



Prof. Ass. Dr.
Fitim RIFATI

Institute of History "Ali Hadri" - Prishtina
Rruga "Çlirimi" nr.25, Lagja e Spitalit nr.3,
10 000, Prishtina, Republic of Kosovo
fitim_rifati@hotmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3413-7681>

Eser Geçmiş / Article Past:

Başvuruda bulundu.
Applied
10/06/2020

Kabul edildi.
Accepted
20/06/2020

Araştırma Makalesi

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21551/jhf.750922>

Research Paper

Orjinal Makale / Original Paper

The Visit of Albanian Homage Delegation in Vienna (April 1917)

Arnavut Heyetinin Viyana Başsağlığı Ziyareti (Nisan 1917)

Abstract

The Albanian-Austro-Hungarian political relations in the years of World War I are an important element for the economic, social, cultural and educational situation of the Albanians in Southeast Europe. The Austro-Hungarian Empire, as one of the most interested in the geography and the Albanian issue, especially at the beginning of the 20th century, in accordance with its geopolitical and geostrategic interests, aimed at national, cultural, educational and state consolidation of Albanians. In this context, to avoid further territorial fragmentation and to avoid the constant danger posed by neighboring Balkan monarchies, the Albanians welcomed the constructive attitude of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In this context, the visit of the Albanians to Vienna was an appropriate occasion to present to the highest state authorities, the aspirations and position on the course of the First World War and on the Austro-Hungarian administration in the Albanian areas. In the documents and press of the time, the visit and treatment of Albanian personalities is described as a delegation of prominent notables (nobles, leaders, aristocrats), who in the second half of 1917, from April 16th-23rd, stayed at Vienna at the invitation of the Emperor of Austria-Hungary, Charles I.

Key words: Vienna, Albanian, delegation, Charles I, loyalty, self-administration

Öz

Arnavutlar'ın Avusturya-Macaristan İmparatorluğu ile siyasi ilişkileri ekonomik, sosyal kültürel ve eğitimsel durumları için önemli bir unsurdur. Özellikle, Avusturya – Macaristan yüzyılın başındaki Arnavut coğrafyası ve Arnavut sorunu için en çok

ATIF: RIFATI Fitim, "Arnavut Heyetinin Viyana Başsağlığı Ziyareti (Nisan 1917)", **Tarih ve Gelecek Dergisi**, 6/2 (Haziran 2020), s. (459-469)

CITE: RIFATI Fitim, "The Visit of Albanian Homage Delegation in Vienna (April 1917)", **Journal of History and Future**, 6/2 (June 2020), pp. (459-469)

ilgilenen güçlerden biri olup, kendi ceostratejik çıkarları doğrultusunda Arnavutlar'ın ulusal, kültürel, eğitimsel ve devletleşme konsolidasyonunu amaçlamıştır. Bu bağlamda Avusturya-Macaristan İmparatorluğu'nun, Arnavut topraklarının parçalanma emellerine ve diğer komşu Balkan ülkelerinden gelen tehditlerine karşı koruyucu tutumundan dolayı Arnavutlar tarafından takdir edildi. Böylece Birinci Dünya savaşının gerçekleri ve Arnavutluk topraklarındaki Avusturya-Macaristan İmparatorluğunun konumu hakkındaki düşüncelerini ifade etme açısından Arnavut Heyeti'nin 1917 yılında ki Viyana ziyareti önemli bir fırsattı. Arnavut heyeti 16-23 Nisan tarihleri arasında Avusturya-Macaristan İmparatoru I. Karl'ın misafiri olarak Viyana'da bulundular. Arnavut heyeti dönemin resmi belgelerinde ve gazetelerde Arnavut seçkinleri (notable) heyeti olarak kayd edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeleri: Viyana Ziyareti, Arnavutlar, Heyet, I. Karl, Güven, Özerklik

On November 21st, 1916, the Emperor of Austria-Hungary, Franz Joseph I, died. The next day, the Emperor was succeeded by his nephew, Charles I. Albanian administrative workers, Muslim and Christian religious leaders and prominent Albanian personalities expressed condolences to Austro-Hungarian military and administrative leaders in Albania and other Albanian areas under Austro-Hungarian occupation and administration (Serbia, Montenegro). In the telegrams and visits to the administrative authorities, the Albanians expressed their gratitude for the kindness of the late Emperor and offered readiness for cooperation with the succeeding Emperor, Charles I.¹

On the same day, the press reported that at the funeral of Franz Joseph I, to be organized in November 30th, 1916, an Albanian delegation of political and popular personalities, such as Bajram Curri, Abdi Toptani, Filip Noga and others, would also attend.² In the meantime, on April 1st and 2nd, as a sign of comfort and solidarity, in the city of Gjakova, as well as in other centers, the markets were closed and prayer ceremonies were held in mosques and churches. The Austro-Hungarian administrative authorities expressed their gratitude for Gjakova's people solidarization and for the honor shown to the figure of Franz Joseph I.³ With the death of the Emperor, the Albanian elite considered it to be proper to travel to Vienna to pay homage to the Austro-Hungarian state. This moment was described as an honorary visit of the Albanians to Emperor Charles I and a visit of homage to the tomb of Emperor Franz Joseph I.

