

FAILURES AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF ALBANIAN NATIONALISM IN THE ERA OF NATIONALISM

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ABSTRACT

The development of Albanian nationalism was not uniform from the beginning and it followed distinct patterns. First there were local protest movements, some were culturally based while others were created by the local elite to protest against local and specific problems. Later these different patterns in Albanian nationalism turned into mass uprising during the 1910 and 1911s. The aim of this paper is to understand the crucial period of mass uprising of Albanians and to analyse how these different patterns in the movement had participated and expressed themselves, what the basic motivation of uniting around a common purpose was, and ease and difficulties in this regard.

Keywords: Nationalism, Nation, National Identity, Albanian Nationalism, Balkan Nationalism

MİLLİYETÇİLİK DÖNEMİNDE ARNAVUT MİLLİYETÇİLİĞİNİN YETERSİZLİĞİ VE BAŞARILARI

ÖZET

Arnavut milliyetçiliği başlangıcından itibaren tek tip bir hareket olarak gelişmemiş kendi içinde farklılıklar göstermiştir. Hareket içindeki bu farklı gelişme biçimleri önce yerel protestolar, kültürel temelli hareketler ve belirli sorunlara karşı yerel seçkinlerin protesto hareketleri olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Daha sonra Arnavut milliyetçiliği içindeki bu farklı gelişme biçimleri, 1910 ve 1911 yıllarında kitlesel bir ayaklanmaya dönüşmüştür. Çalışmanın amacı, kitlesel Arnavut ayaklanmasının ortaya çıktığı bu önemli dönemi, hareket içindeki farklılıkların kendilerini nasıl konumlandığı, nasıl ifade ettiği ve bunların ortak bir amaç etrafında birleşmelerini kolaylaştıran ve zorlaştıran temel motivasyonun neler olduğu bağlamında anlamaya çalışmaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Milliyetçilik, Millet, Milli Kimlik, Arnavut Milliyetçiliği, Balkan Milliyetçiliği

INTRODUCTION

“How can one measure the limits of success or failure of a nationalist movement?” We need to point out three aspects. The first is the conditions under which the movement emerged, the second is the nature and development of the movement, and finally the goal and actions of the movement. Conditions under which the nationalist movement emerged include those which lead a society to generating a world-view to identify itself with, gather around, and reclaim their own collective life. Actual opposition to and struggle against these conditions comes up as the most apparent phenomena. For instance, interventions to material and spiritual spheres of the collective

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life may provoke such struggles. In this context, legitimacy of actual opposition and struggle is an important factor for success of the movement.

Nature and development of the movement refers to the character of a “nation” definition required by a nationalist movement. In this respect, it shows up as basic identifiers of the nation definition of a nationalist movement. In other words, it is the most distinctive characteristic on which the nation description is built, such as a common language, shared history or religion. At this point, success of the movement is largely determined by resistance or resistlessness of sub-national collective identities or loyalties against a broader national identity.

Goal and actions of the movement refers to the embodiment of the nation definition as a project with actual opposition and struggle. Spatial or territorial thinking that dominates here. According to this logic, the nations must have a well-defined countries and territories.¹ In this context, a legalization quest is apparent with claims of legitimation and political recognition, incorporating in the project the broadest population possible. At this point, whether nationalist leaders have a clear vision and if there are related political formulations as well as how the state, in which the movement emerged, reacts to such political project plays a decisive role for the success of movement. Based on the above issues, intention of this article is to make an evaluation for the birth and development of Albanian nationalism.

1. RISE OF ALBANIAN NATIONALISM IN THE ERA OF BALKAN NATIONALISM

Albanian nationalism emerged in the second half of the 19th century. Nationalism of that era was a political doctrine pursuing the goal of establishing "nation-based" modern states or survival of an existing modern state. This doctrine was based on the idea that correct form of political organization corresponded to the boundaries of national society. In other words, the doctrine advocated that each nation should establish a separate state.² As a matter of fact, the Balkan nationalism in the 19th century developed under the influence of the same ideas. The Ottoman Christian subjects in the Balkans including Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbs and Romanians set out to separatist nationalist activities with the purpose of establishing their own nation-states. These activities resulted in the formation of new nation-states, with the help of Western powers that imposed a patronage system over the mentioned Ottoman Christian subjects. With the intention of precluding Russia's Pan-Orthodox and Pan-Slavist policies of expansionism, the Western powers initially advocated for the integrity of Ottoman Empire, and supported the reformation of imperial administration. However, they left this policy after the 1877-78 Ottoman-Russian war, and switched their support to the formation of new nation-states in the Balkans against Russian expansionism. In this respect, the Treaty of San Stefano that put an end to the 1877-78 Ottoman-Russian war confronted Albanians for the first time with a challenge of survival. The Treaty of San Stefano designed new political boundaries in the Balkans so that Russia would dominate the region. Under this treaty, majority of the territories where Albanian population lived were included in new nation-states. Macedonia was incorporated into the territories of a great Bulgarian state. Northern parts of Kosovo (Mitrovica and Vushtrri) were ceded to Serbia.³ However, Western

¹ Smith, Anthony, D. , Milli Kimlik, İletişim Yın. İstanbul, 1999, p.25.

² Özkırımlı, Umut, Milliyetçilik Kuramları, Eleştirel Bir Bakış, Doğu Batı Yın. Ankara, 2008 p.35; Smith, ibid., p.125.

³ Jelavic, Balkan Tarihi, c. 1, Küre yın., İstanbul, 2006, p.388-389.

states, which did not want Russia to gain that much power in the Balkans, gathered Berlin Congress in 1878 and arranged the new political boundaries for the Balkan countries in a way that would not threaten the balance of power between them. With the Berlin Agreement, Macedonia were given back to the Ottomans, but some territories in North Kosovo, which were inhabited by Albanians (Gusinje), were left to Serbia.⁴ From this aspect, 1878 Ayastefanos Agreement and the process of 1878 Berlin Congress, which was revising this, became important turning points for the beginning of Albanian nationalism. The reflections of the negative affects of this agreement on Albanians in the forthcoming years were mentioned in British diplomatic correspondences often.⁵ There are three distinctive features in this process:

1. One of them is that Western states gave up the policy of protecting Ottoman territorial unity and the process of dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire began ⁶

2. The issue of how the dismemberment would be was determined by the protection of the balance of power between the big states. It became clear that Albanians were not included to the project of building new nation-states in the process of dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire.⁷

3. These developments made Albanians to face serious foreign threats about their living space. The result of this was a beginning of a struggle among Albanians, which mainly aimed every kind of resistance against the foreign annexation of Albanian lands. 1878 The League of Prizren became the first organized expression of this struggle. This struggle had continued for the next 34 years as long as this threat existed. At this point, especially the problem of Macedonia was the greatest threat against the living space of the Albanians.

