

Osmanlı İdaresinde Balkanlar

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Entangled Trajectories: From Unity Of Islam To Albanian Nationalism

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ABSTRACT

After the Congress of Berlin, the Hamidian policy to protect the rest parts of Ottoman Rumelia (especially Macedonia), promoted an Albanianism closely linked to the 'Unity of Islam' (İttihadi İslam) that would respond to Hellenism and Pan-Slavic regional threats. In this purpose, Abdulhamid II supported the Albanianism and their resistance of the Prizren League/Cemiyeti İttihad (1878) against the invading states by trying to bound Albanians to religious notion of Unity of Islam. However, the events of the late XIX century in the Balkans within the confines of the Eastern Question, the intervention of Great Powers in Macedonia (1903) and Young Turk Revolution (1908) influenced Albanian intelligentsia to transform this movement into more national - going outside of the framework based on 'Unity of Islam'. Thus, this study aims to analyze this transformation and their trajectories of Albanian intelligentsia from Istanbul (Sami Frasheri and Pashko Vasa) and Thessaloniki (Midhat bej Frasheri) via Podgorica, Dubrovnik and Trieste (Nikolle bej Ivanaj) to Southern Italy (Girolando de Rada and Giuseppe Schiro). By taking a trans-imperial and trans-national perspective based on entangled history, I will analyze the Albanian subjects of Ottoman Empire, Montenegro and Italy by participating into political violence, the lobbying of European powers and the publication of newspaper promoting autonomy or independent Albania. These activities should not be assumed to have reflected a unified national agenda. Using a few case studies of some of the more conspicuous Albanians in Eastern Mediterranean region, I will demonstrate that their ambitions were varied and sometimes contested.

Keywords: Berlin Congress, Albania, Society of Islamic Union, Albanian Nationalism

DEĞİŞEN YÖRÜNGELER: İTTİHAD-I İSLAM'DAN ARNAVUT MİLLİYETÇİLİĞİNE

ÖZET

Abdülhamid'in politikası Berlin Kongresi'nden sonra Arnavutlara yönelik Rumelide özellikle Makedonyada farklı bir yön almıştır. Bu toprakları korumak için Abdulhamid Helenizm'e ve Pan-Slavizm'e karşı bir Arnavutçuluk (Albanianism) gerçekleştirmeye çalışmıştır. Böyle bir politika İttihat-i İslam üzerinden incelemekte fayda var. Bu amaçla, Abdülhamid işgalci devletlere karşı Prizren Ligi'ni (Cemiyeti İttihad) desteklemiştir. Fakat, Doğu Sorunu çerçevesinde Makedonya meselesi (1903) ve Jöntürk Devrimi'nin (1908) çıkmasıyla beraber Arnavut aydınlarını etkilemiş ve onların milliyetçi hareketini dönüştürmüştür. Böylece, bu çalışma, bu dönüşümü „Değişen Yörüngeler“ olarak incelemeye çalışır ve arnavut milliyetçilerinin yörüngelerini

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hem İstanbul (Sami Fraşeri ve Paşko Vasa) ve Selanik'ten (Midhat bey Fraşeri) hem de Podgorica, Dubrovnik ve Trieste'ten (Nikolle bey Ivanaj) Güney İtalya'ya kadar (Girolamo de Rada ve Giuseppe Schiro) analiz eder.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Berlin Kongresi, Amavutluk, İttihad-ı İslam, Amavut Milliyetçiliği

In the last decades, the scholars of the Ottoman Empire are addressing an audience whose primary interests lie beyond Ottoman studies. As in the last twenty years are opened new doors of interdisciplinary inquiry within area studies, I am trying to analyze different trajectories of Albanian intelligentsia in the Eastern Mediterranean space combining it with Ottoman, Albanian and Mediterranean studies. In this case I am interested in the role émigré communities play in the development and transformation of Albanian nationalist sentiments during the Ottoman period. Specifically, I will draw a picture of how Albanian subjects of the Ottoman Empire, Montenegro and Italy interacted in Ottoman Albania during a dramatic rise in political activism in the late XIX and beginning of XX century. By not ignoring the politically sensitive Eastern Question and Macedonian situation, however, I don't want to minimize this aspect of the thesis that Albanian nationalism was under influence of different studies done by European travelers interest in Albanian communities.

In the mid-XIX century an Austrian linguist Johann Georg von Hahn in his work *Albanesische Studien* (1854) developed a theory claimed the Pelasgians as the original proto-Albanians and the language spoken by the Pelasgians, Illyrians, Epirotes and ancient Macedonian being closely related to today's Albanians. In addition to generating a "historic right" to territory, this theory also established that ancient Greek civilization and its achievements had an "Albanian" origin. According to Noel Malcolm "the greatest expansion of Hellenic civilization and rule thus occurred thanks to an 'Albanian' and not a Hellen."¹ Figures originating from the ancient period such as Alexander the Great and Pyrrhus of Epirus were enveloped in myth and claimed as Albanian men of antiquity. Thus, the great ancient Macedonia and the Balkan space was led by an Albanian. According to Johann Georg von Hahn "(Albanians together with) Macedonians are coming from a pelasgo-illyrian tribe (*Makedonern sind pelasgisch-illyrische Volksstamm*)."² Therefore, in modern age Nathalie Clayer is asking then "where did the borders of "Albania" lie, in particular with Macedonia?"³

¹Malcolm, Noel (2002). "Myths of Albanian national identity: Some key elements". In Schwanders-Sievers, Stephanie; Fischer, Bernd J. *Albanian Identities: Myth and History*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. pp. 77

²Johann Hahn, *Albanesische studien*, pp. 228

³ Nathalie CLAYER, *The Young Turks and the Albanians or Young Turkism and Albanianism?* In ed. Nathalie C LAYER and Erdal KAYNAR, *Penser, agir et vivre dans l'Empire ottoman en Turquie*, PEETERSPARIS - LOUVAIN - WALPOLE, MA2013, pp. 69

ALBANIANISM IN ISTANBUL: AGAINST PAN-SLAVISM AND PAN-HELLENISM

There is no doubt that the 'transfer of knowledge' from 'West' influenced the Albanian intelligentsia to construct a special imagination of Ottoman Albania and Ottoman Macedonia as their territory. With this purpose, on 18 December 1877 was founded the Central Committee for Defending Albanian Rights in Istanbul by an influential group of Albanian intellectuals. The group was composed of both Christians and Muslims and some of its more important members like Abdul Frasherî and Vaso Pasha were later to play leading roles in shaping the League of Prizren. The Committee's plan and ideals were printed in the *Tercüman-ı Sark* newspaper⁴, and anticipated the founding of a single Albanian vilayet that would encompass the vilayets of Kosovo, Monastir, Janina and Scutari. Contrary to what is often said, a claim for territories very often included the Salonica Vilayet too.⁵ This became the first meeting of what came to be known as the League of Prizren taking into consideration parts of vilayeti selase (Macedonia) as part of Albania. During the first couple weeks of 1878, the Istanbul Committee drafted a program that would initiate a "league" resembling a political and military organization concerned with the protection of these Albanian territories from foreign invasion as well as to fight to create a unified Albanian vilayet. The colonized minds of these members of Albanian intelligentsia placed the center of culture outside the borders of their own country (Europe), and condemned the neighbor countries and Russia for barbarism. Abdul Frasherî wrote in *Messenger de Vienne* "the day will come when Europe will be convinced that Albanians serve the cause of humanity and civilization better than any other people of the East," and that they "will always be the best vanguard against Russian pan Slavism."⁶ According to this article, the main aim was to oppose the Pan-Slavism influence in Macedonia as a contra strategy of Albanianism supported by Pan-Islamic ideology that is much more civilized than ideology of their neighbors (Pan-Slavism and Hellenism). As Nathalie Clayer has suggested, the complicated emergence of "Albanianism" links directly to the anti-Slav reactions emerging in Ottoman society as Russia expanded its influence in the Caucasus and Balkans. Partly Hellenistic, partly Islamic in nature, an important sense of belonging emerged among Ottoman-Albanians as a result.⁷ Because of these emerging sentiments, key local leaders identified a link between strengthened

