

Charles, although aware of his failure in dealing with the German situation, would never have conceded defeat had it not been for his knowledge that he could not rely on Ferdinand and the Catholics for cooperation. When in 1554 it became obvious to him that neither Ferdinand nor the Catholics would support him in his struggle for religious unification, when it became obvious to him that the King of the Romans was prepared to sacrifice his moral scruples for the sake of peace and subsidies against the Turks, the Emperor decided to admit defeat. Broken in health and spirit, Charles had to recognize, in the fall of 1555, that the concessions which the Protestants had been able to obtain since 1532 could not be eradicated by wars or councils as long as unity of purpose and action did not exist in Christian Europe, or in the Holy Roman Empire.

Religion in Albania during the Ottoman Rule

An Essay

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Few countries have experienced such unusual confessional changes as Albania. After the religious schism of 1054, she was split into a Catholic north and an Orthodox south. Westerners from across the Adriatic, first the Normans and later the Angevins while the Venetians had occupied parts of the littoral, invaded Albania and attacked the Byzantine Empire. The *thema* of Durrës (Dyrrhachium) and its Metropolis became the most active theater of contest between the two faiths¹). Whenever the Western armies were successful, the border line of the Eastern Church receded; whenever Byzantium was victorious, its frontiers expanded. Church power followed the vicissitudes of the political power which supported it.

Caught between the East-West struggle, the local lords and bishops in Albania tried to adapt themselves to the changing situations. They wavered between Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism, according to their momentary interests²). These oscillations, however, and the mixed population of cities, such as Dur-

¹) M. Šufflay, *Srbi i Arbanasi* (Serbs and Albanians), (Belgrad, 1925), pp. 85—89, 94.

²) Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 94.

rës, prevented the Orthodox-Catholic conflict from taking a violent form on Albanian territory³).

With the coming of the Ottomans a third religion was introduced into Albania: Islamism. The Turks invaded Albania for the first time in 1385. They were invited by an Albanian feudal lord of the central part, Charles Thopia, who, distrusting Venice and fearing the domination of a ruling house in the north, the Balshas, asked for Turkish support. Balsha II and many other Albanian lords formed a coalition in order to oppose the enemy, but their resistance was broken near the Vjosë (Voyoussa) River. Albania was invaded again in 1394—1396 by Sultan Beyazid I and a large part of the country was occupied by the Ottomans. Shkodër (Scutari) had even a certain Shahin as capitaneus Turchorum for two years⁴). But after Beyazid's departure the local lords revolted and much of the lost territory was regained. This may be explained if we consider that for about two decades after 1398 the Turks were struggling against the Mongol invasions in Asia Minor (battle of Ankara in 1402) and the internal rivalries among the heirs of Sultan Beyazid⁵). A great invasion of the Turkish army took place in 1423 under Sultan Murad II (1421—1451) reaching as far as the Adriatic.

At the outset the Ottomans do not seem to have employed force for the propagation of Islam. They allowed the Albanian lords to maintain their positions, on condition that they pay the *h a r a c* (tribute), send their sons as hostages to the Sultan's court, and furnish auxiliary troops⁶). In a record-book of *t i m a r s* (Ottoman military fiefs) in southern and central Albania for the years 1431—1432, only 30 per cent of the *t i m a r s* were held by Turks from Asia Minor whom the sultans had rewarded with lands in Albania, the rest were held by Albanian lords⁷).

³) Cf. Ibid., „Die Kirchenzustände im vortürkischen Albanien. Die Orthodoxe Durchbruchszone im katholischen Damme“, in L. von Thallóczy, ed., *Illyrisch-albanische Forschungen*, (München und Leipzig, 1916), I, pp. 190—191.

⁴) C. Jireček, *Geschichte der Serben*, (Gotha, 1918), II, 1, p. 128.

⁵) Cf. E. Rossi, „Saggio sul dominio turco e l'introduzione dell'Islam in Albania“, *Rivista d'Albania*, III (1942), p. 201; G. Stadtmüller, „Die albanische Volkstumsgeschichte als Forschungsproblem“, *Leipziger Vierteljahrsschrift für Südosteuropa*, V (1941), p. 74.

⁶) H. Inalcik, „Timariotes chrétiens en Albanie au XV^e siècle, d'après un registre de timars ottoman“, *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs*, IV (1952), p. 120.