In the spring of 1917, homage delegations, to express special honors, as a token of gratitude to the Austro-Hungarian Emperor Charles I, were also organized by other countries under Austria-Hungary. All Austro-Hungarian state institutions and heads of state in Vienna and Austria-Hungary were mobilized and engaged for their reception. In March 1917, the Austro-Hungarian opinion was made public that such a delegation would be leaving

1 Cetinjer Zeitung, "Peja.", Cetinje, 3. Dezember 1916, p.2.

2 Leo Freundlich, "Eine albanische Abordnung beim Leichenbegängnis des Kaisers", *Die Albanische Korrespondenz*, 28. November 1916, p.45.

3 *Posta e Shqypniës*, "Gjakova n'dekë t'Nelt Madhniës s'Tii Franc Jozefit I", Shkoder, 20 Dhetuer 1916, p.4.

from Bosnia and Herzegovina, under the chairmanship of the country's head, Sarkotic. Meanwhile, on April 8th, 1917, based on the programmatic experience of this delegation, the Austro-Hungarian officer, Wisner, was sent to Sarajevo in advance to learn in detail about the organization and reception of the delegation in Vienna, so that the experience would also serve the Albanian delegation. In this context, according to the telegram of the Austro-Hungarian Consul in Shkodra, August Ritter von Kral, it was previously thought that the Albanian delegation, besides paying homage to Emperor Charles I, would also pay a visit to the Foreign Ministry, Archduke Max, the Ministry of War, the Army Headquarters, the Mayor of Vienna, etc.⁴

In this context, daily stays in Sarajevo and Budapest were also planned for respectively nine hours. The Army Command in Baden required more detailed information to get ready and take appropriate military and civilian measures that would enable caution to receive and welcome the Albanian delegation. In addition, readiness was expressed for the Albanian delegation to be received from the military and administrative authorities, while in Budapest the prime minister, the Ministry of Defense, the military command and municipal authorities. In the end, the Army Chief Commander demanded preliminary confirmation that visits to the said centers would take place.⁵

On April 9th, 1917, the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, Ottokar Theobald Czernin, at the request of the administration of the Emperor Charles I's cabinet⁶, asked the Austro-Hungarian Consul General in Shkodra, A. Kral, to send as soon as possible, via telegraph, the list of participants of the Albanian delegation of homage in Vienna.⁷ The next day, April 10th, 1917, the Austro-Hungarian consul from Shkodra sent to the Foreign Ministry in Vienna a list of names and surnames of 35 representatives of Albanian counties, districts and provinces under Austro-Hungarian occupation and administration, with biographical data on fragmentary form for each of them. The Albanian delegates for Shkodra and its surroundings were: Musa Efendi Juka (mayor, Muslim), Kol Ujka (merchant, Catholic), Hasan Bekteshi (Catholic); for Malësia (Catholic Highland Tribes): Vat Marashi (Shkreli's Bayraktar, Catholic), Gjelosh Gjoka (Vojvod of Kastrati, Catholic), Abdi Bej Kol Shala (Muslim); for Postriba: Hasan Ahmeti (vojvoda); for Lezha: Mano Beu of Mehmet Beu (Muslim), Ded Çoku (notable of Kelmendi - Bregmatje, Catholic); for Puka and Mirdita: Kapedan Ndue Gjoni of Oroshi (Catholic), Zef Ndoci (Vojvoda of Spaç, Catholic), Zejnel Aga (Vojvod of Iballa, Muslim); for Mati and Kruja: Muharrem Pengili (naib-mufti of Kruja, Muslim), Xhafer Taga⁸ (Muslim), Ahmet Bej Zogolli of Mati (Muslim); for the district of Tirana: Musa Maçi⁹ (notable, Muslim), Xhelal Bej Toptani

4 *Haus - Hof und Staats Archiv, Politisches Archiv Albanien (HHSStA, PA, A)*, Wien (hereinafter: AIHT), Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministry Funds for 1917, preserved in the Archives of the Institute of History in Tirana, Republic of Albania, Vj.27-1-127, Telegram of the Austro-Hungarian Consul in Shkodra, Kral, sent to MFA in Vienna, April 8, 1917.

