

**CASE OF ITALY-ALBANIA RELATIONS:
POLICY CULTURAL INTERACTION (1878-1918)**

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Abstract

After the Treaty of Berlin, there was a considerable change in the political status of the Balkans. Especially in Albania, the political and cultural studies of neighboring countries started to operate. Italy, with the aim of expanding its colonies through the weakening Ottoman Empire and by depending on its old heritage, started to realize certain plans in Albania. In our study, Italy's enhancement of cultural oppression on Albania between the years 1878 and 1918 by cultural means will be revealed by probing the newspapers and archival documents of that period. Attention will be drawn on the significant impact of educational and cultural interaction on political relations such as the demand to adopt the Latin alphabet in Albania and increase of schooling, by emphasizing oppression of cultural transformation besides political interaction while creating this effect.

Key Words: *Albania-Treaty of Berlin-Italy-Balkans-cultural oppression*

Introduction

In the 1878 Berlin Congress, some districts of Albania were decided to be surrendered to Montenegro, including a few ports that Russian Tzardom took from the Ottoman Empire by Ayastefanos Treaty. Reacting to the decisions, Albanians established a national union in Prizren with the support of the Ottomans (Bozbor, 1997.). The Prizren Union, which was formed as a result of the congress on June 10, 1878, determined regulations on subjects like Albania being a solitary state, start of diplomatic struggle, and preparation of an autonomous status (Alpan,1978). Later on, the Prizren Union was demolished by European powers. Despite its demolition, the act of independence was conducted by other organizations and gained power after the Second Constitutionalist Period. Starting from the end of 1905, national acts that began to revive among Albanians developed with great speed and attempts to start a common act between northern and southern Albanians reached to such a

level that they drew the attention of foreign states in mid-1907. Due to these nationalist acts, the administration of Istanbul arrested or sent many suspected Albanians to exile (Açar, 2000).

The National Congress that gathered in Bitola in 1909 made the first step in the way of independence and requested an autonomous Albania that would include Shkoder, Kosovo, Bitola and Janina in the Ottoman State. In addition, a committee of national union was elected. Disapproving this demand, the Party of Union and Progress tried to find ways of compromise with the impact of developments in the Balkans. In the years 1909, 1910 and 1911, Albanians outraged against the Ottoman State for their demands.

With the ending of the Balkan War in 1912, Albania gained independence but then became a principality of the Ottoman Empire in December 1912. The progress of Serbians in Northern Albania irritated the Austro-Hungarian Empire while the desire of Greece to annex South Albania including Vlore had the same effect on Italy. With the call of the British who wanted to prevent the conflict from turning to a war that would include all of Europe, a conference was held in London with the participation of Balkan countries and it had to recognize Albania's independence. The Kosovo district, where the majority of Albanians lived, was left to Serbia and the first president of Albania was Ismail Kemal Vlora.

At the London Conference, which was held on May 30, the Ottoman Empire had to abandon all her rights of Albania. After the determination of the Albania-Greece border by an international commission gathered at the London Conference, European governments decided Albania to exist as an independent principality under the guarantee of neutral, hereditary, sovereign, and majestic powers on July 29, 1913. The independence of Albania executed under the will of major governments at the London Conference was recognized by the Ottoman Empire in May 1913 (Başdoğan, 1991).

In the beginning of the First World War, Albania was only in her first year of independence when it was shared and invaded by Italy, Greece, and Serbia. Consequently, the country encountered the conflicts and issues that kept occurring in its history for centuries because of its strategic location. Not being able to fall into its place and devoid of the protective umbrella of the Ottoman, it was inevitable for Albania to be shared (Şimşir, 2001).

Shared by means of a treaty among Italy, Greece, and Serbia, Albania was invaded especially by Italy among the three countries until 1920. Based on the treaty, the north of the country was taken by Montenegro and Serbia, its south by Greece, and the remainder was taken by Italy. Being in the middle of this sharing, Italy proceeded with the plan of preventing the existence of a powerful government across the Adriatic. Moreover, she both supported the rights of Greece in North Epirus and Thrace and encouraged Albanians for armed and diplomatic struggle (Armaoğlu, 1991).

