STAVRO SKENDI

The Albanian National Awakening

1878-1912

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by Stavro Skendi

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To the Memory of My Parents

Preface

SOME YEARS AGO, while engaged in a project on the history of Albania, I found myself at a loss to cover the period from the collapse of the Albanian League (1881) to the declaration of the Young Turk Revolution. Neither the general books on Albania—and most of the books on that country are general in character—nor the few existing historical studies treated of that period: they jumped from generalities regarding the Congress of Berlin to generalities about the Albanian revolts during the Young Turk regime. When a publication dealt with the period at all, interest was concentrated on the rivalry between Austria-Hungary and Italy in the Adriatic.

The need to fill the gap was also recognized—following the publication of several of my articles on Albanian nationalist trends in the period under study—by two very different historians, both of world-wide reputation. One was the late Professor Carlton J. H. Hayes at Columbia University; the other, Professor W. N. Medlicott, formerly at Oxford University and now at London University. Both scholars encouraged my efforts, Professor Hayes urging me to write a book "with stress on Albanian nationalism."

There were, however, several difficulties in carrying out the project. The first step was to dig out the facts from the archives. Because of Austria-Hungary's special interest in Albania, after the Congress of Berlin, the first archives to be investigated were those in Vienna. While on a trip from the USSR to Yugoslavia, I stopped for a week in the Austrian capital to examine the *Haus-Hof-und Staatsarchiv* and concluded that the material preserved there justified a study of the Albanian national awakening (1878–1912). Two years later I spent a summer doing research in those archives. Since Italy had been the rival of Austria-Hungary in Albania at that time, it was also necessary to study the Italian archives in Rome—*Archivio Centrale dello Stato* and *Archivio Storico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri*—mostly to check on the facts and to reach a more balanced judgment. In order to round

out the research, the archives of a third power, France—*Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères,* Paris—came under examination, especially since they were rather rich in information in Albanian domestic affairs.

But archival material alone, however essential in this instance, could not convey a complete picture of the developments during the period under consideration. I have also studied pertinent published material, especially contemporary periodicals and political pamphlets.

Further difficulty was encountered in the treatment of the material. There was a substantial difference in development between the southern and northern parts of Albania. Moreover, the division of the population into three religious groups, each with its own particular cultural orientation and political interests, rendered the picture more complex. The interests of the great powers—in this case Austria-Hungary and Italy—and the neighboring states, which had their own aims, added to the complexity.

The editors of the documents on medieval Albania maintained that during the Middle Ages that country was a "monad" in which the Balkan world was reflected.* As will be seen in the present study, there is strong reason to hold that in the period 1878–1912 Albania was even more of a Balkan "monad."

A matter for investigation was whether in the meantime the Russians or the Albanians had written anything significant on this subject. In 1959 a book by I. G. Senkevich on the liberation movement of the Albanian people in the years 1905–1912 (*Osvoboditel'noe dvizhenie albanskogo naroda v 1905–1912gg.,* Moscow) was published by the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. Although bearing the name of one writer, it is undoubtedly a collective work, written with the aid of Albanian scholars. It is based preponderantly on material of the *Haus-Hof-und Staatsarchiv,* which Tirana has had microfilmed and to which it has given

* L. Thallóczy, C. Jireček, and E. Šufflay, eds., *Acta et Diplomata res Albaniae mediae aetatis Illustrantia,* Vienna, 1913, I, vi.

its own classification. Apart from the Marxian slant, which was to be expected, the Soviet book contains certain misinterpretations, which have been pointed out in the present work. In 1961 Albanian historians prepared for the students of the State University of Tirana two short mimeographed volumes: one covering the period 1839–1900; the other, the period 1900–1919. Both of them are devoid of footnotes, but one who is familiar with the documents of the *Haus-Hof-und Staatsarchiv* can easily discover which documents were used. For the period 1905–1912, there is a striking similarity, indeed often identity, between the Tirana mimeographed volume and I. G. Senkevich's book, which testifies to the collective character of the latter. However, the Tirana volumes, having been published after the Albanian-Soviet conflict, manifest a certain departure from Moscow influences and a more nationalist tendency than previous Albanian historical studies. I have not ignored these works by Communist historians, but have made critical use of them.

The Turkish references in I. G. Senkevich's book or in the Tirana volumes are not founded on Ottoman archival material. The archives of the Ottoman empire regarding Albania have not yet been studied. The difficulty appears to lie not so much in their bulk as in the lack of classification and of competent scholars to do the needed research. When exploited, the Ottoman archives will contribute to the completeness of Albanian history in the years 1878–1912, especially if compared with the archival material found in the capitals of Western Europe.

I wish to thank the officers of the various archives who were helpful to me, particularly Dr. Anna H. Benna of the *Haus-Hof-und Staatsarchiv,* who was always ready to lend her assistance.

While engaged in this project, I benefited from the encouragement of Professor Philip E. Mosely of Columbia University, to whom I wish to express my warm thanks. Special appreciation is due to Dr. John C. Campbell of the Council on Foreign Relations, a Balkan specialist of long standing,

who read the manuscript with care and gave his evaluation. I am also deeply indebted to my wife, whose comments helped to improve this book.

The project could not have been carried through had it not been for the generous grants, both for research and writing, provided by the Joint Committee on Slavic and East European Studies, of the American Council of Learned Societies and the Social Science Research Council, to which I wish to express my gratitude. Thanks also go to Columbia University for defraying the cost of typing the manuscript.

Institute on East Central Europe
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May 1965

STAVRO SKENDI

Note on Transcription and Toponymies

I. PRONUNCIATION

1. *Albanian* spelling is phonetic. Except for the following letters, the rest are pronounced like their English counterparts:

LETTER[S]	PRONOUNCED LIKE	AS IN
c	"ts"	cats
ç	"ch"	church
dh	"th"	father
ë	"i"	first (but less rounded)
g	"g"	girl
gj	g′	(palatalized g)
j	"y"	yes
l	l (soft)	leaf
ll	l (hard)	lord
nj	"gn"	*ligne* (French)
q	k′	(palatalized k)
th	"th"	thin
x	"ds"	gods
xh	"j"	jam
y	"u"	*huile* (French)
zh	"s"	pleasure

2. As for the reading of words in *Turkish,* the following letters are pronounced differently than in English:

LETTER	PRONOUNCED LIKE	AS IN
c	"j"	John
ç	"ch"	church
ş	"sh"	shop
ö	"eu"	*peu* (French)
ü	"u"	*lune* (French) or Türe (German)
ğ	y (palatal) or gh (velar; γ)	saying

3. Whereas Albanian employs mostly digraphs in the alphabet, *Serbocroatian* makes use primarily of diacritical marks. The pronunciation of the following letters should be noted:

LETTER	PRONOUNCED LIKE ALBANIAN
č	ç
dz	x
dž	xh
š	sh (the same as English "sh")
j	j
nj	nj (n')
ž	zh
ć	q (palatalized t or k)
đ or gj	gj (palatalized d or g)

II. TOPONYMIES

The place names have various spellings, both in the Balkan languages and in the Western ones. The following are those more frequently used in the book:

AS SPELLED	OTHER SPELLINGS
1. Towns	
Cetinje	Cettigné, Cettigne
Dibër	Dibra or Debar
Durrës	Durazzo
Gjakovë	Jakova, Đakovica
Gjirokastër (Gjinokastër in Geg dialect)	Argyrokastro, Argyrocastro, Argirocastro
Ipek (Turkish)	Peć, Pejë
Janina	Jōannina, Yannina
Korçë	Korcha, Kortcha, Koritsa, Korytza, Corizza
Krujë (Krue in Geg dialect)	Croya
Lesh (Lezhë " " ")	Alessio
Monastir	Bitolj, Bitola
Përmet	Premeti
Prishtinë	Prishtina, Priština
Sarandë	Santi Quaranta
Shëngjin	Shën Gjin, San Giovanni di Medua
Shkodër	Scutari (Scutari d'Albanie, Scutari d'Albania), Skutari, Skadar

Tetovë	Kalkandelen (Turkish), Tetovo
Üsküb (Turkish)	Skoplje, Skopje, Scopia, Uskub

2. Rivers and Regions

Bojanë (Buenë in Geg)	Bojana, Boyana
Çamëri	Tsamouria, Chamouria, Ciamouria
Dukagjin	Ducagini
Shkumbî (Shkumbin in Tosk)	Shkumbini
Vijosë	Voyoussa

In keeping with the form commonly used in the Albanian maps, the indeterminate form was chosen for the toponymies in Albanian: Shkodër and not Shkodra, Çamëri and not Çamëria, Elbasan and not Elbasani, Ipek and not Ipeku. Only for Albania's capital the English form Tirana was preserved.

