

Albanian Political Thought and Revolutionary Activity, 1881—1912

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I.

When during the nineteenth century the other Balkan peoples revolted against Turkey to win independence, the Albanians despite a series of local insurrections, remained faithful to her. The majority (about two-thirds of the population) were Moslems, and many of their leaders, attracted to Constantinople, occupied very high civil and military positions in the government. At the same time, being a part of the Ottoman Empire, Albania was guaranteed against aggression by her neighbors. As a result a mutual confidence between the Albanians and the Turks had been established¹).

But the Russo-Turkish war of 1877 deeply shook that confidence. The Ottoman Empire had proved weak, and had been forced by the Great Powers at the Congress of Berlin (1878) to cede Albanian inhabited territory to the neighboring states. In the face of this situation leaders from all over Albania met at Prizren, a town in Kosovo (now in Yugoslavia), and founded the „Albanian League“, often called the League of Prizren, to defend the rights of the Albanian nation. At the outset this action met with the support of the Turkish government, which hoped thus to prevent further extension of the privileges of the Balkan states. The League alone, however, opposed by the force of arms — and this constituted the first part of its program — the decisions of the Berlin Congress detrimental to the territorial integrity of the country.

The Congress of Berlin made Albanian patriotic leaders well aware of the shaky structure of the Ottoman Empire, supported only by interested powers for political motives. They could no longer face the future of their country with the same sense of national security as they had in the past, with the fear of dismemberment now hovering over them²). But in general they still did not think Albania should break away from Turkey. Religion among the Albanians was not identified with nationality as it was among the other Balkan peoples. Only the Christians, who con-

¹) Cf. The Memoirs of Ismail Kemal Bey, edited by S. Story, London, 1920, pp. 362—363.

²) Ibid.

stituted a minority, were set apart from the conquerors. The Mohammedan Albanians in the Ottoman Empire, the political-social basis of which was religion and not nationality, held a privileged position. But not all parts of Albania were equally developed. Some mountainous regions had even enjoyed privileges for centuries. These were among the factors which made the union of the Albanian people difficult, and to achieve it most of the nationalist leaders thought that the best course to follow was autonomy within the framework of the Ottoman Empire.

The example had been set by the League of Prizren. Under the inspiring leadership of Abdul Frashëri, a program for the autonomy of Albania was formulated for the first time, as a second principal objective. The cardinal points of the program were unification of Albanian lands into one vilayet, the appointment of Albanians as government officials, the opening of Albanian schools, and use of Albanian as the language of the administration in the country³⁾. Turkey opposed these attempts strenuously, and in 1881 she suppressed the League by armed force⁴⁾, but the aspiration it had aroused could not be suppressed.

The program of the League of Prizren continued to exercise a strong influence on Albanian political thought during the following three decades. This is evident in the writings of nationalist leaders and in the various appeals and memoranda. They are not numerous, and the memoranda and petitions, although collective manifestations, usually lack the specification of the groups supporting them. The signers are vague: an Albanian committee or an Albanian society about which no details are given, perhaps as precautionary measure. Nevertheless, the appeals and memoranda are of great value because they reveal the political thinking of the time. The program of the League also stimulated revolutionary activity, less in the pre - Young Turk period — when insurrections were sporadic, local, and disconnected in aims — and much more after it. But this does not mean that the Albanians ceased to

³⁾ For the points of the program, see Th. Ippen, „Beiträge zur inneren Geschichte Albaniens im XIX. Jahrhundert“, in L. von Thallóczy, ed., *Illyrisch-albanische Forschungen*, München und Leipzig, 1916, I, p. 372; also L. Skendo, „Liga e Prizrenit“ (The League of Prizren), *Hylli i Dritës* (The Star of Light), III (1922), pp. 471—472.

⁴⁾ See for Albanian resistance S. Skendi, „Beginnings of Albanian Nationalist and Autonomous Trends: the Albanian League, 1878—1881“, *American Slavic and East European Review*, XII (1953), pp. 228—230.

come to the assistance of Turkey, whenever she was in trouble with their neighboring Balkan states. Matters became more complicated with the growth of interests in Albania by foreign powers. Of these Austria-Hungary and Italy were especially concerned, and their interests — or rather their rivalry — in Albania at times tinged Albanian political thought, or influenced insurrectionary activity. The interference of foreign powers became another obstacle to the unification of aims and concerted action.

II.

It was natural that a period of quietness should ensue after the abolition of the Albanian League. The expedition of Dervish Turgut Pasha had dispersed the Albanian forces. Many principal Albanian leaders were exiled to Asia Minor or other provinces of Turkey. Even when released, they were not allowed to return to their fatherland, but they were given government positions far from it or in Constantinople⁵). Sultan Abdul Hamid, although a strong opponent of Albanian national aspirations, had a weakness for the Albanians, possibly due to the fact that most of his personal bodyguard was composed of Albanians upon whose faithfulness he knew he could rely. The Albanians were also the frontier guard of the Empire in the Balkans. Abdul Hamid not only avoided taking harsh measures against Albanians, but on the contrary, he often rewarded certain of their leaders with gold and honors⁶). Nevertheless, Albanian revolts occurred during his reign, although they differed in objectives. More common than actual revolts were Albanian activity abroad and petitions and memoranda to the Porte and the Great Powers.

The first Albanian insurrection after the suppression of the League of Prizren was that of the tribes of Kastrati, Hoti, Gruda, and Shkreli, when in May 1883 they opposed a delimitation of the Turco-Montenegrin frontier as damaging their interests⁷). Three

⁵) See memorandum of the Albanian Committee, November 1899, in C. Libardi, *I primi moti patriottici albanesi, nel 1910—1911—1912*, Trento, 1935, II, Document No. 10, pp. 247—249.

⁶) E. Jäckh, *Im türkischen Kriegslager durch Albanien*, Heilbronn, 1911, pp. 26—27; *The Memoirs of Ismail Kemal Bey*, p. 365; R. Pinon, „La question albanaise“, *Revue des deux mondes*, 54 (1909), pp. 799—800.

⁷) A. Galanti, *L'Albania*, Roma, 1901, p. 232; G. Schirò, *Gli Albanesi e la questione balkanica*, Napoli, 1904, p. 74.

years before they had resisted the „Corti Compromise“ which ceded their lands to Montenegro⁸). Although the mountaineers of the north did not possess a developed national consciousness, local patriotism among them was a powerful force. As M. E. Durham pointed out in her book *The Struggle for Scutari* (London, 1914, p. 159), „The frontiers drawn by the Treaty of Berlin were so impossible that in many places they could not be defined much less enforced. As the borderers themselves described it, ‚The frontier floated in blood.‘“ The agitation of 1883 was suppressed by Turkey two months later. That same year, however, the highlanders took their revenge on the Ottoman army in a battle near Kastrati⁹).

The northern Albanians were also ready to create disturbances whenever the Ottoman government attempted to infringe upon their privileges and immunities. In March 1885 there was a very active unrest in the northeastern part of Albania, particularly around Prizren. Its cause was the demand for exemption from taxation, and also for the liberation of the political prisoners and interneés, whose number in a district like Prizren, which had been the center of activity during the period of the Albanian League, must have been considerable, despite Dervish Turgut Pasha's conciliatory policy. A fight took place on the road to Ferizović between the insurgents and the Ottoman forces¹⁰).

Despite Albanian demonstrations and revolts against the Turks, whenever Turkey was involved in hostilities with the Greeks or the Slavs, the Albanians were ready to defend her. There was a community of interests. A defeat of the Ottoman Empire would result in amputations of Albanian territory. Both Tosks (southerners) and Ghegs (northerners) fought on the side of Turkey during the Greco-Turkish war of 1897¹¹). In January 1899 a meeting of Albanian chiefs was held in Peja (Peć) and a union was formed, with Mulla Zeka as its president, which resolved to defend the Porte against the Slavs by opposing the extension of the Macedonian movement as harmful to the interests of Albania and Turkey. In the beginning

⁸) See for provisions of the „Corti Compromise“ *Protocole relatif a la démarcation des frontières Turco-Monténégrines et Memorandum annexe*, April 18, 1880, in G. Effendi Noradounghian, *Recueil d'actes internationaux de l'empire Ottoman*, Paris, 1902, IV, pp. 260—262.

⁹) G. Schirò, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

¹⁰) *Ibid.*

¹¹) R. Guicciardini, „Impressioni d'Albania. I,“ *Nuova Antologia*, XCIII (June 16, 1901), pp. 583—584; A. Galanti, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

of May 1901, Albanian bands attacked the Slavs and pillaged and partly burned the Sandžak, Senica, and Prishtina¹²).

In February 1903 the inhabitants of Mirdita, a semi-autonomous Catholic region, in agreement with the highlanders of Puka, rose against the Turkish government. They blocked the road between Shkodra (Scutari) and Prizren, cut the telegraph wires in the vicinity of Lesh (Alessio) and threatened to attack the town. Joined by other tribes, they dispatched a memorandum to the vali and consuls of the Great Powers in Shkodra, asking for the return to Mirdita of their chieftain, Prenk Bib Doda, who had been exiled by the Porte after the abolition of the „Albanian League“, adding: „The Sultan will never be recognized as our lord; the Crescent will not wave any longer on our mountains; we want to be free, we want our nationality recognized, like that of other people. From now on our flag will be that of Gjergj Kastrioti Skenderbeg which is already flying on the snowy peaks of St. Paul, in the clear sky of Mirdita, blown by the wind of liberty“¹³). This was considered too daring a challenge to Turkey to have come from as small a region as Mirdita without outside support. Austria-Hungary was suspected to be the instigator¹⁴).

Such a suspicion was based on the Dual Monarchy's growing interest in Albania. Following the occupation of Bosna-Hercegovina as a result of the treaty of Berlin, Austria-Hungary came nearer to northern Albania, where the Catholics lived. The Albanians had a common interest in opposing Slav expansionism. Still more so the Catholics, who were protected by Austria-Hungary by virtue of privileges accorded some three centuries past (Treaty of Vienna, 1615), renewed and expanded by later treaties and decrees¹⁵). At the Congress of Berlin she insisted as a Catholic power, together with France, on the preservation of the semi-autonomy of Mirdita, and an agreement was reached whereby Turkey would refrain — at least temporarily — from introducing any changes there¹⁶).

¹²) J. Larmeroux, *La politique extérieure de l'Autriche-Hongrie, 1875—1914*, Paris, 1918, I, p. 411; G. Schirò, *op. cit.*, pp. 173—174.

¹³) *Ibid.*, pp. 369—370.

¹⁴) *Ibid.*, p. 370.

¹⁵) See Th. A. Ippen, „Die religiöse Protectorate Osterreich-Ungarns in der Türkei“, *Die Kultur*, III (1902), pp. 298—310.

¹⁶) France, Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, *Documents diplomatiques* (Paris), Série A., Vol. 88 (1878), pp. 206—207.

While the Mirdita insurrection was still in progress, another broke out in south central Albania, in the district of Berat. The inhabitants called for a reduction of taxes and the replacement of government employees they regarded as unworthy of their offices¹⁷). The taxes were indeed heavy. It was estimated in 1901 that the vilayet of Janina, with half a million of people dispersed over an area of approximately 8500 square miles (22,000 square kilometers), paid 10 million francs to the public treasury¹⁸). There was also much agitation by the inhabitants of Filati, in Çamëria (now Chamuria, Greece¹⁹).