5 *AIHT*, Vj.27-1-128, Telephone Telegram of Storck from Baden, April 19, 1917.

6 *Ibid*, Vj.27-3-301, Czernin's encoded telegram from Vienna to Kral in Shkodra, April 11, 1917.

7 *Ibid*, Vj.27-1-131, Czernin's encoded telegram from Vienna to Kral in Shkodra, April 9, 1917.

8 On April 12th 1917, at the request of Circuit-Commander IV, Xhafer Taga joined the Albanian delegation of tributes. See more: *AIHT*, Vj.27-3-305, Telegram of Kral from Shkodra, April 13, 1917.

9 The Austro-Hungarian Consul General in Shkodra, A. Kral, had raised little doubt about the integrity

(Muslim); for the district of Durrës: Izedin Beshiri (Muslim), Monsignor Nikollë Kaçorri (city priest, Catholic); for the Kavaja district: Qazim Bej (mayor, Muslim), Shasivar Bej (notable, Muslim); for the district of Elbasan: Irfan Bej Ohri (grandson of Iliaz Pasha Dibra and Aqif Pasha Elbasani, Muslim), Lef Nosi (former minister, Orthodox); for the districts of Berat and Skrapar: Sami Bej Vrioni (latifondist, Muslim), Mehmed Esadi (former Mufti, Muslim), Dhimitër Lavda (notable, Orthodox); for the district of Lushnja: Ahmed Bej Resuli (notable, Muslim), Emin Vokopola (notable, Muslim); for the district of Fier: Kahreman bej Vrioni (landowner, Muslim); for the district of Zhur and Peshkopi: Elez Isufi (bayraktar, Muslim), Salih Spahia (sub-prefect of Luma, Muslim); for the province of Krasniqi: Hysni Bej Curri (sub-prefect, notable, Muslim), Salih Mani (notable, Muslim); for Zadrima: Llesh Miloti (Catholic); for Kosovo: Hasan Bej Prishtina.¹⁰ Qemal Bej from Elbasan and Leon Hoxha from Fier were invited to be part of this delegation, but for health reasons they were forced to decline the invitation.¹¹

It should be noted that the highest Austro-Hungarian imperial, military, political and diplomatic organs, which previously reviewed the request of the most prominent Albanian of the time, Hasan Prishtina, to join the Albanian delegation of tributes. At the last minute, at the request of the Army Chief in Baden to the Foreign Minister O. Th. Czernin, on April 8th, 1917¹², the proposal to join the Albanian delegation was approved. On April 14th, 1917, according to the announcement that the Commander-in-Chief of Baden received from the General Military Government in Belgrade, “*Hasan Prishtina was invited by Commander of the XIX Corps*”, while in Budapest he would join the Albanian delegation.¹³

Thus, among the Albanian delegation of tributes were Albanian Muslims, Catholics, popular leaders, politicians, priests, imams, beys, aghas, presidents, former ministers and administrative officials of all Albanian cities and provinces under Austro-Hungarian occupation and administration. Not only did they come from influential families in their district, they were also high-ranking patriots who enjoyed trust, authority and consideration in the Austro-Hungarian administrative bodies. Some of them were opponents of the Ottoman rule, fighters against the Serbian and Montenegrin army during 1912-1916, supporters of Prince Wilhelm Wied I, opponents and fighters of the reactionary forces and of Esat Toptani; political supporters of Austria-Hungary, whose authorities, some of them decorated with imperial medals of merit, etc. All leaders were considered prominent personalities and had a great influence on the Albanian population.

The Infantry General, at the same time the Commander of the XIX Corps in Albania, Ignaz Trollmann, who invited representatives of the Albanian delegation, taking the example of the Bosnia and Herzegovina delegation under Sarkotic’s leadership, decided

and credibility of Musa Maçi, whom the districts sources charged with incarceration during Ottoman rule, but the allegations were unconfirmed. He feared that M. Maçi could cause an incident in Vienna, therefore he urged the relevant authorities to take care of him. However, he was convinced that M. Maçi was a very influential person and enjoyed the confidence of the population of Tirana and its surroundings. See more: *AIHT*, Vj.27-3-322, Private Letter of Consul Kral to Vice-Consul Mayerhauser, April 2, 1917.

10 *Ibid*, Vj.27-2-299, List of the Albanian delegation of tributes, Shkodra, April 10, 1917.

11 *Ibid*, Vj.27-3-304, Storck’s encoded telegram from Baden, April 12, 1917.