NOTE ON THE SPELLING OF PROPER NAMES IN TURKISH

There is a tendency in Turkish (and in Albanian also) to pronounce the written voiced consonant at the end of a proper name (or a word) as unvoiced. Owing to this, with the adoption of the Latin alphabet for Turkish, an inconsistency ensued in spelling. One finds both forms of a proper name, as it was originally written and as it is actually pronounced: Hamid and Hamit, Necib and Necip, and so on. However, since in Osman Turkish one Arabic letter stood at times for more than one sound (phoneme), the inconsistency spread to comprise other positions and other letters. This explains the various spellings for the name of two generals mentioned in this text: Dorgud, Durgud, Torgud, Turgut, Dorgut, Durgut.

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Abbreviations

(Complete citations in the bibliography)

A and P	Accounts and Papers, London.
ACS	Political and other files (Carte), Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Rome.
AMAE	Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris.
ASMAE	Political correspondence, Archivio Storico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Rome.
DDF	Documents diplomatiques français 1871-1914, Paris.
DDI	I Documenti diplomatici italiani, Rome.
GP	Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette 1871-1914, Berlin.
HHStA	Haus-Hof-und-Staatsarchiv, Vienna.
Ö-U.A	Österreich-Ungarns Aussenpolitik 1908-1914, Vienna.

Introduction: Albania's Legacy

ALBANIA was one of the first Balkan countries to be invaded by the Ottomans. In 1385 the Albanian feudal lord of Durrës (Durazzo), Karl Thopia, expelled from his possessions by a ruling house in the north, the Balshas, appealed to the Ottomans for support. Balsha II hastened to oppose the Turks, but his resistance was broken near the Vijosë (Voyoussa) river.[1] It appears that after the victory of the Ottomans the principal Albanian feudal lords recognized the suzerainty of the Sultan.[2] Yet, whenever the Turks were in trouble far from Albania, those lords revolted and regained much of the territory they had previously lost.[3]

A great Ottoman invasion took place in 1423, under Sultan Murad II, and it expanded as far as the Adriatic coast, which was controlled to a great extent by Venice.[4] The Albanian feudal lords of the central and southern parts of the country attempted to regain their independence; they revolted and their victories, particularly that of the Aranitis (Arianitis) in 1433, attracted the attention of the Christian West.[5] This attention increased with the resistance of the Albanians under the leadership of George Kastrioti Skenderbeg (Scanderbeg).

Skenderbeg was the son of the Albanian feudal lord of Krujë (Croya), a fortified town in upper middle Albania, and its surroundings. He became a Moslem either as a hostage in the Sultan's palace or under his father's persuasion.[6] After the battle near Niš (1443), where he had fought on the side

[1]N. Jorga, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches,* Gotha, 1908, I, 255.
[2]*Ibid.,* p. 261.
[3]Cf. A. Gegaj, *L'Albanie et l'invasion turque au XV^e siècle,* Louvain, 1937, pp. 48-49.
[4]Cf. *ibid.,* p. 39; E. Rossi, "Saggio sul dominio turco e l'introduzione dell' Islam in Albania," *Rivista d'Albania,* III (1942), 201.
[5]Cf. C. Jireček, *Geschichte der Serben,* Gotha, 1918, Vol. II, Part 1, pp. 154, 171, and "Albanien in der Vergangenheit," L. v. Thallóczy, ed., *Illyrisch-albanische Forschungen,* Munich and Leipzig, 1916, I, 81; cited hereafter as *Illyrisch-albanische Forschungen.* On the Aranitis, see F. Babinger, *Das Ende der Arianiten,* Munich, 1960.
[6]F. S. Noli, *George Castrioti Scanderbeg,* New York, 1947, p. 30.

of the defeated Ottomans against the Christians, who were headed by John Hunyadi, king of Hungary, he rushed to Albania and raised the banner of revolt in the center of his father's lands.[7] He immediately returned to Christianity, but this act was not just a diplomatic move like that of his father, who had been "converted" several times.[8] Skenderbeg invited the Moslem colonists and converts to choose between Christianity and death; those who did not reject Islam lost their lives.[9] He thereby declared a Holy War from which there could be no retreat.

For twenty-four years Skenderbeg led his countrymen in wars against the Ottomans in defense of their country and of Christianity. He was helped by the Christian West, particularly by the king of Naples, Alphonse V, who continued to represent Western ambitions in the Balkans, and by the popes. Before his death in 1468, Pope Nicholas V called him "Champion of Christendom," a title which was confirmed by three of his successors.[10] After Skenderbeg's death, the Turks gradually extended their conquests in Albania, Shkodër (Scutari) being the last city to fall (1478). The commander who succeeded in uniting the Albanians, and who led them in so many victories against the Ottomans, was destined to become their national hero.

In the invasions before Skenderbeg's time, the Ottomans pursued a conciliatory policy. They allowed the Albanian feudal lords to maintain their positions, on condition that they pay tribute, send their sons as hostages to the Sultan's court, and furnish auxiliary troops.[11] In a record-book of *timars* (Ottoman military fiefs) in southern and central Al-

[7]F. Babinger, *Mehmed der Eroberer und seine Zeit,* Munich, 1953, p. 56; F. S. Noli, *op.cit.,* p. 31.

[8]*Ibid.,* p. 35.

[9]*Ibid.,* p. 36.

[10]*Ibid.,* p. 73.

[11]H. Inalcık, "Timariotes chrétiens en Albanie au XV^e siècle, d'après un registre de timars ottoman," *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchiv,* IV (1952), 120.

bania for the years 1431–1432, only 30 per cent of the fiefs were held by Turks from Asia Minor; the rest were in the hands of Albanians.[12] As in the case of Hercegovina later, it was not obligatory for a Christian Albanian feudal lord to become a Moslem in order to preserve his possessions or part of them as *timars.* The record-book mentions timariots who maintained their Christian faith for two generations.[13]

The system of *timars,* on the whole, prevented the Ottoman conquests from assuming the character of a simple military occupation.[14] The extensive use of the system in Albania, however, seems to have been influenced by local considerations. The inhabitants were warlike people, inclined to rebellion, and their country was well protected by mountains. Across the Adriatic was the Catholic West, and Venice, a potential enemy, was in possession of a significant part of the Albanian littoral. The Albanian feudal lords were small and more or less independent; with as good an offer as the *timar,* it was easy for the Ottoman State to come to terms with each one separately. It was not even very difficult for them to become Moslems. Before the coming of the Ottomans, when Albania was the battlefield between Byzantium and the West, the feudal lords had led an amphibious life between Catholicism and Orthodoxy.[15] The policy of the Ottoman government in Albania in the early period was determined by its interest in maintenance of peace on a vulnerable frontier and recruitment of support.

[12]The record-book, discovered and edited by H. Inalcık: *Hicrî 835 tarihli sûret-i defter-i sancak-ı Arvanid* (Copy of a Record Book of the Sandjak of Albania Dating from 835 of the Hegira [A.D. 1431-1432]), Ankara, 1954; cf. his "Timariotes chrétiens en Albanie au XV^e siècle, d'après un registre de timars ottoman," p. 123.

[13]*Ibid.,* pp. 130-131.

[14]Cf. H.A.R. Gibb and H. Bowen, *Islamic Society and The West,* London, New York, Toronto, 1950, Vol. I, Part 1, p. 46.

[15]M. Šufflay, "Die Kirchenzustände im vortürkischen Albanien. Die orthodoxe Durchbruchszone im katholischen Damme," *Illyrisch-albanische Forschungen,* I, 241.

But the long wars between the Albanians and the Ottomans upset this situation. Many of the lords who remained in the country espoused Islam in order to preserve their positions, and a part of the population naturally followed the nobility in its conversion. But some, like the Aranitis, the Muzakis, and the Dukagjinis, fled with their people to southern Italy.[16] This great exodus was followed by several other migrations of southern Albanians. Among them were descendants of those Albanians who in the latter half of the fourteenth century had settled in Greece, especially in the Morea, not solely as conquerors but also upon the invitation of local rulers, who needed them as settlers.[17] To this day one hears in the Albanian settlements of Greece a southern Albanian dialect in its old form.[18] Small migrations from Albania proper to Italy continued until 1744, the last to migrate being inhabitants of Himarë, on the littoral south of Vlorë (Valona).[19] In addition to southern Italy, particularly Calabria, Albanian settlements were established in Sicily. Of these Albanian colonists, who call themselves *Arbreshë* (Albanians) but whom the Italians call Italo-Albanians, over the years some became Catholics, while the majority joined the Uniate church, thus preserving the Orthodox liturgy but recognizing the supremacy of the pope.[20] They constituted the main Albanian diaspora.