⁴Tercüman-ı Şark, Şemseddin Sami tarafından çıkarılmıştır. Taranangazetenin/derginin ilk sayısının tarihi: 29 Mart 1878

⁵Clayer, Nathalie (2007), *Aux origines du nationalisme albanais: la naissance d'une nation majoritairement musulmane en Europe*, Karthala, p. 463

⁶See Abdyl Frasherî in *Messenger de Vienne* nr. 22 May 31, 1878 p. 5

⁷Clayer, Nathalie, op.cit.

administrative control over hitherto neglected areas of the Balkans and the long-term survival of the Ottoman state in which they had heavily invested.

We need to emphasize that their Albanianism could be combined with other identity claims and ideological trends as well (Hellenism, Romaniano-Arumanism, Ottomanism, and Turkism or Young Turkism).⁸ However, it's *Zeitgeist* during the Russo-Turkish war and Congress of Berlin emerged from the "wreckage of Ottomanism in the transition from the Ottoman imperial ideology to Pan-Islamism."⁹ Therefore, some saw the League of Prizren as a Muslim organization that shared interests with Muslims in Bosnia, others moved it in the direction of being an Albanian national organization, which is how it is remembered today. I argue that both elements were included, since Pan-Islamism and Albanianism were not opposed at the first stage of its development. Thus, some authors argue that Albanian nationalism, unlike its Greek and Serbian counterparts has its origins in a different historical context that did not emerge from an anti-Ottoman struggle and instead dates to the period of the Eastern Crisis (1878) and threat of territorial partition by Serbs and Greeks. The category "Albanians" was more specifically used during periods of crisis, as in 1878-79 (with the creation of an Albanian Cultural Society in Istanbul, and the diffusion in French, English, and German of the book "The Truth on Albania and the Albanians" by Pashko Vasa, the prime thrust was to oppose Panslavic and Hellenic claims, and in 1884-1886 with the publication of a journal in Albanian in Istanbul, and the opening of an Albanian school in Korçë.¹⁰ Hence, the Eastern Crisis, followed by the Treaty of San Stefano, was a particular turning point for Albanians that ended up with League of Prizren (1878). On 13 June 1878, the League submitted an eighteen-page memorandum to Benjamin Disraeli, the British representative at the Congress of Berlin, announcing: "Just as we are not and do not want to be Turks, so we shall oppose with all our might anyone who would like to turn us into Slavs or Austrians or Greeks. We want to be Albanians." There is no doubt that Prizren League constructed kind of Albanianism separated from notion Turk/Muslim. However, the Ottoman state and one part of the League still saw Islam as crucial element that helped Sultan to create a kind of Islamic notion to the League and Albanianism. Initially the Ottoman authorities showed great sympathy for the League of Prizren and offered no hindrance to its formation,

⁸ Nathalie Clayer, *Aux origines du nationalisme albanais*, Paris, Karthala, 2007, pp. 59

⁹ Dimitris Stamatopoulos, *The Eastern Question or Balkan Nationalisms: Balkan History Reconsidered*, Vienna: V&R Unipress, Vienna University Press, 2018, pp. 43-44; See: "(...)while the Slav-Macedonian movement emerged from the clash between Serbs and Bulgarians, mainly, over this Slav-speaking population magma in the Macedonian plains in the wake of the fail-ure of the San Stefano Treaty."

¹⁰ Nathalie Clayer, *The Young Turks and the Albanians or Young Turkism and Albanianism* In ed. Nathalie Clayer and Erdal Kaynar, *Penser, agir et vivre dans l'Empire ottoman et en Turquie*, PEETERSPARIS - LOUVAIN - WALPOLE, MA 2013, pp. 71-72

because one of its aims was to defend the areas inhabited by Albanians who until then had been under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. According to the first article of the “Kararname”¹¹ from 18 June 1878 can be seen that “Our (Prizren) league has come together to oppose any government other than that of the Sublime Porte and to defend our territorial integrity by all possible means.” Thus, we can conclude that Albanians didn’t gather in Prizren to oppose the Ottoman Empire, but rather to protect its border especially on the lines inhabited by Albanians (but also other Muslim groups as Bosniaks). The League has its Islamic element emphasized in the article 16: “After us, this League will be taken over by our children and grandchildren. Whoever abandons it, will be treated as if he had abandoned our Islamic faith and will be the object of our curses and scorn.”¹² Additionally, in the decree (kararname) of meeting at Marash Tekkesi (1879) in Prizren it was even more emphasized the Islamic notion that “God make it to be forbidden (mazallah) to all Albanian people (bütün Arnavud kavmi) to become part of another state and to separate from general Islamic order.”¹³ They were led by two driving interests: preserving the integrity of Albanian lands and their own interests within the Empire. Noel Malcolm also describes the “Prizren League” as a purely Muslim, conservative movement for the preservation of the old order of the Ottoman state combined with new Pan-Islamic ideology. Thus, the motion is more a religious than a secular, and is “guided by myftilerët, ulama and kadij I think it’s clear that the Sublime Porte and the League had the same opinion and were working to realize a common purpose - protecting the province.”¹⁴

Therefore, is obvious that the Ottoman state briefly supported the league’s claims viewing Albanian nationalism as possibly preventing further territorial losses to newly independent Balkan states. This policy was also admitted by the highest Ottoman officials Dervish Pasha who thought that “the League of Albania would be useful to the Empire (*quela Ligue de l’Albanieserait utile à l’Empire*).”¹⁵ According to Kostov who Compared Albanians with their Balkan counterparts, these

¹¹http://www.albanianhistory.net/1878_League-of-Prizren/index.html
from: HHStA, Vienna, Consulate of Shkodra, Note 64, AIH, A-VI-10, p. 73-77. Appendix to a report by Austro-Hungarian consul Jelinek of Prizren, to Consul Lippich in Shkodra, 13 July 1878; AktetëRilindjesKombëtareShqiptare, 1878-1912 (Tirana: Instituti i Historisë 1978), p. 40-48; and La Liguealbanaise de Prizren, 1878-1881 (Tirana: Institut d’Histoire 1988), p. 55-65. Translated from the German, Albanian and French by Robert Elsie. The original Ottoman Turkish version is missing.