12 *Ibid*, Vj.27-1-130, Storck’s telegram from Baden to Czernin in Vienna, April 8, 1917.

13 *Ibid*, Vj.27-3-306, Storck’s cited Telegram from Baden, April 14, 1917.

to lead and chair the Albanian delegation as a spokesperson in Vienna. He wanted the Albanian delegation under his leadership to be accompanied by his personal adjutant, Lieutenant Colonel Myrdacz.¹⁴ The Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister O. Th. Czernin, replied positively to this request, through a telegram sent to Wilhelm Ritter von Storck at the Army Commander in Baden, saying that there was no objection to Ignaz Trollmann leading the Albanian delegation of tributes.¹⁵

On April 14th, 1917, the Albanian delegation of tributes, headed by I. Trollmann, departed from Shkodra on Saturday and was scheduled to arrive in Vienna on Monday or Tuesday evening.¹⁶ At noon on April 14th, 1917, the delegation passed to Cetinje and was received by Major-General Petkovic, officers and officials in front of the building of the General Military Government of Montenegro. According to the impressions of the administrative officials in Cetinje, the characteristic of most of the members of the delegation was the national dress. After being received by authorities, the delegation continued on its way to Vienna.¹⁷ The next day, April 15th, 1917, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, O. Th. Czernin, through a telegram, informed the Army Command in Baden that, according to a telephone announcement by the Chancellor of the Emperor Charles I's cabinet, the audience of the Albanian homage delegation would be held on Friday, April 20th, 1917, at the Imperial Palace in Hofburg of Vienna.¹⁸ The homage delegation arrived in Vienna on the evening of April 16th, 1917. It was hosted by the Chief of General Staff, Ernsst Ritter von Gross, Captain Stojakovic, Consul von Rudnay, imperial journalist Leo Freundlich, and Professor Kolë Rrota. A large number of automobiles from Central Railway Station took delegates to hotels for accommodation.¹⁹

The record office of the General Staff in Vienna was ordered to take care of the accommodation and food of the Albanian delegation. It prepared a few cars that would transport and help the delegation members move, while they were in Vienna. Austro-Hungarian officers were also at their disposal. In this context, the imperial palace was informed in detail of all matters pertaining to the Albanian delegation before it reached the audience organized at the Emperor Charles I complex.²⁰

However, one concern raised by the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministry had to do with the length of time and the civilian and military institutions that the Albanian delegation would visit. The Minister O. Th. Czernin suggested that after the visit of Emperor Charles I, the delegation's visit to military and civilian institutions would be limited to a few offices. He preferred a short stay in Vienna, no speeches by delegation members, no visits to non-

14 *Ibid*, Vj.27-1-127, Telegram of Austro-Hungarian Consul in Shkodra, Kral, sent to MFA in Vienna, April 8, 1917. In addition to Lieutenant Colonel Myrdacz, Captain Wimmer, Lieutenant Colonel Woodspach and Lieutenant Vukic were added to his escort. See: Leo Freundlich, "Die albanische Huldigungsdeputation in Wien", *Die Albanische Korrespondenz*, 17. April 1917, p.50.

15 *Ibid*, Vj.27-1-129, Czernin's encoded telegram sent to von Storck in Baden, April 8, 1917.

16 *Ibid*, Vj.27-3-307, Telegram of Kral from Shkodra, April 14, 1917.

17 *Cetinjer Zeitung*, "Die albanische Huldigungsdeputation in Cetinje.", Cetinje, 15. April 1917, p.3.

18 *AIHT*, Vj.27-3-309, Czernin's coded telegram from Vienna to Storck in Baden, April 15, 1917.

19 Leo Freundlich, "Die albanische Huldigungsdeputation in Wien", *Die Albanische Korrespondenz*, 17. April 1917, p.50; *Vëllazënija*, "Të mbriritunit e deputacionit shqipëtar në Vjenë", Vjenë, 28 prill 1917, p.1.

20 *Ibid*, Vj.27-3-308, Telephone telegram of Arz to Storck, Baden, April 15, 1917.

state offices and no participation by the Viennese press, due to the sensitivity and delicacy of the Albanian issue. It was suggested that such measures would also apply during the delegation's eventual visit to Budapest.²¹ Austro-Hungarian diplomacy was concerned about the sensitivity and delicacy of the Albanian problem, due to reactions it might receive from Austro-Hungarian military administrative bodies in Serbia, Montenegro and the Serbian government in exile, if publicly declared the objective of a united and autonomous Albania.²²