⁷) The record-book was found in the Turkish National Archives some six years ago by H. Inalcik. It was written in the year 835 of the Hegira under

It was not obligatory for a Christian Albanian lord to become a Mohammedan in order to preserve his possessions or part of them as *timars*, although no doubt he would be more favored by the Ottoman administration if he were converted to Islam. In the record-book just mentioned, a Christian lord named Pavlo Kurtik appears as a holder of a great *timar* south of Tiranë, while well-known Albanian Christian lords, like „Yuvan“ (John, Skenderbeg's father), „Balsha“, „Aranitid“ (Araniti), „Zenebish“ (Zenevisi), „Dimitri Ghionoma“ (Jonima), are in control of other lands⁸). There were *timars* held by Christians even during the reign of Mehmed II. Title to *timars* could also pass from a Christian to a Moslem and vice-versa. We meet *sipahi* (holders of *timars*) brothers of whom one is a Christian and the other a Moslem. In the 1431—1432 record-book, *timar*-holders are mentioned who preserved their Christian faith for two generations⁹).

Apparently local conditions influenced the Turks to pursue a conciliatory policy toward Albania before Skenderberg's time. 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 an important part of the Albanian coast. The Albanian local lords were small and more or less independent and it was easier for the Ottoman state to come to terms, with each one separately, with as good an offer as the *timar*¹⁰). It was not even very difficult for them to become Moslems. They had led in pre-Turkish Albania an amphibious life between Catholicism and Orthodoxy. A military state like the Ottoman Empire offered a wide field of opportunities for their warlike qualities. The interest of the Ottoman government in Albania seems then to have been primarily in recruiting support, irrespective of religion.

But in 1443 one of the sons of an Albanian lord who had been reared as a Moslem in the Sultan's palace returned, after the

the order of Sultan Murad II, and contains the *timars* of the Sandjak of Arvanid (Albania), which at this time comprised southwestern Albania, from Krujë (Croya) to Filat (Philates, in northern Greece), including the town of Tiranë, Elbasan, Berat, and Gjirokastër (Argyrokastro). There are also additions of later dates in the record-book. Cf. H. Inalcik, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

⁸) Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 126.

⁹) Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 130—131.

¹⁰) About the disposition of the local lords see N. Jorga, *Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches*, (Gotha, 1918), I, p. 261.

battle of Niš, to Albania and raised the banner of revolt in the center of his father's domains, the town of Krujë (Croya)¹¹). It was Gjergj Kastrioti, surnamed Skenderbeg, the national hero of the Albanians. He immediately returned publicly to the faith of his grandfathers. His conversion to Christianity, however, was not just a diplomatic move like that of his father, who was „converted“ several times¹²). Skenderbeg invited the Moslem colonists and converts to choose between Christianity and death. Those who rejected the invitation lost their lives¹³). He declared in reality a Holy War from which there was no retreat; he linked his interests with the Christian West and burned the bridges behind him.

At a convention which was held in 1444 at Lesh (Alessio), attended by all the local lords along the coast from southern Epirus to the Bosnian boundaries¹⁴), a League was constituted and Skenderbeg was elected Commander-in-Chief of its army. For twenty-four years he led the Albanians in wars against the Ottomans for the defense of their country and Christianity, being helped also by the Christian West. Before his death in 1468, he was called by Pope Nicholas V „Champion of Christendom“¹⁵).

The wars between the Albanians and the Ottomans during Skenderbeg's time had born the stamp of the cross against the crescent and had been too bloody and long to prevent a tide of apostasy. Many of the lords who remained in the country espoused Mohammedanism; of course, a part of the people followed the nobility in its conversion. Others, however, like the Aranitis, the Muzakis, the Dukagjinis fled together with their people to Italy. It was the great exodus, followed by several other migrations of southern Albanians. They settled in southern Italy and Sicily, where their descendants live today. Some of these Albanians over the years became Catholics, but the majority are Uniates, preserving thus the Orthodox liturgy but recognizing the supremacy of the Pope¹⁶).

¹¹) F. Babinger, *Mehmed der Eroberer*, (München, 1953), p. 56; F. S. Noli, *George Castriota Scanderbeg*, (New York, 1947), p. 31.

¹²) *Ibid.*, p. 35.

¹³) *Ibid.*, p. 36.

¹⁴) F. Babinger, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

¹⁵) F. S. Noli, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

¹⁶) About the Italo-Albanians see L. von Thallóczy, „Die albanische Diaspora“, *Illyrisch-albanische Forschungen*, I, pp. 330—340.

During the four centuries which succeeded the complete conquest of Albania by the Ottomans, the propagation of Islam followed a slow and uneven process. It was opposed at different periods both in the Catholic north and in the Orthodox south.

Among the Catholics of the north the new faith does not seem 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 thirtieth part of them are Turks [Moslems], and the rest Christians, Catholics and warlike, but among the Christians there are three different factions, one depends on the Pope, the other on the Catholic King [Philip V], the third on the Venetians, which at present is united with the Turks, for the Venetians who do not dare go to war against the Turks, ... do not allow that they be liberated by others, and when they hear of an agreement of the sort they even uncover it to the Turks...¹⁷⁾.

And in a reference of 1610 one learns that the Catholic population exceeded the Moslem by a ratio of ten to one¹⁸⁾.