¹²http://www.albanianhistory.net/1878_League-of-Prizren/index.html

¹³BOA, HR.SYS. 214, 25, 1879; see. Vali Kabashi, Lidhja e Prizrenit – Organizata më e madhe politiko-ushtarake!, Koha Ditore, 09.06.2018

¹⁴ Malcolm, Noel (1999), Kosovo a short history, p. 222

¹⁵KristaqPrifti. "Certains aspects des rapports de la Liguealbanaise de Prizren avec la Sublime Porte selon les documents ottomans (1878-1881)". StudiaAlbanica 01, 2012, pp. 50; r, Ahmet MoukhtarPacha, le 20 mars 1295/1 avril 1880. Le maréchal Dervish Pacha, chargé par la Sublime Porte dans les années1880-1881 pour réprimer la Ligue albanaise.2 BOA, Istanbul. Fon: Yildizesasevraki. Doc. N° 14 88/16 88 12.Rapport envoyé au Conseil des Ministres par Dervish Pacha, Shkodra, le 15décembre 1296/27 décembre 1880.

Albanian politicians and historians were very moderate and mainly had the goal to attain socio-political recognition and autonomy for Albanians under Ottoman rule.¹⁶ In line with the politicization of Albanianism at the time, Pashko Vasa demanded the formation of a single Albanian province (composed of the provinces of Shkodër, Ioannina and Kosovo) explaining that “the division of Albania into three vilayets was already sufficient to completely destroy the beneficent [*sic*] action of administrative unity without aggravating it by a heterogeneous medley.”¹⁷

Thus, beside the fund of the diplomatic acts of the Albanian League of Prizren (1878-1881) made up by hundreds of memorandums, protests and petitions, sent to the Congress of Berlin and Sublime Porte, the work of Pashko Vasa “*Études Sur L’Albanie Et Les Albanais*” or “*La vérité sur l’Albanie et les Albanais*” can be consider very important. This work firstly came out in Constantinople in 1879 with the title “*Etudes sur l’Albanie et les Albanais*” (“*Studies on Albania and the Albanians*”), printed in the typography of the newspaper “*La Turquie*”. On the publication of this work casts light the correspondence of the minister of Foreign Affairs of the Ottoman Empire, Karatheodor Pasha with the imperial embassies in Paris, Berlin and London. According to Kristaq Prifti this work was not published by the author, but by “the Turkish Embassy with a direct order from the government of Istanbul.”¹⁸ Being interested to secure its borders in the Balkans, particularly in Macedonia, the Ottoman government accepted to be engaged the embassies with the spread of the work of Pashko Vasa in Europe publishing it into German and English, as had ordered the ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ottoman Empire at the end of May 1879.

The central idea of this work of Pashko Vasa was the recognition of the Albanian nation by the Great Powers and the European public opinion, as a nation quite particular from its neighbours, the Greeks and Slavs, which should be “inaugurate under the aegis of His Majesty the Sultan an era of unity, of concord, and of fraternity for all faiths and all religions.”¹⁹

Vasa was against the partition of his homeland against the neighbor invasion, but did not favor in any case the formation of an independent Albania (rather a vilayet including territories of Macedonia). Considering this attempt to incorporate the future Albania into the Ottoman Empire, he confined himself f to the struggle for

¹⁶Kostov, Chris (2010). *Contested Ethnic Identity: The Case of Macedonian Immigrants in Toronto 1900-1996*. Oxford: Peter Lang, pp. 40

¹⁷Pashko Vasa, *Albania and the Albanians*, p. 42.

¹⁸Kristaq Prifti, *Botimi dhe perhapja ne Evrope e vepres se Pashko Vases “E verteta per Shqiperine dhe Shqipetaret”*, *Studime Historike* 01-02, 2002, Pp. 59

¹⁹Late Enlightenment: Emergence of modern national ideas, edited by Balázs Trencsényi, Ahmet Ersoy, Michal Kopeček, Maciej Górný, Vangelis Kechriotis, pp. 124

recognition of his nation and Ottoman Empire and the following attempt to leap his country towards the rest of the civilized nations. In his work, Vasa makes it clearly that "It appears to us, in the interests of all (Albanians) to be of the highest importance to unite Albania into one sole vilayet: to give it a simple, compact, and strong organization; to give a large share of the public administration to the native element of the country, and to inaugurate under the aegis of His Majesty the Sultan an era of unity, of concord, and of fraternity for all faiths and all religions."²⁰

With a very progressive mindset, Vasa evidently believed in progress as an ardent nationalist of the XIX century, emphasizing that "with a little more civilisation and better conditions, Albania not only would have nothing to envy Switzerland, but surpass it in beauty, in poetry, and in force."²¹

Pashko Vasa's work was printed in Turkish in the year 1880 by an "Albanian Scientific Society" which must have been "The Istanbul Society of the Albanian Letters"²², a society close to the Ottoman government and Abdulhamid II's policy.²³ Society for the Publication of Albanian Writings was founded on 12 October 1879 in Istanbul, led by Sami Frashëri, Abdyl Frashëri, and other Albanian revivals (Rilindas) among whom was also Pashko Vasa. Its members represented all Albanian territories and all religions. The society gave huge contribute to education in Albanian back in the days, and emphasized the need for a unified Albanian alphabet as necessity to be part of civilization. Thus, they confirm the colonialist essentializations: civilization-barbarism, Enlightenment-the Dark Ages, intelligentsia-rednecks, superior-inferior, better-worse. According to their Status "all enlightened and civilized nations, are enlightened and civilized from the writings of their own languages. And every nation, which does not write its own language, and does not have writings of its own language, stays in darkness and barbarian. Even Albanians, while not writing their own language and not having an alphabet of their own languages, stay like that, and the presupposition and hope from three thousand years so far (as far as history is known) to be enlightened and civilized by using the languages and writings of their neighbors, proved to be useless...Without having, neither wanting, anyone better than the others between us, that will come after us, we pray the God of Life, to bless our existence, the Society for the Publication of Albanian Writings."²⁴

²⁰Late Enlightenment: Emergence of modern national ideas Balázs Trencsényi, Ahmet Ersoy, Michal Kopeček, Maciej Górny, Vangelis Kechriotis, pp. 124

²¹Pashko Vasa, *Albania and the Albanians*, (op.cit.), p. 33

²²Pashko Vasa Efendi, *Amavutluk ve Arnavutlar*, Istanbul, 1287 (1880)

²³Kristaq Prifti, op.cit. *Studime Historike* 01-02, 2002, Pp. 57

²⁴Kanonizmë e shoqërisë të shtypuri shkronja shqip, Konstantinopojë, Ndëshkronjështypëtorët A. Zelicit, 1879, ff. 1-2; (Gjithësakombejanëtëndrituarëdhetëqytetëruarëjanëndrituarëdheqytetëruarëprejskronjasndëgjuhëttëveta.