As evidenced by the Treaty of San Stefano and the Congress of Berlin, Albanians were forced to act to save themselves from their neighbors not from the Ottoman government. Albanians were the only group in the Empire that reacted to the Treaty of San Stefano with more fear than the other Ottomans themselves. Their first attempts against the Treaty of San Stefano was the foundation of the Committee for the Defense of Albanian Rights based in Istanbul. The leading members of the committee were the Albanian intellectuals prominent in the Ottoman center. It was the first group of Albanians that was organized to ensure the territorial integrity of Albanian lands.⁸ Meanwhile, in Albania, groups of Albanians, whose lands were brutally undermined in the Treaty of San Stefano had begun to organize militant bands to defend themselves from encroachment. 1878 League of Prizren has been the first. organized expression of that struggle This struggle continued for approximately 34 years. At this point, for the Albanians Macedonia issue would continue to be the biggest threat.

The most dramatic development faced by Albanians and the Ottoman Empire was Bulgaria's full independence immediately after the proclamation of the Young Turks Revolution of 1908. This development made the Macedonian question more dangerous not only for the Ottoman state itself but for the Albanians. Within a period with increased activities of the irredentist

⁴ Jelavic, *ibid.*, p.390-391.

⁵ PRO FO 195 /2297, Mr. Harry Lamp's Selanik Report dated April 30, 1908.

⁶ Sander, Oral, *Siyasi Tarih, İlk Çağlardan 1918'e*, İmge yyn. Ankara, 2003 p.34-35; Jelavic, *ibid.*, p. 211-216.

⁷ Castellan, George, *Balkanların Tarihi, Milliyet Yyn.*, İst., 1993, p.376.

⁸ Bozboray, Nuray, *Osmanlı Yönetiminde Arnavutluk ve Arnavut Ulusçuluğunun Doğuşu*, Boyut Yyn. İst., 1997, p.190.

policies of the neighboring countries of Macedonia, the repressive policies of the Committee of Union and Progress towards the Albanians in Kosovo would lead to outbreak of a revolt in 1910. This was followed by another one in 1911, which was as a result of the violent policies that should be pursued under Ottoman government which clubs and newspapers were closed and forceful disarmament of the people effected.⁹

In short, the beginning of the Albanian nationalism, like the beginning of so many nationalist movements, was caused by the conditions of a foreign attack or invasion against their own living space. The first reaction of the Albanians against these attacks was manifested as the local armed resistance. However, in order to acquire a nationalist characteristic, a new synthesis and a new ideology had to be created for uniting this struggle over a common goal, explaining and justifying this, showing a new way to them, and presenting a new center for their own identity. At this point, a new factor was emerged like in most of the nationalist movements. This was the role of the intellectuals. In fact, Albanian intellectuals made important contributions to create Albanian consciousness for showing the justness of the Albanian struggle and to constitute a nation image for Albanians.

2. DEFINITION OF ALBANIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY

As indicated above, Albanian nationalism was developed in a nationalism era that the view of “every sovereign state has to have a single nation” was dominant. However, there are so many difficulties to determine the factors that constitute a nation. In the definition of nation, certain cultural characteristics as history, traditions, language, religion and ethnicity are usually considered as the signs of being a nation; however, there are no objective criteria to identify where and when a nation is existed.¹⁰ Thus, every nationalism movement had to make its own definition of nation according to the historical conditions within which it was developed.

Different nation definitions are reduced to two general categories in the nationalism literature and conceptualized as “cultural nation” (ethnic nation) and “political nation” (civic nation). “Cultural nations” are exclusive since they consider themselves as a homogenous body coming from a common descent and they reject pluralism. “Political nation” sees the nation as a political society. According to this approach, regardless of the cultural, ethnic or other identities they have, a nation is a community of people that the individuals are united through the citizenship. According to this approach, nation is pluralistic and assimilative. Under these general categories, the image of a nation is usually based upon a national consciousness that was built on one of these approaches. The architects of these are the nationalist.¹¹

In this context, Balkan nationalisms are considered under the category of ethnic or cultural nationalism.¹² Because the motive of building the future based on the past is clear in the national identity construction of Balkan nationalisms. To put it another way, the basic reference sources of Balkan nationalist intellectual-leaders for their efforts of transforming cultural-ethnic identity to a

⁹ Sönmez, İşlet, Banu, *II.Meşrutiyet'te Arnavut Muhalefeti*, YKB Yyn., İstanbul, 2007, p.147-172; Çelik, Bilgin, *İttihatçılar ve Arnavutlar*, Buke Yyn., İstanbul, 2004, p.371-384.

¹⁰ Smith, *ibid.*, p.75.

¹¹ Smith, *ibid.*, p. 24-29.

¹² Smith, *ibid.*, p.134.

national one (creating a national society from an ethnic-cultural society) were the cultural factors such as history, language, religion, or common descent. However, “being different from others” and “authenticity” claims of ethnic nationalism¹³ caused one of the cultural factors that emphasize this most to be placed more in the foreground.

As a matter of fact, language played an important role in the Albanian national identity building as being the major emphasis of collective identity and authenticity for the Albanians who are divided religiously, as contrary to other Balkan nations¹⁴. It was impossible for ethnic identities to find a legitimate place for themselves in the Ottoman *millet system*, which was only recognizing the religious identities as legitimate or official. Non-Muslim Ottoman subjects had chances to pass from an identity based on religious homogeneity to an identity based on ethnic homogeneity in the relatively autonomous administrative and cultural spaces that were brought by the millet system. The patronage policies of Western states, started in the 18th century, played an important role in this. In the Tanzimat period, ethnic identities found spaces to express themselves by the secularization started in the administration of Non-Muslim communities. Its first expression was to gain independence from the highest religious authority by establishing their national churches. The first phase of transition from the religious identity to the national identity was followed by separatist nationalist movements, which were the liberation struggle from the political dominance of Ottoman Empire. Hence, the phase of nationalization of Balkan communities was completed when they acquired the lands where they would live as sovereigns. However, irredentist aims, that are specific to ethnic nationalisms continued to be a high insecurity factor and threat conception between these nation-states. So, the greatest obstacle for Albanian intellectuals was to find a common ground that would emphasize their difference and authenticity. The real source of these obstacles was the *Millet System*, which was compatible with the ideological and political content of the Empire. Namely:

1. The religious divisions among Albanians put them under the regulations and power of three different religious authorities. This brought dependency to three different religious centers. Because, the only legitimate authority in the Ottoman Empire was the religious authority. Within this structure, there was not any legitimate political response to the ethnic identities. The modernization process started with *Tanzimat* did not bring any changes to this approach. Secularization in the realms of education and jurisdiction was only for providing Muslim, Non-Muslim equality Ottomanism approach brought by Tanzimat modernization on the basis of equal citizenship, was imposing the acceptance of a supra-identity over national-ethnic identities. Because of this reason, religious identity continued to be a divisive force for Albanians rather than a uniting one.

