and their biografis were to be destroyed. The problem I had with the book is the mixing of fact and fiction. After a while I didn't know what was true.

Michelle says

I gave up on this book about chapter 7. It started off ok: flash back narrative, jump to present tense, back story of interesting political characters, and then it all fell apart. Lots of pokey observations on the color of tunics and who ate what yogurt. Sigh. I had such hopes.

Shonna Froebel says

<http://cdnbookworm.blogspot.ca/2015/1...>

Reed says

A solid fusion of travel memoir and exploration of culture/ Albania post-Hoxha. Having traveled in Albania certainly helped to put context and imagery into the reading. Most interesting was the quest to find and the history of one of Enver Hoxha's former body doubles.

Floortje Zwigtmann says

Atmospheric account of a voyage through 1990's Albania. The mix of fiction and non-fiction didn't bother me. Impressive post stamp portraits of historical figures, too.

Ted says

Albania may be crazier than North Korea..

Alvin Rc says

The 1994 novel BIOGRAFI by Lloyd Jones, the author of the wonderful Mister Pip, is an astonishing literary account of the author's journey to Albania, a country, which according to him, was but an hour's flight from Italy but another century removed from Europe. Jones's visit to the terribly damaged country happened in 1991, six years after the death of Hoxha, when the country was still struggling to recover from the devastations Hoxha's regime had inflicted. The narrative was woven around his search for Petar Shapallo, who, in the story, was a pathetic dentist who had a great resemblance to Hoxha, had been abducted from a remote village, had undergone plastic surgery, had been made to live as Hoxha's body double and kept under house arrest, who had fled from certainty of death when the dictator died because he would be of no further use, and who had traveled the convalescing country to visit places from his past. When they finally met, the author/narrator joined the broken body double in the latter's journey to the past as the former generously detailed his observations of the wreck – people and structures – left by the mad regime of Hoxha.

Biografi is a marvel.

Calzean says

This was so well written that I thought was a travel documentary until I read the Afterword. Jones visited Albania in 1991 and in his book he tells of the frightening country that had been produced

during the 40-year reign of the country's megalomaniac dictator Hoxha.

Every citizen had their own Biografi which documented everything the Government knew of them and whatever facts the secret police wanted to write regardless of the truth. Since the secret police needed enemies of the State they freely invented charges of treason, sedition, fraud or whatever to maintain their control of the populace.

When Hoxha died, Albania was an economic, social and political mess. A very scary book on what can happen.

John says

Biografi is an extraordinary book. The narrative easily carried me along and i was captivated by Lloyd Jones's lovely prose. The 'controversy' in the afterword about fiction/non-fiction was hilarious, adding to my enjoyment.

Helena says

A bizarre and fascinating mix of fact and fiction. I only picked this up because I read *Mister Pip* and figured it would be an obvious next step in my relationship with Mr. Jones. I'm not sure what motivates one to write about traveling to Albania in the early 1990s. Neither does Mr. Jones, obviously, who supplements his travelogue with the story of Petar Shapallo, a dentist forced to spend his life as a body double for Communist leader Enver Hoxha. The result is an indistinguishable blend of reality and fantasy that would set Oprah on the warpath.