Therefore, a colonized mind is not the same as “captive mind.” Captivity is imposed from the outside, whereas the colonized mind (in the postcolonial period) implies a choice. One chooses the hegemon rather than an awkward, slow, and frustrating construction of one’s own domestic identity. This idea Ewa Thompson further elaborated that “one chooses the surrogate hegemon because it is an easier choice: it is easier to trust the enlightened and tested foreign metropolis. (...) Those who opted for the surrogate hegemon declared thereby that trustworthiness can only be found abroad and that “the location of culture” is foreign.”²⁵ However, Şemseddin Sami Frashëri in his book “Medeniyet-i Islamiye”²⁶ (1879) tried to elaborate that this location of the culture and civilization is probably abroad, but it has its roots among Muslims. Thus, the notion of European civilization it has actually an Islamic root that need to be returned to its source (*Avrupalıyı cehâletten kurtaran şey, İslâm medeniyetidir. Vahşi Avrupalının zihnini nurlandıran öğretmenler genellikle Müslüman hocalardır.*)²⁷ According to him the civilization is a result and product of Islam (*Medeniyeti sâdece İslâm dininin semeresi ve mahsûlüdür deriz.*)²⁸ He further explains that any nation who accepted Islam was already part of civilization (*Her hangi bir kavim İslâm dinini Kabul ettiyse, bu medeniyet dairesine dahil oldu. Bu medeniyet İslâm dininin semeresi(ürünü)dir.*)²⁹

Thus, he is known through his writings on Islam and Islamic civilization with moderate Pan-Islamist tendencies, where he was trying to offer a modernist interpretation of Islam and its history, to prove that Islam is not incompatible with modern (Western) civilisation, and to promote the brotherhood among Muslims. In his another book “Transferring the New Civilization to the Islamic Peoples” (*Medeniyet-i cedidenin ümem-i islamiyeye nakli*)³⁰ written in 1883, he emphasized that “saving the Muslim peoples from ignorance and once again bringing them to civilization are among the most important priorities of any zealous person who loves his religious community and fatherland, since the survival and glory of Islam are contingent upon this alone.” Therefore, an aim of every nation that is part of Islam

Edheçdokombqënuukashkruarëgjuhën e vet, edhe’skashkronjandëgjuhëttë vet ështëëndët’errëtëdehbarbar. Edheshqiptarëttuemoshkruarëgjuhën e tyredhetu me mospasurshkronjandëgjuhëttëtyre, kështutjenededhe pa ndihma e shpresakëtu e tri mijëvetpërpara (saqëmundtënjihethistoria) qëtëndriçoheshindhetëqytetëroheshinë me gjuhëttëfëqinjët e tëhuajët u dëftue e kotë, edhetrimëria e tëmiratë, qëkanëduarttonanëprejshokësh, qëdukemishkruarënë fund secili me dorëttë vet.Edhenuk e kena, as duamë, ndonjëprej ma tepër se shokët e tjerë, qëkanë me u ba pas nesh, por i lutemiZotitëjetesë, tevejëmbarrëshoqëriaajone, Shoqëria e tështypuritshkronjashqyp)

²⁵Ewa Thompson, *The Surrogate Hegemon in Polish Postcolonial Discourse*, pp. 8

²⁶ŞemseddinSâmi, *İslâmMedeniyeti*, Mihran, 1879/1296

²⁷Ibid., pp. 28-29

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹ŞemseddinSâmi, *İslâmMedeniyeti (Sadeleştiren: FahriErdem)*, İstanbul 1980, pp. 25-26

³⁰Şemseddin Sami Frashëri, “Medeniyet-i cedideninümem-i islamiyeyenakli” (Transferring the New Civilization to the Islamic Peoples), *Güneş (The Sun)*, İstanbul, Ottoman Empire, volume 1, number 4, 1883–1884, pp. 179–184. Translation from Turkish and introduction by M. ŞükrüHanioglu

has an aim to “transfer contemporary civilization to the Islamic nations. In order to achieve this goal, they used newspapers, books, pamphlets, sermons, and all available means to spread the view that European civilization was borrowed from the Muslims, that Islam is no obstacle to true civilization, and that most of science and technology which we see in the hands of the Europeans today is made up of Muslim discoveries.” In this context, the obligation of Albanians is also to write in their own language and promote their superiority. Thus, Semsedin Sami Frasheri viewed those two concepts (Albanianism and pan-Islamism) as “different sides of the same coin (...) consistent with Ottoman unity, which included ethnic diversity.”³¹ In the Albanian historiography the Albanians inhabited four Ottoman vilayets (Shkodra, Janina, Manastir and Kosovo) that “have been living there during the whole their history.”³² This meta-narrative appears in Semseddin Sami Frasheri’s work too, describing even Macedonia that was inhabited since antiquity by the Pelasgians³³, the ancestors of the Albanians and “this people (Albanians/Pelasgians) reside in the Balkan Peninsula since very early times that history cannot score.”³⁴ In the chapter about Macedonia in encyclopedia “Kamus al-alam” Semseddin Sami Frasheri continues to state that “there is no doubt that the old Macedonians are originally Albanians (*Eski Makedonyalilarin sirf ve halis Arnavut bulunmus olduklarinda suphe kalmaz*).”³⁵ Therefore, for many Albanians the rest of Rumelia (consisted by Albania and Macedonia) was the core of their old Illyria. Hence, Albanian nationalist intellectuals noticed that is time for political formulation to create an autonomous province in this territory as a part of the Ottoman Empire. An autonomous Albania meant “maintaining the commitment for Caliph Sultan to conservative Muslim Albanian.”³⁶ Abdulhamid II did not support the idea of autonomy, but has been seen as indirectly responsible for the forging of Albanianness.³⁷ Semseddin Sami Frasheri praised Abdulhamid II for allowing the Albanian people (*kavim*) to establish the school in Albanian language in order to create Albanian national literature (*edebiyat-i milliye*) aiming “to counter Greek and Slavic territorial claims on these regions (including Macedonia).”³⁸

³¹Ibid., pp. 37

³²Stefanaq Pollo, Aleks Buda, Kristaq Prifti, Kristo Frasheri, Historia e Shqipërisë (vitet 30 tetshk. XIX-1912), vëllimi I dyte, Akademia e shkencave e RPS të Shqipërisë – Instituti i Historisë, Tiranë, 1984, pp. 35-37

³³ According to one version that Sami Frasheri represented, the name Pelasgian derives from the Albanian word “plak” (Turkish İhtiyar or Kadim) that was given to the old people as Albanians. According to him they were widespread on all sides of the Balkan Peninsula and western parts of Anatolia.