On April 17th, 1917, the Albanian delegation paid a visit to the Chamber of the Imperial Treasury, where professors Gjergj Pekmezi and Kolë Rrota, who lived and worked in Vienna, took care of the necessary explanations in Albanian language. Later, Albanian leaders visited the Museum of Art History, where the sword and helmet of Gjergj Kastrioti - Skanderbeg, which were preserved in the museum, were of great interest. The same day, they also visited the imperial family's central cemetery. The delegation also visited the tomb of the late Emperor, Franz Joseph I, on whose casket he laid a wreath and expressed gratitude for his dedication to the Albanians and their problems.²³

On April 18th, 1917, the audience of the Albanian delegation was solemnly welcomed by the Austro-Hungarian Emperor, Charles I, at the Imperial Palace in Hofburg. In this context, Austro-Hungarian diplomacy took care in advance of drafting the speech to be delivered by the Albanian delegation headed by I. Trollmann, to the audience of Emperor Charles I. In this panel, they also prepared the concept of the Emperor's response speech upon completion of I. Trollmann's speech on behalf of the Albanian delegation. The content of the speech of the Albanian delegation, which was read by I. Trollmann, expressed deep appreciation for the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which had strongly supported Albania and the fate of the Albanians, especially in the last five years. Among other things, the concept of the Albanian delegation's speech stated: "*Guided by the spirit of paternal benevolence and traditional sympathy for Albanians, Austria-Hungary has always supported open and without interest the Albanian nation, during the most dangerous and critical times for the country (Albania, F. R.)*". The speech excluded and criticized other states of the Great Powers, which had hindered the all-out efforts of the Austro-Hungarian state and the desire of Albanians to join other peoples within Austria-Hungary. Finally, on behalf of all Albanian territories, the delegation expressed its loyalty to Emperor Charles I and the Austro-Hungarian state.²⁴

The concept of the Emperor's response expressed his appreciation for the loyalty, support and gratitude of the Albanian delegation to the Austro-Hungarian state, its institutions and administration in the Albanian territories. Among other things, in the content of his speech, the Albanian delegation was promised that, "*on the basis of the full*

21 *Ibid*, Vj.27-1-133, Czernin's encoded telegram from Vienna to Storeck in Baden and Kral in Shkodra, 9 April 1917.

22 *Kosovo State Archives Agency (KSAA)*, Fund: Јован Јовановић - Пижон, кутиа нр.9, Министарство Инострани Дела, Пов.А.Н.374, Краљ. Српском Посланству Лондон, Крф, 10 октобра 1917.

23 Leo Freundlich, "Die albanische Huldigungsdeputation in Wien", *Die Albanische Korrespondenz*, 17-18. April 1917, p.50-51.

24 *AIHT*, Vj.27-1-134, Concepts of the Speech of the Albanian Delegation and His Majesty's Response, Vienna, April 10, 1917.

equality of all tribes and confessions and respecting national features, language, as well as respect for the old rights and customs of the nation to create the prerequisites for the future self-government of the country". So, the focus of Emperor Charles I's speech, was to develop the necessary steps in the service of achieving Albania's autonomy under Austria-Hungary, which meant, at that time Albanians were not at the optimal developmental stage for an autonomous political status.²⁵ The contents of these speeches, which were read to the audience, had been agreed by the Military Command in Baden, which had termed them definitive speeches, where the concept of the Albanian delegation was transmitted to its chairman, I. Trollmann, as soon as he arrived in Vienna.²⁶ Thus, the two speeches, which had been prepared the day before, were thoroughly read on the occasion of the organization of the audience of the Albanian delegation before Emperor Charles I.²⁷

Speeches given to the audience highlighted three issues relevant to further Albanian-Austro-Hungarian relations in the context of the First World War. *First*, the Albanians expressed full loyalty to the Austro-Hungarian Empire and its administrative authorities in Albania. *Second*, the Austro-Hungarian state declared its position on an Albanian political perspective within Austria-Hungary. *Third*, the content of both speeches did not mention the independence of Albania and the unification of the ethnic Albanian areas into a single state. Despite the circumstances of the war, this constituted a stagnation in Albanian and Austro-Hungarian politics over the issue and political status of Albanians.

According to the protocol, the meeting with Emperor Charles I and Empress Zita lasted 45 minutes. Among other things, Albanian delegation member Xhelal Toptani donated a three-year-old princess, Adelheide, an Albanian national costume embroidered with gold thread, handmade by Albanian embroiderers. Afterwards, the delegation met with the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, O. Th. Czernin, with Archduke Max and the Mayor of Vienna, dr. Richard Weiskirchner.²⁸ He was welcomed by senior officials as well, from the Ministry of War and the Naval Section, where Hasan Prishtina in a French speech thanked Navy Admiral Rodler for the warm and friendly reception.²⁹ The head of the delegation, I. Trollmann, held a meeting in the dormitory with Albanian students in Vienna. He suggested Albanian students to study agriculture in the future of their education, because it was of great importance for the economic development of Albania.³⁰ The Albanian delegation created a special feeling and left a deep impression on the public and the citizens of Vienna,

25 *Ibid.*

26 *Ibid.*, Vj.27-3-308, Telephone telegram of Arz to Storck, Baden, April 15, 1917.