In the large province of Macedonia parts of Kosovo were included. They were subject to reforms. The Kosovars, however, being by inclination conservative and considering foreign interference as favoring the Slavs, opposed the Austro-Russian program of reforms for Macedonia. In March 1903 they revolted, occupied Vučitrn and proceeded to Mitrovica, attacking the Turkish garrison there. The Porte sent various commissions to conciliate them, but they would not listen. The Russian consul in Mitrovica, Shcherbin, was assassinated by an Albanian. The disorders spread in Prishtina and in the Sandžak, and unrest spread to the northern part of the vilayet of Shkodra. Turkey was forced to take steps to suppress the movement²⁰).

It was thought that Austria-Hungary had fomented the troubles as a pretext for occupation, for conferences were held in Vienna between the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the military chiefs²¹). Italy, maintaining that there was fear that the Albanian disorders might extend in other vilayets, requested the Austro-Hungarian government for an exchange of views. Vienna answered that there was no Albanian question, and that the suppression of the Albanian movement, which Russia and Austria demanded of Turkey, had as its only aim the nationally mixed Sandžak. As for Albania proper,

¹⁷) G. Schirò, *op. cit.*, pp. 370—372.

¹⁸) R. Guicciardini, „Impressioni d'Albania. II,“ *Nuova Antologia*, XCIV (July 1, 1901), p. 27.

¹⁹) G. Schirò, *op. cit.*, p. 372.

²⁰) Constans to Delcassé, April 7, 1903, and May 21, 1903, *Documents diplomatiques* (Paris, 1905), Série A, Vol. 66, No. 4 and No. 11.

²¹) L. Salvatorelli, *La Triplice Alleanza, storia diplomatica 1877—1912*, Milano, 1939, p. 268; A. Lorecchio, *Il pensiero politico albanese in rapporto agli interessi italiani*, Roma, 1904, *Note e documenti*, p. LXIV.

the reply added, Austria-Hungary held fast to the policy of the status quo²²).

Other Albanian revolts of definite significance do not appear to have taken place until the coming to power of the Young Turks in 1908. The patriotic leaders in general disapproved of revolutions, feeling that the time was not ripe. The influential Italo-Albanian poet De Rada wrote: „We cannot yet say consciously whether the moment has arrived to take up the arms or whether our brothers have decided to do so owing to instigations of foreigners who stand around them“²³). In 1900 Ismail Kemal Vlora, an Albanian leader who had held high government offices in the Ottoman Empire and was destined to proclaim the independence of his country, expressed the opinion that insurrections could only legitimate interventions and prejudice the situation for Albania²⁴). As a rule lawful means were advocated by the patriotic leaders in order to attain the recognition of the Albanian national rights.

Cultural autonomy was considered a very important step. The Turkish government had put a ban on written Albanian. The schools in the country were Turkish for the Moslems, and Greek for the Orthodox Christians. The Patriarchate of Constantinople had taken over the protection of the latter - known as Roums — and education was naturally given in Greek. It served the purposes of both the Church and the Porte to keep Christian and Mohammedan Albanians apart. There were only two Albanian Catholic institutions in Shkodra at the beginning of the post-League period: a Franciscan seminary, opened in 1861; and a Jesuit school, Collegio Saveriano, founded in 1877, largely due to Austro-Hungarian support²⁵). A literary club, the Society for the Development of the Albanian Language, had been founded in 1879 in Constantinople. It created a unified alphabet and published readers, but this society, as well as its organ „Drita“ (The Light), had been suppressed²⁶). Some Alba-

²²) Wedel to the [German] Foreign Office, April 29, 1903, *Die große Politik der europäischen Kabinette, 1871—1914*, Vol. XVIII, No. 5539.

²³) Text in G. Schirò, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

²⁴) See Ismail Kemal's interview in *Tribuna* (June 12, 1900) of Rome, as reproduced in G. Schirò, *op. cit.*, p. 321.

²⁵) G. Petrotta, *Svolgimento storico della cultura e della letteratura albanese*, Palermo, 1950, p. 73.

²⁶) Cf. G. Meyer, „Della lingua e della letteratura albanese,“ *Nuova Antologia*, 50 (April 15, 1885), p. 598; C. A. Dako, *Albania—The Master Key to the Near East*, Boston, 1919, p. 82.

nian schools were opened in the southern part of the country in the two decades of the post-League period, but their existence was precarious. They depended upon the domestic policy of the Porte, which oscillated between reform and conservatism, and upon the influence which Albanians with high positions in the administration could exercise upon it. The schools were alternately opened and closed until eventually were definitely shut²⁷). The struggle of the Albanians, however, for education in their language continued. At the basis of it was the political thought for the unification of the Albanian lands and people and their autonomy.

In October 1896 an Albanian petition was addressed to the Great Powers from Monastir (Bitolj), calling for the establishment of schools in towns and relatively important villages in which the official language, Turkish, would be taught together with Albanian, and asking further that the government employees in Albania should know the Albanian language. They also expressed the desire to see the fusion of the vilayets of Kosovo, Monastir, Salonica, Janina, and Shkodra in one single vilayet, with Monastir as capital, maintaining the populations of all these vilayets were in the majority Albanians. Aware of the aspirations of the Balkan states, they further requested that the soldiers furnished by the Albanian provinces should be incorporated in the regiments of European Turkey, charged with the defense of the Bulgarian, Serbian, Montenegrin, and Greek frontiers, and proposed that all their inhabitants, irrespective of religion, should be drafted²⁸).

The desire to live within the Ottoman Empire, while enjoying the rights of other nationalities, is revealed in a memorandum of February 1897 addressed to the ambassador of Great Britain in Constantinople. Protesting against the division attempted by the enemies, calling them Turks, Greeks, and Bulgarians, the Albanians declared that they asked nothing of the Sultan that would imply partition of the Empire, but merely that they could live in it like other nationalities. They called for the union of the Albanian vilayets (excluding the vilayet of Salonica), with Monastir as the capital, and for the appointment of Albanian employees in their administration, as well as for the opening of Albanian schools²⁹).

²⁷) Cf. *ibid.*, p. 84; G. Petrovta, *op. cit.*, pp. 71-72.

²⁸) C. Libardi, *op. cit.*, II, Document No. 4, pp. 228-231.

²⁹) *Ibid.*, II, Document No. 5, pp. 232-237.

The religious division of the Albanians was of great concern to the patriots. For political reasons the Orthodox Christians were often confused with their neighboring coreligionists. An Albanian reform committee dispatched a memorandum to the Grand Vizier, in 1896, in the name of both Christians and Moslems, protesting against the prevailing confusion in the Ottoman Empire by which Orthodox Christian Albanians were considered Greeks or Slavs, thus decreasing the number of Albanians living in the vilayets and increasing that of the neighbor populations³⁰).

As an aim the union of the Albanians, Naim Frashëri, the apostle-poet of Albanian nationalism, wrote in his „Notebook of the Bektashis“ (he himself belonged to this Moslem pantheistic sect): „The Bektashis are brothers not only among themselves but with all humanity as well. They love the rest of the Moslems and the Christians as their soul and they get along well with all men. But above all they love their fatherland and their countrymen, this being the highest of all virtues³¹).“ Owing to his influence, Bektashism in Albania followed a patriotic and nationalist trend. Union was also the objective of Naim's brother, Sami Frashëri (known in Turkish as Shemseddin Sami Bey), in his booklet, „Albania: What She Has Been, What She Is, What She Shall Be“ (1899), protesting against the identification of the Albanian Moslems as Turks and the Albanian Orthodox Christians as Roums. He was bitter against the Greek attempt to hellenize and separate the Albanian Orthodox Christian from his brothers so that at the convenient moment Toskëria (southern Albania) could be incorporated into Greece³²).

But Sami Frashëri was a deeper political thinker than his brother. He developed his ideas further. He believed that Albania and Turkey could not live any longer together, even if Turkey were to have another period of prosperity. Albania would not be able to preserve her nationality and language if Turkey continued to prevent the Albanians from founding their own schools and developing their own language, while she allowed the other nationalities, her own and Albania's enemies, to act as they pleased. If

³⁰) Ibid., II, Document No. 3, pp. 225-228.

³¹) N. Frashëri, Fletore e Bektashinjet (Notebook of the Bektashis), as republished in Balkan Archiv, II (1926), pp. 231-232.

³²) Sch. Sami Bey Frasher, Was war Albanien, was ist es, was wird es werden?, aus dem Türkischen übersetzt von A. Traxler, Wien und Leipzig, Alfred Hoelder, 1913, pp. 29-30.

Turkey were to continue to rule in Albania, Sami Frashëri thought, there would eventually remain no trace of the latter, for the Greeks and the Slavs would partition her³³).

Yet the Albanian writer did not advocate revolt against Turkey for the freedom of his fatherland. He appealed to the Albanians to form a union, a *b e s a*, and demand the recognition of Albanian rights of Europe and Turkey. The Porte would eventually be compelled to yield by the pressure brought to bear on it. The union would be preserved until the national rights of autonomous administration of Albania under the sovereignty of the Sultan were assured. Feeling, however, that Turkey's life in Europe was not long to endure, he thought the Albanians should be prepared to create an independent state³⁴). He proposed as the most suitable form of government for future Albania a sort of a republic with a senate at its head³⁵).

Sami Frashëri's proposed *b e s a* bears great resemblance to the League of Prizren. But conditions were different. The League was formed at a time when the Albanians were forced to unite in order to defend their territory. The movement was also supported by Turkey, whose interests coincided with that of the Albanians: preservation of lands within the Empire. Sami Frashëri advocated a union of all the Albanians at a time when no outside pressure was felt by them and Turkey herself opposed it. Besides, the distinction between local privileges and national rights was not clear for all the inhabitants. Although noble and patriotic, Sami Frashëri's proposal was not feasible at that time.

Meanwhile much Albanian activity was carried on abroad. In 1884 the headquarters of the literary club of Constantinople were transferred to Bucharest, the center of an active Albanian community³⁶). Soon other societies were established in various colonies abroad, particularly in Egypt and Bulgaria, and newspapers were published, which aimed at propagating the Albanian language, and the recognition of the Albanian rights. Congresses were not lacking and appeals were launched.

On January 31, 1902, an appeal to unite was made to the Albanian people by Giovanni de Aladro Castriota, who had been in

³³) Ibid., p. 41.

³⁴) Ibid., pp. 44, 47-49.

³⁵) For details of the envisaged future Albanian state, see *ibid.*, pp. 50-54.

³⁶) G. Petrotta, *op. cit.*, p. 58; C. A. Dako, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

the Spanish diplomatic service and who was a descendant of Skenderbeg, the 15th century Albanian national hero. He called himself „as a servant of the nation“, ready to fight together with the people for the revival of Albania³⁷).

The independence of Albania was also the ultimate objective of a committee formed in Paris in November 1902, composed of Dervish Hima, a Moslem Albanian from Struga (near Ohrida), and captain Dimitri Papazoglou, a Vlach from Monastir. The Vlachs at this time were in a position similar to the Albanians. They hated Hellenism and Slavism and were friends of the Albanians. Some people also favored a Vlacho-Albanian union³⁸). The committee chose for its president Prince Albert Ghica, a Rumanian of Albanian descent. In addition to serious study of the Albanian question, its program included active propoganda to acquaint Europe with the desiderata of the Albanians, and the creation of favorable opinion for Albanian independence³⁹).