Already after the collapse of the Serbian state of Stefan Dušan (1355), Albanians had penetrated into Old Serbia and

[16]K. Jireček, "Albanien in der Vergangenheit," *Illyrisch-albanische Forschungen,* I, 83-84.

[17]Cf. G. F. Finlay, *A History of Greece, from Its Conquest by the Romans to the Present Time,* Oxford, 1877, VI, 28-29; K. Jireček, *op.cit.,* pp. 79-80; G. Stadtmüller, "Die albanische Volkstumsgeschichte als Forschungsproblem," *Leipziger Vierteljahrsschrift für Südosteuropa,* V (1941), 73-74.

[18]See the study by G. Weigand, "Das Albanesische in Attika," *Balkan Archiv,* II (1926), 167-225.

[19]Cf. M. Šufflay, *Srbi i Arbanasi* (Serbs and Albanians), Belgrade, 1925, p. 80.

[20]Concerning the Italo-Albanians, see L. v. Thallóczy, "Die albanische Diaspora," *Illyrisch-albanische Forschungen,* I, 330-340.

a part of western and northern Macedonia.[21] In 1388 Albanian emigrants were found as far as Dubrovnik. But subsequent to the 1690 exodus of the Serbs to Hungary, Albanians spread further northeastward in present Yugoslavia. They settled in Kosovo (Kosovo-Metohija), Novi Pazar, and even around Niš. Ipek (Peć), which for six centuries had been the see of the Serbian church, became like Gjakovë (Đakovica) and Gusinj, an Albanian city.[22] From the eighteenth century on the Albanian migration into Macedonia was intensified.[23] It was not an Albanian diaspora but an Albanian expansion.

When the Ottomans arrived in Albania, they found, as a consequence of the 1054 schism, a Catholic north and an Orthodox south. They introduced their own religion: Islam. As noted, the Turks did not at the outset employ force for conversions. The apostasies occurred after Skenderbeg's death. This was natural, for the Albanian hero's wars had not only been long and bloody but had also borne the stamp of the cross against the crescent.

Among the Catholics the new faith does not appear to have made great progress in the sixteenth century. In a document describing the situation of the Albanian Catholic Church in the half century preceding the creation of the Propaganda Fide (1622), we read: ". . . all the Albanians desire naturally to be liberated from the Turkish yoke, and they could do this by themselves, since only one thirteenth of them are Turks [Moslems], and the rest Christians, Catholics and warlike. . . ." [24] And in a reference of 1610 one reads that the

[21]Cf. G. Stadtmüller, *op.cit.*, p. 73, and "Die Islamisierung bei den Albanern," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas,* III (1955), 412, 420 and note 86, 421.

[22]M. Šufflay, *Srbi i Arbanasi,* pp. 80, 81-82; K. Jireček, "Albanien in der Vergangenheit," pp. 87-88; J. Cvijić, *La Peninsule balkanique,* Paris, 1918, pp. 122-123.

[23]M. Šufflay, *op.cit.*, p. 81; J. Cvijić, *op.cit.*, p. 123.

[24]The text of the report, which is in the Vatican Archives, has been reproduced in F. Cordignano, *Geografia ecclesiastica dell'Albania (dagli ultimi decenni del secolo XVI⁰ alla metà del secolo XVII⁰)*, Rome, 1934, pp. 231-232. Cordignano believes that the document is from the end of the 16th or the beginning of the 17th century.

Catholic population exceeded the Moslem by a ratio of ten to one.[25]

Gradually, however, Moslem influences gained converts among the Catholic population. The conversions became more frequent in the large towns. Most of the villages were inhabited by Christians, with a small admixture of Moslems. In fact, the countryside and the mountains from Elbasan to Kelmend, bordering on Montenegro, yielded slowly to Islam.[26] The majority of the converts were men. Women, although married to Moslems, often retained their Christian religion, and were a factor in creating a good feeling between the members of the two faiths. In some instances the followers of the Prophet contributed toward the support of the parish priest, as the majority of them had Christian wives.[27]

But in the course of the seventeenth century the Catholic population began to decline rapidly. Three explanations have been offered for the general lapse to Islam: the desire to avoid the payment of taxes; the attraction of worldly advantages, for in the Ottoman empire the political-economic basis was religion and not nationality; and the insufficient number of intelligent clergy to supply the spiritual needs of the population.[28] The Franciscan brothers, who first came to Albania in the thirteenth century, were very active in opposing the conversions. Indeed, they saved Catholicism from ruin during the difficult seventeenth century, although several episcopal sees were lost in the north.[29]

On the other hand, political reasons for the decrease of the Catholic population were not absent. The Ottoman empire saw Catholicism as an adversary with which it could not come to terms. In addition to papal Rome there were the powers

[25]T. W. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam,* London, 1913, p. 180.

[26]Cf. F. Cordignano, *L'Albania atraverso l'opera e gli scritti di un grande Missionario italiano, il P. Domenico Pasi, S. I. (1847-1914),* Rome, 1933-1934, II, 361.

[27]See T. W. Arnold, *op.cit.,* pp. 180-182.

[28]*Ibid.,* p. 182; F. Cordignano, *op.cit.,* I, 96.

[29]*Ibid.,* I, 95, and II, 366.

of the West, which could organize an attack in the name of Catholicism. When the Turco-Venetian war of 1645 broke out, the Albanian Catholics, instigated by the high clergy, sided with Venice. As the reprisals were harsh, many embraced Islam and several joined the Orthodox Church, the adherents of which remained faithful to the Ottoman empire.[30] A forced conversion ensued after the revolt of 1689 and the subsequent retreat of the Austrian armies, when the Pasha of Ipek deported inhabitants of northern Albania, who were mostly Catholics, to the plain of Serbia (*in planitiem Serviae*), and those villages were compelled to pass to Islam.[31]

In the eighteenth century the Russo-Turkish wars began and the pressure on the Catholics was eased. Austria also, by the treaty of Sistova in 1791, renewed her privileges over the Catholics of the Ottoman empire.[32] Yet accessions to Islam—sometimes for trivial reasons—continued up to more recent times; when Evliya Celebi, an Ottoman high official, visited Shkodër in 1668, it had only eleven mosques as compared with twenty-six at the beginning of the twentieth century.[33]

In the lowlands of central Albania, which encompass both sides of the Shkumbî River, Islam gained the most converts. The inhabitants of this region felt the Ottoman rule more than did the mountaineers of the secluded regions of the north. Moreover, the lowlands had been the borderlands between Catholicism and Orthodoxy, where religious oscillations had taken place, and were therefore more vulnerable to the propagation of Islam.

Conditions in southern Albania were different from those in the north. The population was Orthodox in faith, and to the Patriarchate of Constantinople the Ottomans accorded special treatment. Following the fall of the city (1453), Meh-

[30]T. W. Arnold, *op.cit.*, p. 188.

[31]F. Cordignano, *op.cit.*, I, 90; T. W. Arnold, *op.cit.*, p. 196.

[32]See Article XII of the treaty in T. Ippen, "Das religiöse Protectorat Österreich-Ungarns in der Türkei," *Die Kultur*, III (1902), 300.

[33]F. Babinger, *Ewlijâ Tschelebi's Reisewege in Albanien*, Berlin, 1930, pp. 4-5.

med II sought the allegiance of the Orthodox Christians in the Balkans by proclaiming himself the protector of the Orthodox Church and granting to the Ecumenical Patriarch the old rights and privileges.[34] Moreover, the Patriarch assumed considerable temporal power over the Orthodox subjects of the Sultan.[35]

During the first centuries of occupation the Ottomans were at the height of their power and feared no intervention from an external Orthodox Christian state. There appeared to be no reason therefore to use force for apostasy. So long as the Orthodox Christians were not dangerous they could be milked better than the "true believers," and conversion *en masse* was in no one's interest.[36] On the basis of an Ottoman record-book of *timars,* approximately of the year 1510 (912 of the Hegira), there were in the district of Vlorë 1206 Moslem as against 14,304 Christian families, and in the district of Gjirokastër (Argyrokastro) only 53 Moslem and 12,257 Christian families.[37]

However, when the Orthodox Albanian embraced Islam, he did so for the same useful reasons as the Catholic of the north. The ignorance and illiteracy of the clergy were contributing factors. But the ignorance of the Orthodox priest was not as important as that of the Catholic, since the traditionalism of Orthodoxy did not need a rational theological culture. The force of religious conviction among the Orthodox was not dictated by the understanding of dogmas, but by the unshaken belief that they had inherited from their ancestors the sole true religion and that they had to maintain

[34]Cf. T. W. Arnold, *op.cit.,* pp. 145-146; T. H. Papadopoullos, *Studies and Documents Relating to the History of the Greek Church and People under Turkish Domination,* Brussels, 1952, p. 17. Although the text of the document to the Patriarch has not been transmitted to posterity, the official confirmation of it as a *berat* or as a chrysobull has been admitted. *Ibid.,* p. 7.