³⁴Samy-Bey Frashery, Kamus al-alam I, Istanbul, 1306/1889, pp. 86

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 117

³⁶ Ibid. pp. 14

³⁷ Nathalie Clayer, The Young Turks and the Albanians or Young Turkism and Albanianism? In Penser, agir et vivre dans l’Empire ottoman et en Turquie, ed. Nathalie Clayer et Erdal Kaynar, Collection Turcica, Vol 19, Paris, 2013, pp. 71

³⁸ Ibid. 72

George Gawrych has already stressed how, soon after the end of the Orient Crisis (1876-1878), Abdulhamid II and some of his councillors came to consider the "Albanians" as the pillar of the Ottoman presence in Europe, referring generally to the "Albanian Muslims," who were numerous in the border regions with Montenegro, Serbia and Greece, the idea of the imperial authorities being to reinforce their loyalty to Ottoman rule and to Islam.³⁹

This emergence of Albanianism, Sultan Abdulhamid II also wanted to bind it to religious notions of Islamic unity (*Ittihad-i Islam*) and simultaneously to undermine the development of nationalistic tendencies. Therefore, the Abdulhamid II's support of the 'Albanianism' and organized resistance of the Prizren League (1878) that tried to give an Islamic notion to the resistance,⁴⁰ was an attempt to bound Albanians not to independent national movement but to Pan-Islamic religious feelings. There is no doubt that Abdulhamid wanted to identified himself as 'father (*baba*) of Albanians' in order to "establish an enlightened rule in his domains, and he had some definite ideas about Albania and Albanians."⁴¹In Kosovo especially, local officials requested to employ the troops to assist the government functions and to bring 'civilization' (*medeniyet*) and 'humanity' (*insaniyet*) to the wild regions of Macedonia and Albania.⁴² The main supporter of such ideas was a former Grand-vezir Mehmed EsadSafvetPasa who on 12 April 1880 submitted a memorandum advocating to form a separate policy for people living in the periphery, especially Albanians who were 'essence of support' (*maya-ul-istinadi*) of Ottoman state in order to suppress its enemies.⁴³ This policy was also admitted by the highest Ottoman officials Dervish Pasha who thought that "the League of Albania would be useful to the Empire (*que la Ligue de l'Albanieserait utile à l'Empire*)"⁴⁴ Thus, after 1878 many Albanian were taking important positions in the Sultan's Yildiz Palace.⁴⁵ The First secretary (Başkâtibi) of the Ottoman Empire, Tahsin Pasha

³⁹ Nathalie CLAYER, The Young Turks and the Albanians or Young Turkism and Albanianism? In ed. Nathalie C LAYER and Erdal KAYNAR, Penser, agir et vivre dans l'Empire ottoman en Turquie, PEETERSPARIS - LOUVAIN - WALPOLE, MA2013, pp. 68

⁴⁰ Nurray Bozboru, The policy of Abdulhamid II regarding the Prizren League, Turkish Review of Balkan Studies, 2006, pp. 47

⁴¹ George Gawrych, op.cit. New York, I.B.Tauris, 2006, pp. 107

⁴² Ibid., pp. 117

⁴³ Ibid., pp. 73

⁴⁴ Kristaq Prifti, "Certains aspects des rapports de la Ligue albanaise de Prizren avec la Sublime Porte selon les documents ottomans (1878-1881)". Studia Albanica 01, 2012, pp. 50; r, Ahmet Moukhtar Pacha, le 20 mars 1295/1 avril 1880. Le maréchal Dervish Pacha, chargé par la Sublime Porte dans les années 1880-1881 pour réprimer la Ligue albanaise. 2 BOA, Istanbul. Fon: Yildizesasevraki. Doc. N° 14 88/16 88 12. Rapport envoyé au Conseil des Ministres par Dervish Pacha, Shkodra, le 15 décembre 1296/27 décembre 1880.

⁴⁵ The focus of this study is more emphasized on Slavic speaking muhacirs who were defined by Husein Basic as Turkonegrins (*Cmoturci*). The Albanian speaking muhacirs from region of Krajina (Kraja), Ulcinj (Ulqin) and parts of Podgorica were not taken into details as a part of this study. However, according to Nathalie Clayer there were from this region more than 60 people who worked as personal guard of Sultan Abdulhamid II. Some of them worked as gunman (*tufekci*), part of gendarme (*hadimjandarma*) or commandants in different parts of Ottoman Empire as Iskodrali Tahir Pasha, Kranjali Tahir Pasha, Kucuk Tahir Bey, Halil Bey Skeja

wrote that "on the first line to protect (as guard) Abdulhamid were Albanians (...). This trust to Albanian had a special place in the Abdulhamid's policy because they were an Ottoman fortress in Rumelia."⁴⁶ This promotion of Albanianism closely linked to strong common "Islamic" values, was important as a respond to Hellenism and Pan-Slavic regional threats.

Official surnames of the European provinces between 1889 and 1896 drew on the descriptions of Semseddin Sami Bey in his *Kamus al-alâm*, and depicted some Balkan regions such as Epirus and Macedonia as having been inhabited since remote antiquity by the Pelasgians, the ancestors of the Albanians, with the authors providing further information on the Albanian inhabitants. The aim was of course to counter Greek and Slavic territorial claims on these regions. Although this kind of assertion disappeared after 1896, it seems that the growing interference of the Great Powers in Macedonia from 1903 onwards sparked renewed interest among the Ottoman authorities in attributing an Albanian identity to certain territories so as to limit their control by the Great Powers.

This is the period when Sami Frasheri formulated a program which will be more independent from Ottoman government. He wrote a book "Shqipëria - Ç'ka qënë, ç'është e ç'do të bëhetë? Mendime për shpëtimt të mëmë-dheut nga reziket që e kanë rethuarë" (Albania - What It Was, What It Is and What Will Become of It? Reflections on Saving the Motherland from Perils which Beset It) published in Bucharest in 1899. Indeed, the main work by Sami used in the construction of his mythologized image in Albania has always been and still is this book, because it has always been seen as (one of) the first 'manifesto'(s) of Albanian political nationalism foreseeing an Albanian state. This work of Balkan pathos is indicative of the awakening of Albanian national identity at the end of the nineteenth century. The immediate goal of the manifesto was full autonomy within the Ottoman Empire, although it served to promote the ideal of full Albanian independence.

Considering Sami's Albanian book, it is bluntly maintained in its first section titled "Pelasgians", where Sami claims that the Albanians are the eldest people of Europe and direct descendants of the Pelasgians.⁴⁷ He emphasizes that the Albanians are Pelasgians and the tribes (fise) as their branches - Illyrians, Epiriots, Macedonians and Thracians. He underlines the positive side of the centuries-long isolated life of Albanians remote from civilisation in the 'barbarian times':

and Osman Pasha – the general of brigades and commandant of battalions of guardians (*zuavevshqiptare*). See: Nathalie Clayer, *Ne fillimet e nacionalizmitshqiptar – Lindja e nje kombi me shumicemysliman ne Evrope*, Marlin Barleti, Tirane, 2012, pp. 62-63; Theodor Ippen, *Skutari und die NordalbanischeKuestenebene*, Daniel A. Kajon, Sarajevo, 1907, pp. 41-42

⁴⁶ Tahsin Pasa Anilari., pp. 34

⁴⁷ Shqipëria. Ç'ka qënë, 3-6.

“Albanians preserved their language and their nationality not because they had letters, or knowledge, or civilization, but because they had freedom, because they always stood apart and didn’t mix with other people or let foreigners live among them. This isolation from the world, from knowledge, civilization and trade, in one word - this savage mountain life allowed the Albanians to preserve their language and nationality.”⁴⁸

This romanticist picture of isolated ‘barbarian’ life might remind us of Rousseau’s idea of the ‘noble savage’, which is also displayed, though implicitly, when Sami admires the Albanians for being brave warriors. Nevertheless Sami’s main goal is the modernisation of Albania, which is compatible with Ottoman government that had actually been attempting modernisation of the empire, including Albania.