On April 23, 1904, a National Albanian Congress was held in Bucharest and Prince Ghica was again elected president. The Congress proclaimed that its sole political program was „the independence of Albania, consisting of the provinces of Shkodra, Üsküb, Salonica, Monastir, and Janina“, and „voted unanimously to take up arms against Turkey or any other invader of Albania“, appointing „Prince Albert Ghica chief of the insurrection with dictatorial powers“. The Congress declared simultaneously that no one had the right to be called pretender to the throne of Albania⁴⁰). This declaration, based on a proposal made by Prince Ghica, apparently was aimed at Giovanni de Alardo Castriota, who held such aspirations⁴¹).

But most active were the Italo-Albanians, the descendants of those Albanians who had emigrated and established colonies in Sicily and southern Italy in the fifteenth century and later to es-

³⁷) Text of appeal in A. Lorecchio, *op. cit.*, Note e documenti, pp. CCCLXX-CCCLXXII; also G. Schirò, *op. cit.*, pp. 337-338.

³⁸) Cf. Sch. S. Bey Frasher, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-33; A. Galanti, *op. cit.*, p. 233; R. Pinon, *op. cit.*, p. 794.

³⁹) J. Larmeroux, *op. cit.*, II, p. 392.

⁴⁰) Points of program in *ibid.*, II, pp. 393-395.

⁴¹) For de Aladro Castriota's letter to De Rada, see G. Schirò, *op. cit.*, pp. 339-340.

cape the yoke of the Ottoman Turks⁴²). Living in separate communities, they had preserved the language, customs, and traditions of their fatherland. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, Italo-Albanian writers, like De Rada and Camarda, had made individual studies affirming the existence of the Albanian nationality⁴³). With the linguistic congresses of October 1, 1895, at Corigliano, and February 20, 1897, at Lungo (both in Italy), however, Albanians of the Italian settlements entered the field of collective manifestations. In addition to a unified alphabet, the compilation of a dictionary, and the publication of an Italo-Albanian review, their program comprised „the opening of relations with the mother country“⁴⁴). The Albanian National Society was founded with branches in all the Italo-Albanian colonies. Its organ was „La Nazione Albanese“, directed by the capable publicist A. Lorecchio, in which the best Albanian writers from both sides of the Adriatic collaborated. In a few years more than two hundred publications — books and monographs — saw light in Italy, and in 1900 the Italian government founded a chair of Albanian language and literature in R. Istituto Orientale of Naples⁴⁵).

Two basic principles guided the political endeavors of the Italo-Albanians. The first was „Albania for the Albanians“⁴⁶). This coincided with Italian policy. As part of Italian Oriental policy, Premier Francesco Crispi — „Albanian by blood and heart“, as he himself said — inaugurated a policy which did not aim at Albania's occupation by Italy, but rather at preventing a strong power from entrenching itself on her territory. This policy was pursued by all Italian governments after 1878⁴⁷). The second principle was that „the Adriatic was an Italian and Albanian sea“, to the second

⁴²) Cf. L. von Thallóczy, „Die albanische Diaspora“, *Illyrisch-albanische Forschungen*, pp. 335-336.

⁴³) See S. Skendi, „Beginnings of Albanian Nationalist Trends in Culture and Education (1878-1912)“, *Journal of Central European Affairs*, XII (1953), pp. 357, 360-361.

⁴⁴) See statutes of the two congresses, A. Lorecchio, *op. cit.*, Note e documenti, pp. LXXV-LXXVI, CXIX-CXXI.

⁴⁵) *Ibid.*, p. 64; K. Kamsi, „Shqiptarët e Italisë“ (The Albanians of Italy), Leka, Albanian review published in Shkodra, IX (1937), p. 447.

⁴⁶) A. Lorecchio, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-36.

⁴⁷) Cf. G. Volpe, „Formazione storica dell' Albania“, *Nuova Antologia*, 406 (December 16, 1939), pp. 330-331.

part of which the Italians would not subscribe, desiring the Adriatic to be only an Italian sea⁴⁸).

But the Adriatic at this time could not be an Italian sea. Austria-Hungary was in possession of the Dalmatian coast and free passage in the Adriatic interested her as much as Italy. Albania became the apple of discord between the two monarchies of the Triple Alliance. As each was opposed to the other's setting foot on Albanian territory, in November 1897 they reached a secret verbal agreement regarding the status quo and autonomy of Albania⁴⁹). On December 20, 1900, after a declaration in the Italian parliament by Visconti Venosta, the agreement was put down in writing in a note to Goluchowski, the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister as: (1) maintenance of the status quo of Albania as long as circumstances permitted; (2) in case changes should be imperative, to use their joint efforts to the end that modifications should be made in the direction of autonomy; (3) to seek in common the most appropriate means to safeguard their reciprocal interests⁵⁰).

Although all the Italo-Albanians had the liberation of Albania as their primary objective, two opinions prevailed among them as to the methods to be used. One was represented by G. Schirò, a great poet and writer, who advocated revolution to speed the independence of Albania⁵¹). Its following was small, as this current of thought did not fully take into consideration the difficulties or the desires of the Albanian people. Apparently Schirò's group was under the influence of Garibaldinian and Mazzinian thinking, which, faithful to the principle of nationality, called for complete independence of Albania⁵²). The principal exponent of the second approach was A. Lorecchio, who regarded the Ottoman Empire as „a temporary political formula“ and advocated reforms and auto-

⁴⁸) A. Lorecchio, op. cit., pp. 36, 61, 84.

⁴⁹) Aufzeichnung über die Unterredungen des Grafen Goluchowski mit dem italienischen Ministerpräsidenten Marchese di Rudini und dem italienischen Minister des Äußern Marchese Visconti-Venosta in Mailand und Monza, November 1897. Wiener Staatsarchiv, Geheim, XXXIII/39 (XVI), as reproduced in E. Walters, „Austro-Russian Relations under Goluchowski, 1895-1906“, unpublished documents, *The Slavonic and East European Review*, XXXII (1953), pp. 191-192. Cf. also L. Salvatorelli, op. cit., p. 222.

⁵⁰) Texts of notes in A. I. Pribram, *The Secret Treaties of Austro-Hungary*, Cambridge, 1921, I, pp. 197-199, 199-201.

⁵¹) G. Schirò, op. cit., p. 106; A. Lorecchio, op. cit., p. 71.

⁵²) Cf. G. Volpe, op. cit., p. 331.

nomy. This trend of thought, which did not run contrary to Italian official policy, had many followers. In 1896 Lorecchio wrote Schirò: „... our line should be to ask for those reforms and those internal regulations which would put Albania in a position to have relations with the civilized world. To ask continuously for this the help of Italy and of the Great Powers“⁵³). In order to achieve the reforms for the unification of Albanian lands, Lorecchio did not stop asking for the revision of the treaty of Berlin, along the lines proposed by Lord Fitzmaurice at the Conference of Constantinople (1880)⁵⁴).

The Albanian National Society in Italy also took the initiative for an important appeal (January 1, 1898) made to the Sultan in the name of all the Albanian societies abroad: „We want our language to be recognized by a fundamental law as a national language in the Albanian vilayets; similarly also our church and our schools; ... A law of the Empire concedes to us — as it does to other nationalities, subject of the Sublime Porte — the right to ask for the opening of our schools, and we shall not tire in demanding that this law be applied to us also.“ Moreover, the Albanian societies demanded of the Sultan the unification of the Albanian vilayets into one, administrative autonomy with Albanians as governors, and the liberation of political prisoners and exiles. The appeal also asked the Pope to draw the attention of the Catholic clergy to „the observation of the Divine Law“, declaring that in the vilayet of Shkodra they served interests contrary to those of the Albanian people and fomented discord between Christians and Moslems, causing bloodshed⁵⁵).

Although the Visconti Venosta-Goluchowski agreement constituted the avowed Italian and Austrian policy toward Albania, the two members of the Triple Alliance, mistrustful of each other, carried on a policy of peaceful penetration in the country: building churches, opening schools and post-offices, and aiding trade and

⁵³) G. Schirò, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

⁵⁴) A. Lorecchio, *op. cit.*, pp. 10, 31. Fitzmaurice, Britain's representative on the Eastern Roumelian Commission, attempted to create a large Albania including all those districts which had been under the authority of the League of Prizren. Fitzmaurice to Granville, June 21, 1880, in *Accounts and Papers, 1880*, Vol. 81, Turkey No. 15 (1880), No. 33.

⁵⁵) C. Libardi, *op. cit.*, II, Document No. 6, pp. 239-240.

navigation⁵⁶). As Greece and Montenegro were the two Balkan states interested in expanding in Albania, in order to counterbalance each other's influence, Italy favored Montenegro and Austria-Hungary for sometime inspired Greek policy⁵⁷). There were moments, however, when the two Allies recognized the necessity of developing national sentiment in the Albanian population to make possible, at a given time, the constitution of an autonomous state. In Venice (April 1905) Goluchowski and Tittoni, the Italian Foreign Minister, agreed that they should establish schools in Albania which would be completely Albanian and Goluchowski said that, as an effect of the Muerzsteg agreement of reforms, the districts of the vilayets of Macedonia in which the Albanian element prevailed would be attached to the vilayets of Shkodra and Janina. On May 12, 1905, Tittoni declared in the Italian parliament that the two countries had renounced an occupation of Albania^{57a}). Yet the interest of foreign powers in Albania gave rise to various prospects of publicists — partition or spheres of influence — but the Albanians in general stuck to their desire to remain within the Ottoman Empire but enjoy the rights of other nationalities.

The attitude of the Albanians toward the foreign countries and their desire to remain within Turkey were expressed in a memorandum in the name of the three creeds, addressed to the Hague Peace Conference of 1907. They protested against the injustice done to Albania by the treaty of Berlin in according Albanian territory to Serbia, Montenegro, and Greece, who oppressed a part of their compatriots, the other being the victim of „odious exploitation“ by the Porte. They also raised their voice against the status quo which was the policy of the Great Powers, requesting them, if they really desired peace in the Balkans, to use their influence that administrative autonomy be granted to Albania⁵⁸).

More moderate Albanian political thinking was not wanting. Certain Albanians believed that, as they foresaw more difficult

⁵⁶) F. Guicciardini, „Impressioni d'Albania. II“, pp. 35-36; L. F. von Chlumecký, Österreich-Ungarn und Italien. Der Westbalkan, Wien, 1907, pp. 164-165, 192; J. Larmeroux, op. cit., II, pp. 483-484.

⁵⁷) E. Driault et M. Lhéritier, Histoire diplomatique de la Grèce, Paris, 1926, IV, pp. 332-333.

^{57a}) F. Tommasini, L'Italia alla vigilia della guerra, Bologna, 1935, II, pp. 67-68, 129.

⁵⁸) C. Libardi, op. cit., Document No. 14, pp. 252-257, or J. Larmeroux, op. cit., II, pp. 396-401.

times ahead for Turkey, Turkey herself would later be compelled to grant independence to Albania to retain her as a friend and ally, and that consequently a few concessions would be sufficient for the moment⁵⁹). There were even some proposals of an Italian protectorate over Albania, originating abroad⁶⁰). Yet in 1896 a great part of the notables of Gjinokastër (Argyrokastrò), both Moslems and Christians, expressed the opinion that in the face of an imminent collapse of Turkey „the eyes of all the true Albanians, whether Moslem or Christian, are incessantly turned across the Adriatic toward Italy, . . . all their expectations and desires are concentrated on their brother Italians, at whose head is the worthy person of H. Exc. Crispi, whose energy, ability and Albanian heart they already know“⁶¹). This opinion appears to have been uttered under pressure: the people of Gjinokastër feared Greek territorial expansion. But Faik Konitza, the learned editor of the periodical „Albania“, published in London, also expressed suspicions about the intentions of the Italian government and even of the Italo-Albanians⁶²). Indeed, in 1904 an Italo-Albanian Committee was constituted in Rome, connected with the National Federation for Irredentist Italy which delegated Ricciotti Garibaldi, the son of the Italian liberator, „to prepare the future of Albania as a nation“⁶³).