In December 1919, with the congress held in Durrës, one of the ports of Albania, the legislative government was settled under the presidency of Turhan Pasha. The new government sent a committee to Paris Peace Conference, which started to meet on January 18, 1919, in order to provide Albania's territorial integrity. With the second congress held in January 1920 in Lushajë, it was decided that both the territorial integrity of Albania would be protected and invasion of Italy would end. A new government was effectuated under the presidency of Süleyman Delvina and Tiran was set to be the capital city.

The Italian troops that invaded the north of the country during war under the leadership of General Ferrero barely abandoned the country in 1920. As a result of acts and armed struggle that started with the establishment of the new government, Italy had to compromise and leave the country. Consequently, the borders of Albania determined in the 1913 London Conference were recognized in Paris Peace Conference (Coşkun,2001). As a result of positive political developments, Albania was accepted to the League of Nations in December 1920 (Glenny,2001).

Ottoman State and the Case of Albania

In the Balkans, nationalism was constructed basically on language and religion in the 19th century. All national cultural leaders considered the element of language to be the most powerful means to establish the national union. The most significant example of this phenomenon is Albania, where religious differences among the Muslim, Catholic and the Orthodox are relatively easily realized. On the other hand, Albanian nation is the latest arousing nation among the Balkan nations. As a result of national and international developments, Albanian nationalism gained acceleration with the dominance of national feelings instead of Ottoman thought. Developing as a result of the spreading of fundamentals of modern nationalism among the Albanian intelligentsia, Albanian nationalism was the first failure of the Ottoman politics of pan-Islamism. On the other hand, this was the result of the supporting of countries like Italy and Austria for Albanian national movement in order to use this for their own benefit. The main factors that affected Albanian nationalism are as follows: The ignorance of Albanian identity by the Ottoman nation system, benefit conflicts of European powers in the Balkans, ethnic elements enrolling in attempts of deploying against Ottomans after establishing their countries, the research of the Albanian rich and intelligentsia living abroad and foreign researchers about Albanian language, history, etc., the rise of a new Albanian class in Albania as a result of developing trade with Italy, the emergence of a modern intellectual community from this new class and their cultural and political enrollment, Abdülhamit's oppressive governance and his acceptance of the abandonment of some Albanian land to Balkan nations in Berlin, and his liberalism as to conservative Islamic belief (Çelik, 2004).

The national consciousness of Albanian society first revealed itself in June 1878, when an Albanian League was established just before the Berlin Congress. The aim of this league was to prevent the distribution of districts that belonged to the Ottoman Empire to neighboring countries. However, Albanian representatives could not be effective in the congress. Consequently, contrary to their expectations, some Albanian land was given to Montenegro, Serbia, and Greece with the Berlin Treaty. Albanians hereby concluded that the Ottoman governance was bereft of protecting their benefits and started a resistance movement in the occupied districts. European countries wanted the Ottoman government to enforce the decisions to Albanians by force of arms. Thereafter, constant perturbations arose in the Albanian states (Heinzelmann, 2004). Prince Bismark, the chairman of the Berlin Congress, denied a nation under the name Albania and insisted on recognizing them based on their religious identities (Muslim Albanians as Turks, the Orthodox as Greeks). By this way, some of the Albanian land was decided to be distributed among the new Balkan nations (Greece, Montenegro, and Serbia) at the congress. Albanians strongly reacted to the commissions that were formed for the purpose of executing the Berlin decisions and determining the borders with the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, and Greece. Furthermore, the Prizren league condemned this decision (Bozbor,1997).

One of the most significant elements in the development of the national consciousness of Albanians is the Albanian language. Among the Balkan nations, only Albanians were not allowed to provide education in their language. Muslim Albanians were taught Ottoman whereas Orthodox Albanians studied Greek letters and Catholics learned Latin.

There had been long-lasting correspondences and debates about language with the Ottoman Empire. It was written in a petition to the sultan dated 1897: *"Measures should be taken in the states that form Albania for the recognition of Albanian language as national language, for the official approval and protection of churches and schools as has been applied to Bulgarian and Serbian churches and Schools, and for facilitating the relations between Albania and Albanians living in Italy"*. (BOA,BEO, Nu. 1001/75051;BOA, Y.A.Hus. Nu. 376/22)

However, a year later, demands changed as follows: There were no schools in Albania; however, Europeans knew the Albanian language and it was obligatory to open Albanian schools in the shortest time possible (BOA, Y.PRK.BŞK. Nu.58/6).