2. There was also a serious cultural division among Albanians. This was especially common among the Northern tribes, that the sub-national identities had been protected very strictly. Ottoman *millet system* provided relatively autonomous spaces for preserving different traditional structures. These relatively autonomous spaces gained clarity in the privileges and exemptions provided for certain cultural communities by the state. This resulted in the preservation of the tribe identities based on blood ties for centuries. As long as the *Millet system* had continued,

¹³ Smith, *ibid*, p. 201.

¹⁴ Draper, Stark, “The Conceptualization of an Albanian Nation”, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Volume 20, No.1, January 1997, p.2.

there were no conflicts between these sub-national identities and the Ottoman identity of the state, which recognizes these identities. Until the centralist implications of Tanzimat reforms violated these traditional autonomous spaces. These implications started the first serious conflict between central Ottoman administration and Albanian tribes. In this conflict that went beyond the Tanzimat period, Albanian tribes had struggled for regaining their old privileges and exemptions, which were providing them to preserve their own sub-national identities¹⁵ Thus, especially the strict structure of sub-national identities in North Albanian tribes would be the reason of major conflict between national interests and tribal interests in the era of nationalism.

The Ottoman identity which has not been corresponding to any form of national identity, was the primary obstacle to Albanians for being part of the nation-state building process in an era of nationalism. . Basic challenge in this issue was where Albanians would stand under the ideology of Ottomanism covering all Ottoman subjects as a whole. This was the point of focus in political and cultural programs of Albanian intellectuals. Ottomanism was a political-cultural scenario which was expected to ensure a kind of Ottoman fraternity¹⁶ which originated as a reponse to foreign enroachments and separatist movements and has been used by political elites to achieve consensus among different ethnic and religious communities to encourage political and social unanimity of loyalty to the Sultan. While Ottomanism was sufficiently vague and malleable concept to serve different political platform for the territorial integrity of Ottoman domains was its constant concern. Ottomanism was also compatible with the tradition of imperial. The main components the tradition of the imperial has been the the sanctity of state and reign and preservation of differences and diversity. Therefore, due to its roots in the tradition of imperial, authoritarian or liberal Ottomanism was easily able to obtain the form. This concept has been also used as a tool to address sometimes to be conducive to the whole Ottoman elements, sometimes the Muslim and the Turkish elements increasingly of whom were the Ottoman elites mainly representative, in accordance with the time and the changing conditions. This explains why the Ottoman Elites have not abandoned Ottomanism as long as the presence of the Empire was in question.

Although it is authoritarian and centralized in nature Tanzimat Ottomanism had germinated the notion of citizenship. New rights given to the Ottoman subjets have been declared as a grace from the Sultan with absolute power. On the other hand the reforms were announced as a state decision to modernize the society and asked all the people to obey this decision. The main objective of the state was presented as progress and salvation. At this point Ottomanism reveal an interesting mixture of enlightened synthesis of progressivism and enlightened despotism.¹⁷ The equal rights of non-Muslims before the law which was put implementation in 1856 were under international mortgage. This situation has created the effect of psychological trauma for the Muslims and created a division in the Muslim bureaucrats. *New Ottomans* movement was born in this division.

New Ottomans brought a new approach to the idea of Ottomanism. This was the constitutionalist Ottomanism. First they criticised the authoritarian implementation of the reforms.

¹⁵ Bozboru, Nuray, *Osmanlı Yönetiminde Arnavutluk ve Arnavut Ulusçuluğu*, Boyut Yyn., İstanbul, 1997, p.150-151.

¹⁶ Ögün, Süleyman Seyfi, *Mukayeseli Sosyal teori ve Tarih Bağlamında Milliyetçilik*, Alfa yyn. İst., 2000, p.96.

¹⁷ Somel, Sina Akşin, "Osmanlı Reform Çağında Osmanlılık Düşüncesi", *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce*, vol. 1, iletişim yyn. İstanbul, 2001, p.96.

Secondly, they argued that they were the Tanzimat reforms western imitation. And finally, they criticised the Edict of 1856 with the argument that it led to foreign intervention to increase. According to them, for the salvation of the state constitution, parliament was necessary.¹⁸ They suggested that the new regime's ideology of Ottomanism to be used as leverage. They argued that the constitution would also ensure the implementation of the reforms; the parliament would allow the political representation of all Ottoman subjects while the Ottomanism would be a unifying identity to develop loyalty to the state. *Young Ottomans* thought that could stop the external interventions under the pretext of protecting the rights of the non-Muslims. The *Young Ottomans* represent an attempt to reconcile the new institutions with the Ottoman and Islamic political tradition. They wanted the reforms to be built on the Islamic traditions with the argument that there are forms of democratic governance in Islam. Namık Kemal was a leading representative of this idea. His initial idea of Ottomanism gradually shifted to a line Islamist due the growing pan-Slavism and separatist movements. By the 1870s Namık Kemal defended the brotherhood of Islam, rather than Ottomanism. In the contrary, Fazıl Pasha who was another leading figure of Young Ottomans did not give much importance to the role of religion and tradition in a constitutional regime. Ali Suavi who is known as an ardent Turkish nationalist represented an attempt to merge Turkism, Islamism and Westernization in a melting pot. The idea of the establishment of a federal structure of the Ottoman Empire was proposed by Mithat Pasha and Sherif Halil Pasha in 1872. Their main objective was to keep the Ottoman lands in the Balkans within the Ottoman Empire just as it same for the other *new Ottomans*. But Russia, Serbia and Romania strongly opposed to this idea. The dangerous developments in the Balkans have accelareted the efforts to transition Constitutionalist regime.¹⁹

The first official definition of Ottomanism came into being in 1876 Constitution.²⁰ According to the Constitution of 1876 Ottomanism was not understood as religious communities but population as a whole. At this point, very close to the ideal of Ottomanism. However the first parliamentary deputies were elected on the basis of the religious community through the old regulation. More important, different imaginations for the implementation of the Ottomanism became apparent in the debates on Provincial Law and Electoral Law during the parliament sessions.²¹ This gives some clue about how much the Muslims get used to the idea of the equality. The first constitutional period is also important to understand the expectations of the Albanian intellectuals. Şemsettin Sami an Ottoman intellectuals of Albanian origin, defended the Ottomanism in the framework of the Constitution of 1876 during the first constitutional period. At the same time he was defender of the cultural rights of the Albanians against the danger of Slavic and Greek. More important he pointed out the importance of the Islamic bonds that unites the different ethnic groups for the Ottoman unity. His ideas are very important to understand how he acquires the meaning of Ottomanism in three different identities. There is no doubt that the Ottomanism which acquires the meaning of the three separate identities in a harmony would be the most ideal one. In this context the relationship between the Albanians and the Ottomans is a key

¹⁸ Koçak, Cemil, “Yeni Osmanlılar ve Birinci Meşrutiyet” Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce: Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet’in Birikimi, by Tanıl Bora, Murat Gültekingil, editors, İletişim Yın., İstanbul, C.1, 2001 , pp. 72-82,p.80.