Discounting slight deviations, until the coming of the Young Turks to power, the general line of Albanian political thought was for reform and autonomy. As A. Lorecchio wrote in 1904: „Reforms, on the contrary, are the only and continuous goal of this people. There is no memorandum . . . sent to the Sultan or the Powers, there is no newspaper or review . . . there is no committee, congress, assembly, or any other collective manifestation of Albanian will in which the highest and dominant note is not one and the same: reforms, administrative autonomy to the people of Albania“⁶⁴).

⁵⁹) G. Schirò, op. cit., p. 116.

⁶⁰) L. F. von Chlumecký, op. cit. p. 116.

⁶¹) F. Crispi, *Questioni internazionali*, Milano, 1913, p. 239.

⁶²) Cf. A. Lorecchio, op. cit., p. 82.

⁶³) I. Volpe, op. cit., p. 331.

⁶⁴) A. Lorecchio, op. cit., p. 27.

III

With the accession of the Young Turks to power, Albanian political thought began to be put into action to develop the union of the Albanian people along national lines. But local interests continued to play an important role in certain parts of Albania. When the Young Turks tried to suppress national development or regional privileges, the conflict became unavoidable. The insurrections followed each other in growing intensity and magnitude. Although they still lacked coordination, they followed political thought more closely and more and more they assumed a national character.

The movement of the Young Turks was the result of the general dissatisfaction with the tyrannical regime of Sultan Abdul Hamid II (1876—1909). It originated in the early nineties among Ottoman exiles in Geneva, and expanded to hold an important congress in Paris in 1902, developing later into the „Committee of Union and Progress“ of Salonica. It proclaimed constitutional guaranties and the convocation of a parliament where all the races of the Empire would be represented, without distinction of religion or nationality⁶⁵).

When an Anglo-Russian scheme of reforms, the Reval Program, was announced in June, 1908, the Young Turks thought that the moment for action had arrived. They reasoned that if the Sultan accepted the project, the Macedonian revolutionaries would possess a powerful weapon to further their propaganda; if he refused it, the European powers would intervene in order to carry out its application and would thus humiliate the Ottomans again⁶⁶). In both cases there was danger, for the reforms would lead to an autonomous Macedonia and ultimately to its loss. It was at this juncture that the Young Turks asked for the help of the Albanians in the execution of their political program⁶⁷).

An autonomous Macedonia would jeopardize Albanian national unity, for it would incorporate Albanian lands. At the same time the program of the „Committee of Union and Progress“ satisfied the demands of the Albanians for the same rights as those of other peoples of the Empire. In the Paris congress of the Young Turks,

⁶⁵) L. Skendo, „Indipendence morale“ (Moral Independence), Leka, p. 504; J. Larmeroux *op. cit.*, II, p. 33.

⁶⁶) Cf. *Ibid.*, II, p. 36.

⁶⁷) The Memoirs of Ismail Kemal Bey, p. 365.

Ismail Kemal Vlora, then a political exile, had declared himself for a constitutional regime⁶⁸). By 1908 several Albanians had even become members of the „Union and Progress Committee“. The Young Turks still had to come to an understanding with the bulk of the Moslem population of the northeast, the Kosovars, who were not inclined to abandon the Sultan, whom they called *baba mbret* (the father King).

The signal of the Young Turk revolt was given on July 3, 1908, at Resna, a town in Macedonia near the Albanian boundary. An Albanian captain of the Ottoman army and a member of the „Committee of Union and Progress“, Niazi Bey, leading a group of soldiers, declared to his army superiors that he was turning the arms against the regime in order to defend liberty and the cause of reforms, in the general interest of both the Christian and Moslem populations⁶⁹). The uprising began to spread into other parts of Macedonia and Albania. On July 21, 1908, twenty thousand armed Albanians gathered at Ferizović, between Prishtina and Üsküb, at the instigation of Shemsi Pasha, commander of the division in Mitrovica, a man who had the confidence of the Sultan. But delegates of the „Committee of Union and Progress“, present at the meeting, represented the Constitution to them as the only way to prevent the execution of the Reval Program and put an end to the meddling of Europe in the affairs of the Ottoman Empire⁷⁰). Nevertheless, the Young Turks would not have won the Kosovars to their side, had they not promised to satisfy their demands. They engaged to respect the old privileges with regard to taxation, which meant the return to the Sheri (the religious law); they gave assurances that the Albanians would remain in possession of their arms; they promised the opening of Albanian schools; and they accepted the inviolability of the Sultan⁷¹).

With the acceptance of the Albanian terms, the gathering of Ferizović turned into a manifestation in favor of the Young Turks and telegraphed to Sultan Abdul Hamid for the reestablishment

⁶⁸) Ibid.

⁶⁹) Cf. E. b. V[lora], *Die Wahrheit über das Vorgehen der Jungtürken in Albanien*, Wien und Leipzig, 1911, p. 7; J. Larmeroux, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 36-37.

⁷⁰) R. Pinon, *op. cit.*, p. 812; J. Larmeroux, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 36-38; C. A. Dako, *op. cit.* pp. 76-77.

⁷¹) See Official vilayet communiqué of July 30, 1908, in E. b. V[lora], *op. cit.*, p. 7; Cf. also R. Pinon, *op. cit.*, p. 812.

of the 1876 constitution, which he himself had granted and then repealed. The telegram was a decisive blow: „it produced a greater impression upon him [the Sultan] than the remonstrances of all the Turks or all the diplomatic representations of Europe“⁷²). On July 24, 1908, the Sultan promulgated a decree ordering the convocation of a parliament and promised by the Hatti Hümayun (imperial decree) of August 1, 1908, that „every subject belonging to whatever race and religion should enjoy individual liberty and equality of rights and duties“⁷³).

The beginning of the Young Turks regime saw the Albanians very active. In November 1908 a congress of representatives from all parts of Albania and the Albanian colonies abroad was convened at Monastir to decide upon a common alphabet. It was presided over by Midhat Frashëri (alias Lumo Skendo), the son of the leader of the „Albanian League“, and poets like Gjergj Fishta and Dom Ndre Mjeda, as well as intellectuals like Sotir Peci, took an active part⁷⁴). The Congress of Monastir unanimously adopted the Latin alphabet — that of Constantinople and one completely Latin (the present alphabet)⁷⁵) — thus taking a great step toward Albanian unification. During the first ten months of Turkish constitutional government sixty-six Albanian cultural and political clubs were founded in Albania and in other parts of the Empire for the propagation of Albanian culture and the defense of Albanian rights. In the same period thirty-four day schools with 1, 850 pupils, and twenty-four night schools with 1, 753 pupils were opened⁷⁶). Schools began to function also in Üsküb, Salonica, Monastir, Janina, and Constantinople. For months the Albanian educational movement was supported by newspapers and periodicals, which appeared in all the important towns of the country and in other parts of the Empire⁷⁷). The very names of the publications are symbolic of the nationalist trend.

⁷²) The Memoirs of Ismail Kemal Bey, p. 365.

⁷³) Text in J. L a r m e r o u x , op. cit., II, pp. 40-43.

⁷⁴) See for a list of representatives Leka, p. 355.

⁷⁵) See the resolution of the committee on the question of the alphabet in Leka, p. 360.

⁷⁶) C. A. D a k o , op. cit., pp. 259-260.

⁷⁷) See S. S k e n d i , „Beginnings of Albanian Nationalist Trends in Culture and Education“, p. 365.

In the meantime (December 17, 1908), the Turkish parliament was convened with the four Albanian vilayets represented. Some of the most prominent deputies, destined to play a role in the political life of Albania, were Ismail Kemal Vlora for Berat, Shahin Kolonja for Korça (Koritza), Esad Toptani for Durrës (Durazzo), Hasan Prishtina for Prishtina, Nexhip Draga for Üsküb, and Mufid Libohova for Gjinokastër (Argyrokastró)⁷⁸). But the elections were not very regular. The elements of the „Union and Progress Committee“ opposed the election of nationally minded deputies⁷⁹). The Catholics of Shkodra protested against them as anticonstitutional, on the ground that they were not allowed to vote for a Christian candidate⁸⁰).

Only a few months had passed after the Young Turks had come to power when it became apparent that their viewpoint was opposite to that of the Albanian nationalists. The real aim of the „Committee of Union and Progress“ was not the free development of the nationalities, but the „Ottomanization“ of all subjects of the Empire and a centralized government. The Albanians, on the other hand, followed the principle of decentralization, prevalent in the Turkish group of Sebahaddin Bey and among the intelligentsia of all parties of the non-Turkish nationalities in the Ottoman Empire. By union the Albanians understood a grouping of various peoples under the flag of the Ottoman constitution, a sort of confederation which would strengthen the Empire and guarantee national existence to each⁸¹).

The Young Turks, who viewed the Albanians merely as a Moslem people with a slightly developed political ideal, believed that by better management and the exertion of pressure they could make them docile Ottomans, serving as an example to the other nationalities⁸²). They forgot the promises they made to the northern Albanians when they needed their support. They asked them to pay taxes like the other subjects of the Empire; to obey the govern-

⁷⁸) For a list of Albanian deputies, see Leka, p. 363.

⁷⁹) E. b. V[lora], op. cit., p. 8.

⁸⁰) Shkodra memorandum of January 1909, C. Libardi, op. cit., II, Document No. 15, pp. 257-260.

⁸¹) Cf. E. b. V[lora], op. cit., pp. 9-11; The Memoirs of Ismail Kemal Bey, p. 366.

⁸²) Ibid., p. 367.

ment officials sent from Constantinople; to deliver their weapons and accept the draft⁸³). Although from the viewpoint of the authority of the state such measures were justifiable, the moment and the region to apply them were ill-chosen. The drastic law against the bands—banishing the whole family and confiscating its property if one of its members joined them — which the Young Turks had promulgated, in spite of its general character, was believed to foreshadow similar legal measures to crush Albanian resistance⁸⁴).

Consequently in the counter-revolutionary movement of April 13, 1909 — the failure of which caused the fall of the Sultan Abdul Hamid — the Albanians were split. The supporters of the old regime were mostly among the conservative Moslems of the north, who had been favored by the Sultan. But Ismail Kemal Vlora, who had become the leader of the Liberal Opposition in the parliament, also seemed to have favored the revolutionary coup — in fact, he was accused as being one of its instigators⁸⁵). In general, the more enlightened Albanians, primarily interested in national cultural development, and with Abdul Hamid's opposition to it still very vivid in their memory, sided with the „Committee of Union and Progress“. The Albanian club in Salonica advised the clubs in Albania to support the army and the constitution, and Ali Pasha Kolonja, a southern Albanian, directed the military operations against the counter-revolutionary movement under the command of Mahmud Shefket Pasha⁸⁶). The Young Turks had not yet frustrated the hopes of all the Albanians.