Taking these demands into consideration, the Ottoman Empire decided that it was necessary to open schools in districts with no schools in 1899 but education shares would be collected later. The purpose was to establish order and overcome illiteracy. They started to calculate the location and number of schools in Albania and the necessary budget (BOA,DH.TMIK.S. Nu.28/54 ;BOA,DH.TMIK.S. Nu.29/43).

The first society to be affected from national movements in the Balkans among Albanians is Orthodox Albanians. The most significant reason of this national consciousness is the unavoidable result of their education in Greek schools. Even though the general purpose of these Greek schools was to make the Orthodox Albanians Greek, this idea was partly successful. In contrast, it contributed to national consciousness of Albanians. After this step, the main goal of Orthodox Albanians was to cut loose from the patriarchate and establish their own church and school (“İsyân Nasıl Başladı”, **Sabah**, 20 Mayıs 1912, s.2.).

In South Albania and Janina, the Greek thinking was aimed to pervade by means of schools. The scripts sent to the government indicated that many teachers in the schools of this area did not have diplomas; instead, they had a script from the metropolitan bishop, which was an insufficient document to be appointed to a school according to law. It was also added that some of the teachers and principals in those schools were graduates of Greek schools and universities, were raised in Greece and aimed to pervade Greek culture (BOA, BEO, Nu. 2016/151137 ; BOA, BEO, Nu.2052/153878).

The Ottoman Empire wanted to increase the number of schools in problematic districts for both preventing cultural effects and establishing order. For instance, due to spoilt moral values and religion in districts of Kosovo, it became necessary to open schools in those villages (BOA, BEO, Nu.2121/159044; BOA, MF.MKT, Nu.718/69; BOA, DH.TMIK.S. Nu.29/43).

After 1908 in the air of freedom resulting from the constitution, Albanian intellectuals were involved in profound cultural activity by founding many societies and associations. Although some of the Albanians who established these societies for the purpose of bringing national identity forward indicated in their regulations that they would not be involved in politics, they had a political aim. On the other hand, some others founded societies to protect Ottoman identity and reflect their conservative attitudes. Especially Baskim Organizations became the most important center of Albanian national movement (Çelik, 2004).

After the Second Constitutionalist Period, the purposes of opening of schools in Albania changed due to demands from Albania. This time, Albanian society increased their demands of nationalizing the language of education and pressurized the government for setting Albanian to be the national language. They declared to the government the need to open schools that give education in Albanian language and to design an alphabet. Furthermore, the society reacted to Latin being the language of education in some districts of Albania. Coming to the subject of the Arabic alphabet and calligraphy, besides the two Arabic alphabets -one in Latin the other in Greek alphabet- by Austrian and Italian Catholic reverends, there was even one written in an alphabet invented by Şemseddin Sami Bey. Most part of South Albania accepted education in Latin alphabet while some parts of North Albania accepted Latin and the rest accepted education in Turkish (BOA, TFR.I.MKM, Nu.32/3101). This became an issue to impede union in the

country, which was used by European countries to their advantage to such extent that because of alphabet conflicts, there were rebellions in South Albania and consequently some people were mobilized (BOA, DH.MUË, Nu. 104-2/18).

Conflicts arose among Albanian intelligentsia about some issues, the primary one of which was the Albanian alphabet. Some of the Albanians maintained Albanian to be written and read in Latin alphabet whereas others were for Arabic letters. Conservatives founded societies for this purpose and tried to be effective on Albanians via the media (Çelik, 2004). After the proclamation of the constitution, these movements reached their peak with the rebellions of 1909 - 1911 and the one that broke out in 1912 brought independence.

After the 1910 rebellion, Albania claimed the following issues from the government: the start of an exclusive reform in Albania, a fair attitude from the government to prevent the oppression of ignorant and powerless public, punish rioters, prevent suffering of the society, send qualified and authorized government officials, construct roads, open schools, select officials to send to Albania among people knowledgeable about Albania, send governors and tenants who were appreciated by Albanians, give importance to opening schools (BOA, HR. SYS., Nu.135/41; Çelik, 2004). Before the government found the opportunity to start the reforms, news arrived about the exacerbation of rebellions in Firzovik, where forces gathered and took the Kacanik Gate under control. They ruined the telegraph and train lines between Skopje and Firzovik, disallowing military transport, even appropriating military equipment and capturing officers and soldiers. Due to this reason, it became obligatory for reserve soldiers of Salonika and Denizli to be called to arms (**Tanin**, No. 596 ;Çelik, 2004).