¹⁹ Mardin, Şerif, “Yeni Osmanlı Düşüncesi”, Modern Türkiye’de Siyasi Düşünce: Tanzimat ve Meşrutiyet’in Birikimi, by Tanıl Bora, Murat Gültekingil, editors, İletişim Yın., İstanbul, C.1, 2001, pp.,42-53 ; Somel, İbid., p.105.

²⁰ Somel, İbid., p.105.

²¹ Meclis-i Mebusan 1877 Zabıt Ceridesi, Onikinci inci inikad, 26 Mart 1877, Vilayat Kanunu görüşmeleri, p.82-87; Otuzaltıncı İnikad, 24 Mayıs 1877, intihab-i me’busan kanunu görüşmeleri, p. s.286 1877) by Hakkı Tarık Us, Gazete Matbaa Kütüphanesi, İstanbul, 1939.

phenomenon for measuring the level of the liberal face of political modernization of the Ottoman state.

Not caused a significant problem for the Albanians initially the Ottoman identity as long as this represents the structure of the imperial and the Islam has been an important part of it.²² For this reason during the process of modernization, the Albanian opposition against the centralized bureaucratic practices emerged as the traditional responses. Although it was ethnic nationalism in itself as much as other Balkan nationalist examples, this movement differed from others in that it mainly focused on an issue of survival from extinction to existence. This was a guiding force for the Albanian national movement on territorial integrity, sometimes with armed resistance which represented bitter face of Albanian nationalism. On the other hand, the enlightening literary and intellectual movement as the basis of Albanian cultural awakening led by Albanian intellectuals represented a moderate aspect of Albanian nationalism. These two aspects of the Albanian national movement came to light under 1878 League of Prizren, which gathered Albanians around a common objective. In this respect, claims such as territorial integrity and modernization of Albanian society in every sense were advocated on the basis of regional autonomy granted by Ottoman rulers. According to them, the only way for the salvation of the Albanians was the liberalization of the ideology of Ottomanism. However, each time the Albanian intellectuals faced with the cold side of the ideology of Ottomanism.

Once the Ottomanism with its reference to the Islam, not allow the recognition of the legitimacy of ethnic identity. Second, with its reference to the sanctity of the state and its governors, it does not allow the recognition of the legitimacy of the another political formation out of the central government. Finally, with its reference to sanctity of the territory of the empire it does not allow fragmentation of this land. However, due to the religious division among the Albanians, they need a non-religious identity. Secondly, the Albanian speaking lands had to be recognized as a separate political entity.

These issues from the agenda of the Albanian nationalist intellectuals after 1878, would lead to anti-foreign, anti-clerical and ethno-linguistic discourse Vaso Pashko who was a Roman catholic and held various administrative positions in the Ottoman empire, which has been the most radical advocate of anti-religion among the albanian nationalist discourse.²³ His statement as "the faith of the Albanians is in Albanianism" is the best expression of his ideas in the question. Faik Konitza was the advocate of the cultural movement with the idea that this was necessary for the nationalist movement to gain political legitimacy. For this reason he emphasized the importance of the ethno-linguistic national identity.²⁴ Sami Frasherri has developed a theoretical background for Konitza's ideas. Sami's ethnic language studies, not only the Albanian nationalist ideology, but also the Turkish nationalist ideology has contributed to. Sami argued the coexistence of two motherlands within the empire. Ottoman Empire was the "general home land". Besides this there were "special home lands" possessed by the former. "Special home land" was the expression of the individual territories of religious and ethnic origin, in his formulation. This means that under the

²² Draper, *ibid.*, p.2.

²³ Licursi Emiddio Pietro., *Empire of Nations: The Consolidation of Albanian and Turkish National Identities in the Late Ottoman Empire, 1878-1913*, p.55-69, Senior Thesis, Department of History Columbia University, Spring 1911, http://academiccommons.columbia.edu/download/fedora/content/download/ac:131865/CONTENT/Licursi_Senior_Thesis, p.58-60

²⁴ Licursi, *ibid.*, p.61

auspices of Ottomanism, non-religious identities would be granted a space for their development. Thus, Albanians would continue their commitment to the Sultan as well as their cultural developments would have an adequate tolerance. Thus Sami has a different definition of Ottomanism. While describing the Albanian and Turkish togetherness as a sort of long-lasting companionship, in the face of the inevitable fragmentation of the empire he argued that this association might come to end for pragmatic reasons. His pragmatic approach has brought such a radical discourse relating the Albanian and Turkish co-existence. According to him, for the salvation of the two peoples was the Albanian-Turkish coexistence must be ended.²⁵ However, under the current international conditions, end of co-existence would be realized through the political struggle rather than the armed one. However Abdulhamit II's Ottomanism locked to unity of Islam was far from satisfying the demands of the Albanians.

That is why some Albanian intellectuals such as İsmail Kemal and İbrahim Temo joined *Young Turks*, which aimed at a more liberal order. In this movement, the Prince Sabahattin's liberal ideas were compliant with Albanian purposes. This way of thinking that puts individual above citizen and even nation and supports individual entrepreneurship and decentralization stood for liberal Ottomanist line.²⁶ In this respect, Albanian intellectuals supported this political wing wholeheartedly. On the other hand, represented by Ahmet Rıza centralist ideas contained in the Party of Union and Progress in itself authoritarian and Turkist. Both focused on the Ottoman liberation. However, Turkist wing in the Union responded better to the requirements of an era when the nation-building was uncontrollably rising. On the other hand, since the founding dynasty was Turkish, it was easily joined with Ottomanism, which was based on existence of the Ottoman Empire. Basic challenge in this issue was how Albanians would cope with this Turkist line if the Union was able to establish its political domination. On the other hand, due to negative developments after the revolution of 1908, such as the independence of Bulgaria, Turkism, gained weight within the Unionist Ottomanism. Albanians had to wait no longer to see it.

The Young Turks agreed on secular and constitutionalist Ottomanism but were divided about the nature of the underlying administrative framework. Power struggle among these two political wings, liberal Ottomanism and Turkist Ottomanism of the Unionist which acted in cooperation for the revolution of 1908, resulted in the political domination of the Unionist thinking. This was also the end of liberal environment brought by the proclamation of Constitutional Monarchy. Ottoman-Albanian relations during the Constitutional Monarchy should be reviewed as an issue of survival on both parts. Administration of the Union and Progress Party was committed to solving the issue of Ottoman survival by reordering the society according to positivist principles. Realization of this modernization project, based on order and progress, was accompanied by positivist secularism, increasing dominance of Turkism against Ottomanism, and creating dutiful individual citizens. Compared to this modernization project presented as a requirement for modernity, progress, and being a nation, liberal Ottomanists was criticized for being too backward line. In fact, liberal Ottomanism provided a political framework to create conditions required for the survival of Albanians. Decentralist, individualist and diversity-oriented liberal characteristics of this political line would ensure Albanians to attain cultural freedom and reach their political maturity within autonomous structures. In other words, liberal Ottomanism

²⁵ Licursi, İbid, p.69-70,

²⁶ Ramsour, E.E., Jön Türkler ve 1908 İhtilali, Sander Yyn., Türk Tarih Dizisi:4, p.102

appeared to be the liberation formula for Albanians compared to Turkist and authoritarian Ottomanism of government of the Party of Union and Progress. Interestingly, arrangements made by the Party of Union and Progress on disarmament, taxation, land law and military, as in any other modern state, encountered with the bitter face of Albanian opposition, sometimes with armed resistance. Nonetheless, Albanians' right to take part in literary and intellectual activities for cultural development as in any other modern state was hampered by the Turkist vein as the most severe aspect of Unionist Ottomanism. Basic challenge in this issue is that Ottomanism was an open-ended concept. Albanians accepted the revolution of 1908 as the return of flexibility embodied in the concept of Ottomanism. Therefore, their expectation from the revolution of 1908 was the recognition of traditional cultural and political rights.