With the overthrow of Sultan Abdul Hamid, the „Committee of Union and Progress“ was firmly in the saddle. Federalist principles had receded, and the centralist policy was pursued more energetically. In the middle of June 1909, Bedri Pasha, the vali of Shkodra, announced that the government was about to embark on a census, the *n o f u z* (tahir-i nufus) as the Albanians called it. The people opposed this measure as a threat to their privileges and a prelude to obligatory military service. They began to agitate. Next the vali ordered the establishment of a record book of real estate to serve as a basis for taxation. The poor highlanders of the pro-

⁸³) E. Jäckh, op. cit., pp. 27-29; E. b. V[lora], op. cit., p. 14.

⁸⁴) The Memoirs of Ismail Kemal Bey, pp. 329, 367.

⁸⁵) Cf. Ibid., pp. 345-346; R. Pinon, op. cit., p. 816; Leka, p. 365.

⁸⁶) A. von Rappaport-Arbengau, „Në Shqipni e për Shqipni“ (In Albania and for Albania), Leka, p. 436; Cf. also Leka, p. 365.

vince had always resented taxes, and when the Young Turks decided to take their arms from the Albanians, who had possessed them from times immemorial, unrest vastly increased and resistance became more stubborn⁸⁷).

In the vilayet of Kosovo, however, it was the policy of centralization which met the greatest opposition. Even before the fall of Sultan Abdul Hamid the Kosovars had sent a delegation to Salonica to remind the „Committee of Union and Progress“ that they wanted to preserve their privileges⁸⁸). The Young Turks ordered Djavid Pasha, the new commander of the division at Mitrovica to make an army demonstration in the mountains. Isa Boletini, a prominent leader often honored by the Sultan, and other chiefs of Peja (Peć) and Gjakova attacked the Ottoman army. In the summer of 1909, Djavid Pasha pursued his campaign to Gjakova and the highlands, demanding their disarmament and imposing a new tax for the army and the schools. On August 17, three thousand Albanians, gathered at Ferizović to protest the new taxes, were dispersed by artillery fire. A month later Djavid Pasha penetrated the mountains of Luma, on the excuse that the Lumjans refused to enter the market-place of Prizren without their weapons. Here, however, he encountered resolute resistance. After a fierce battle and the burning of certain villages, he retreated to Mitrovica under the pretext of cold weather⁸⁹). His expedition gave rise to a bitter grudge among the Albanians. The entire mountain region between Peja and Dibra was in a state of rebellion.

Meanwhile, on July 10, 1909, a congress of the Albanian committees (clubs) in the vilayets of Macedonia took place in Dibra. To give it a general rather than solely an Albanian character, the „Committee of Union and Progress“ demanded that other Macedonian communities be invited. The Young Turks sent their own delegation, composed of Niazi Bey, the hero of Resna, and some army officers. At the outset a program prepared by the „Committee of Union and Progress“ was adopted. Then the assembly elaborated complementary articles: in the appointment of functionaries, the preference should go to the natives; each faith should have the right to possess its own national schools and hold religious services in Albanian; schools should be created with Albanian as the

⁸⁷) Cf. J. Larmeroux, *op. cit.*, II, 406; R. Pinon, *op. cit.*, pp. 815-816.

⁸⁸) R. Pinon, *op. cit.*, pp. 812, 818.

⁸⁹) *Ibid.*, pp. 817-818; Leka, p. 364.

language of instruction; roads and railroads should be constructed; each year an Albanian Congress, called the „Ottoman Albanian Congress of Constitution“, would be held in one of the cities of European Turkey⁹⁰). Virtual autonomy was implied in the articles.

In Kosovo, however, the situation deteriorated. In the middle of March, 1910, town dues were imposed in Prishtina by order of the vali. The people were unwilling to pay them and the government attempted to exercise its authority. As a protest, some 800 Kosovars, under the leadership of a certain Islam, barred the road from Prishtina to Podjova. Representatives of the population of Prishtina failed to persuade them to disperse. The insurgents demanded the abolition of the town dues and the fulfilment of the Ferizović conditions, and the next day a clash with the Ottoman army took place, and the revolt rapidly expanded⁹¹). Armed men rushed to Ferizović from many parts of Kosovo. Although there were individual complaints, they all had one charge in common: „We have been deceived! The Young Turks have broken their solemn agreement.“⁹²) A *b e s a* (agreement, union) was made to oppose the Young Turk regime, which had suppressed their age-old rights and traditions.

The Turkish government dispatched General Shefket Turgut Pasha to quench the rebellion. He had under his command 16,000 infantry apart from cavalry and artillery. The Albanian revolutionaries, inferior in number, had occupied the passes. At Kačanik, the commander was Idriz Seferi; at Crnoleva, the command was entrusted to Hasan Hyseni and Isa Boletini. Although without artillery, the Albanians inflicted heavy losses upon the Turkish army in the battle of Kačanik, and the issue might have been resolved in their favor had not 8000 men from Luma returned home because of a treachery⁹³). On May 2, 1910 the Ottoman Minister of War, Mahmud Shefket Pasha, arrived and the army was increased to more than 40,000 men, for the Young Turks were firmly resolved to put an end to the Albanian insurrection. In the battle at Crnoleva the Turks were again the victors and the road to Prizren was now open to them.

⁹⁰) See for resolution comprising all the points in *Drita* (The Light), Tirana, November 28, 1937, p. 5; R. Pinon op. cit., pp. 818-819.

⁹¹) E. b. V [l o r a], op. cit., pp. 26-28.

⁹²) E. J ä c k h, op. cit., p. 26.

⁹³) Leka, p. 366.

Having disarmed Kosovo, Turgut Pasha proceeded to Shkodra, reaching it on July 26, 1910. He ordered the inhabitants to turn in their arms, and asked for the census of the population and the drafting of young men from 18 to 26 years old. All the northern part of the country, except the northern and northwestern mountains, was occupied by Turgut Pasha's forces. Before his departure for Salonica, the Turkish General ordered his army to occupy Dibra and disarm the population. His whole expedition in northern Albania lasted five months⁹⁴).

While in the north the Ghegs opposed the centralistic policy of the Young Turks by the use of arms, in the south the Albanians waged an unarmed battle for cultural autonomy. The creation of a Latin Albanian alphabet had disturbed the regime. In order to fight it, the Turks appealed to the religious sentiment of the Moslem Albanians by proclaiming the Latin script an invention of foreigners and its use a sacrilege, insisting that Arabic characters alone should be used⁹⁵). The Albanians reacted with meetings in various towns and telegrams addressed to the Porte in defense of the Latin script for the Albanian language. The demonstration which took place on February 19, 1910, in Korça was imposing. 15 000 people attended, many speeches were delivered in support of the „Albanian letters“, and a prayer was said by the hodja, Hafëz Ali, who also blessed the Albanian alphabet⁹⁶). As the rift between the Young Turks and the Albanian nationalists was becoming deeper, in March 1910 a second linguistic congress was held in Monastir to clarify the situation. It declared: „The pure linguistic question of the Albanian alphabet, which had been definitely solved in the Congress of Dibra, has come up again and has given place to crises and contradictory currents of opinion. This question, which interests solely the Albanian element, has even acquired an internal political significance, as it regards education in the whole Ottoman nation and the interest of the authorities . . . The Congress unanimously declares that the question of the Albanian language, however much it has deviated from its basis, be-

⁹⁴) Cf. E. Jäckh, op. cit., pp. 27-29, 37-42; E. b. V [l o r a], op. cit., pp. 26-27, 29-30, 36, 82; Leka, pp. 366-367; J. Larmeroux, op. cit., II, p. 407.

⁹⁵) E. b. V [l o r a], op. cit., p. 18.

⁹⁶) Drita, p. 4; Z. M. Harapi, „Gjuha e shkolla shqype në kohën e Xhemietit“ (Albanian Language and School at the time of the [Young Turk] Committee), Leka, p. 465.

longs exclusively to the Albanians, and it is desirable, in the true Ottoman interests, that it should not get from its natural sphere"⁹⁷).

When their propaganda for the Arabic script failed, the Turkish government resorted to force. After the suppression of the northern revolt by Shefket Turgut Pasha, the Albanian clubs were closed, the authorities considering them as hotbeds of insurrection⁹⁸). This was followed by the suppression of newspapers and the closing of schools. Leaders and editors were imprisoned, while others sought refuge abroad. The Albanian political-cultural situation of the time may be judged by a memorandum of the Central Committee of the Albanian Students, addressed on October 10, 1910, to „the public opinion of the civilized world“. The Central Committee protested against arbitrary measures taken with regard to Albanian journalists; the suppression of Albanian publications; the prohibition of the import of Albanian newspapers published abroad; the closing of Albanian printing houses in Monastir, Salonica, and Korça; the closing of Albanian schools and the exclusion of the Albanian language from government schools in Albania; the suppression of Albanian clubs; and intrigues on the part of the Turkish government to discredit the national alphabet⁹⁹).

Shefket Turgut Pasha's campaign, however, did not put an end to the rebellion of the north. Ded Gjo Luli, the Catholic chieftain of Hoti, gathered his highlanders, and joined by those of Shala, under Mehmed Shpendi, decided to defy the orders of the vali of Shkodra to pay taxes and deliver their arms. Pursued by the Turkish army, the insurgents entered Montenegro. Podgorica (now Titograd, Yugoslavia), became the center of the refugee revolutionaries, to which had come Isa Boletini and other leaders of Kosovo, later joined by many Albanian intellectual patriots¹⁰⁰). The insurrection of the north of Catholics and Moslems alike, for the preservation of their traditional privileges, developed a national sentiment which soon called for national rights.

In December 1910, thousands of armed Albanians mustered in the mountains of Dibra and set forth their claims. They did not ask for privileges, but for the opening of Albanian schools, free

⁹⁷) C. Libardi, op. cit., II, Document No. 18, pp. 262-263.

⁹⁸) Cf. Ibid., p. 264.

⁹⁹) Ibid., Document No. 19, pp. 266-268.

¹⁰⁰) Cf. Leka, pp. 367-368; C. Libardi, op. cit., I, p. 173 and II, p. 119; The Memoirs of Ismail Kemal Bey, p. 368.

circulation of Albanian publications, amnesty for all Albanians condemned for political activity, government employees of Albanian nationality, spending of taxes in Albania, and the construction of roads¹⁰¹). On March 30, 1911, the highlanders of the north, who had found shelter in Montenegro, expressed their desires in a memorandum addressed to the Great Powers. Their demands were similar to those formulated in the mountains of Dibra, except that in addition they also asked for the recognition by the Porte of the integrity of Albanian territory comprising the four Albanian vilayets and the appointment of Albanian valis in the latter¹⁰²). On April 27, 1911, after a visit to the revolutionary leaders in Podgorica, Dr. Terenc Toçi (Tocci), an Italo-Albanian nationalist lawyer, gathered the chieftains of Mirdita and Dukagjin, as well as Moslems from Mati and Dibra, and hoisted the Albanian flag at Kimëz (Ghims), in Mirdita. Toçi was not in touch with the Italian government, but with Ricciotti Garibaldi, who had promised him assistance. At this time a parliamentary committee for Albania, composed of some 60 deputies of various political colors, was constituted in Rome and preparations were made for an expedition of volunteers to Albania. But this committee had overtones of an anachronistic garibaldiism¹⁰³). The Italian government, although desirous of weakening Turkey during the Tripoli war (1911—1912), was careful not to provide Austria with opportunity to intervene in Albania when it had its own hands tied in Tripoli¹⁰⁴). The Italian government therefore prevented any assistance to Albania on the part of the Italo-Albanians. On the day of the meeting at Kimëz a short-lived Provisional Government was formed with Dr. Toçi as president, and Albania was declared „free and independent with her frontiers in history, language, and nationality“¹⁰⁵).