Gradually, however, Mohammedan influences gained converts among the Catholic population. The conversions appear to have been 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 Polis (Elbasan), Çermënikë, Mat, the region of Peshkopi, through Has, Krumë, Bëtyq, as far as Dukagjin, Hot, Kelmend yielded slowly to Mohammedanism¹⁹⁾. The majority of the converts were men. Women, although

¹⁷⁾ The text of the report, which is in the Vatican Archives (Borghese 126, H. 1, fol. 269—270), has been reproduced in F. CORDIGNANO, *Geografia ecclesiastica dell'Albania (dagli ultimi decenni del secolo XVI^o alla metà del secolo XVII^o)*, [in the series of *Orientalia Christiana*, Num. 99, Decembri 1934], (Roma, 1934), pp. 231—232. Cordignano believes that the document was written at the end of the XVIth or the beginning of the XVIIth century.

¹⁸⁾ Cf. T. W. ARNOLD, *The Preaching of Islam*, (London, 1913), p. 180. The knowledge we possess about the Catholic north is derived from the ecclesiastical chronicles published in Farlati's *Illyricum Sacrum* and the *Congregation de Propaganda Fide* by clergymen in Albania, as well as from reports by political agents of Venice. T. W. Arnold has made use of these sources and specific references are contained in his study.

¹⁹⁾ F. CORDIGNANO, *L'Albania attraverso l'opera e gli scritti di un grande Missionario italiano il P. Domenico Pasi, S. I. (1847—1914)*, (Roma, 1933/1934), II, p. 361.

married to Moslems, often retained their Christian religion, and were a factor in creating a good feeling between the members of the two faiths. There were instances when the followers of the Prophet contributed toward the support of the parish priest, as the majority of them had Christian wives²⁰).

But in the course of the seventeenth century the number of the Catholic population began to decline rapidly. In the city of Prizren, according to documents of the Propaganda Fide relating to visits of 1622—1624, there were 12 000 Turks, „almost all Albanians [who are] shrewd by nature“, 200 Catholics, and 600 Orthodox²¹). Three explanations are 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 economic-political basis was religion and not nationality; and the want of a sufficiently large number of intelligent clergy to supply the spiritual needs of the population²²). The villages were often neglected. What occurred in a village of Mat toward 1700 is significant as an illustration for the general motive for which Catholic villages, especially those in the neighborhood of Moslems, abandoned themselves to conversion:

For some time the inhabitants of the village had been without a priest. They complained to a missionary returning from the hospice of Chidena, and he, in turn, spoke to the archbishop of Durrës. The Prelate saw to it that missionaries from Chidena were sent to the village twice a year. The villagers however, were not satisfied and threatened to call a hodja if they could not have a regular priest²³).

The Franciscan brothers were very active in opposing apostasy. They had first come to Albania in the thirteenth century, but in the latter part of the first half of the seventeenth century a new group of them, trained in the wars of difficult missions, were sent to Albania and began to oppose vigorously the forces of dissolution

²⁰) T. W. Arnold, *op. cit.*, pp. 180—182.

²¹) F. Cordignano, *Geografia ecclesiastica dell'Albania ...*, p. 248. In addition to *Illyricum Sacrum*, Cordignano has also studied documents in *Orbis Seraphicus*. However, it does not seem certain that all the converted Albanians in Prizren had been Catholics; some of them might have been Orthodox Christians.

²²) T. W. Arnold, *op. cit.*, p. 182; F. Cordignano, *L'Albania attraverso l'opera e gli scitti ... di P. Domenico Pasi*, I, p. 96.

²³) *Ibid.*, p. 95.

and destruction. Some decades are filled with their heroism. Indeed, they saved Albanian Catholicism from ruin, during that difficult period, although a number of episcopal sees were lost in the north²⁴).

There were also political reasons for the decrease of the Catholic population. The Ottoman Empire saw Catholicism as an adversary with whom it could not come to terms. Next to papal Rome there were the powers of the West which could organize an attack in the name of Catholicism. In fact, when the Turco-Venetian war of 1645 broke out, the Albanian Catholics, instigated by the high clergy, sided with Venice. As severe measures were taken against them by the Turks, many were converted to Islam and some joined the Orthodox Church, the adherents of which remained faithful to the Ottoman Empire²⁵). In 1649 another insurrection took place in favor of the Venetians. It was crushed by the Turkish armies, and another wave of apostasy ensued among the Catholics²⁶). The persecution seems to have been ruthless, for it forced the missionaries to leave Albania²⁷). Another important revolt occurred in 1689. When the Austrian armies entered deeply into the Balkans, the Albanians took up arms and went to the assistance of the Venetian forces, which, under the Proveditore General Daniele Delfino, successfully attacked the Ottoman armies²⁸). A forced conversion ensued after the retreat of the Austrian armies. The Pasha of Peć (Ipek) deported in 1690 inhabitants of northern Albania, who were mostly Catholics, to the plain of Serbia (*in planitiem Serbiae*) and those villages were compelled to pass to Islam²⁹).