[35]*Ibid.,* p. 10.

[36]F. W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans,* Oxford, 1929, II, 469.

[37]H. Inalcık, *op.cit.,* p. 132.

this religion and transmit it unchanged.[38] The traditionalism of the Orthodox Church was undoubtedly a great force against accessions to Islam.

Yet the disinterest of the higher clergy, as well as the gradual decline of the Archbishopric of Ohrid (commonly called the Patriarchate of Ohrid in the Ottoman period), on which the Orthodox bishoprics of Durrës and southern Albania depended, weakened the resistance of the southern Albanians to the faith of Islam.[39] Although in 1767 the Archbishop of Ohrid was brought under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the abuses by representatives of the Church continued, for simony had expanded. Even the Greeks themselves began to strongly oppose the exactions of the Orthodox Church.[40]

Islamic pressure on the Orthodox Christians started with the decline of the Ottoman empire and the Russo-Turkish wars of the eighteenth century. The officials in the provinces were corrupt and wanted to enrich themselves at the expense of the population. The Christians were naturally more exposed to extortion and ill-treatment, owing to the difficulties that lay in the way of obtaining redress at law, and some of them may have sought relief from their sufferings in a change of faith.[41] In the Russo-Turkish war of 1768, when Alexis Orlov's enterprise failed, the Ottomans made reprisals against the Orthodox Christians, whom they considered allies of Russia, and used pressure to convert them.[42]

The conversions were more numerous around the city of Berat, in south-central Albania, where the Moslems bordered

[38]Cf. L. Hadrovics, *Le Peuple serbe et son église sous la domination turque*, Paris, 1947, p. 22.

[39]Cf. G. I. Konidarē, *Hē hellēnikē ekklēsia ōs politistikē dynamis en tē historia tēs Khersonēsou tou Haimou* (The Greek Church as a Civilizing Force in the History of the Balkan Peninsula), Athens, 1948, pp. 178-179.

[40]Cf. T. H. Papadopoullos, *op.cit.*, pp. 48, 133.

[41]T. W. Arnold, *op.cit.*, p. 115.

[42]See "Moskhopolis," in *Megalē Hellēnikē Egkyklopaideia* (Great Greek Encyclopedia), Athens, 1931, XVII, 399.

on the Christians. Since 1670 this city had been predominantly Moslem: nineteen of its thirty sections were inhabited by Moslems.[43] Several quarters had been compelled to apostasy, and many churches held no liturgies, because of a lack of priests.[44] Yet it was the Orthodox Church and the Greek school which strengthened Albanian resistance to the spread of Islam in the south during the eighteenth century. One of the leading figures of this period was Kosmas Aitōlos, who traveled and preached over a great part of Albania. He even went as far as Durrës and the surroundings of Krujë, an indication that there were Orthodox Christians in those regions.[45] But the center of his activity was Berat, where in 1779 he fell a martyr to his religion.[46]

Both in the north and in the middle of Albania there appeared a phenomenon, noticed also in other parts of the Balkans—crypto-Christianity. The crypto-Christians lived in regions near those inhabited by Moslems and professed Islam, but satisfied their consciences by practicing Christianity in private. They emerged in periods of outbursts of anti-Christian fanaticism.[47] In the north the crypto-Christians were concentrated in the Pashalik of Prizren; they were called *laramanë* (motley), and they lived chiefly around Ipek and in the plain of Kosovo.[48] In south-central Albania, in Shpat, a region comprising a number of villages between Elbasan and Berat, the inhabitants remained crypto-Christians until the

[43]Cf. F. Babinger, *Ewlijâ Tschelebis . . .*, p. 19.

[44]G. I. Konidarē, *op.cit.*, pp. 178-179.

[45]Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 182-183.

[46]Cf. *ibid.*, p. 179 and F. Mikhalopoulos, *Kosmas ho Aitōlos* (Kosmas from Aetolia), Athens, 1940, pp. 119-120.

[47]T. W. Arnold, *op.cit.*, p. 182; F. W. Hasluck, *op.cit.*, II, 471, 474, note 2, 723.

[48]V. Prennushi, *Kângë popullore gegënishte* (Popular Geg [northern] Songs), Sarajevo, 1911, note on p. 10; F. Cordignano, *L'Albania atraverso l'opera e gli scritti . . .*, II, 134-135. It is interesting to note that in Cyprus the crypto-Christians were called "piebalds," a term similar to that of the Albanian "motley." See R. M. Dawkins, "The Crypto-Christians of Turkey," *Byzantion*, VIII (1933), 256 and note 1.

turn of the century.[49] Whereas the former were Catholic crypto-Christians, the latter were Orthodox crypto-Christians.

Bektashism also spread in Albania as nowhere else in the Balkans. This Moslem pantheistic order is believed to have originated in the thirteenth century in a frontier region of Anatolia, where Christianity, Islam, and paganism coexisted.[50] It is an offshoot of Shia Mohammedanism and has numerous points of contact with Christianity.[51] Bektashism was apparently introduced into Albania sometime in the fifteenth century by the Janissaries of the Ottoman army.[52] But the great expansion of Bektashism in that country occurred in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, during the time of Ali Pasha Tepelena (Tepedenleli) of Janina, who is believed to have been a Bektashi himself.[53] The greater freedom of Bektashism and its relationship with Christianity must have had an appeal for the Albanians, among whom it did not remain an order but became a sect.

As a result of the Ottoman conquest, the religious picture of Albania was further complicated. The Catholics remained in the north, confined more or less to an enclave, with Shkodër as the core. The Moslems were spread all over the country, predominantly in the central parts and Kosovo. Except for the Bektashis of the south and the few in the middle regions and Kosovo they were all Orthodox (Sunni) Moslems. Most of the Orthodox Christians lived in territories south of the Shkumbî river, principally in the districts of Korçë and Gjirokastër. This religious composition was destined to play a predominant role in Albania's evolution.

[49]Cf. J. G. Hahn, *Albanesische Studien,* Vienna, 1853, I, 18; G. I. Konidarē, *op.cit.,* p. 177.

[50]J. K. Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes,* Hartford, 1937, pp. 22, 30-33.

[51]*Ibid.,* pp. 210, 215-218; F. W. Hasluck, *op.cit.,* II, 568.

[52]J. K. Birge, *op.cit.,* p. 70. It has recently been maintained that the first Bektashi dervishes set foot on Albanian territory between 1644 and 1662; see H. J. Kissling, "Zur Frage der Anfänge des Bektaschîtums in Albanien," *Oriens,* Leiden, XV (1962), 285.

[53]F. W. Hasluck, *op.cit.,* II, 537, 588; J. K. Birge, *op.cit.,* pp. 72-73.

Natural barriers have also divided the Albanians into two main groups, those who live in the mountainous regions north of the Shkumbî river and are called *Gegs* (Ghegs), among whom are included the Albanians of Kosovo, and those who live south of that river, in the lowlands and plains, and are called *Tosks*. Their territories are respectively named *Gegëni* and *Toskëri*.

When the Turks conquered the country, they found among the Geg highlanders an ancient organization, which was tribal. They not only maintained it but were also compelled to grant it self-government. This organization continued to exist until very recently, more or less in its original form. Because it was an anachronism in Europe and often discussed, foreigners usually tended to forget that it was confined to the highlands of the north.

There is a strong resemblance between the organization of the Montenegrin tribes and the Albanian *fis*-es. The *fis*, considered sometimes as a tribe and at other times as a clan, corresponds more correctly to the Latin *gens*. The family is the nucleus of the *fis* and its head is the oldest male of the parental or grandparental generation, the patriarch.[54]

There is also a territorial-political organization, closely connected with the *fis*, called *bajrak*. The *bajrak* (Turkish word for banner, standard), composed of one or more *fis*-es, is "a geographical area with some kind of natural unity." It is a political union of one or more *fis*-es under a single head, the *bajraktar* (standard-bearer), whose office is hereditary in certain families. Originally the *bajraktar* had only the modest office of leading the highlanders to the battlefield; his importance seems to have grown during the time of Kara Mahmud Pasha Bushati, ruler of Shkodër toward the end of the eighteenth century, who needed the armed highlanders in his wars. It may also be said that each *bajrak* constitutes an

[54]For the organization of the Albanian *fis*, see F. Cordignano, *op.cit.*, pp. 103-105, and C. S. Coon, *The Mountains of Giants. A Racial and Cultural Study of the North Albanian Mountain Ghegs.* Cambridge, Mass., 1950, pp. 27-28; for that of the Montenegrin tribes, see J. Cvijić, *op.cit.*, pp. 318-332.