Meanwhile the revolutionary movement burgeoned in the north. The revolt acquired a new vitality around Shkodra. The vali of the

¹⁰¹) C. Libardi, op. cit., II, Document No. 20, pp. 269-272; J. Larmeroux, op. cit., II, pp. 407-408.

¹⁰²) Ibid., II, pp. 408-409.

¹⁰³) G. Volpe, op. cit., p. 331.

¹⁰⁴) Cf. V. Mantegazza, „The Relations of Italy and Austria and the Albanian Question“, *The British Review*, II (1913), p. 322.

¹⁰⁵) P. Pal Dodaj, „Shqypnija e Shqyptarve e Qeverija e Përkohëshme“ (Albania to the Albanians and the Provisional Government), *Hylli i Dritës* (The Star of Light), X (1934), pp. 245-255; Leka, pp. 514-515 (text of the declaration is included); C. Libardi, op. cit., II, pp. 37-49, 52-53.

city, Bedri Pasha, attempted to use religion in the application of the principle *divide et impera*. As most of the insurgents were Catholics, he appealed to the Mohammedans (March 27, 1911) to accept arms from the government and pursue those who wanted to destroy the „din“ (Moslem faith). There were some Moslem Albanians who fought against their brothers. Ironically they were called the followers of *Hürriyet* (liberty)¹⁰⁶), this being the first part of the slogan of the Young Turks, the other two being „justice“ and „friendship“. Under the increasing attacks, patriots like Luigj Gurakuqi, a Catholic intellectual from Shkodra, joined the revolutionaries¹⁰⁷).

Confronted with the increasing growing proportions of the Albanian uprising, the government of Constantinople again dispatched Shefket Turgut Pasha as the commander of a new expedition. Arriving at Shkodra, the General issued a proclamation (April 28, 1911), telling the Albanian insurgents to return to their homes and turn in their weapons, for the rank and file would be pardoned. Only the chiefs would not be pardoned, as they were to be tried by the *Divani Harb* (Court Martial). The Albanians, in their reply from Podgorica (May 11, 1911), stated that as the promises of the constitutional rights which Turgut Pasha had given had not been kept they could not rely on his word again, and they wanted more serious guarantees¹⁰⁸).

It seems strange that Montenegro, a country against which the northern Albanians had often fought, should offer asylum to Albanian revolutionaries. Her protection and support, for she supplied the Albanians with weapons, was certainly motivated by political considerations. It was no secret that Montenegro supported the Albanian uprising. Her King boasted that he could bring it to an end within twenty-four hours. Montenegro wanted war to expand her territory, and the Albanian insurrection could be used for that purpose. But she could not achieve her aim because Russia did not support her¹⁰⁹). The prolongation of the revolt had a future advantage: it weakened Albanian fighting power. If Turkey yielded to the demands of the Albanians, the Turkish army would leave the

¹⁰⁶) C. Libardi, *op. cit.*, II, p. 171.

¹⁰⁷) Leka, pp. 370-374; J. Larmeroux, *op. cit.*, p. 408.

¹⁰⁸) Text of proclamations in C. Libardi, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 33-35, and Document No. 24, pp. 276-277; Leka, pp. 374-376.

¹⁰⁹) M. E. Durham, *Twenty Years of Balkan Tangle*, London, 1920, pp. 217-218.

country. In the event of an invasion on the part of Montenegro, resistance in northern Albania would be weaker. If Turkey continued to use force to suppress the revolt, the mountaineers would think that Montenegro was their friend and Turkey their real enemy. She could then use them for her aims, in case an intervention would be necessary for the peace of the Balkans.

But after some time the situation became embarrassing for Montenegro. The number of Albanian refugees to be taken care of increased and Turkey concentrated troops on the frontier.

Russia then intervened and asked the Porte to state categorically that she had no aggressive intentions toward Montenegro. Turkey gave assurances of her pacific intentions toward Montenegro in the speeches delivered in the Turkish parliament by both Rifat Pasha, the Foreign Minister, and the Grand Vizier. In this way Russia, by supporting Montenegro, who in turn was supporting the Albanian insurgents, attempted to establish friendly cooperation between Albanian and Slavic elements in order to contribute to the failure of Austrian designs. The government of St. Petersburg also recommended that Montenegro observe strict neutrality in her relations with the insurgent Albanian mountaineers¹¹⁰). On July 15, 1911, the King of Montenegro submitted and informed the foreign Powers that he would not permit the Albanians to cross the border¹¹¹).

As the Albanians were disposed to make common cause with all those who favored their demands, Austria-Hungary could not but feel somewhat disturbed. Moreover, the Turks had instituted a regime of terror in Albania, among whose victims were the Catholic highlanders. Because of its protectorate over the Albanian Catholics, the Dual Monarchy could not remain indifferent to her prestige, particularly as clericalism had just at this time regained power in Vienna. She let the Porte know that a change in Turkish methods was necessary¹¹²). This Austrian step had an immediate

¹¹⁰) J. Larmeroux, *op. cit.*, II, p. 409; Buchanan to Grey, May 26, 1911, and Lowther to Grey, May 30, 1911, in *British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898-1914*, Vol. IX, part 1, No. 472, No. 473.

¹¹¹) C. Libardi, *op. cit.*, II p. 107; see also for other details, E. C. Helmreich, *The Diplomacy of the Balkan Wars, 1912-1913*, Cambridge (Mass), 1938, p. 93.

¹¹²) Cf. Bompard to Poincaré, September 21, 1912, *Documents diplomatiques français (1891-1914)*, 3e série, Vol. III, No. 450; Cartwright to Grey, June 8, 1911, *British Documents*, Vol. IX, Part 1, No. 476.

effect, for the Turkish government, afraid of a new intervention in its affairs, announced through the press that the Albanians were subdued, and that on the occasion of his trip to Macedonia, while in Kosovo, Sultan Mehmed V. would visit the tomb of Murad I, who had fallen there after the victory over the Serbs in 1389, and that the new Sultan would grant a general amnesty to the revolutionaries¹¹³).

In June 1911, Shefket Turgut Pasha made the imperial decree of amnesty known to the population. The insurgents should return within ten days; the Sultan would give a personal gift of 10,000 Turkish liras as reparation of damages; the government would indemnify the highlanders for property lost or destroyed¹¹⁴). In their answer five days later, the Albanian chiefs, having assailed the regime of the Young Turks as most tyrannical and having referred to the destructions incurred by Djavid Pasha in Luma and the devastation by Turgut Pasha in the north, set forth their claims. In addition to the usual demands for the opening of Albanian schools and the use of the Albanian language, the following were significant: a guaranty against anticonstitutional actions and abuses; the respect of customs and traditions; the recognition of the national existence of Albania; full liberty to choose their own deputies; the organization of the vilayets inhabited by Albanians along lines of decentralization; the choice of the valis and high officials from among the most capable of the Empire, the rest of the government employees to be selected from among the Albanians; the appointment for a given period of a representative of the Sultan as Inspector General; obligatory military service for all Albanians, to serve in time of peace only in Albania, and the constitution of a special military organization for the regions bordering on the Balkan states, with the right of Albanians to serve there for the surveillance and defense of the frontiers; that taxes should be spent first for the needs of Albania; the restitution of confiscated weapons with the obligation on the part of their possessors to comply with the regulations¹¹⁵). The memorandum expressed the political thought

¹¹³) Cf. J. Larmeroux, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 409-411; Lowther to Grey, June 14, 1911, British Documents, Vol. IX, Part 1, No. 479.

¹¹⁴) Text in C. Libardi, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 94-95; Leka, p. 390; Tewfik Pasha to Nicholson, June 14, 1911, British Documents, Vol. IX, part 1, Enclosure No. 480.

¹¹⁵) See for complete text C. Libardi, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 134-141.

of experienced Albanian leaders. It was drawn up with the advice of Ismail Kemal Vlora, who at that time was in Montenegro¹¹⁶).

Sultan Mehmed V. arrived in Kosovo, and on July 3, 1911, he signed the amnesty decree¹¹⁷). But the insurgents refused to return; they were too bitter against Turgut Pasha. They held him personally, rather than the Constantinople government, responsible for all the misfortunes of Albania. It was deemed wise to recall him to Constantinople; he left Albania in July 1911. There was some satisfaction for Albanian patriots in seeing the humiliation and departure of the General who, after his first campaign against them, had been personally decorated by the Sultan and by the ambassadors of the powers in favor of the status quo for having quenched the Albanian insurrection¹¹⁸).

Abdullah Pasha, who replaced Turgut Pasha, brought new proposals with him from the government of Constantinople, concessions restricted to the Catholic highlanders. Besides granting an amnesty and Albanian schools, these concessions were: military service would be performed in the vilayet of Shkodra, and only the last year in Constantinople; government employees should know Albanian; for a period of two years men would not be drafted and no taxes would be paid; after two years the dues on livestock would be greatly reduced; the right to carry arms would be granted; a commission, composed of one representative of the government and one representative of the Catholic archbishopric of Shkodra, would evaluate the damages to the property of the highlanders which the government would repair; the Sultan himself would give 10,000 Turkish liras; all the highlanders who returned from the exile would be assisted with food and money¹¹⁹). The Catholic highlanders, forced by Montenegro to leave the country, accepted the new proposals, and an agreement was signed on August 3, 1911, at Podgorica.

Even before the Young Turks had come to power southern Albanians had organized guerrilla bands. Two of their commanders were Çerçis Topulli, a Moslem from Gjinokastër, and Mihal Gra-

¹¹⁶) The Memoirs of Ismail Kemal Vlora, p. 368.

¹¹⁷) Text in C. Libardi, op. cit., II, pp. 162-163.

¹¹⁸) Ibid, II, pp. 142-144. For this period of the Albanian rising (March 30-Oct. 21, 1911) see British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898-1914, Vol. IX, Part 1, Chapter LXXV, pp. 449-512.

¹¹⁹) Text in C. Libardi, II, pp. 175-176; Leka, p. 393.

meno, an Orthodox Christian from Korça, and these two patriots had distinguished themselves in the fight against the Turkish army at the battle of Mashkullore (March 1908). In the south, where the Tosks were mainly concerned with the rights of the Albanian nation, the struggle was more on the national level. Their guerrilla bands did not fight for privileges or immunities, and they persecuted Ottomans who were obstacles to Albanian nationalism. Redjeb Palla, the commander of the Korça garrison, was assassinated as an opponent of it. During the second campaign of Shefket Turgut Pasha in the north, however, the southern part of Albania, became more aggressive. On May 15, 1911, the Central Revolutionary Committee made an appeal from Vlora (Valona) to the Albanians to be ready for the general revolution. It demanded of the government of Constantinople: 1) administrative autonomy within the Ottoman Empire; 2) union of the four vilayets (Shkodra, Kosovo, Monastir, Janina) in a single pashalik (a province ruled by a pasha), governed by Albanians, with a separate parliament and a separate army; and 3) that all the government employees be of Albanian nationality. The appeal concluded with the threat that if Turkey did not fulfil the demands, the Albanians would not lay down their arms¹²⁰). In Gjinokastër an uprising organized by Ali Baba Shejko of the Bektashi Order broke out. The prefect was imprisoned and the fortress was occupied by the revolutionaries¹²¹). In the district of Korça young nationalists, both Orthodox Christian and Moslem, had raised the standard of revolt. In July 1911, a group including among others Bajazid Rehova, Kostaq Kosturi, and Odhise Pjasto, fell in a clash with a Turkish army at Orman Çiflik, very close to Korça¹²²). They were young martyrs to the rising nationalist idea.