When we look at the Turkist ideas of Yusuf Akçura that inspired the Unionists, it can be seen the secular and anti-ottomanist motifs as it can be in the ideas of Albanian nationalists. Yusuf Akçura like the Albanians has a multiple identity. He is a Muslim, Ottoman and Turkish, respectively. However, while he was rejecting the Islamism and Ottomanism as the failed policies for the unity of the empire, He argued that the Islam was a unifying force for the Turks, with the pragmatic reasons.²⁷ Again, he pointed to the continuity of a link between the Turks and the Ottoman dynasty from ancient times.²⁸ However for the Albanians the religion was not a unifying force due to the religious division among them. On the contrary, religion had a function of the divider in terms of the Albanians. For this reason Albanian nationalism required the rejection of religious identities, respectively. On the other hand there was not a perpetual link between the Albanians and the Ottoman founder of the dynasty since the ancient time as it was for the Turks. In an age of empires shattered by nationalist movements, in both the Albanians and the Turks were looking for a pragmatic way of salvation out of their multiple Identities. In this respect, the Albanian nationalism and the predominant direction of Turkic Unionist Ottomanism were mutually exclusive concepts. This paved the way for rupture of relations between Albanians and Ottomans. So, having emerged as an important part of defensive Ottoman modernization, Ottomanism became the most prominent target of its own components.

Under the influence of these factors, the language had become an important reference point for Albanian nationalist intellectuals for creating national consciousness and identity. This cultural element was seen as a glue both for emphasizing the differences from other Balkan nations and overcoming the different religious and regional-cultural sub-identities among Albanians. The fact is that, Albanian nationalist intellectuals such as Naum Vekilharci, Jeronimi de Rada, Vaso Pasha, Abdül Frasheri, Sami Frasheri, Naim Frasheri who gave several products on Albanian language, literature and folklore, were coming from different religions and sects and were influenced from each others' products constituted a very important point in the development of Albanian national identity on a secular basis. The actions of Albanians on national language had acquired clarity about two issues. Using Albanian in education and writing of a common alphabet. Since the basis of education was religious and sectarian in the Ottoman Empire, the language of education was also differentiated. Albanians were reading sacred texts in Arabian, Greek, Bulgarian or Serbian, depending on their religious beliefs. This was exposing them to different cultural influences. The most effective way of blocking these influence channels was using the Albanian language in

²⁷ Georgeon, François, *Türk Milliyetçiliğinin Kökenleri*, Yurt yyn. No.13, Ankara, 1986, p.42-43.

²⁸ Georgeon, *İbid.*, P.68-71.

education. In fact, we can say that after the declaration of II. Meşrutiyet in 1908, the acceptance of Albanian education demands were easily embraced among the Albanians. However, the issue of deciding the alphabet, which would be used for writing Albanian, created serious discussions and divisions not only among the Albanian intellectuals but also among the Albanian public. Istanbul Alphabet which were written by the initiative of Sami Frasheri in 1879 and consisted of Greek and Latin letters, was only accepted by Muslim Albanians in Central and South Albania, while the other alphabets continued to be used in other regions. The discussions about the common alphabet in Monastir Congress of 1908 were resulted in the usage of two different alphabets; Istanbul Alphabet and Latin Alphabet. While the Istanbul Alphabet was accepted for general usage, it was accepted to make some amendments for Scutari dialect.²⁹ However, this could not bring a minimal consensus among Albanians, as contrary flamed the discussions about the alphabet. Because the conservative Muslim Albanians created a serious opposition for using the Latin Alphabet. The reflection of this division about alphabet to the regional level can be broadly expressed as the division between Northern Muslim Gegas, and Southern Muslims and Non-Muslim Toskas which did not cause any problems about education in national language, namely Albanian. Gegas were supporting Arab Alphabet³⁰ while Toskas were supporting Istanbul Alphabet³¹ There were national as well as religious contradictory responses at the root of the strong opposition of this group to Latin Alphabet. Conservative Muslim Albanians insisted on the usage of Arab Alphabet. Because they claimed that while Arab Alphabet was sacred for Muslims, Latin Alphabet was both religious and national alphabet of the Christian Western world. According to them, using the Latin Alphabet could cause harmful cultural influences on Albanians. Teaching the Albanian with Arab letters would both prevent foreign cultural influences among Albanians³² and provide Muslim Albanians the advantage of reading their own sacred texts easily.³³ In fact, writing Turkish, the official language of Ottoman Empire, with Arab Alphabet was giving this advantage to Turks. The most important reason of the acceptance of the Latin Alphabet by the Central and Southern Albanian Muslims, despite of this reaction of conservative Muslims, was the belief of Bektashizm which is a more flexible branch of Islam³⁴ This made it easy for the Bektashi³⁵ Albanians to adapt the idea of national independence. This division about the alphabet became an issue that reflects the religious and regional-cultural differentiation among the Albanians. The best example of this is the fact that Albanian education started in different regions with different alphabets. The official declaration of Committee of Union and Progress in 1910, which was stating that in order to overcome these complications Albanian language would be thought by Arab Alphabet, flamed the discussions among Albanians. As a reaction to this official decision Tosk Albanians stopped

²⁹ PRO FO 195/2298/no.65 ,W.S. Edmonds' Monastir Report to Sir Gerard Lowther Ambassador in Istanbul, dated November 24, 1908.

³⁰PRO FO 195/ 2330 /no.46, Satow's Uskup Report to Harry Lamb, dated December 1909 , Mr. Satow points out that "... The adoption of the Frashery alphabet is likely to meet with some resistance in backward places like Yakova and Ipek where clerical influence is strong".

³¹ PRO FO 195/2357/no.11, Arthur Geary's Monastir Report to Mr. Sir Gerard Lowther, Ambassador in Istanbul, dated February 18, 1910 ; Skendi, Stawro, *The Albanian National awakening 1878-1920*, Princeton, New Jersey, 1967, P.143; Clayer, Nathalie, "Bektaşilik ve Arnavut Ulusçuluğu", *Toplumsal Tarih*, sayı:2, Şubat 1994, p.59.