27 *Neu Freie Presse*, "Die albanesiiche Deputation in Audienz beim Kaiser und bei der Kaiserin.", Wien, 19. April 1917, p.5; *Cetinjer Zeitung*, "Die albanische Huldigungsdeputation.", Cetinje, 22. April 1917, p.3.

28 Leo Freundlich, "Die albanische Huldigungsdeputation in Wien", *Die Albanische Korrespondenz*, 17-18. April 1917, p.51; *Neu Freie Presse*, "Die albanesiiche Deputation in Audienz beim Kaiser und bei der Kaiserin.", Wien, 19. April 1917, p.5; *Cetinjer Zeitung*, "Die albanische Huldigungsdeputation.", Cetinje, 22. April 1917, p.3; *Vëllazënija*, "Pritja e delegacionit shqiptar në hotel "Meissl & Schadn"", Vjenë, 28 prill 1917, p.2; Pjetër Logoreci, "Prijësat shqiptarë në Vjenë e 1917", *Rilindasi*, Newspaper supplement *Shqiptarja*, Tiranë, 12 May 2013, p.18.

29 *Neu Freie Presse*, "Die albanesiiche Huldigungsdeputation in Wien.", Wien, 21. April 1917, p.7; *Cetinjer Zeitung*, "Die albanische Huldigungsdeputation.", Cetinje, 22. April 1917, p.3.

30 Leo Freundlich, "Die albanische Huldigungsdeputation in Wien", *Die Albanische Korrespondenz*, 17-18. April 1917, p.51.

who were amazed by their appearance and traditional national dressing.³¹

On the evening of April 20th, 1917, in a restaurant “Meissl & Schadh”, a farewell dinner was held, in which I. Trollmann expressed the positive impressions of all the members of the Albanian delegation, for the warm welcome especially organized by Emperor Charles I and Archduke Max. Among other things, I. Trollmann expressed satisfaction with the harmony of the Albanian leaders of all regions, because understanding and healthy relations between them were very necessary “*for the future of the Albanian people*”. Seeking the support of Albanians for his work in Albania, I. Trollmann concluded his speech with the acclaim in Albanian: “*Long live the future of the Albanian people!*”, “*Long live Albania!*”. From the Albanian representatives, Hasan Prishtina thanked General I. Trollmann with the most grateful and friendly feelings and as a loving personality for the Albanian people, who had led the Austro-Hungarian army in its victory over the Albanian enemies. Also, on behalf of all the Albanian delegates, Monsignor Nikollë Kaçorri expressed his gratitude for the reception organized by all the leaders and institutions in Vienna, promising continued support to General I. Trollmann in Albania.³² Accordingly, part of the delegation left Vienna on April 21st, 1917, while the rest under I. Trollmann remained in Vienna until April 23rd, 1917.³³

In general, the Albanian delegation paid homage to the highest Austro-Hungarian imperial, political, diplomatic, military, social, cultural and educational authorities, being promised that the Austro-Hungarian state was committed to the issue of Albanian aspirations and giving particular importance to the national and cultural consolidation of Albanians for future self-administration.³⁴ In all meetings, the Albanian history, the heroism of Gjergj Kastrioti - Skanderbeg, the bravery, generosity and culture of the Albanians, were highly appreciated. However, at the same time, it should be noted that Austro-Hungarian state figures wanted the economic development and prosperity of the Albanians.

In the following days, the Austro-Hungarian state made the political and economic balance of the visit of the Albanian delegation of tributes, while the Foreign Ministry undertook to pay a large amount of expenses incurred from the accounts and stay of the delegation in Vienna. Thus, of the 11,805 kronor and 70 heller that the Chief of General Staff had suggested to the Foreign Ministry to pay, the latter undertook to pay only half of that amount. Thus, only 5902 kronor and 85 heller of expenses.³⁵ However, the Foreign Ministry expressed its dissatisfaction that the selection of members of the Albanian delegation “*in some particular cases was not very good*”. They argued this defect with the fact that the

31 *Neu Freie Presse*, “Die albanesiiche Deputation in Audienz beim Kaiser und bei der Kaiserin.”, Wien, 19. April 1917, p.5.