autonomous state governed by customs and other juridical regulations basically common to all the other *bajraks.* A tribe in the mountains of northern Albania is "an aggregation of *bajraks,*" having at the head an official chosen from a ruling family and bearing a different title in each tribe.[55]

In order to settle matters of law, assemblies of tribesmen were held under the presidency of elders, using their unwritten customary law, the Code of Lekë Dukagjini, attributed to the local lord Lekë III Dukagjini, who lived in the fifteenth century. This code had a juridical value in the mountains of Mbishkodër and Dukagjin, which also comprised Mirditë.[56] It is this customary law that has given sanctity to the popular Albanian word *besa* (word of honor); rather than break it, a mountaineer would sacrifice his life. The prerogative to make laws resided with the General Assembly of the tribe and the Partial Assemblies, which were the governing bodies.[57] In the mountains to the south, in Dibër, Mat, and Krujë, a slightly different and less consistent customary law, called the Code of Skenderbeg, prevailed.[58]

In the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century, when Menemenli Mustafa Pasha was Governor General of the vilayet of Shkodër (1856–1858), a new organization was established for the *fis*-es nearest to the city; the Mountain Committee of Shkodër (*Işkodra Cibali Komisioni*), often referred to briefly as *Xhibali* in Albanian. Its aim was to bring the *fis*-es to a closer dependence on the government. The *bajraktars* were linked with the Committee in Shkodër at the head of which stood a president, invariably a Moslem, appointed by the Governor General and chosen from among the notables of the city.[59]

[55]Cf. C. S. Coon, *op.cit.,* pp. 30-31; F. Cordignano, *op.cit.,* I, 106, 123.

[56]See S. K. Gjeçov, *Kanuni i Lekë Dukagjinit* (The Code of Lekë Dukagjini), Shkodër, 1933, p. xxix.

[57]See M. Hasluck, *The Unwritten Law in Albania,* Cambridge, 1954, Chapters XIV, XV.

[58]*Ibid.,* pp. 15, 59.

[59]Cf. T. Ippen, "Beiträge zur inneren Geschichte Albaniens in XIX. Jahrhundert," *Illyrisch-albanische Forschungen,* I, 365; S. K. Gjeçov, *op.cit.,* p. xxix; F. Cordignano, *op.cit.,* I, 390, 448.

South of the Shkumbî River, that is, among the Tosks, the tribal organization had disintegrated in the course of time and only remnants of a customary law like that of the Gegs could be found in certain mountain regions, like Kurvëlesh. In the south, the control of the Ottoman government, owing to better means of communication, had extended beyond the cities. Yet in the eighteenth century there were villages composed of *farë* (literally seeds), corresponding to a small clan, headed by elected chieftains.[60]

As in the north the Catholic and Moslem highlanders enjoyed autonomy, so in the south the Orthodox of Himarë and Suli, the latter in present-day northern Greece, lived in autonomous cantons. In both instances there were no government officials and only a small lump sum was paid as a tribute. It is interesting to note that in the north the tribute was collected by the highlanders themselves and was delivered to the Ottoman government "outside the boundary of the *Kanun* (code)." [61] Both the highlanders of *Gegëni* and the Himariots were obliged to send soldiers—in Himarë by 1868 their number could not exceed 1,000—to the Sultan, whenever he was engaged in war.[62]

In the towns the population was made up of Christians and Moslems, in varying proportion. The Christians, barred from government positions, were engaged in crafts (organized in guilds),[63] in business, and in the liberal professions.

The towns were also cultural centers. We have evidence that in the latter half of the seventeenth century there existed Turkish schools for boys and *medreses* (Moslem seminaries).[64]

[60]G. Reméramd, *Ali de Tébélen, Pacha de Janina, 1744-1822,* Paris, 1928, p. 23.

[61]S. K. Gjeçov, *op.cit.,* p. xxviii.

[62]*Ibid.*; J. Matl, ed., "Neuer Beitrag zur inneren Geschichte Südalbaniens in den 60er Jahren des 19. Jr. s-Bericht des k. k. Consuls in Janina de dato 24 Juni 1868," *Südost-Forschungen,* XVI/2 (1957), 439; G. Reméramd, *op.cit.,* p. 21.

[63]Cf. E. Rossi, *op.cit.,* pp. 209-210.

[64]See number of schools and *medreses* in the various towns in F. Babinger, *Ewlijâ Tschelebis . . .* , pp. 5, 16, 20, 25, 27.

Although Celebi's work mentions no boys' schools and *memedreses* in Elbasan, the fact that forty-six mosques existed in that city [65] implies that the *medreses* at least were numerous. Moreover, Elbasan became the most important center of Oriental culture in Albania,[66] to be surpassed in the next century by Berat and Shkodër. Turkish schools, attended solely by Moslems, continued to function in the following centuries.

The Orthodox population of Albania, which with the prevailing concept of the *millet* among the Turks came under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, attended the Greek schools. Since the sixteenth century a Greek school had functioned in the monastery of St. Nahum, on Lake Ohrid, and Greek schools are mentioned in 1723 in nearby Korçë. In the seventeenth century there were Greek schools in Zagorie and Himarë, and in 1741 in Vlorë.[67] The number of schools increased after the middle of the eighteenth century, owing particularly to the activity of Kosmas Aitōlos, who is believed to have founded more than 200 Greek schools in Albania.[68] The increase in schools was also encouraged by the Russo-Turkish treaty of Küçük Kaynarca (1774); the situation of the Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman empire improved thereafter, as Russia, liberally interpreting that treaty, claimed the protection of the Orthodox subjects of the Sultan.[69] In the nineteenth century, when the Greek state was formed, the Greek schools increased in number and expanded northward.[70]

Two centers of Greek culture exercised great influence on the Orthodox Christian Albanians: Voskopojë (Moskhopolis) and Janina. The population of Voskopojë, primarily Vlakh and Albanian, had grown to more than 40,000 in the eigh-

[65] *Ibid.*, p. 36.

[66] *Ibid.*, p. 37.

[67] T. E. Evanghelidēs, *Hē paideia epi tourkokratias* (Education under Turkish Rule), Athens, 1936, pp. 102, 129-130, 137, 173-176, 187, 194.

[68] *Ibid.*, p. 188.

[69] Cf. J. C. Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East, a Documentary Record: 1535-1914*, Princeton, 1956, I, 54.

[70] G. I. Konidarē, *op.cit.*, pp. 190, 191, note 5.

teenth century, and the city had become a significant commercial and intellectual center. It carried on trade with the West and had Greek schools dating from the previous century. In 1744 there existed a school called the New Academy, which rivaled the best Greek high schools of the time. A great number of books, especially ecclesiastical works, were printed in Voskopojë and distributed in the Orthodox Christian world, enhancing the city's prestige.[71] When it began to decline, in the last decades of the eighteenth century, Janina emerged as a Greek cultural center; it had a famous gymnasium in the nineteenth century—Zōsimaia Skholē—[72] at which some prominent Moslem Albanians in the period of national awakening were educated.

Although the population of Albania, both Christians and Moslems, spoke Albanian at home and in public, schools in the native tongue were not allowed. Albanian schools were not permitted even after the proclamation of the *Hatt-ı Humayun* (Imperial Rescript) of 1856, which promised equal treatment in education to all the peoples of the empire.[73] It was in the interest of the Porte and the Patriarchate of Constantinople to keep the Albanians divided on the basis of creed.

Nevertheless, some publications, printed abroad, did appear in Albanian; they were, however, ecclesiastical in character. Only among the *Arbresh* of Italy did a literature with nationalist tendencies emerge, around the middle of the nineteenth century. These people enjoyed cultural freedom in Italy and had been more exposed to the Western ideas of enlightenment and nationalism than Albanians in the mother country. However, indigenous Albanians, who had become aware of the nationalist trends among their Balkan neighbors, had begun to think about the fate of their country in the event of a collapse of the Ottoman empire.

In the countryside there were at first the *sipahis* (cavalry

[71]See "Moskhopolis," *op.cit.*, XVII, 399-400. There is considerable literature on this city in Greek.

[72]See "Ioannina," in *ibid.*, 1930, XII, 379-380.