³² Çelik, Bilgin, *İttihatçılar ve Arnavutlar*, Buke Yyn. İSt., 2004, s.286.

³³ Çelik, *ibid.*, 280-281.

³⁴ Ger Duijzings, "Religion and Politics of Albanianism, Naim Frasheri's Bektashis writings" , *Albanian Identities: Myth and Politics*, by Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers and Bernd j. Fischer ,editors, Indiana University Press, 2002, p.63-64.

³⁵ Doja, Albert, "The Politics of Religion in the Reconstruction of Identities, the Albanian Situation", *Critique of Anthropology*, vol.20(4), 2000, pp.421-438, p.432.

sending their children to the schools.³⁶ The fact that the conflicts about the alphabet had continued until 1912 through meetings, fractioning and propaganda, gives important information about the deepness of this division.

3. THE POLITICAL PROJECT OF ALBANIAN NATIONALIST LEADERS REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ALBANIAN NATION-STATE

Since the Albanian nationalist intellectuals were aware of the dangers of these deep divisions, they tried to keep their political aims and actions for establishing a nation-state within certain limits. Thus, their main aim was not the separation from the Ottoman Empire, but to obtain an autonomous status within the territories of the Ottoman Empire. Actually, the ideal position was to establish an independent nation-state in the nationalist atmosphere of the era. Hence, this ideal was resulted in the establishment of nation-states in Balkans one after another. However, the existent conditions were not letting Albanians to turn this ideal to reality yet. In fact, the attitudes of Westerns states in the Berlin Congress of 1878, the reform conditionality put forward for Macedonia, the irredentist tendencies of new nation- states in Balkans, were all proving that dismemberment would continue. It became apparent in the Berlin Congress of 1878 that Ottoman Empire could not resist this dismemberment by itself. Hence, Albanian nationalist intellectuals noticed that the armed struggle against the annexation of their territories was not sufficient and it was a necessity to determine a vision for the future of Albanians. Their political formulation for this vision was to create an autonomous province within the territories of the Ottoman Empire. The aim of this political project, which was introduced by Abdül Frasherî, was primarily to obtain recognition for the lands that Albanians were living.³⁷

Because, the transition from cultural-ethnic communities to a national society necessitated the existence of a particular land in the era of the establishment of modern nation states. Only through this way, a national identity, which overcomes the regional, communal, tribal, etc. identities could be created and Albanians could be united over a single national cause. From this aspect, the safest way was to stay as a part of the Ottoman Empire and struggle for their own independence within this political structure. Demanding independence could cause the risk of foreign domination over Albanian lands and the most accurate way to realize this aim within an autonomous Albania.³⁸ This project was actually compatible with the aims of the local Albanian leaders who were acting with different motivations due to the religious and cultural divisions among Albanians. An autonomous Albania, first of all, would lay a legitimate ground for the struggle against the foreign domination of Albanian lands and this was desired by all Albanians. Other than this, an autonomous Albania meant maintaining the commitment for Caliph Sultan to conservative Muslim Albanians, when it meant preserving the traditional privileges especially to North Albanian tribes. So, it is debatable to what extent the common support given by all Albanian leaders in the Debre Meeting of 1880 was compatible with the vision that was determined by the Albanian nationalist intellectuals. As a matter of fact, the divisions that would come onto surface about alphabet in 1908, and the divided image of Albanian rebellions that were serving to different

³⁶ PRO FO 195/2357/no.11, Arthur Geary's Monastir Report to Mr. Sir Gerard Lowther, Ambassador in Istanbul, dated February 18, 1910.

³⁷ Frasherî, Kristo, *The History of Albania*, Tirana, 1964, p.130-131; Puto, Arben and Pollo, Stefanaq, *The History of Albania, From its Origins to Present Day*, London, 1981, p.119.

³⁸ See for the British opinion on the subject PRO FO 195, Arthur B.Geary's Monastir Report to C.M.Marling, dated July 8, 1911.

causes in 1910, were giving clues about this. Above, we discussed the divisions about alphabet. An another example for it was the Malissori uprising of 1911. The Malissori uprising of 1911 was limited to a certain region in North of Albania.³⁹ On the other hand, this fragmentation was not only of tribal and regional level there was also differences between the Albanian leaders in terms of their political aims in certain places of Albanian lands.⁴⁰

By 1912, lack of an unified movement with a single-center has been the biggest obstacle to Albanian nationalist intellectuals. Indeed, on the eve of the Balkan Wars and after, there was a lot of attempts by the Albanian leaders to get a support from the outside in order to ensure the autonomy of Albania - for support Austria-Hungary was resorted to⁴¹ This showed fragmentation in the Albanian nationalist movement.⁴² Foreign support for the Albanians were calling to was Austria-Hungary. Because She always argued the territorial integrity of the Albanian lands against the Slavic expansionism. Although the Albanian leaders of different political projects applied to Austria-Hungary, their basic demands was Austria's support for the autonomy of the Albanian territory. So at the beginning of the Balkan Wars, independence of Albania had not as yet on the

³⁹PRO FO 195, Arthur B.Geary's Monastir Report to C.M.Marling, dated July 8, 1911 In this report, Greary stated that Albanian Committee had been preparing for a common rebellion however, the independent Malisor rebellion had ruined this plan. Mr. Geary continues his report as such "... the Albanian committee has only been seriously working for few short months and their organization was far from complete when the rebellion of the Malissores took them by surprise. They themselves would have favoured the postponement of the rising for at east another year, at the end of which period they would have hoped to unite the whole of Albania in a national rising with far greater of success than are likely to be realised by the intermittent efforts of isolated insurgents. Those Beys, with whom I came incontact, regretfully acknowledged the difficulty of combination in a countr, where each Bey clings tenaciously to his own dependcence and can only be induced with the greatest reluctance to submit to the leadership of one themselves. They would welcome with relief the arrival of a foreign leader, whose leadership they could accept without loss of dignity..."

⁴⁰ PRO FO 195/2407 no.3959/no.705 from British Foreign Office to Therapia, dated August 21, 1912 which was informing about the British Vice Consul's report at Uskup on the subject. British Vice Consul at Uskup informs that at Prishtina it become evident that there were considerable differences of opinion among the chiefs. "...There are three main policies;

1.The Entestist Group under: Hassan Bey, whose chief grievance was against the C.U.P. who having succeeded in dealing a blow at the Committee, now only ask for guarantees that Albania shall not be treated in the future as she has been in the past

2.The Autonomist Group: which centres round Rıza Bey aims at ultimate if not immediate autonomy

3. The Reactionary Group: under Issa Bolletin, which only ask fort he restoration of the good old times before the constitutional regime, when every Albanian was free to conduct his own blood feuds to kil lor to be killed in accordance with the traditions of the vendetta.