32 Leo Freundlich, “Der Abschied der albanischen Huldigungsdeputation”, *Die Albanische Korrespondenz*, 21. April 1917, p.54-55; *Vëllazënia*, “Pritja e delegacionit shqiptar në hotel “Meissl & Schadh””, Vjenë, 28 prill 1917, p.2.

33 *Neu Freie Presse*, “Die albanesiiche Huldigungsdeputation in Wien.”, Wien, 21. April 1917, p.7.

34 *Ibid*, „Die albanesische Huldigungsdeputation in Wien.“, Wien, 21. April 1917, p.7; *Cetinjer Zeitung*, “Die albanische Huldigungsdeputation.”, Cetinje, 22. April 1917, p.3. In December 1917, Ottokar Czernin emphasized that Austria-Hungary aimed at reviving and strengthening Albanian national sentiments, to consolidate state sentiments that paved the way for future self-management and their cultural development. See more: *Cetinjer Zeitung*, “Die Balkanvölker.”, Cetinje, 6. Dezember 1917, p.2.

35 *AIHT*, Vj.27-3-317, Telegram of Kral from Shkodra sent to Count Czernin in Vienna, October 15, 1917.

Albanian delegation was initially planned to represent ten Albanian cities, and eventually turned into a representation for the whole country, which the Foreign Ministry considered a hasty action. A second argument was the fact that the Foreign Ministry had received a full list of its members just one day before the departure of the delegation, of which it was late “to propose any improvement”.³⁶

However, Austro-Hungarian Consul General in Shkodra, A. Kral, making preliminary accounts in line with Austro-Hungarian political interests in Albania, had acknowledged that engaging such personalities in line with state policies left open the possibility that they “may be considered more or less like our people” in the future.³⁷ Thus, despite mobilization, time, preparations, reception and spending, the Austro-Hungarian imperial, political and diplomatic authorities could consider as a victory, the positive attitude of the Albanian leaders’ obedience and loyalty to the Austro-Hungarian intentions in the Albanian lands. An alliance with the Albanian nobles and their promises as allies in the war against the enemies of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, both inside and outside the Albanian lands, constituted an important fact for the Austro-Hungarian state to continue the war alongside the Central Powers and administer without any concern Albanian areas in Albania, Serbia and Montenegro.

Conclusion

The visit of the Albanian leaders to Vienna had historical, political, economic, social, cultural and educational significance. After the Declaration of Independence of Albania in 1912, it was the most special occasion when an Albanian delegation with an extended ethno-geographical format was welcomed by the highest authorities and representatives of a powerful European state. The Albanians receive direct confirmation that the Austro-Hungarian policy towards Albania was constructive and aimed the development and consolidation of the Albanian state. The Albanian delegation was closely acquainted with the basis and economic development of a country that cultivated the same premises for a sustainable economic base Albania. He became closely acquainted with the historical, social, cultural, artistic and educational achievements and values of the capital of the Austro-Hungarian state, creating the impression that Albania, despite the historical obstacles and injustices, could take faster steps of global development, to affirm and consolidate its values in coherence with the most developed European countries.

Sonuç

Arnavut liderlerinin Viyana ziyareti tarihi, siyasi, ekonomik, sosyal, kültürel ve eğitim açısından önemliydi. 1912’de Arnavutluk Bağımsızlığını ilan edilmesinden sonra Arnavut devleti’nin önde gelen devlet adamları Avusturya-Macaristan gibi güçlü bir devletin temsilcileri tarafından ağırlandılar. Bu ziyaret esnasında, Arnavutlar Avusturya-Macaristan

36 *Ibid*, Vj.27-3-314, MFA Announcement in Vienna for Storck and the Registry of the General Staff in Vienna, June 1, 1917.

37 *Ibid*, Vj.27-3-322, Private letter of Consul Kral sent to Vice-Consul Mayerhauser, April 2, 1917.

siyasetinin dostluğunu ve Arnavutluk'un devletleşme sürecinde desteğini almayı başardılar. Ayrıca Arnavut heyeti Avusturya-Macaristan'ın iktisadî istikrarı ile Viyana'da ki tarihi, sosyal, kültürel, sanatsal ve eğitimsel kazanımları ile yakından tanışma fırsatı bulup, tarihi engellere rağmen Arnavutluk'un diğer gelişmiş Avrupa ülkeleri gibi daha hızlı adımlarla ilerleyebileceği izlenimi yarattı.