The Albanian colony in the United States also played a role in the revolutionary movement of the south. Albanian emigration to America, which began toward the end of the nineteenth century, increased in the first decade of the twentieth. It consisted entirely of southern Albanians, and mostly Orthodox Christians. A militant organization, the Besa-Besën (Faith for Faith) was constituted in Massachusetts in 1907 where a year before the foundation of the Albanian nationalist movement in America had been

¹²⁰) C. Libardi, op. cit., II, Document No. 23, pp. 274-275.

¹²¹) Ibid, II, pp. 119-120.

¹²²) Drita, p. 10.

laid with the establishment of the weekly „Kombi“ (The Nation)¹²³). In 1907 *Bashkimi* (The Union), the Bucharest center of Albanian nationalism, dispatched Bajo Topulli, the brother of Çerçis Topulli and an Albanian revolutionary, to Boston. His mission was to collect funds as well as to persuade young men in the Albanian community to return to Albania and join secret insurrectionary groups¹²⁴). Four years later a small expeditionary force was formed to fight for Albania. Their caps bore the motto „Freedom or Death“¹²⁵).

The political thought of Albanian leaders in the United States did not differ from that of the nationalist leaders in Albania. Under the editorship of Sotir Peci, „Kombi“ demanded an autonomous Albania within the framework of the Ottoman Empire, as well as Albanian schools and the adoption of the Albanian language in administration¹²⁶). In 1908 a convention of Albanian Orthodox Christians in the United States resolved to abandon the Greek Church and create an Albanian Independent Church with Fan S. Noli, then a priest, as its head¹²⁷). The schism was a powerful incentive to the growth of nationalist sentiments. Translations of Greek liturgical books into Albanian followed. In 1909 „Kombi“ was succeeded by „Dielli“ (the Sun). The Program of „Dielli“, as announced in its issue of February 15, 1909, was more radical than had been that of „Kombi“, for also demanded the separation of Albanian and Turkish rights, except in military and foreign affairs, concluding: „Albania will be part of the Turkish Empire with the above mentioned rights as long as Turkey exists in Europe. If Turkey is driven out of Europe, then Albania will become an independent nation ruled by some European prince.“

Meanwhile, in northern Albania, the hotbed of insurrections, the Catholic highlanders of Shkodra were dissatisfied even with Abdullah Pasha's agreement. On February 9, 1912 fifty of their chiefs were assembled at Shkodra and handed a note to the consuls of the Great Powers. It denounced the Ottoman government for having violated the promises of the accord of August 3, 1911.

¹²³) Federal Writer's Project of the Works Administration of Massachusetts, *The Albanian Struggle in the Old World and New*, Boston, 1939, pp. 38, 41.

¹²⁴) *Ibid*, p. 44.

¹²⁵) *Ibid*, p. 48.

¹²⁶) *Ibid*, p. 38.

¹²⁷) *Ibid*, p. 43.

When the electoral period began, the „Committee of Union and Progress“ officially imposed its candidates. There was no longer any constitutional guarantee¹²⁸). In spite of the Reform Commission, which Constantinople sent out to investigate matters, trouble broke out. The people of Kosovo had similar complaints about the elections. Under the leadership of Isa Boletini and Bajram Curri, a fervent and disinterested patriot, they had successfully revolted in Peja and Gjakova. Denouncing the elections as improper, the Kosovars asked for the dissolution of the parliament. The Turkish government, at war with Italy, was obliged to send forces so that the rebellion would not expand to Prishtina, Prizren and Üsküb. But this time insurrection broke out among the troops dispatched to restore peace. The insurrection spread to other parts of Kosovo¹²⁹). In Constantinople the packed chamber resulting from the recent elections did Said Pasha little good, and he was forced to resign.

On July 23, 1912, a new ministry was formed, one of its principal objectives being to make peace with the Albanians, but Albanians continued their resistance. On July 30, the revolutionaries of Kosovo, assembled in Prishtina, addressed a note to the consuls of the Great Powers and principal representatives of the press in Üsküb and Salonica, stating that their „movement had the legitimate aim to establish a truly constitutional regime apt to guard all the rights of all Albanians, because we have become aware that the blows brought, during the last four years, to the Constitution by the present government, and the policy pursued by, deplorable in all aspects, will bring the country inevitably to ruin¹³⁰“). At the same time the insurgent Kosovars telegraphed the Porte that, unless the parliament was dissolved within 48 hours, they would march on Üsküb and, if need be, on Salonica. The Turkish government, already in difficulties with the chamber, was compelled to yield and on August 5, 1912, to the mortification of the „Committee of Union and Progress“, the parliament was dissolved by imperial decree. Later Kiamil Pasha constituted a new Cabinet¹³¹).

¹²⁸) Cf. J. Larmeroux, op. cit., II, pp. 411-412; E. C. Helmreich, op. cit., p. 94.

¹²⁹) Cf. C. Libardi, op. cit., II, p. 189; Leka, p. 404.

¹³⁰) C. Libardi, op. cit., II, Document No. 27, pp. 282-283.

¹³¹) The Memoirs of Ismail Kemal Bey, p. 369; J. Swire, Albania: the Rise of a Kingdom, London, 1929, p. 122.

But the troubles of Turkey did not stop. Dibra had already revolted, and at the beginning of August Tirana, Lushnja, and Berat followed suit. From Nice, where he had retired, Ismail Kemal Vlora addressed a circular to all Albanian centers, stressing the necessity to be ready for any eventuality¹³²). When the south joined the revolt the whole of Albania had taken up arms against the Ottoman government.

On August 10, 1912, the Albanian leaders of the north, acting in the name of the four vilayets of Janina, Monastir, Shkodra, and Kosovo, were strong enough to present substantial demands. These were a special system of administration and justice, according to the requirements of the country; military service to be effected in Albania, except in time of war; nomination of capable and honest government employees knowing the language and customs of the country; the creation of sultaniye-s (secondary schools), with Albanian as the language of instruction, in the capitals of the vilayets and the sandjaks of more than 30 000 souls; the creation of medrese-s (schools of Moslem religious instruction); the teaching of Albanian in schools of every grade; absolute liberty to establish private schools; the construction of roads; impeachment before the Supreme Court of Hakki Pasha and Said Pasha (fallen Premiers); a general amnesty and indemnity for damages suffered during the insurrection; restitution of arms¹³³). Four days later an estimated 20 000 Albanian insurgents under the leadership of Isa Boletini, Riza Gjakova, Bajram Curri, Nexhip Draga, Hasan Prishtina, Zefi i Vogël entered Üsküb. They encountered no opposition and a detachment pushed on to Köprülü (Veles)¹³⁴). As if to remind the Porte, a congress was held in Vlora in early September 1912, in which the southern Albanians made known their demands, which were similar to those of the Ghegs¹³⁵).

If there were any outside encouragement for the Albanian revolt, it came from Montenegro and Serbia. These two countries had agreed on Alliances which could bring about the Balkan War, and the continuation of the Albanian insurrection could provide an opportunity to strike. While Italy has also been suspected as

¹³²) The Memoirs of Ismail Kemal Bey, p. 368.

¹³³) C. Libardi, op. cit., II, Document No. 29, pp. 284-285; see also London Times, August 13, 1912, [3:1]; Leka, p. 409.

¹³⁴) Leka, p. 410; J. Larmeroux, op. cit., II, p. 413.

¹³⁵) Cf. C. Libardi, op. cit., II, Document No. 30, pp. 285-287.

an instigator, it would have been unwise for her to antagonize Austria-Hungary at the time of the Tripoli War. The Turks thought that the Dual Monarchy was behind the revolt, but the Austrian documents (See E. C. Helmreich, *op. cit.*, p. 96, footnote 31) show this not to have been the case, even though Austria-Hungary was deeply interested in Albania during this period.

After the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the evacuation of the Sandžak, Austria-Hungary followed a more reserved policy in Albania. While she was preoccupied with the elimination of the Serbian revolutionary nest, she did not want to dissatisfy and antagonize Europe whose attitude was favorable to the new Turkish regime. In 1911, however, favored by the weakness of the Young Turk regime and the Tripoli war, she resumed her former policy of influence in Albania. The project for an autonomous Albania presented by Dukagjini, a mountainous region of the north, was suspected to be her creation. Austria-Hungary desired a large Albania who could be a wedge among the South Slavs¹³⁶). Her attitude also became overtly anti-Italian, although as recently as December 1909 she and Italy had agreed on cooperation or compensation in Balkan affairs. When in June 1911 an Italian cruiser arrived at Durrës (Durazzo), the Austro-Hungarian government made serious remonstrances to Rome, speaking of violation of the agreement concerning the Albanian status quo¹³⁷). A report (August 4, 1912,) of the French vice-consul in Janina, Duchesne, told of Austrian agents who crossed the whole vilayet, affirming that Italy was not any longer in a position to assist the Albanians and that they could only depend on the Dual Monarchy. The Austrian consul was transferred from Vlora to Berat, the center of the revolt in the south, and encouraged Albanian aspirations¹³⁸). Nor did Austria-Hungary neglect the international field. When on August 13, 1912, the cabinet of Muhtar Pasha had brought the inner crisis of Turkey to standstill and was endeavoring by concessions to bring an end to the Albanian insurrection, Berchtold, the Austrian Foreign Minister, proposed an exchange of views to the Great Powers with

¹³⁶) Cf. Bompard to Poincaré, September 21, 1912, Documents diplomatiques français (1871-1914), 3e série, Vol. III, No. 450; L. Salvatorelli, *op. cit.*, pp. 339, 341; C. Libardi, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 157-158.

¹³⁷) L. Salvatorelli, *op. cit.*, p. 389.

¹³⁸) Duchesne to Poincaré, August 4, 1912, Documents diplomatiques français, (1871-1914), 3e série, Vol. III, No. 243.

the aim of exercising friendly influence upon the Porte for a decentralizing policy and upon the Balkan States to refrain from disturbing the development of the new experience¹³⁹). Italy replied that she agreed as to the second part of the proposal, while she could do nothing about the first, being at war with Turkey¹⁴⁰). Russia, however, was dissatisfied with the Austrian proposal, and expressed the opinion to Italy that Berchtold's real aim was the constitution of an Albania dominated by the Dual Monarchy¹⁴¹).

The day after the presentation of the Albanian demands (August 11, 1912) the Turkish government unofficially accepted almost all of them. Formal notification of acceptance was given on September 4, 1912. The two conditions which the Constantinople government declared it could not fulfil were the impeachment of the cabinets of Hakki and Said Pashas, such a procedure being the prerogative of the parliament then dissolved, and the agreement on regional military terms¹⁴²). This acceptance amounted to virtual autonomy. The Albanian revolutionaries, facing shortages in food and supplies and fearing a possible attack by the army coming from Salonica, dispersed, waiting for the fulfilment of the promises. But trouble still did not cease, for the Catholic mountaineers of Shkodra still held high the banner of revolt¹⁴³). This was the situation at the outbreak of the First Balkan War.