[73]See text in J. C. Hurewitz, *op.cit.*, p. 151.

men who held military fiefs) and the peasants, who cultivated their lands. The Albanian *sipahis* were renowned in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries for their contribution to the military campaigns of the Ottomans.[74] In the eighteenth century, however, the army of the *sipahis* had declined. The empire was no longer conquering new lands to reward military prowess and faithfulness; on the contrary, it was losing territory. In this period there originated in Albania the landowning beys.[75] The military fiefs, in the course of years, had become more and more hereditary, and the *sipahis,* being far from Istanbul and under a weak government, could affirm more strongly their possession of land. Thus their *timars* were gradually transformed into *çiftliks* (estates). At the same time the system of farming out the state lands in the lowlands, the coastal plains, and the interior basins, created in Albania a class of big landowners, the *ayans.*[76]

The *çiftliks* and the state lands were as a rule cultivated by Christians, whose lot was hard. Even during the period of the *Tanzimat* (1839–1876), there was no substantial improvement in the situation of the Christian peasants, although small businessmen and those in the liberal professions could buy small pieces of land in the countryside, as in Korçë, Gjirokastër and Shkodër.[77]

J. Zwiedinek, the Austrian consul of Janina, who visited southern Albania from Preveza to Berat, called Epirus in the nineteenth century,[78] wrote in 1868: "In the whole of Chamuria [Çamëri],[79] for instance, the land is not exclusively the

[74]G. Valentini, "La migrazione stradiotica albanese," *Rivista d'Albania,* II (1941), 233.

[75]*Ibid.*

[76]"Arnawutluk" (Albania), *Encyclopedia of Islam* (new edition). Leiden, London, 1960, I, 650-658.

[77]Cf. I. G. Senkevich, *Osvoboditel'noe dvizhenie albanskogo naroda v 1905-1912 gg.,* Moscow, 1959, p. 24.

[78]See also G. Stadtmüller, "Landschaft und Geschichte in albanisch-epirotischen Raum," *Revue Internationale des Études Balkaniques,* III (1937-1938), 346.

[79]Çamëri, in Albanian, is the region in the northwestern corner of present Greece.

property of those who till it, but it belongs to the Albanian beys and agas who have embraced Islam, partly also to the government, and the Christian peasants who reside on it have only the relevant usufruct." [80] He further stated that the heavy taxes imposed on the peasant, who was obliged to give to the landlord one-third of the pure produce, induced him to seek abroad more favorable conditions for settlement.[81]

The Albanian and Bosnian Moslems have been regarded as the pampered children of the Ottoman empire. But whereas the Bosnians became fanatic Moslems, apparently because they were a minority surrounded by Christians against whom they had to fight constantly to defend the empire, the Albanians, being a majority secure in their lands, were rather tolerant. The historical past must have also been influential: in Albania, during the Middle Ages, Catholics and Orthodox shifted from one religion to the other according to momentary interests. Their saying, "where the sword is, there lies religion" (*Ku është shpata është feja*),[82] is related to their political experience. Among the Albanian Moslems of Kosovo, however, because of Bosnian influence and Slavic pressure, one finds less religious tolerance.

The Ottoman empire, based on conquest, offered to the warlike Albanian great opportunity. While using religion in order to differentiate the rulers and the ruled, it placed the Moslem Albanian automatically among the rulers. The Albanian distinguished himself from the outset. Most of the renegades who reached high positions during the reign of Mehmed II were Albanians.[83] At the periodical levies of unmarried male children of Christian subjects for the Janissary troops, the so-called *devşirme,* the strongest and the ablest

[80] J. Matl, ed., *op.cit.,* p. 436.

[81] Cf. *ibid.,* pp. 436-437.

[82] J. G. Hahn, *op.cit.,* I, 35; see also A. di San Giuliano, *Briefe über Albanien,* Deutsch von D. Schulz und W. Wichmann, Leipzig, 1913, p. 24.

[83] Cf. N. Jorga, *op.cit.,* 1909, II, 202-203.

came from Albania.[84] Many of the *Iç-oğlans,* pages for the Sultan's palace, trained not only in the arts of the courtier but also in that of the administrator and commander, were Albanians.[85] The family of the Köprülüs, members of which during the latter half of the seventeenth century saved the empire from its decline, was Albanian in origin.[86] Considering the small size of the Albanian population, a disproportionate number of Albanians served in high positions of the Ottoman army and administration: at least thirty grand viziers were of Albanian origin.[87] The Moslem Albanian found in the empire a vast field in which to develop his personality and impose his authority. It was natural for him to be absorbed in the larger realm and to neglect his small and primitive country, whose interest he viewed as bound to that of the empire. However, in general, he did not forget that he was an Albanian.

Quite early the Ottoman state judged it convenient to entrust the government of Albanian territories to native pashas or beys. But there was never a sole and absolute pasha who ruled over the whole of Albania in the name of the Sultan. The Porte played off one against the other, as it did with the chieftains of the highlands. It was partly in order to prevent the union of the beys and the pashas that the Porte did not at first attempt to stop the growing power of two local dynasts, the Bushatis (Bushatlis) in the north and Ali Pasha Tepelena in the south, who later created hereditary principalities almost independent of the Sultan. It was impossible for them not to come in conflict with the centralizing policy of Sultan Mahmud II (1784–1839). The Sultan destroyed their power; but while Mustafa Pasha Bushati, owing to Aus-

[84]A. H. Lybyer, *The Government of the Ottoman Empire in the Time of Suleiman the Magnificent,* Cambridge, Mass., 1933, p. 52; H.A.R. Gibb and H. Bowen, *op.cit.,* p. 74.

[85]Cf. *ibid.,* pp. 56-57; A. H. Lybyer, *op.cit.,* p. 74.

[86]Cf. J. W. Zinkeisen, *Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches in Europa,* Gotha, 1857, v, 261-262, 287.

[87]"Arnawutluk," *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (new edn.), p. 677.

trian intervention, was allowed to live unmolested in Istanbul, after 1831,[88] Ali Pasha Tepelena was decapitated, in 1822. Of the two, Ali Pasha was a more important political figure.

In 1788 Ali Pasha Tepelena, who had been a *derbenci* pasha, guarding the passes of the Pindus Mountains and the Epirotic and Macedonian surroundings, was recognized as governor of Janina by the Porte. Assisted by his sons, he extended his authority over all southern Albania, Greece, and southwestern Macedonia, and for thirty-two years he ruled like a despot.[89]

Owing to the strategic position of the littoral of southern Albania and Epirus, which he controlled, Ali Pasha played a significant role in the Napoleonic wars. Both France and England needed his alliance or neutrality, as the Ionian islands and certain coastal towns, previously under the control of the Venetian Republic, were occupied by the French, as a result of the treaty of Campo Formio (1797). He handled the changing situation with dexterity.[90]

Ali Pasha won a reputation for ruthlessness and persecution of Christians, primarily because of his expeditions against the Himariots and the Suliots. In reality, he was a lukewarm Moslem and wanted to conciliate the Christians, for he needed the support of an important minority which would otherwise give him trouble, and numerous Christians were in his service.[91] If he was harsh with the Himariots and Suliots, it was because they defied his rule. His interest was in imposing his rule. When in 1820 the Pasha was declared a rebel by the Porte and endeavored to get support from the Greeks, he told the Orthodox bishops, in an assembly held in

[88]T. Ippen, *op.cit.*, p. 349.

[89]Cf. *ibid.*, p. 344; K. Jireček, "Albanien in der Vergangenheit," *op.cit.*, p. 89.

[90]Cf. G. Remérand, *op.cit.*, p. 51. For details see A. Boppe, *L'Albanie et Napoléon (1797-1814)*, Paris, 1914.

[91]F. W. Hasluck, *op.cit.*, I, 590-591; G. Remérand, *op.cit.*, p. 227.

Janina, that if he had to fight against the Suliots it was "because they never consented to depose their arms." [92] He was not less ruthless toward his Moslem enemies.[93]

During the domination of the Bushatis of Shkodër and of Ali Pasha Tepelena, the influence of the beys and agas had sunk low. After their disappearance, however, the old powerful Moslem families, whether in the north or in the south, tried to regain their positions. It was natural that they too should resist the centralistic policy pursued by the Porte which curtailed their influence and independence.

The unrest began in the south, but it became more violent in the north. The agas and beys of southern Albania, who sided with the Ottomans in the Greek Revolution of 1821, abandoned the battlefield when the Sultan's High Command was not in a position to give them the contracted payment. When that revolution and the Russo-Turkish war came to an end (1829), Mahmud II resolved to break the disobedience and independence of the Albanians and force them to obey Istanbul. In 1830 Mehmed Reshid Pasha, Turkish Commander-in-Chief, invited all the southern beys and agas to Monastir, on the pretext that they would be rewarded for the Greek campaign. Five hundred of them were treacherously murdered in one day (August 26, 1830).[94] The massacre of Monastir did not end opposition to the new regime. In 1833, some of the agas and the beys who had fled to Greek territory provoked an uprising, in order to harass the government and expel the Ottoman officials dispatched by the Porte. At the head of it were such leaders as Abdul Koka and Tafil Buzi. A few months later a revolt broke out in the district of Gjirokastër and many government employees were killed.[95] In March 1834 the southern Albanian leaders arose again, but

[92]See speech in *ibid.*, pp. 236-238.