Bibliography

Archival resources

1. *Kosovo State Archives Agency (KSAA)*, Fund: Јован Јовановић - Пижон, кутиа нр.9, Министарство Инострани Дела, Пов.А.Н.374, Краљ. Српском Посланству Лондон, Крф, 10 октобра 1917.
2. *Haus - Hof und Staats Archiv, Politisches Archiv Albanien (HHStA, PA, A)*, Wien (hereinafter: АИТ), Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministry Funds for 1917, preserved in the Archives of the Institute of History in Tirana, Vj.27-1-127, Telegram of the Austro-Hungarian Consul in Shkodra, Kral, sent to MFA in Vienna, April 8, 1917.
 - Vj.27-3-322, Private letter of Consul Kral sent to Vice-Consul Mayerhauser, April 2, 1917.
 - Vj.27-1-129, Czernin's encoded telegram sent to von Storck in Baden, April 8, 1917.
 - Vj.27-1-130, Storck's telegram from Baden to Czernin in Vienna, April 8, 1917.
 - Vj.27-1-127, Telegram of Austro-Hungarian Consul in Shkodra, Kral, sent to MFA in Vienna, April 8, 1917.
 - Vj.27-1-131, Czernin's encoded telegram from Vienna to Kral in Shkodra, April 9, 1917.
 - Vj.27-1-133, Czernin's encoded telegram from Vienna to Storck in Baden and Kral in Shkodra, 9 April 1917.
 - Vj.27-2-299, List of the Albanian delegation of tributes, Shkodra, April 10, 1917.
 - Vj.27-1-134, Concepts of the Speech of the Albanian Delegation and His Majesty's Response, Vienna, April 10, 1917.
 - Vj.27-3-301, Czernin's encoded telegram from Vienna to Kral in Shkodra, April 11, 1917.
 - Vj.27-3-304, Storck's encoded telegram from Baden, April 12, 1917.
 - Vj.27-3-305, Telegram of Kral from Shkodra, April 13, 1917.
 - Vj.27-3-306, Storck's cited Telegram from Baden, April 14, 1917.
 - Vj.27-3-307, Telegram of Kral from Shkodra, April 14, 1917.
 - Vj.27-3-309, Czernin's coded telegram from Vienna to Storck in Baden, April 15, 1917.
 - Vj.27-3-308, Telephone telegram of Arz to Storck, Baden, April 15, 1917.
 - Vj.27-3-308, Telephone telegram of Arz to Storck, Baden, April 15, 1917.
 - Vj.27-3-317, Telegram of Kral from Shkodra sent to Count Czernin in Vienna, October 15, 1917.
 - Vj.27-1-128, Telephone Telegram of Storck from Baden, April 19, 1917.
 - Vj.27-3-314, MFA Announcement in Vienna for Storck and the Registry of the

General Staff in Vienna, June 1, 1917.

Periodical

1. *Cetinjer Zeitung*, “Peja.”, Cetinje, 3. Dezember 1916, p.2.
 - “Die albanische Huldigungsdeputation in Cetinje.”, Cetinje, 15. April 1917, p.3.
 - “Die albanische Huldigungsdeputation.”, Cetinje, 22. April 1917, p.3.
 - “Die Balkanvölker.”, Cetinje, 6. Dezember 1917, p.2.
2. *Die Albanische Korrespondenz*, “Eine albanische Abordnung beim Leichenbegängnis des Kaisers”, 28. November 1916, p.45.
 - “Die albanische Huldigungsdeputation in Wien”, 17. April 1917, p.50.
 - “Die albanische Huldigungsdeputation in Wien”, 17-18. April 1917, p.50-51.
 - “Die albanische Huldigungsdeputation in Wien”, 17-18. April 1917, p.51.
 - “Der Abschied der albanischen Huldigungsdeputation”, 21. April 1917, p.54-55.
3. *Neu Freie Presse*, “Die albanesische Deputation in Audienz beim Kaiser und bei der Kaiserin.”, Wien, 19. April 1917, p.5.
 - “Die albanesische Huldigungsdeputation in Wien.”, Wien, 21. April 1917, p.7.
4. *Posta e Shqypniës*, “Gjakova n’dekë t’Nelt Madhniës s’Tii Franc Jozefit I”, Shkoder, 20 Dhetuer 1916, p.4.
5. *Rilindasi*, Newspaper supplement *Shqiptarja*, Pjetër Logoreci, “Prijësat shqiptarë në Vjenën e 1917”, Tiranë, 12 May 2013, p.18.
6. *Vëllazënija*, “Të mbriritunit e deputacionit shqipëtar në Vjenë”, Vjenë, 28 prill 1917, p.1.
 - *Vëllazënija*, “Pritja e delegacionit shqiptar në hotel “Meissl & Schadn””, Vjenë, 28 prill 1917, p.2.