However, he distinguishes Albanian and Turks as totally different entities. Sami Frasheri pointed out that the Turks actually “do not have any more right to live like this than these other savage peoples, yet even today they continue to live as freeloaders. They no longer have such rights. Up to now, they have created neither a state nor a government, as other countries have. They prefer to live in savagery. They will fall and must perish so that humankind can survive. But what have we done to them that, in their fall, they want to take us down with them? What do we have in common with them? Did we arrive with them? No, not at all. We are not Turks, nor did we arrive from the wilds of Asia. We are the oldest people of Europe. We have more rights to live in Europe than any others.”⁴⁹

His argument being “oldest people of Europe” and seeing the Turks as “savage people” was just a Zeitgeist for political formulation of imperialism and nation state. Empires and nation-states may in fact best be thought of as alternative political projects, both of which are available for elites to pursue depending on the circumstances of the moment. Ultimately empires and nation-states do point in different directions. Thus, here, there were broadly two types of claim in order to formulate imperialistic projects. First, the nation had existed in the same territory ‘from time immemorial.’ (...) Second, the ancestors of the nation moved from elsewhere, but at a particular point in time settled permanently in their current location, establishing a decisive presence.

In this context, Sami Frasheri emphasizes firstly that “since the Macedonian issue, which has been the subject of much diplomatic attention at the negotiating table, will take its course and be solved one way or the other, Roumelia will not

⁴⁸Shqipëria. Ç’kaqënë, 17-18.

⁴⁹Ibid.,

remain as it is.”⁵⁰ Therefore, secondly “the one and only goal of the Albanians” must be and “it is to preserve Albania and not let it be divided up by foreigners, to preserve our language and national identity, to confound all the intrigues of our foes and to impede the spread of Greek and Serbian languages and ideas which are destroying our foundations and uprooting the Albanians and their country. Everything detrimental to this goal must be fiercely combatted by all true Albanians and by the Albanian league. Everything conducive to this goal must be embraced by them and unhesitatingly supported.”⁵¹

ALBANIANISM IN THESSALONIKI: FROM SUPPORT OF YOUNG TURKISH MOVEMENT TO SUPORRT FOR AUTONOMY

Although Frashëri family (Abdyl, Naim and Sami) are accepted as three of the founders of Albanian nationalism, historians often undermine the role of Mithat Frasheri in the Ottoman administration and later in Albanian nation building. Once an Ottoman bureaucrat in Palestine and the nephew of prominent Albanian nationalists Samsaddin Sami (Sami Frasher) and Naim Frasher, Mid'hat Frasher began his activist career in the years leading up to the Committee for Union and Progress (CUP) takeover of power. That he abandoned the ideals of the Ottoman Empire after 1908, as he uncle Sami Frasher after 1898, however, did not mean he gave upon integrationist models of all together.⁵² Before the Young Turkish Revolution and its centralization politics after 1908, especially after 1910, Mithat Frasher supported integrationist ideas of Albania inside Ottoman Empire. During that period he worked for the Ottoman administration in the vilayet of Salonika from 1905 to 1910 who published a weekly newspaper "Lirija" in Salonika and edited a monthly magazine entitled "Diturija", a magazine based on the cultural, literary and scholarly interest of Albania. In this magazine he praised Albanian Istanbul society established by his uncle Sami Frasher Prasing Istanbul Society.⁵³

In this sense he continued uncles anti-Slavic and anti-Greek politics by emphasizing that “after the war with Russia, San Stefanos and Berlin Treaty the threats for Albania started from Slavic side, wile from Greek side was a threat of assimilation by losing the language and spoiling the nation.⁵⁴ However, he presents

⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 3

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Isa Blumi, Publishers, Hitmen, Diplomats, and Dreamers :Switzerland's Ottoman-Albanian Diaspora,1899-1920, in Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Geschichte, Zürich, Schweiz, Band 52, 2002, pp. 318

⁵³ Diturija, 1 Januar 1909, Selanik, Nr. 1, pp. 5: See: N' eshte pra se sot sqipes' i degohete zeri, kete ja kemi hua asaj shoqeris' s' Stambolit qe ka qen' e para pune kombiare

⁵⁴ Diturija, 1 Januar 1909, Selanik Nr. 1, pp. 4-5 See: Pas luftes'se Rusise, pas tratatit te Shent Stefanajt dhe te Berlinit ne rezik i madh u tregua pcr vendin tene ng' an' e Slavevet. Ger m' ahere Shqiperija kish rezik te madh ng' an' e grekeret qe perpiqeshin te na humbasine guhene dhe te na prishine kombesine.

Albanians dominance over those nations. According to him "after all those nations living in Turkey, Albanians played the most important role. After more the 25 years of war between Turkey and Scenderbeg, Albania became part of Turkey not as a conquered place, rather as a friendly and equal nation"⁵⁵ and "Turkey had only a name over Albania, because the local government reminded Albanian. The locals, the children of this place were Albanians. This means that Turkey didn't had any force over Albania".⁵⁶ Mithat Frasherî tries to show special status of Albanians in Ottoman Empire that were even dominant over Greeks and Slavs. According to him, we need "to have a look on Turkish history, we will see which beautiful role played Albanians. Albania was a place that could deal by its own, living in liberty; Albanians were also always the first in whole Empire, looking at Turkey as it own place, not just for work and profit, but also for ruling the Empire."⁵⁷

The solution to continue with this dominance, he saw in Albanian alphabet as civilization mission that will enlighten Albanians. Thus, "(Albanians) need to know both dialects (...) to bring them to the spoken level."⁵⁸ He is trying to analyze that the alphabet will give opportunities to Albanians "from Shar mountains till Basra, from Black See to the Red one. Whole this market is open for Albanians to rule over it."⁵⁹ Hence, he saw this realization inside the Ottoman Empire by working close with Young Turkish movement and glorifying Constitution and Mithat Pasha as the father of Constitution from 1876 (*babaj i Konstitucionit' me te vertet ka qen ni patriot i madh.*)⁶⁰ He also compared the American, French and Ottoman revolution that happened in July, as three events that changed the history (*tirani e cmendur e Sultan Hamidit qe kish shtene ne nje rezik gjithë Tyrqine, kish tfaqure qarjet e botese dhe shpresen e nje shpetimi edhe keshtu u be dite e 10 korrikut ne Tyrqi, me te cpallurit te konstitucionit, nje dite qe pas ketej do te luset si feste kombiare.*)⁶¹

⁵⁵ Diturija, 1 Mars 1909, Selanik Nr. 3, pp. 33 See: Nga kaqe kombe qe jan' ne Tyrqi Shqipetaret jan' ata qe kane lojtur me te madh roll. Pas njezet e pes vjet lufte nene flamur te ndricim te Skenderbeut, dhe pas nje kundreqendrimi te ndercim. Shqiperija hyri nene sunim te Tyrqise, jo si nje vent i mundure, po si nje komp shok dhe baras.

⁵⁶ Diturija, 1. Mars 1909, Nr 3, pp. 33 See: Tyrqija vc- emrin kish mi vendin tene, se qeveri e vendit ka mbeture kurdohere ne duar te shqipetarevet, te femijeveve te vendit, qe kane mbajture ger fort afre mevetesin' e tyre, aqe sa qeveri e Tyrqise s' kish asnje fuqi ne Shqiperi."