⁴¹ This was known by British Government that it was inevitable. PRO FO 195 / 2382 /no.42 Mr. Geary's Monastir Report to Sir Gerard A.Lowther, dated August 19, 1911

⁴² In 1911 Don Ndre Mjeda ve Don Luigj Bumçi the leading edge of Catholic clergy wanted Austrias's intervention complaining that Ottoman government has broken the agreement between the tribes and the government and violated the Kultusprotektorat; in January 1912, Hasan Prishtina asked for Austria's support for autonomous Albania; In January 1912, Fehim Zavalani ex-president of Albanian Club of Monastir asked Austrian Chief Consul to Salonica for Austria's diplomatic support. Zavalani made his conversation with the Chief Consul on behalf of himself and also nationalist Bektashi Şeyhs, Baba Abidin from Frasheri Tekke, Baba Hüseyin from Görice Melcan Tekke and Baba Ibrahim from Kolonya Kesarak; in March 1912 Pasquale Krasnici Catholic reverend asked Austria's support for autonomous Albania; in March 1912 Pasquale Krasnici Catholic reverend of the Firzovik Community asked Austiran-Hungarian Ambassador to Belgrade for Austria's support for the administrative autonomy for the Catholic Albanians under the control of a big power ; in summer 1912 Zef Seregi Archbishop of Shkoder applied to Austria-Hungary Chief Consul to Shkoder and wanted Austria to invade Albania or at least the regions of the Catholics on the Albanian lands.; in October 1912 Ekrem Vlora was sent to Vienna by the notables from Southern and Central Albania, to ask Austria's support for the unity of Albanian lands ; in November 1912, Musa Hamit Bey and Fehim Zavalani made an conversation with the Austria-Hungary ambassador to Yanya and asked Austria's support for the Albanians stating that they were trying to make a coordination between the Southern and Northern part of the Albania and that Tosks were planning to ask for protection of the Monarchy in the event of seperation of Roumelian territory from the Ottoman Empire. ; in November 1912 Albanian delegates in Draç applied Austria to ask assurance for Albanian's overall autonomy within the Ottoman state and also they asked for recognition of Albanian indepence if it becomes impossible to manage the Albanian territories of the Ottoman Empire, Sönmez İşlet, İbid, 211-213.

agenda of the Albanian leaders. The developments during the Balkan wars, however will put the issue on the agenda of the Albanians. When Ismail Kemal who was one of the Albanian leaders asked for Austria's support, declared Albanian independence in the town of Vlora on 28 November 1912, many of the Albanians probably did not even know about it. This initiative was in fact not compatible with the political projects of the Albanian nationalist leaders for the development of the national struggle in a autonomous Albania in the form of a more secure long-term. But this project never been able to bring all Albanians together around a joint leadership. When the Albanians faced the problem of survivevibility with the outbreak of Balkan Wars İsmail Kemal has taken the initiative to declare the independence. But even this did not eliminate the differences of opinion among the Albanians. In fact, after the proclamation of indepence, the goverment formed by Ismail Kemal, faced opposition from sections of various Albanians soon. The opponents of the new regime such as Essad Pasha Toptani and the pro-Ottomans resisted İsmail Kemal.⁴³

On the other hand, the response of Ottoman elites to this political project of Albanian nationalist intellectuals was actually negative. Because from the most reformists to the most liberal ones, the main aim of Ottoman elites was to prevent the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. This protective approach, which is taking the Ottoman Empire as a reference point, was also marked the modernization/westernization attempts of the Ottoman elites. While the Ottoman reformists were making reforms based on the West, the most important problem they faced was the conception of nation in the West. Because of this reason, Ottoman reformism started with *Tanzimat*, was realized by the Ottomanizm ideology, which was also coined in that period, for serving the protection of the territorial unity of the Ottoman Empire. Thus, the Ottoman reformism had a character of aiming the salvation of the state without responding the national demands. However, it could not prevent the dismemberment of the empire. The rising autonomy demands among Albanians after the Berlin Agreement of 1878 could not find a positive response under the autocratic and Pan-islamist policies of II. Abdülhamid. Hence, the Albanian nationalist intellectuals gave great support to *Young Turk* movement, which was developed against the regime of II. Abdülhamid. On the other hand Abdülhamid II supported the League of Prizren as long as it was in line with the Ottoman State's domestic and foreign policies. That meant since the lands that Albanians struggled for were a part of the Ottoman Empire, the Albanian resistance was legitimate as far as Abdulhamid II was concerned.⁴⁴ The success of this resistance in preventing the loss of the lands in question was in concordance with the interests of the Ottoman State and such a success could relieve the Ottoman State from possible liabilities against signatory countries. Furthermore, the fact that a great majority of the Albanians were Muslim created suitable grounds for Abdülhamid II for controlling this resistance movement. In the isolated state, Islam had become the strongest weapon for Abdülhamid II in both domestic and foreign politics. From this point of view, the mainly Muslim Albanians were the stronghold of Ottoman presence in Roumelia lands.⁴⁵ Abdülhamid II realized that the transformation of the Prizren League into a national movement would dangerously lead to the turning of Albanian attention to the domestic rule of their country. To prevent this from happening, he opted to give a religious form to this League through the efforts of Muslim Albanian clergymen in the region. The efforts of Abdülhamid II were largely successful

⁴³ Jelavic, *İbid.* c.2, p.108.

⁴⁴ Bozbor, Nuray, 'The Policy of Abdulhamid II Regarding the Prizren League', *Turkish Review of Balkan Studies*, Annual 2006, no. 11, İstanbul, p. 46.

⁴⁵ Bozbor, Nuray, 'The Policy of Abdulhamid II Regarding.....', p. 46.

and this caused a division within the League. Taking advantage of this division within the League Abdülhamid II, suppressed the nationalist activities and established a central authority in the region. Despite the various political discrepancies it contained, the League of Prizren holds an important place in Albanian history as a movement that gathered and organized the Albanians under a single cause. Although this movement strong in terms of being a resistance force for the defense of the Albanian lands against invading countries, it was unable to become a politically strong and stable movement that could establish its own political future.⁴⁶

Albanians hoped to gain the political rights they desired under the constitutional monarchy rule. However, this time they had to face the centralist policies of the Committee of Union and Progress, which was emphasizing the Turkism. The autonomy demands of Albanians did not find any positive response under the centralist policies of the Committee of Union and Progress rule, which were aiming the salvation of the Ottoman Empire.