The Catholic Church in Albania was also at war with Serbian Orthodoxy. Before the arrival of the Turks the bishopric of Bar (Antivari) had stood a bulwark against the expansion of the Serbian Church toward the sea^{29a}). But the struggle now had been weakened, for the Turkish domination had contributed greatly to the decline

²⁴) Ibid., I, p. 95, and II, p. 366.

²⁵) T. W. Arnold, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

²⁶) Ibid., p. 189.

²⁷) F. Cordignano, *L'Albania attraverso l'opera e gli scritti ... di P. Domenico Pasi*, I, p. 89.

²⁸) J. W. Zinkeisen, *Geschichte des osmanischen Reiches in Europa* (Gotha, 1855), V, pp. 185—186; M. Šufflay, *Srbi i Arbanasi*, pp. 67—68.

²⁹) F. Cordignano, *L'Albania attraverso l'opera e gli scritti ... di P. Domenico Pasi*, I, p. 90, T. W. Arnold, *op. cit.*, p. 196.

^{29a}) M. Šufflay, *Srbi i Arbanasi*, p. 90.

of the spiritual culture of the Serbian clergy³⁰). There was small danger of expansion on the part of Serbian Orthodoxy, yet its attacks on the papal curia and Catholicism became stronger. In 1603 an apostolic visitor to Albania reported that the Orthodox who lived in the neighborhood of the Catholics said the following to him: „Neither the Pope, nor the College of Cardinals, nor the Latin community [„tuti i Latini“, i. e., the Catholics] do not know which road they are following, so that they will be damned without exception“³¹).

No subsequent period appears to have witnessed such widespread apostasy among the Catholic Albanians as the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century the Turkish-Russian wars began and the Catholics fared better. Austria also showed a greater interest in the Catholics of the Ottoman Empire. By the treaty of Sistova in 1791 she renewed her privileges over them³²). But it was not until the latter half of the nineteenth century that Austria-Hungary began to be seriously interested in the Albanian Catholics. In 1861 a Franciscan seminary was opened in Shkodër, and in 1877 a Jesuit school (*Collegio Saveriano*) began to function in the same city, under Austro-Hungarian auspices³³). As the interest of the Dual Monarchy in non-Slavic Albania grew, after having been entrusted with the administration of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Albanian Catholics were well under her protection. Yet some accessions to Islam continued up to more recent times — Shkodër in 1662, when Evliya Çelebi, a Turkish high official, visited it, had only 11 mosques as compared with 26 at the outset of the twentieth century³⁴) — sometimes with trivial reasons for conversion.

In the lowlands of the central part of Albania, which encompass both sides of the Shkumbî River, Islamism had more converts. The inhabitants of this region felt more closely the Ottoman rule since they were more exposed to Moslem influences than the mountaineers of the secluded regions of the north. The most oriental city

³⁰) Cf. L. Hadrovics, *Le peuple serbe et son église sous la domination turque*, (Paris, 1947), p. 22.

³¹) Text in *Ibid*, p. 28.

³²) See article XII of the treaty in Th. A. Ippen, „Das religiöse Protectorat Osterreich-Ungarns in der Türkei“, III (1902), p. 300.

³³) G. Petrotta, *Svolgimento storico della cultura e della letteratura albanese*, (Palermo, 1950), p. 73.

³⁴) F. Babinger, *Evlijâ Tschelebi's Reisewege in Albanien*, (Berlin, 1930), pp. 4—5.

during the latter half of the seventeenth century was Elbasan, in central Albania³⁵). Also the fact that the lowlands had been the borderlands between Catholicism and Orthodoxy, where religious oscillations had taken place, made them more vulnerable to the propagation of Islam. Once they were converted, the inhabitants of central Albania, surrounded by Christians, tended toward fanaticism.

Conditions in southern Albania were different than those in the north. The population was Orthodox in faith and the Turks accorded to the Patriarchate of Constantinople a special treatment. Following the fall of the city (1453), Mehmed II, in order to secure the allegiance of the Orthodox Christians in the Balkans, proclaimed himself the protector of the Orthodox Church, and granted to the Ecumenical Patriarch the old rights and privileges³⁶). Moreover, the Patriarch assumed a part of the temporal power over the Orthodox subjects of the Sultan³⁷).

During the first centuries of occupation the Turk was at the height of his power and feared no intervention from an external Orthodox Christian power. Besides, the Eastern Church had become an associate institution in the state system of the Empire. There appeared to be therefore no reason 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 to no one's interest³⁸). According to a record-book of *timar*s approximately of the year 1510 (912 of the Hegira), in the district of Vlorë (Valona) there were 1206 Moslem as against 14304 Christian families, and in the district of Gjirokastër (Argyrokastro) only 53 Moslem to 12257 Christian families³⁹).