IV

During this period (1881-1912) one is struck by certain similarities and dissimilarities in political thought and revolutionary activity.

In the north revolutionary activity was predominant. The northeastern Moslems of the Kosovo region, as well as the Catholic mountaineers of Shkodra and Mirdita, had enjoyed a more or less autonomous life for centuries. They were averse to the centralizing reforms which the Turkish government had introduced. As they were brave and stalwart fighters and lived in isolated regions, they relied more on the use of arms in opposing the application of these reforms than on protests, petitions, and memoranda.

¹³⁹) Telegram to St. Petersburg (other capitals follow), August 13, 1912, *Osterreich-Ungarns Außenpolitik*, 1908-1914, Vol. IV, No. 3687.

¹⁴⁰) Telegrams from Rome, August 15, 1912, in *ibid*, Nos. 3695-96.

¹⁴¹) Cf. L. Salvatorelli, *op. cit.*, pp. 445-446.

¹⁴²) *London Times*, September 6, 1912, [5:2], Leka, p. 412.

¹⁴³) *Ibid*, p. 413.

In the south political activity prevailed. The means of communication were better than in the north and this facilitated control by the state. The southern Albanians had accepted the centralistic reforms. Education also was more diffused among them, they were more prepared to think in national terms, and a considerable number of the beys and the agas were cultivated men who had entered the service of the Ottoman state. Aware that the Albanian people were not yet mature enough for independence, the Moslem and Christian Albanians of the south directed efforts mainly toward the autonomy of an Albania within the framework of the Ottoman Empire.

The patriotic leaders served as a link between these two parts of the country. Whether they lived in Albania, in other parts of the Empire, in Italy, or in other foreign countries, their political thinking generally ran along the same line: autonomy of Albania. It is this which accounts for the constant demand in the memoranda of both the south and the north for the inclusion of the four vilayets of Monastir, Kosovo, Shkodra, and Janina in a single vilayet or pashalik. The unification of Albanian lands was necessary. Albania should not be a vague geographical expression; she should possess her own political frontiers. Not all the four vilayets were purely Albanian, but the majority of their populations were considered to be Albanians. If some of the nationalists went further and regarded the vilayet of Salonica as Albanian, this was due partly to a romantic nationalism and partly to a reaction against the claims of their neighbors, who coveted territory.

But the unification of the vilayets was not sufficient. In 1901, after a trip through northern Albania, R. Guicciardini wrote: „As for the Albanian sentiment of nationality, one may say that it is in its latent state and manifests itself in jerky movements and with indeterminate objectives, but the smallest educative work would make it conscious in movements and aims¹⁴⁴).“ Education in the Albanian language and the propagation of Albanian writing was considered their most important task by the Albanian leaders, who asked for the opening of Albanian schools. Absent at the outset from the protests and memoranda of the northern Albanians, the demand for Albanian education appeared more often in those of later years to become constant during the period of the Young Turks.

¹⁴⁴) R. Guicciardini, „Impressioni d'Albania, II“, p. 56.

Even when demands for the opening of Albanian schools or publications in the Albanian language were temporarily satisfied, many serious difficulties were encountered. The Porte feared the awakening of the Albanians, linked by ties of language, customs, and traditions, would eventually bring about the detachment of Albania from the Empire. The neighboring states made propaganda through church and school among the Orthodox Christian Albanians to frustrate Albanian endeavors. An Albanian petition to the Porte in July 1896 put the issue clearly: „In the district of Macedonia and lower Albania (Toskeria), where churches and schools function in the Greek language, the Greeks hold us in sequestration as if we belong to them, and they pose as our protectors and relatives. In northern Macedonia and in Ghegaria (northern Albania), where Slavic schools and churches exist, we are considered as Slavs. Whose is the fault? The error committed by the government gives free rein to Greek propaganda, which tends to convert and win the Albanians over to them [the Greeks]; . . . this propaganda is not made in the interest of religion, nor does it aim at enlightening humanity . . . ¹⁴⁵.”

The interest of the Great Powers was a new factor in the post-League period. Russia, Austria-Hungary, and Italy interfered directly or indirectly in Albanian affairs. Russia's interest was rather limited. Its policy was aimed at restricting Austrian influence and in supporting Montenegro, a Slavic country, the aspirations of which were contrary to those of the Dual Monarchy. But in 1912, when she sponsored the Balkan alliances, Russia's interest became broader. In order to stop the Austrian „Drang nach Osten“, Russia's objective was to extend the territories of Serbia and Montenegro at the expense of Albania — and Montenegro's hand was felt in the insurrection of the last two years of the Young Turk regime. The concern of Austria-Hungary and Italy was much deeper. For Austria-Hungary the Albanian people, being non-Slavic, could be used as a counterbalance against the Slavs. Moreover, Austria-Hungary could not allow the occupation of the shores of Albania by another power, least of all by Italy. Italy's interest was primarily as an Adriatic country. If the coast of Albania were in the hands of a Great Power, especially that of the Dual Monarchy, entrance to the Adriatic would not be free and Italy's security imperiled. As neither of these two Adriatic powers was in a posi-

¹⁴⁵) C. Libardi, *op. cit.*, II, Document No. 3, pp. 226-227.

tion to occupy Albania relying solely on its own forces, and as a partition of the country between them would carry grave consequences, they decided to keep each other away from her. They then formulated the policy of the status quo of the „Ottoman coasts“ of the Adriatic, and, if it were impossible to preserve it, for the autonomy of Albania. Both Italy and Austria-Hungary, however, diligently attempted to enhance their prestige in the country.

The policy of the status quo was an obstacle to Albanian political thought and action in the pre-Constitution period. Albanian leaders wanted changes in their country. For them the status quo could have but one meaning: to remain within the Ottoman Empire. They did not favor special privileges for either the Catholic highlands of Shkodra, which were maintained partly due to Austrian support, or for the Moslems of Kosovo. They were also opposed to discrimination between Christian and Moslem Albanians, asking that all Albanians, irrespective of creed, should be called to serve in time of war in ordered regiments. They wanted uniformity to facilitate the union of the Albanian people. The demand for the unification of the Albanian vilayets was most contrary to the status quo. The major parts of Kosovo and Monastir were included in the province of Macedonia, which was subject to reforms, thus separated from the rest of the Albanian lands.

If the Albanians at first supported the Young Turks, it was because their program for the free development of the nationalities in the Empire coincided with Albanian political thought. Albanian political thought and national desires, as expressed in writings, and especially in memoranda of the period 1881-1912, went hand in hand. It was revolutionary activity that was erratic and capricious. One wonders whether the Albanian patriots foresaw the future and immediately after the declaration of the Constitution began to put political thought into practice: the awakening and union of the Albanian people. The conflict was inevitable. The centralization and „Ottomanization“ policy of the Young Turks was opposed to the objectives of the Albanian nationalist leaders and it flouted the privileges to which the northern Albanians stuck so stubbornly.

The next three years saw a series of alternating revolts and suppressions with the insurrection intensified and expanded even in the central lowlands toward the end of the period. This part of

the country had remained inactive till then. The inhabitants were generally peasants dominated by feudal landowners. The Moslems were fanatic Sunnis. They had experienced the foreign pressures of neither the north (the Slavs), or of the south (the Greeks). They felt protected in the middle part of Albania. Had they shown any activity they would have been a valuable link between the north and the south; instead they formed a deep wall which separated the north from the south. But in 1912 the central lowlands also joined in the revolt of the whole of Albania which brought about the overthrow of the Young Turk regime.

Certainly not all the Albanians who were united in their opposition to the rule of the „Committee of Union and Progress“ had the same motives. Some desired the restoration of the old regime, while others were against the Young Turks because their centralistic policy frustrated their desire for a privileged position in the Ottoman Empire. A great many, however, seem to have fought for the autonomy of Albania. In the three decades following the suppression of the League of Prizren national consciousness had made considerable progress. But a center which would coordinate political thought and revolutionary activity still did not exist.

In the face of this situation, Albanian leaders did not wish a speedy solution of the Balkan question. The general desire remained an autonomous Albania within the Ottoman Empire. The longer the life of such an Albania the better the chances for the unification of her people. They would also be better prepared to resist the ambitions of the neighboring states. In the event of a Turkish collapse, however, there were some who thought that Austria-Hungary should be the heir. As Austria-Hungary was a multinational Empire, they felt that within it the Albanians could preserve the integrity of their land and acquire conditions favorable to their development¹⁴⁶). But the opinion expressed by „Dielli“, that if Turkey were out of Europe, Albania should become an independent state ruled by some European prince, was shared by the majority of the Albanian leaders. When the Balkan War broke out they came forward with the demand for the „Independence of Albania“. This slogan was not accepted now by the Albanian leaders in the

¹⁴⁶) Cf. „Ziele und Zukunft der Albanesen“, Albanian memorandum in place of editorial, *Osterreichische Rundschau*, XV (1908), p. 397.

United States, who maintained that Turkey would never be beaten and were unwilling to believe that Austria-Hungary's sympathy for Albania would mature into concrete political action¹⁴⁷). Toward the end of 1912, however, Balkan events favored the solution of an independent Albania.

Ergebnisse einer Archivreise in der Slowakei

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Die wichtigste Voraussetzung für die Erforschung des deutschen Rechts im Osten ist die Kenntnis der Rechtsquellen dieses Raumes. Auf die Wichtigkeit dieser Forschungsaufgabe hat Weizsäcker immer wieder hingewiesen. Wir danken ihm auch die geschlossenste Zusammenfassung der bisherigen Forschungsergebnisse¹). Dabei mußte er aber feststellen, daß viele Quellen in diesen Gebieten noch unerfaßt und unerforscht sind. Besonders hinsichtlich der Archivschatze in der Slowakei wiederholte er die Forderung nach einer umfassenden Erforschung der vorhandenen Rechtsquellen²). Diesem Bedürfnis kam das große Unternehmen der Ordnung und Verzeichnung aller deutschen Archivbestände in der Slowakei³) entgegen. Die besondere Schwierigkeit für die deutsche Forschung in der Slowakei ist die Mehrsprachigkeit, die vor allem den binnendeutschen Forschern die Arbeit so sehr erschwert^{3a}). Die unmittelbare Quellenforschung leidet unter diesen Verhältnissen weniger, doch die wissenschaftliche Auswertung muß die verschiedensprachigen literarischen Bearbeitungen der einzelnen Fragen berücksich-

¹⁴⁷) Federal Writer's Project, op. cit., p. 49.

¹) Wilhelm Weizsäcker, Das deutsche Recht des Ostens im Spiegel der Rechtsaufzeichnungen: Deutsches Archiv für Landes- und Volksforschung, 3. Jg., 50 ff., Leipzig 1939.

²) Ders., Die Verbreitung des deutschen Stadtrechts in der Slowakei: Karpatenland, 13. Jg., 17 ff., Preßburg.

³) Heinrich Kunnert, Deutsche Archivbestände in der Slowakei. In: Deutschtumsfragen im Nordkarpatenraum, Preßburg 1943.

^{3a}) Die geringen slawischen Sprachkenntnisse des Verf. machten es ihm leider unmöglich, an Ort und Stelle zu entscheiden, um welche der in Betracht kommenden slawischen Sprachen (tschechisch, slowakisch, polnisch, altkirchenslawisch) es sich handelt. Es mußte daher die allgemeine Bezeichnung slawisch belassen werden. (Anm. d. Red.).