The Young *Turk* Revolution of 1908 in almost all respects failed to fulfill what it promised. The promised democracy and decentralization and also racial-harmony and equality and participation in the state by all ethnic groups were abandoned when *Young Turk* leaders realized that this compromised security. The authoritarian and centralized nature of the government and its attempt to impose a single identity on everyone from short after the promulgation of the Contitution⁴⁷ to the end⁴⁸ led to liberal oppositon of many diverse groups among which the Albanians saw their future as closely linked with a strengthened, more modern Empire. At the begining of the Second Constitutional Period, it seems that there was a collaboration between the Committe of Union and Progress (C.U.P.) and the Albanians. In fact, both sides did not trust each other. C.U.P. gave his efforts to control the Albanian clubs which were opened in İstanbul and Albanian cities as well under the liberal arrangements of the 1908 Constitution. For this aim C.U.P. established Ottoman Union Committees in Albanian cities and a Mixed Commission for Kosova to ensure Albanians' commitments to the C.U.P. and the Constitution. The members of these establishments were consisting of Albanians and the members of C.U.P. The Albanian intellectuals set up secret committees to get rid of control of the C.U.P. Another indicator of this distrust became evident during the general elections of 1908. In their polling district, Albanians did not support the C.U.P.'s candidates and sent their candidates to the Parliament. The decentralisation trends among the Albanian deputies in the parliament become evident soon when they were members of the newly established liberal parties. This has increased distrust of the C.U.P. to the Albanians. After the suppression of the counter- revolutionary movement against the C.U.P. government on March 31, 1909, the C.U.P. goverment made legal arrangements to restrict all constitutional freedoms. All the Albanian associations and clubs were closed by Law on

⁴⁶ Bozbor, 'The Policy of Abdulhamid....', p.66.

⁴⁷ see for the British opion on the subject, PRO FO 195/ 2330 / no.135 / Mr. Harry Lambs' Selanik Report to Gerard Lowther, dated October 25, 1909.

⁴⁸ PRO FO 195 / 2358 / no.38, Confidential, Arthur B Geary's Report to Sir Gerard A.Lowther dated August 28, 1910, This report informing about a speech made at Salnocia by Talat Bey to the members of the local C.U.P assembled in secret meeting. He says "...Ghaiaurs (non-muslims) themselves, who stubbornly resist every attempt to ottomanize them, present an impenetrable barrier to the establishment of real equality. We have made unsuccessful attempts to convert the Ghaiaur into a loyal Osmanli and all such efforts must inevitably fail, as long as the small independent states in the Balkan Peninsula remain in a position to propagate ideas of speratism among the inhabitants of Macedonia. There can therefore be no question of equality, until we have succeeded in our tas of Ottomanizing the Empire- a long and laborious task, in which I venture to predict that we shall at length succeed after we have at last put an end to the agitation an propaganda of the Balkan States'.

Associations. Disarmament of the Albanians by the Law on the Bands, and very heavy penalties against those who rejected was another legal arrangement. Again, all Albanian newspapers closed down by the Law of Press. . The main objective of the C.U.P. in making these regulations was simply to get the entire power into their hands in order to act with severity against the different nations, especially Albanians. On the other hand, besides these legal arrangements the requirements of the centralized policy, regular census, taxation and recruitment has been the main reason for the Albanian rebellion in the following years.⁴⁹

Committee of Union and Progress, sometimes resort to violence in order to eliminate this opposition⁵⁰ and sometimes has chosen to increase the conflict between Albanians by using the religious, regional and tribal division among them for her own benefit. First example of this has been in the alphabet issue. The divisions that emerged among Albanians in Albanian alphabet in Manastir Congress of 1908 has given opportunity necessary for the Union and Progress Party. First, C.U.P. surreptitiously supported the pro-Albanian Arab alphabet, then in 1910 has given order for the use of the Arab alphabet. Despite all the demands of the pro-Albanian Latin alphabet, C.U.P. exhibiting an uncompromising attitude in this respect deepened the divide between Albanians.

On the other hand, which caused widespread uprising among Albanians, disarmament, regular taxation, compulsory military applications, etc. taking military measures against the Albanian revolts, C.U.P. followed a policy of uncompromising on this issue for a long time. When C.U.P. was forced to make concessions, it made sure to prevent the unification Albanians. C.U.P. took the advantage of fragmented structure of the Albanian revolt devoid of a single leadership. In 1911, after the Malissor uprising, they were given wide privileges but their demands autonomy for Albanian territory has been rejected by C.U.P. On the other hand, giving a more limited privileges for the Southern Albanians who want the same privileges, C.U.P. has chosen to deepen the divide between Albanians. However, these concessions were not met for both. This has led to the aggravation of rebellions in 1912. However, the Committee of Union and Progress, making use of division among Albanians, continued to resort to workarounds like to reconcile with them and give them certain concessions limited to the insurgent groups. When the Albanian rebellion broke out in Kosova during the 1912 general elections, C.U.P. has chosen the way to insurgency by military means.⁵¹

The underlying cause of inconsistent policies of C.U.P. was to ensure the divide between Albanians and has been a political insistence on not to compromise. In fact, when the outbreak of the Balkan Wars in 1912, the Union and Progress had no clear policy on the Albanian issue. This has been a good indicator of C.U.P.'s uncompromising stance.

CONCLUSION

As a result, in the emergence and development of Albanian nationalism and the establishment of an independent Albanian state, the problem of survivability has emerged as an

⁴⁹ Malcolm, Noel, Kosova, Sabah Yyn. , İstanbul, 1998.

⁵⁰ PRO FO 195/2329/no.43 Mr.H.E. Satow's Uskub Report to H.Lamb British Consul General to Salonica, dated July 16, 1909. Mr. Satow express his opinion on the subject as "...The civilized isolated military expeditions will only serve to exasperate the Albanians against the new regime and may lead the growth of a serious national movement which is owing to tribal jealousies at present absent."

⁵¹ Malcolm, *ibid.* , p. 303-305.

important determinant of the problem. The main reason for this was the aggressive characteristic of ethnic nationalism developed in the Balkans on the irrational basis. This situation has highlighted the struggle of regional based against the foreign invasion. Regional or tribal ties were predominantly decisive in this struggle.

Albanian nationalist leaders as the most conscious cadres of the movement have spent their efforts to create a national consciousness from these regional or tribal ones. As can be seen in every nationalist movement, this was a necessary step for the transition of regional or tribal identity, the national identity. On the other hand, the cultural and ethnic nature of the Balkan nationalism has revealed the necessity for clarification of the Albanians' authenticity. This was necessary to realize two objectives; to transcend the tribal, regional and religious divisions among the Albanians and gather them around a common identity and also to demonstrate the diversity of other Balkan nations from Albanians. Thus, Albanian language has been an important cultural element that serve both goals in the construction of national identity. This national identity could find its concrete expression in a territory with defined boundaries. The Albanian nationalist leaders claimed an autonomous status for the Albanian territory as a first step in their political projects of nation-state building. Albanian leaders of different religious, tribal and regional identities, albeit for different purposes specified extended their support to this project. However, both the conflicting interests of the great powers and uncompromising attitude of the Ottoman government would not allow the realization of this project. Under the conditions brought by the Balkan war of 1912, independence for the Albanians has become the only option. The traumatic effect created by Albanian land fragmentation and sharing of among the different nation states would lead to development of the Albanian national identity along with a serious survival problems, both in independent Albanian nation-state and among the Albanians within the different boundaries of the nation –states up to the present.

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