However, when the Orthodox Albanian embraced Islam, he did so mainly for the same reasons as the Catholic of the north: exemp-

³⁵) Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

³⁶) Cf. T. W. Arnold, *op. cit.*, pp. 145—146; F. Babinger, *Mehmed II der Eroberer*, p. 110; Th. H. Papadopoulos, *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. Cf. Th. Papadopoulos, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

³⁷) *Ibid.*, p. 10.

³⁸) F. W. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans* (Oxford, 1929), II, p. 469.

³⁹) Cf. H. Inalcik, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

tion from taxation and worldly advantages. 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 convictions 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 this religion and transmit it unchanged⁴⁰). Mathias Gundulić, a Ragusan emissary, who observed the religious life in the Balkans, wrote in 1647: „These people are very attached to their religion and they boast of having preserved it intact from any innovations“⁴¹). The traditionalism of the Orthodox Church was indeed a great force against the accession to Islamism.

Yet the disinterest of the higher clergy, as well as the gradual decline of the Archbishopric of Ohrida, on which the Orthodox bishoprics of Durrës and southern Albania depended, weakened the resistance of the southern Albanians to the faith of Islam⁴²). The autocephalous Archbishopric of Ohrida (commonly called Patriarchate of Ohrida in the Ottoman period) had superior men during the Late Middle Ages, but in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries standards had fallen low. Its archbishops were men without dignity who travelled asking aid sometimes in the West and at other times from Russia⁴³). In 1767 the Archbishopric of Ohrida was brought under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate⁴⁴). In the eighteenth century, however abuses were also made by several representatives of the Eastern Church, for simony had expanded. Even the Greeks themselves began to oppose⁴⁵) the fiscal exactions of the Church harshly.

⁴⁰) Cf. L. Hadrovics, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

⁴¹) *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁴²) Γ. Ι. Κονιδάρη, Ἡ Ἑλληνικὴ Ἐκκλησία ὡς πολιτιστικὴ δύναμις ἐν τῇ ἱστορίᾳ τῆς Χερσονήσου τοῦ Αἴμου. (The Greek Church as a Civilizing Force in the History of the Balkan Peninsula), (Athens, 1948), pp. 178—179. The chapter on the Greek Church and Albania (pp. 147—207) in this book is the only extensive treatment we have until now, based primarily on Greek sources, most of them secondary. Unfortunately the study is not well organized and is rather defective in scholarship.

⁴³) Cf. F. Cordignano, *L'Albania attraverso l'opera e gli scritti ... di P. Domenico Pasi*, II, p. 117.

⁴⁴) Th. H. Papadopoulos, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

⁴⁵) *Ibid.*, p. 133.

Islamic pressure on the Orthodox Christians began with the decline of the 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 a relief from their sufferings in a change of faith⁴⁶). In 1768 Turkey declared war on Russia. Alexis Orlov was entrusted with the task of organizing an insurrection of the Balkan Christians in order to divert troops from the main theater of operations in Moldavia and Wallachia. One of his proclamations was addressed to the Himariotes, who, inhabiting the littoral south of Vlorë, were protected by the mountains. They paid no taxes to the Ottoman government and enjoyed a sort of autonomy. The Himariotes turned to the city of Voskopojë (Moschopolis), near Korçë, for assistance⁴⁷). When the Orlov enterprise failed, the Ottomans made reprisals on the Orthodox Christians. Considering the Orthodox Christians allies of Russia, they used pressure to convert them.

The conversions were more numerous around the city of Berat, in south-central Albania, where the Moslems bordered on the Christians. Since the time of Evliya Çelebi (1670) this city had been predominantly Mohammedan: 19 of its 30 sections were Moslem⁴⁸). Many of its Christian sections were compelled to apostasy and a great number of churches held no liturgies, for there was a lack of priests⁴⁹). Konidarë affirms that inhabitants of Delvinë, and regions south of it, embraced Catholicism in order to enjoy papal protection⁵⁰). If this is true, it is the opposite of what occurred in the previous century in the north, when the Catholics sought the protection of the Orthodox Church.

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 Kozmas Aitōlos, who travelled all over Albania preaching and who founded some 200 schools⁵¹). He even went as far as

⁴⁶) T. W. Arnold, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

⁴⁷) „Μοσχόπολις“ (Moschopolis), in Μεγάλη Ἑλληνικὴ Ἐγκυκλοπαίδεια (Great Greek Encyclopedia), (Athens, 1931), Vol. XVI, p. 399.

⁴⁸) Cf. F. Babinger, *Evlijâ Tschelibi's Reisewege in Albanien*, p. 19.