⁵⁷ Diturija 1. Mars 1909, pp. 33 See: Nje veshtrim i cpejte n' istori te Tyrqise na tregon fort bukure radhen e shkelqyere qe kane mbajture Shqipetaret. Shqiperija jo vetem ka qen' e zonja te mbane vethen' e saj te lire dhe te pa poshteruare, po dhe ka ditur qe te jet' i par' i kombetve ne te tere mbreterit, duke shikuare gjithë Tyrqine si nje vent te hapure per te, ku jo vetem ka punuare, ka fituare, po ka urdheruare dhe mbreteruare.'

⁵⁸ Diturija, 1. Dhjetor 1909, Nr. 11 and 12, pp. 146 See: Duhete pra qe te dime te dy dialektet dhe per kete pune Gegët lipset qe te kEndojne librat toskerisht dhe Toskete librate gegerisht, me nje menyre qe te dy kEe foljet ' i dukene si te tijate dhe jo vetem ' i kupetoje, po dhe te mundin ti flas njeriu.

⁵⁹ Diturija, 1 Mars 1909, pp. 36 See: 'Tani Tyrqija e ter' eshte hapure per ShqipEtarE: qE nga mal' i Sharit e ger ne mence te Basres, qe nga det' i Zi e ger ne det i Kuq, i tere ky shesh eshte i celure: le te jet' i zoti dhe te refehet i pare te mbreterojte dhe te urdheroj

⁶⁰ Dituria, 1 Januar 1909, pp. 11

⁶¹ Diturija, 1 July 1909, Nr. 7, pp. 111

Therefore, he participated in the Congress of Monastir in 1908, on the side of Albanian club that was closed to Young Turkish government. This club was dealing with cultural and political issues and was founded in Salonika and Frashëri was a president. However, other Albanian clubs were concerned about Young Turk influence on Salonika club and rejected that view and instead opted for the Monastir club. One of prominent Albanian figures Andon Zako Cajupi criticized his policy in an pamphlet "Salonika Club" (*Klubi I Selanikut*). Only after Ottoman authorities forbid writing in Albanian and began the centralization of the state, Frashëri switched from CUP and had joined the Freedom and Accord Party that advocated for Ottomanism, government decentralisation and the rights of ethnic minorities. For these purposes and against CUP policy⁶² was established in Monastir another important Albanian organization named The Black Society for Salvation (*Shoqëria e zezë për shpëtim*) or the Black Hand (*Dora e Zeze*).

A POLICY AGAINST THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE. FROM MONTENEGRO TO SOUTHERN ITALY

The main task of Black Hand was to organize uprisings in Albania and Macedonia, both seen as Albanian territories. The aim was to struggling for the unification of the four Ottoman vilayets with the substantial Albanian population (Kosovo, Scutari, Monastir and Janina) into one autonomous political unit with its own government and parliament. One of its main contributors was Nikolla bey Ivanaj. He was born in Montenegro who studied and worked in Trieste and Belgrad. There he was inspired by "Serb, Greek and Bulgarian gang revolutionary activities in Kosovo and Macedonia (*Tue pase qene inspirue (aty ne Beligrad) me veprimet cetnore rivoluçjonare te Serbve, Grekve dhe Bullgarve nëpër Kosovë, Maqedoinii etj.*)"⁶³

In the 1905–08 period he published the newspaper 'The Hope of Albania' (*Shpnesa e Shqypnisë*) in Albanian, Croatian and Italian languages in Dubrovnik Trieste and Rome (*5 Shtator 1905 botimi I gazetës Shpnesa e Shqypniis, ni her ne jav per 4 vjet ne Ragus, Triest dhe Rom (gjithsehit 44 numra)*).⁶⁴ On the first numbers of it was emphasized the aim of the newspaper: "a call to Albanian liberty and self-determination (*e sidha e ka te shkurten e te kjar programin, deshirin e te thirmjen:*

⁶² Historija e Shqipënie se re dhe vëjtjet e veprimet e mija, pp. 11 See: 'Me kritikue keq e me denue, a priori, lirin konstitucionare te rrejshme te Turqis, tye cfaq mosbesim ne premtimin e Turqve Rij.'

⁶³ Historija e Shqipënie se re dhe vëjtjet e veprimet e mija, pp. 7 Further: per pregaditje trolli: për cilrimin e ktyne Dhenavet, si dhe bashkimin e tyne me Shtete Ballkanas respektiv, une, qyqari unai shpnesojshe dhe gadi besojshje, se ende populli Shqiptar ishte i gatshim, qysht' atâhetetë, - për me I ba veprimet e flijet e veta, por për at qellim, për liriön e vet-urdhnimin e vet.

⁶⁴ Historija e Shqipënie se re dhe vëjtjet e veprimet e mija, pp. 10

Lirimi e veturdhnimi i Shcypniis).⁶⁵ The important accent was put that the aim of all Albanians should be “to liberate a homeland, otherwise there will not be peace in the Balkan (*te kepusim vargojt – te e lirojm Atedhen*.“ (...) ,*te sidhat deri sa mos te na jepen – paqe ne Ballkan ska me kjen*.)⁶⁶

To achieve this aim, Nikolle bey Ivanaj searches for allies outside the Ottoman Empire – in Europe (*Evropa te e gerموj Turkijen per me na i dhan reformat*).⁶⁷ This approach distinguish him from other Albanian nationalist like Pashko Vasa, Sami and Mithad Frasheri. While the Albanian Nationalism developed in Istanbul and Thessaloniki was closer to Pan-Islamic and Young Turkish policy, the national revivalist outside the Ottoman Empire, like in the case of Nikolle Ivanaj and Giuseppe Schiro (in Italy) were searching closer ties with other European countries. Nikolle Ivanaj’s argument is based on enlighten superiority of Europe, in this case, the Albanians are an European nation distinguished from Asiatic Turks (*bile, Turkun cysh se ka ardh prej Azijet, sadhte Shcyparet edhe e kan mmajt ne Evrop*.)⁶⁸ As in Pashko Vasa’s and Sami Frasheri’s works, Nikolle bey Ivanaj glorifies personalities like Alexander the Great and Scenderbeg Castrioti who ruled with that region, led uprisings against Ottomans (*Ne kete menyrr edhe me marrue e poshtnue ata te paart te medhejt te padekunit ton, sikurse: mretin Aleksandrin e Madh, baben e tij Filipin, Pirrin e Madh, Kastriotin etj.*). He points out “that is the time to return our old greatness (...) and to break the chains in order to liberate our homeland (*se koha ka ardh, per me na u kthye prap, ka pak e pak, miresija, madhnija e lumenija e hershme (...) koha esht: te kepusim vargojt – te e lirojm Atedhen.*)⁶⁹ Under homeland and liberation it is included Macedonia as well, where he emphasized that ‘there is not such a Macedonian Question, we can talk only about Albanian Question (*bile, sadhte ne kete menyrr kisht me u mmarrue shcim shum e nnjemna – bevetja e Shcypniis (e jo e Makedonijes, se te saj te bevetme, vetmas ska*).⁷⁰ Only in this way, he predicts, will be fulfilled the article 23 from the Congress of Berlin that guaranteed autonomy for Macedonia⁷¹ (i.e.) Albania.⁷² This

⁶⁵ Shpnesa e Shcypeniis, 10 September, 1905, Ragusa, pp. 1

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Shpnesa e Shcypeniis, 10 September, 1905, Ragusa, pp. 3

⁶⁹ Shpnesa e Shcypeniis, 10 September, 1905, Ragusa, pp. 3

⁷⁰ Shpnesa e Shcypeniis, 10 September, 1905, Ragusa, pp. 2

⁷¹ Shpnesa e Shcypeniis, 1 July, 1906, Ragusa, pp. 2 See the text: Zborovi po Albaniji “na svim ce se zborovima zatraziti pretres I privodjenje u djelo 23. Clanka berlinskog kongresa, koji glasi: ‘sve pokrajine evropske Turske imati ce jednu polunezavisnu administraciju, s olaksicom I pravom da mogu imati po jednu opstu Narodnu Skupstinu...’