[93]See the imperial *firman* issued after his death, "Disa dokumenta historike mbi Ali Pashë Janinën" (Some Historical Documents on Ali Pasha of Janina), *Diturija* (Knowledge), Tirana, II (1 January 1927), 103.

[94]Cf. T. Ippen, *op.cit.*, pp. 346-347.

[95]*Ibid.*, p. 350.

this time they were successful and they forced the Porte to come to terms with them temporarily.[96]

Already in the early 1830's the Ottoman government had begun to cripple the power of the northern beys and pashas. It deported a number of them—from central Albania and Kosovo—to Asia Minor and destroyed their fortresses. Yet the resistance to the reforms of Sultan Mahmud II did not stop. In 1835 there was an uprising in Shkodër, because the governor of that city tried to apply the system of recruiting for a permanent army. In September 1839 the population of Prizren expelled its governor.[97] In both the north and the south, the Albanians resented the Turkish administrative officials.

The ideas about reforms, which had been somewhat blurred with Mahmud II, found a clearer expression in the imperial edict, *Hatti Sherif* of Gülhane (1839), proclaimed by his successor, Abdul Medjid. It was then that the Albanian resistance was intensified, for the edict proposed chiefly reforms connected with the formation of the army and the payment of taxes: "to establish laws to regulate the contingent to be furnished by each locality . . . , and to reduce the term of military service to four or five years"; it was necessary also "that henceforth each member of the Ottoman society be taxed for a quota of a fixed tax. . . ." [98]

The Albanian mountaineers had enjoyed autonomy, paid low taxes, and served as soldiers only when the empire was at war. The application of the reforms infringed on the autonomy of their regions. The opposition to centralization and the preservation of autonomy and independent institutions for Albania, which had previously been supported by the interned feudal families for their own interests, was now taken up by the broader layers of the town population.[99] In 1844 a revolt broke out in Üsküb (Skopje), Tetovë and Prishtinë, directed against the new drafting, the new taxes, and the cen-

[96]*Ibid.*, p. 351.
[97]Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 352-357.
[98]See texts in J. C. Hurewitz, *op.cit.*, pp. 114-115.
[99]Cf. T. Ippen, *op.cit.*, pp. 355-357.

tralistic policy of the regime. The next year another uprising broke out in Gjakovë, in which the highlanders also participated.[100]

The Ottoman government was more successful, during the period of *Tanzimat,* in southern Albania, although here, too, the drafting and the new taxes were resented. What the southerners opposed most was the principle in the centralization policy of not assigning functionaries of Albanian nationality in Albania but sending them to Anatolian provinces.[101] In 1847 there was a revolt which took the Porte several months to suppress. Many of its leaders were deported to Asia Minor, some to Salonica and towns of Macedonia, while others were imprisoned in Istanbul.[102]

The principles expressed in the *Hatt-ı Sherif* of Gülhane were more extensively confirmed in the *Hatt-ı Humayun* of 1856. During the twenty years which followed, a series of laws were enacted relating to reforms. Their application was also attempted in Albania. Although in the provinces of Janina and Monastir they gained a firmer foothold, in no other Albanian province could they be applied totally and effectively. In many regions of the north their validity was only nominal.[103]

The application of reforms during the *Tanzimat* period in Albania was not carried out at the same time in all parts. The *Hatt-ı Sherif* was proclaimed in northern Albania as late as 1844. The Turks feared the resistance of the people and pursued their program in various stages and at a slow pace.[104]

In the course of centuries several changes took place in the administrative division of the Ottoman empire to which Albania was frequently subjected and which were detrimental

[100]*Ibid.,* pp. 357-358.

[101]*Ibid.,* p. 369.

[102]*The Memoirs of Ismail Kemal Bey,* ed. S. Story, London, 1920, pp. 8-9; T. Ippen, *op.cit.,* pp. 360-362.

[103]Cf. *ibid.,* pp. 363, 369.

[104]Cf. Z. Shkodra, *Shqipnia në kohën e Tanzimatit* (Albania at the Time of Reforms), Tirana, 1959, p. 36.

to her territorial unity. In 1836, when the most important Albanian feudal lords had been stripped of their power, the Porte introduced the new centralistic-bureaucratic administration. The southern part of Albania constituted the *eyalet* (province) of Janina, which comprised, in addition to the district around that city, those of Berat, Gjirokastër, Arta, and sometimes Thessaly. More complex was the administrative division of northern Albania, which formed part of the *eyalet* of Rumelia, with Monastir as a center. Shkodër, Prizren, and Ipek were each a *liva* (sandjak), a district governed by a *mutesarrif*—governor, under a general of the regular army; Prishtinë, Üsküb, and Tetovë were governed by native pashas and they belonged at times to the *eyalet* of Rumelia and at other times to that of Sofia.[105]

As for Mirditë, the group of highlands which constituted part of the province of Shkodër, it had an old organization at the head of which was a superchieftain, who carried the title of "Captain" (*Kapedan*) and stood in a vassal relationship to the Sultan, through the Governor General of Shkodër.[106] It was obliged only to contribute volunteers, when the Sultan was at war, and pay a small yearly tribute.[107] The other mountainous regions of the north and northeast, whether inhabited by Catholics or Moslems, were only nominally dependent on Shkodër, Ipek, or Prizren, as the case might be, because of their geographic position.[108] When the law of 1865 on the organization of the Ottoman administration was applied, Albania was divided into three *vilayets* (provinces), local governments in direct connection with the Porte: Shkodër, Janina, and Monastir, each composed of a number of sandjaks.[109] Next to the local governments were the administrative councils, composed of Albanian notables and professionals.[110]

[105]*Ibid.*, p. 355.

[106]*Ibid.*, p. 365.

[107]F. Lippich's report on Mirditë, in "Denkshrift über Albanien," Vienna, 20 June 1877, *HHStA*, PA XII/256, Türkei IV.

[108]T. Ippen, *op.cit.*, p. 368.

[109]Cf. Wassa Effendi, *La vérité sur l'Albanie et les Albanais*, Paris, 1879, p. 95; T. Ippen, *op.cit.*, p. 363. [110]Cf. Z. Shkodra, *op.cit.*, p. 37.

While in other parts of the empire the changes were usually made for the purpose of a better collection of taxes, in Albania they appear to have had a political aim. The warlike Albanians occupied a strategic position in the Balkans; it was necessary therefore to prevent their unification. This policy of the Porte, particularly in the nineteenth century when nationalism was on the rise, in the Balkans, seems to account for the frequent changes in the administrative division of Albania. Just before the Congress of Berlin a fourth vilayet was formed, that of Kosovo, including not only Albanian territories but others like Niš, inhabited principally by Slavs, or Novi Pazar, which always constituted part of Bosnia, while Larissa in Thessaly was united with southern Albania.[111] Obviously, the Ottoman government did not want to create homogeneous Albanian vilayets, still less give a definite demarcation to the vague geographic expression "Albania."

It was with the burden of such a past, which brought about so many kinds of division, that the Albanians started on the road to national awakening.

[111]Wassa Effendi, *op.cit.*, pp. 94-95.

PART I

The Groundwork

(1878–1881)

I

The Albanian League and the Congress of Berlin

WHEN THE TROUBLES brewing in the Balkans in the mid-1870's threatened another Near Eastern crisis, the great powers attempted to settle them at a conference in Istanbul (December 23, 1876). The proposed reforms in Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Bosnia-Hercegovina, aimed at decentralization for the benefit of the people of these regions, were rejected by Turkey. It then became impossible for Austria-Hungary and England to prevent Russia from going to war, particularly as anti-Turkish feeling in Russia ran high after the Bulgarian atrocities of May 1876. When a final attempt to solve the confusion peaceably, the London Protocol (March 31, 1877), was turned down, Turkey declaring that she would prefer to be exposed to the peril of war rather than accept humiliating conditions, war with Russia broke out.[1] At its conclusion, Russia imposed on the defeated Turks the Treaty of San Stefano (March 3, 1878).