⁴⁹) Γ. Ι. Κονιδάρη, *op. cit.*, pp. 178—179.

⁵⁰) *Ibid.*, p. 179. The author, however, gives no proof of his statement.

⁵¹) *Ibid.*, pp. 179, 182—183.

Durrës and the surroundings of Krujë⁵²), which is an indication that there were Orthodox Christians in those regions. But his center of activity was Berat, where in 1779 he fell a martyr to his religion⁵³). There had been few Greek schools since the sixteenth—seventeenth centuries in southern Albania, and they were closely connected with the Church, but their number increased after the middle of the eighteenth century⁵⁴). Albanian schools, on the other hand, were prohibited as late as the end of the nineteenth century and the writing of the Albanian language was banned.

Two cultural centers played an important role in the resistance to Mohammedanism, Voskopojë and Yannina, which today is in northern Greece. The population of Voskopojë was more than 40000 in the eighteenth century and the city had grown into a significant commercial and intellectual center. It carried on trade with the West and there were schools in it dating from the seventeenth century. In 1744 there was a school called the „New Academy“, which rivaled with the best existing Greek schools of the time. As a codex has put it, it was „τὸ φῶς τῆς ἐκκλησίας“ (the light of the Church). A great number of books, especially ecclesiastical, were printed in Voskopojë and distributed in the Orthodox Christian world, enhancing its prestige. There were twenty churches in the city⁵⁵). When it began to decline, after the destruction following the Orlov insurrection, Yannina emerged as a cultural Greek Orthodox center⁵⁶).

Another wave of conversion in the south took place during the rule of Ali Pasha Tepelena, an Albanian who had risen to power and had become almost independent of the Sultan, extending his authority in 1812 over all southern Albania, Greece, and southern Macedonia⁵⁷). Ali Pasha seems to have been a lukewarm Moslem who wanted to conciliate the Christians, of whom there were many in his service, for he needed the support of an important minority which would otherwise give him trouble⁵⁸). But he could rely only

⁵²) Ibid., p. 183.

⁵³) Ibid., p. 179.

⁵⁴) Cf. Ibid., footnote 2 on p. 181.

⁵⁵) See „Μοσχόπλις“, in op. cit., pp. 399—400.

⁵⁶) See about Yannina, „Ἰωάννινα“ in Μεγάλη Ἑλληνικὴ Ἐγκυκλοπαίδεια (Athens, 1930), Vol. XIII, pp. 379—380.

⁵⁷) Th. Ippen, „Beiträge zur inneren Geschichte Albaniens in XIX. Jahrhundert“, Illyrisch-albanische Forschungen, I, p. 344.

⁵⁸) Cf. F. W. Hasluck, op. cit., I, pp. 590—591; G. Remérand, Ali de Tébelen, Pacha de Janina (1744—1822), (Paris, 1928), p. 227.

on the Mohammedan Albanians. He was ruthless, however, when the Christians defied his rule. Such examples were his expeditions against the Himariotes and the Suliotes. Following the massacre in the church on Easter day 1798 of the Orthodox Christians of Shën Vasil and Nivica-Bubari, north of Sarandë (Santi-Quaranta), the inhabitants of the surrounding region were converted en masse to Islamism⁵⁹). Sporadic conversions continued until the declaration of Albanian independence, and one might meet instances in which one brother was a Moslem and the other a Christian, let alone cases of relatives.

For sometime the Roman Church was interested in bringing within its fold the Himariotes and their neighbors. The Basilian monks, mostly Italo-Albanians from Sicily and Uniates, undertook this mission from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. In a letter of July 12, 1577, the Himariotes appealed to Pope Gregory XIII for help to rebuild the episcopal residence destroyed by the Turks and buy arms to resist them⁶⁰). It was in February 1581, however, that, proposing to raise the flag of revolt in the Pope's name and that of „Philip of Spain“ [Philip V, called the Catholic], they promised to be under the jurisdiction of the Catholic Church, recognizing the Pope „as the only supreme and true Pontiff“, on condition that they hold their church services „according to our traditions and in our rite“⁶¹). But toward the latter half of the seventeenth century the Basilian missionaries began to encounter the enmity of the Greek Orthodox hierarchy and the nobility of Himarë, who endeavored to shake the faith of the inhabitants in them⁶²). During the time of Catherine II of Russia the Himariotes returned to Orthodoxy⁶³). The situation of the Albanian Orthodox Christians was temporarily improved by the treaty of Küçük Kaynarıcı (1774), which made Russia the protectress of all the Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire⁶⁴).

Both in the north and in the south of Albania there appeared a phenomenon rarely noticed in other parts of the Balkans — cryptochristianity. The cryptochristians, it is believed, emerged in

⁵⁹) Ibid., p. 55.

⁶⁰) Text in N. Borgia, „I Monaci Basiliiani d'Italia in Albania, secoli XVI—XVIII“, Studi Albanesi, II (1932), pp. 160—161.