⁷² Shpnesa e Shcypeniis, 1 July, 1906, Ragusa, pp. 2 See the text: Zborovi po Albaniji “Takozvano makedonsko pitanje (premda ono zasebno I ne postoji, nego – skupa – albansko), koje se kroz toliko vremena ne moze nikako a nekmoli povoljno da rijesi, zadalo je veliku brigu nasem narodu...”. In this case he argues “da se nasemu vilajetu dade ona Uprava, sto je Imperatorsko Upraviteljstvo obecalno 23. Cl. Berlinskog ugovora, I time se, jednom za svagda, I kod nas pocne uvoditi toliko I davno zeljeni poredak, mir I blagostanje.”

should be just a first stage, while the second one should bring its independence from Ottoman Empire (*Shqipëria me kater vilayetet e saj, vetem si nje aleat i Turqis, cka, po t'ishte qene e mundun, perkohsisht, do tishte qen pun e mir dhe e levörtishme për shqiptart ende per Turqien.*)⁷³ This project of liberation of Albania and Macedonia, he emphasized, was supported by "land of Italy – a friendly country of Albania and Albanians (*kete idene e perkrahshin ,dheu i Italis – bujar dhe mik ndaj Shqiptaret e Shqipnis.*)"⁷⁴

Similar ideas were presented by Giuseppe Schiro , who was an Italian subject born in Sicily. In his book "The Albanians and Balkan Question" (*Gli Albanesi e la Questione Balkanica*) written in 1904, where he supported an idea of Italian involvement in Albania. For him, there should not be any Albanian-Ottoman cooperation to safeguard Albanian interests as for him it was counterproductive to achieving Albanian independence.⁷⁵ The opposite approach to Italian involvement in Albania, had another prominent Albanian from Calabria: Girolamo de Rada. He was a defender of federal and multicultural Albanian nationalism in Italy and Ottoman Empire.⁷⁶ Italo-Albanian revival was closely intertwined with Italian Risorgimento. Thus, de Rada's own political ideas were shaped by different intellectual influences drawn from Risorgimento. He supported Italian federalism and ideas of Carlo Cattaneo that Italy should rather preserve its multicultural society. However, after Italian unification in 1861, he became disappointed seeing the Italian statist threat to Italo-Albanian cultural and religious specificities. He concluded that Italian nation-state has not been friendly to Albanians.⁷⁷ Therefore, he advocated an Albanian autonomy inside Ottoman Empire by strengthen this brotherhood in the English-Scottish or Austro-Hungarian form. According to him " it cannot be denied that tearing Albania from Turkey would be a wound (*non puo negarsi che, per la Turchia tutta, lo sbranamento dell'Albania fu una ferita*)" and that "(Albanians) are for the peace in Europe and Albania, entailing that Albanians should not move out of Sultan's rule (*noi volevamo, e il dicemmo, per la pace d'Europa e il bene della Skjiperia, che questa non ci staccasso dal Sultano.*)"⁷⁸ However, he rather saw the autonomous status of Albania inside the Ottoman Empire.⁷⁹

⁷³ Historija e Shqipënis se re dhe vuetjtet e veprimet e mija, pp. 11

⁷⁴ Historija e Shqipënis se re dhe vuetjtet e veprimet e mija, pp. 18

⁷⁵ Gueseppe Schiro, *Gli Albanesi e la Questione Balkanica*, Napoli: a spese dell'editore Ferd. Bideri, 1904

⁷⁶ Artan Puto and Maurizio Isabella, *From Southern Italy to Istanbul: Trajectories of Albanian Nationalism in the Writings of Girolamo de Rada and Shemseddin Sami Frasher* ca. 1848-1903, *Mediterranean Diasporas: Politics and Ideas in the Long 19th Century*

⁷⁷ *Ibid*

⁷⁸ Fiamuri Arberit/La Bandiera dell'Albania, 30 September, 1883, No. 2, Corigliano Calabro, pp. 1-2

⁷⁹ Fiamuri Arberit/La Bandiera dell'Albania, 30 March, 1884, No. 6, Corigliano Calabro, pp. 4 See:

"O Sultano, non dare il tuo assenso

CONCLUSION

After the Congress of Berlin, the Hamidian policy to protect the rest parts of Ottoman Rumelia (especially Macedonia), promoted an Albanianism closely linked to the 'Unity of Islam' (İttihadi İslam) that would respond to Hellenism and Pan-Slavic regional threats. In this purpose, Abdulhamid II supported the Albanianism and their resistance of the Prizren League/Cemiyeti İttihad (1878) against the invading states by trying to bound Albanians to religious notion of Unity of Islam. However, the events of the late XIX century in the Balkans within the confines of the Eastern Question, the intervention of Great Powers in Macedonia (1903) and Young Turk Revolution (1908) influenced Albanian intelligentsia to transform this movement into more national - going outside of the framework based on 'Unity of Islam'. Thus, this study aimed to analyze this transformation and their trajectories of Albanian intelligentsia from Istanbul (Sami Frasheri and Pashko Vasa) and Thessaloniki (Midhat bej Frasheri) via Podgorica, Dubrovnik and Trieste (Nikolle bej Ivanaj) to Southern Italy (Giuseppe Schiro). By taking a trans-imperial and trans-national perspective based on entangled history, I tried to analyze the Albanian subjects of Ottoman Empire, Montenegro and Italy who participated into political violence, the lobbying of European powers and the publication of newspaper promoting autonomy or independent Albania. Thus, the subjects of different states had different visions about the future of Albania. Their activities should not be assumed to have reflected a unified national agenda. Using a few case studies of some of the more conspicuous Albanians in Eastern Mediterranean region, I tried to demonstrate that their ambitions were varied and sometimes contested. The first generation of Albanian national revivalists from Istanbul (Pashko Vasa) and Southern Italy (Girolamo de Rada) supported integrationist projects of Ottoman state, while Sami Frasheri and his nephew Mithat Frasheri switched their political projects from integrationist to irredentist. The case of Nikolle bey Ivanaj and Giuseppe Schiro were lobbying of European powers (i.e. Italy) for independent Albania.

Ti serberemo noi stessi la Skjiperia
 Noi non andremo col Montenero,
 Ne con Serbo, necon Austria,
 Non con Turco, non con la Grecia,
 Vogliamo di noi stessi l'autonomia."