The San Stefano Treaty accorded to the Balkan Slavic nations large pieces of Albanian-inhabited land. But what exactly was considered as Albania at that time is not easy to define. The Ottoman censuses are not of much help for this purpose as they were based on religion, and all Moslems, whether Albanians, Bosnians, or Turks, fell in one category. Language was a better criterion. For northern and northeastern Albania, where the territories granted to the Slavs lay, a language boundary has been traced in a memorandum to the Austro-Hungarian government in 1877 by F. Lippich, its consul in Shkodër. It may be held sufficiently reliable on account of the special interest of Austria-Hungary in this

[1]Cf. W. N. Medlicott, *The Congress of Berlin and After,* London, 1938, p. 1, and *Bismarck, Gladstone, and the Concert of Europe,* London, 1956, pp. 2-3; A Novotny, *Österreich, die Türkei und das Balkanproblem im Jahre des Berliner Kongresses* (Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des Berliner Kongresses 1878), Graz-Köln, 1957, pp. 12, 20, 22.

portion of Albania and Lippich's personal knowledge of it. According to the memorandum,

> The northern linguistic frontier runs from west to east, starting from the Adriatic coast somewhat below Antivari, above the mountain ridge and the northwestern corner of the Shkodër lake, following the Sem (Zem) upstream above Fundina through Kuči to Vasojević and Kolašin; the latter two districts, although Serbian-speaking in the majority, still seem to be in part of Albanian origin—perhaps the only instance of a slavization of Albanians. . . . In its further course, the linguistic frontier moves from Kolašin to Gusinje and Plava, upstream the Ibar river to Rožaj, then from Suhodol and Glugovik to Duga Poljana, on the Rogosna plateau, west and southwest of Novi Pazar, where it climbs the districts of Vučitrn, Kuršunli and Prokoplje up to the Serbian border and descends again to the Toplica, reaching its junction with the Bulgarian Morava. From here it follows, on the whole, the course of this river and the Moravica, which is emptied in it, bending westward and running along the southern slope of Karadag through the Lepenec pass. It then crosses the Vardar valley near the junction of the Treska with the Vardar, and pursuing the Treska through the sandjak of Monastir, it runs along its boundary with Dibra as far as the northern shore of the Lake Ohrid, from where it turns westward to the Shkumbî river and pursuing it winds up on the Adriatic Sea.[2]

From this Albanian-inhabited territory Serbia was allotted a part of the sandjak of Prishtinë.[3] Bulgaria and Montenegro were especially favored. Part of Article vi of the treaty, defining the boundary line between Albania and Bulgaria, reads as follows: ". . . Leaving the new frontier of the Servian Principality, the line will follow the western limits of the Cazas of Koumanovo, Kotchani, Kalkandelen [Tetovë], to Mount Korab; thence by the River Welestchitza as far as its junction

[2]F. Lippich, "Denkschrift über Albanien," Vienna, 20 June 1877, pp. 8-9, *HHStA*, PA XII/256, Türkei IV.

[3]See text of Art. iii of the San Stefano Treaty, *A and P*, 1878, Vol. LXXXIII, Turkey, No. 22 (1878), p. 10.

with the black Drina. Turning towards the south by the Drina and afterwards by the western limit of the Caza of Ochride towards Mount Linas, the frontier will follow the western Cazas of Gortcha [Korçë] and Starovo as far as Mount Grammos." [4] In terms of Albania before World War II, this would mean that, in addition to Dibër, the whole area of the prefecture of Korçë (without Kolonjë) would be included.[5] Montenegro, on the other hand, was to annex northern Albanian regions extending from Rugovë, near Ipek (Peć), to south of Žabljak, as well as the ports of Antivari (Bar) and Dulcigno (Ulcinj), on the Adriatic; while her southern frontier with Albania would run through the Lake of Shkodër and along the Buenë (Bojana) river to the same sea.[6] At Adrianople, the representative of Montenegro, Radonić, advanced claims even to the city of Shkodër, but the Russians pointed out to him the extreme difficulty of his claims and they were abandoned.[7]

With the Treaty of San Stefano, Russia's goal was to create a Great Bulgaria, retaining therein her influence, and form an independent and larger Montenegro and Serbia. This was in accordance with two fundamental tendencies of Russian policy: to satisfy the Slavophiles, who desired to see as many Slavs as possible liberated; and to establish Russia's domination over the Straits and expel Austria-Hungary from the Balkans.[8]

When the San Stefano Treaty was published, the articles concerning Albania caused deep anxiety among her people.[9] The movements of the Albanians, which until then had been

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] Cf. M. Frashëri, *Liga e Prizrenit edhe efektet dipllomatike të saj* (The League of Prizren and Its Diplomatic Effects), Tirana, 1927, p. 11.

[6] Article i of the San Stefano Treaty, *op.cit.*, pp. 9-10.

[7] B. H. Sumner, *Russia and the Balkans, 1870-1880,* Oxford, 1937, p. 412.

[8] M. D. Stojanović, *The Great Powers and the Balkans, 1875-1878,* Cambridge, 1939, p. 233.

[9] See Ceccaldi to Waddington, Scutari, 27 April 1878, No. 213, *AMAE,* Turquie, Correspondance politique des consuls, Scutari, 1878-1879, Vol. xxi.

primarily against the taxes, the draft, and the centralistic policy in general that the Turkish government was attempting to impose, took another turn—they began to be nationalistic.

The Albanian reaction to the San Stefano Treaty was swift and in the course of time was intensified. Spontaneous and independent gatherings were held, particularly in the eastern and northeastern regions, and protests were addressed to the great powers. Toward the end of April 1878, Layard, the British ambassador in Istanbul, and Zichy, his Austro-Hungarian colleague, received a telegram from the inhabitants of Dibër, who protested against annexation of their lands by the new Bulgarian principality. Dibër, the telegram declared, had no relationship at all with the land called Bulgaria; it belonged to Albania. The kaza of Dibër was composed of more than 220,000 Moslems and 10,000 Christians, all of them Albanians. Rather than be incorporated into Bulgaria, the people preferred to be annihilated. They appealed for measures that would exclude their territory from Bulgaria and leave it under the rule of the Ottoman government.[10] On May 16, Zichy forwarded to Vienna a memorandum of Moslem and Catholic representatives of northern Albania, among them the deputy of Shkodër to the first Ottoman parliament, asking for support against the annexation of Albanian lands by Montenegro.[11] In the same month Albanians of Ipek, Gjakovë, and Gusinj protested in a memorandum against the partition of their territory between Serbia and Montenegro.[12] Strong protests against the provisions of the treaty were also made by the inhabitants of the surroundings of Prizren.[13]

[10]Layard to Salisbury, Therapia, 4 May 1878, No. 41 and Enclosure, *A and P,* 1878, Vol. LXXXIII, Turkey, 31 (1878), pp. 60-61; A. Novotny, *op.cit.,* p. 40 and entry 1078, p. 242. See also Ceccaldi to Waddington, Scutari, 4 May 1878, No. 214, *AMAE,* Turquie, Correspondance politique des consuls, Scutari, 1878-1879, Vol. XXI.

[11]A. Novotny, *op.cit.,* entry 1100, p. 246.

[12]*Ibid.,* entry 1116, p. 247.

[13]See *ibid.,* p. 37 and entry 1156, p. 253; text of telegram in *A and P,* 1878, Vol. LXXXI, Turkey, 45 (1878), pp. 35-36.

From the meetings held in the various towns of the Gegs in opposition to the San Stefano Treaty a number of local committees had emerged which undertook to organize the Albanian forces against an eventual attack on the part of Montenegro and Serbia. The committees had begun to collect money for the support of the Albanian refugees from the territories which had already been occupied by the Serbs or the Montenegrins.[14] In order to defend the country better, the local committees felt the need of close cooperation. On May 3, 1878, Green, the British consul in Shkodër, reported to his Foreign Office: "In the districts of Gussinié, Plava, Berani, Granichi, and most of the eastern slopes of the North Albanian mountains a league has been entered into between the Mohammedans binding themselves collectively and individually to resist until death all attempts coming either from abroad or from the Supreme Government to change the present state of their territory. Steps are being taken by these populations to place themselves in accord with the Albanians further south, near Prisrend, Prishtina, Fandi, Dibra, Ochrida, and even as far as Monastir. . . ." [15] The impetus to this movement was given by an influential leader of Gusinj, Ali Bey (later Pasha) Gucija.[16] Barely a month later, Prince Nicholas of Montenegro informed the consulates of the great powers in Shkodër, particularly the French consulate, that in addition to the "league formed by the inhabitants of Gusinj, Plavë and other places," a movement was being organized among the people of Grudë, Klemend, Hot and other parts of *Malësia* (Catholic mountains), in order to bring about a conflict along the frontier.[17]

[14]Cf. *Histori e Shqipërisë*, 1839-1900 (History of Albania, 1839-1900), Tirana, 1961, p. 58; hereafter cited as *Historie Shqipërisë, 1839-1900.*

[15]Green to Salisbury, Scutari, 3 May 1878, No. 40, *A and P*, 1878, Vol. LXXXIII, Turkey, 31 (1878), p. 60.

[16]Ceccaldi to Waddington, Scutari, 4 May 1878, No. 214, *AMAE*, Turquie, Correspondance politique des consuls, Scutari, 1878-1879, Vol. XXI.

[17]Copy of telegram signed by Prince Nicholas, Cetinje, 5 June 1878, as annexe No. 1 to the Dépêche, 9 June 1878, No. 218, in *ibid.*