⁶¹) Text in Ibid., pp. 164—168.

⁶²) Cf. Ibid., V—VI (1935/36), pp. 113—168.

⁶³) F. S. Noli, *Historia e Skenderbeut* (History of Skenderbeg) (Boston, 1924), p. 276; Γ. Ι. Κοιτάρη, op. cit., p. 177.

⁶⁴) Ibid., p. 184.

periods of outbursts of anti-Christian fanaticism⁶⁵). Christians living in regions near those of Moslems professed Islam, while satisfying their conscience by practising Christianity in private. In the north these cryptochristians were called *l a r a m a n ë* (motley), and they lived particularly around Peć and in the plain of Kosovo⁶⁶). In south-central Albania the inhabitants of Shpat, a number of villages between Elbasan and Berat, remained cryptochristians until 1897, when with the assistance of Russia most of them declared themselves openly as Christians⁶⁷) — some became Moslems — the remainder doing so after the creation of the Albanian state.

Bektashism spread also in Albania as nowhere in the Balkans. This Moslem pantheistic sect is believed to have originated in the thirteenth century in a frontier region of Anatolia, where Christianity, Islam, and paganism coexisted⁶⁸). It is an offshoot of Shia Mohammedanism and has numerous points of contact with Christianity⁶⁹). The good Bektashi should make no distinction in his conduct toward Moslems and non-Moslems, and members of non-Islamic religion may be admitted to the order⁷⁰). The greater freedom of Bektashism must have had an appeal for the Albanians.

Bektashism seems to have been introduced into Albania sometime in the fifteenth century with the Janissaries of the Ottoman army⁷¹). The connection between Bektashis and Janissaries remained unofficial until the end of the sixteenth century, by which time it was a matter of course that Bektashis should accompany the Janissaries everywhere⁷²). When the Sultans decided to make the periodical levies of the unmarried male children (between 10 and 20 years) of their Orthodox Christian subjects for the Janissary

⁶⁵) T. W. Arnold, *op. cit.*, p. 182; F. W. Hasluck, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 471, 474 note 2, 723.

⁶⁶) V. Prenushi, *Kângë popullore gegënishte* (Popular Ghëg [northern] Songs), (Sarajevo, 1911), note on p. 10; F. Cordinano, *L'Albania attraverso l'opera e gli scritti ... di P. Domenico Pasi*, II, pp. 134—135.

⁶⁷) Γ. Ι. Κονιδάρη, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

⁶⁸) J. K. Birge, *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes*, (Hartford, 1937), pp. 22, 30—33.

⁶⁹) *Ibid.*, pp. 210, 215—218; F. W. Hasluck, *op. cit.*, II, p. 568.

⁷⁰) M. Hasluck, „The Non-Conformist Moslems of Albania“, *Contemporary Review*, (May, 1925), p. 605.

⁷¹) Cf. J. K. Birge, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

⁷²) Cf. M. Hasluck, *op. cit.*, p. 600; H. A. R. Gibb and H. Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West* (London-New York-Toronto, 1950), I, p. 65; F. W. Hasluck, *op. cit.*, II, p. 490.

troop — the so-called *devşirme* — many of them came from Albania⁷³). However, it appears that when Evliya Çelebi visited southern and middle Albania, Bektashism had not yet spread far, for scarce are the mentions of dervishes in his book. The first concrete evidence of the existence of a Bektashi *tekk e* (monastery) — in the town of Kaninë, near Vlorë — dates from this period⁷⁴).

The great expansion of Bektashism in southern Albania took place during the time of Ali Pasha Tepelena, who is believed to have been a Bektashi himself⁷⁵). The sect had adherents also as far north as Krujë. The ties between the Bektashis and the Janissaries, the latter opponents of Mahmud II who stood for centralism, should have contributed to the support given to Bektashism by Ali Pasha. Sultan Mahmud II succeeded in permanently breaking the Janissaries (massacres of 1826) but only crippled their dervish supporters, who lay low for a time and then emerged to grow stronger than ever⁷⁶). Albania, being remote and inadequately controlled by Turkey, was well adapted for their purposes. Toward the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries Bektashism, thanks to the patriotic poet Naim Frashëri, took a nationalistic trend among the Albanians⁷⁷).

As a result of the Ottoman conquest, the religious picture of Albania was still further complicated. The Catholics remained in the north, confined more or less to an enclave, with Shkodër as a kernel. The Moslems were spread all over the country, predominantly in the central parts. Except for the Bektashis of the south and the few of the middle regions, 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 (Argyrokastro). If we except the autonomous Catholic regions of the north and Himarë in the south, the Moslems were the rulers of the tountry.

⁷³) Cf. 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. 43.

⁷⁴) Cf. F. Babinger, *Evlijâ Tschelebi's Reisewege in Albanien*, p. 12, footnote 1.

⁷⁵) F. W. Hasluck, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 537, 588; J. K. Birge, *op. cit.*, pp. 72—73.

⁷⁶) F. W. Hasluck, *op. cit.*, I, p. 160; M. Hasluck, *op. cit.*, p. 600.

⁷⁷) Significant is N. Frashëri's *Fletorja e Bektashinjet* (Notebook of the Bektashis), republished in *Balkan Archiv*, II (1926), pp. 226—257.

Despite their division into confessional groups, the Albanians did not experience the religious struggles of the West. The Orthodox Albanians who joined forces with the Greeks during their War of Independence (1821—1829) were those who lived in Greece proper or among the Greeks, particularly those of Peloponnesus, descendants of the Albanians who emigrated there during the fourteenth century. The Orthodox Albanians of Albania proper did not participate. Apart from the fact that they were surrounded by Moslems and any revolt on their part would be doomed, they possessed an Orthodox Christian consciousness but not a Greek national consciousness. The Patriarchate of Constantinople (the official Church), whose control they were under, did not support or encourage any phase of the Greek Revolution (remember its condemnation of the Klephtic movement), since it had from of old become reconciled with the Ottoman regime⁷⁸).

On the other hand, the Moslem Albanians who sided with the Turks during the Greek War of Independence were not purely motivated by religious reasons. They had an agreement with the Turkish High Command which promised rewards for their military service. When the Turks did not keep the terms of the agreement, the Moslem Albanians left the battlefield. As a result of this defection, the Sultan Mahmud II ordered that the Albanian leaders-beys and agas — be invited to Monastir (Bitolj), under the pretense that they would be rewarded, but, in fact, to be executed. The few who escaped the massacre fled to Greece, using that country as a base for harrassing the Ottoman Empire⁷⁹). Thus the struggle between Orthodox and Moslem Albanians during the Greek Revolution cannot be considered basically a religious struggle.

Among the Albanian religious feeling was not strong. Those who espoused Islam did not do so out of conviction; worldly advantages were generally the motive. Blood-relationship among members of the various groups, cryptochristianity, and Bektashism were also obstacles to outbursts of fanaticism. However, the exploitation of the Orthodox Christian peasantry by the landowning beys, who replaced the *sipahis*, and the formation of the Greek state in the nineteenth century, attempting to create through the Greek schools Greek national sentiments among the Orthodox Al-

⁷⁸) Th. H. Papadopoulos, op. cit., pp. 147—148.

⁷⁹) Th. Ippen, „Beiträge zur inneren Geschichte Albaniens im XIX. Jahrhundert“, Illyrisch-albanische Forschungen, I, pp. 346—350.

banians, embittered the relations between the two confessional groups in the south. When strong pressure for conversion was employed or conflicts occurred, the causes were generally external.

The confessional division might have seriously impaired the unity of the Albanian people had it not been for certain links unaffected by it. In the north, both the Catholic and Moslem mountaineers lived in a tribal society, in which a common customary law, the Code of Lekë Dukagjini, regulated their lives. In the south, the tribal system had evolved into a patriarchal one, which was almost the same for the Moslems and the Orthodox Christians. The Greek school had not succeeded in making the Orthodox Albanian forget his vernacular; he always spoke Albanian outside the school. In spite of the Turkish school and the Turkish language being that of the Empire, the Moslem Albanian, whether of the north or of the south, stuck to his mother tongue. Common language differentiated the Albanians from their neighbors and the Turks, and made them conscious of their nationality. It was cultural autonomy that the Albanian nationalist leaders stressed in the period following the Congress of Berlin (1878). However, this division of Albania into three religious sections (2/3 of them Mohammedan) could not remain without consequences, when the country broke away from Turkey (1912) and formed an independent state.

Paul Straßburg, ein Diplomat aus der Zeit des Dreißigjährigen Krieges

Von MAGNUS MÖRNER (Stockholm)

Aus dem Schwedischen übersetzt von Dr. Hans Joachim Kießling

Im Kreise der diplomatischen Mitarbeiter Gustav Adolfs II. von Schweden und seines Kanzlers Axel Oxenstierna findet sich bekanntlich eine lange Reihe von Männern ausländischer Herkunft, darunter zwar einige abenteuerliche und wenig gediegene Typen wie etwa ein Fahrensbach oder Roussel, die Mehrzahl aber tüchtige und pflichtgetreue Männer. Wohlbekannt sind Hugo Grotius und Ludwig Camerarius, während andere kaum noch in unserer Geschichtsschreibung den Platz erhalten haben, den sie verdienen, wie etwa ein Christoph Ludwig Rasche, ein Philipp Sadler oder ein Paul Straßburg. Über letzteren soll hier in Kürze gehandelt werden.