By the end of 1910 rebellion, Albanian newspapers were forbidden; some Albanian leaders of struggle were captured and put into prison; Albanian alphabet and language were forbidden and organizations and schools were closed (Çelik,2004).

In 1911, the Ottoman government decided to take some precautions to establish order in Albania. The solution was Sultan Reşat's visit to Roumelia to atone Albanians. This was the plan of the unionists. By this visit, they planned to encourage the commitment of the public to the government and the sultan and to control Albanians. Sultan Reşat accepted the demand of the unionists (Çelebi,2002). In the end, in June 1911, Sultan Mehmet Reşat visited the provinces of Salonika, Bitola, and Kosovo, demonstrating his interest in public issues. Upon the order of the sultan, the rioters were given three days' time to lay down arms and amnesty was guaranteed in return (Heinzelmann, 2004). The government declared that it accepted some of the demands of Malisors on June 10. Accordingly, they were granted privileges as having authority to bear arms, paying their taxes to rulers instead of Ottoman tax collectors, being able to be hired to Albanian governmental posts, and using Roman (Latin) alphabet in schools and official correspondences.

After a few days, the sultan declared amnesty in Kosovo. Albanians were determined not to return back despite the privileges provided by the government.

Reacting to the Albanian rebellion, the Albanians in Istanbul held a meeting in the Albanian Education Associations Head Office (Arnavut Maarif Klüpleri Merkez-i Umumiyesi) in Aksaray. In the meeting, there was reaction against Latin letters and Ismail Kemal. They sent a committee to the Ottoman Porte and submitted a declaration to state. They also claimed that autonomy demands would not serve benefits of Albanians. Moreover, they telegraphed their commitment to the Ottomans (Çelik,2004)..

As a consequence, conflicts began in South Albania and the government declared that it was ready for amnesty, accepting the existence of governmental arms as well. Due to this, opening of Ari schools in South Albania, teaching Albanian with Latin alphabet, decreasing taxes, and constructing bridges and schools were approved by the government. As a result of the Albanian meeting in Tepelena, the amnesty proposal was approved. Thus, the Ottoman administration impeded the spread of the rebellion to the south at its start by providing several privileges to them. By the laying down of arms of the rioters, Albanian rebellion reached to an end.

In 1912, Catholics in the religious institutions of Shkoder and Prezrin Episcopacies were using Latin alphabet in education. In contrast, in North Albania, where people were for Arabic letters, the use of Latin and national letters was allowed in Kosovo, Prishtina, Peja, Prizren and Dibra provinces in addition to Elbasan and Gorce. In the following days, at several locations of Albania, some coursebooks published in Vienna were used in schools. This caused upbringing of children without any knowledge of their own country, especially in history and geography courses. Government officials, particularly Ministers of Education and Inner Affairs, drew attention on this subject. It was decided that different languages could be taught in Albania provided that history and geography courses be national, Turkish be definitely taught and there should be Arabic and religion courses in schools that Muslim children attend (BOA,BEO,Nu.3998/299810; BOA,BEO,Nu.4056/304168). Some Albanians reacted to the decision of the government that there could be education in several languages((BOA,BEO,Nu. 4001/300031).

Hasan Prishtine's 14-article program included the following demands: opening of new schools that gave education in Albanian, teaching Albanian as the official language at Albanian provinces, Ottoman servants knowing Albanian and the culture and traditions of Albania, doing the military service in Albania and Macedonia, restitution of confiscated armament, conservation of Islamic tradition and attitudes, supporting Madrasas with credit, opening of agricultural and technical schools, construction of governmental agencies, amnesty of rioters, and setting courts for the judgment of Hakkı Pasha and Said Pasha governments (Arnavutluk Ahvali, **Sabah**, 1 Haziran 1912,s.2)..

On August 15, the British government suggested the Ottoman government to execute the Albanian reforms which had long been promised (İngiltere'nin İhtarı, **Tercüman-ı Hakikat**, , 15 Ağustos 1912, s.2). Nevertheless, the Ottoman Empire did not have the opportunity. Journalists of the time described the situation as

follows: *"How will all this happen? There are no roads in Albania, no railways, no schools, no agriculture, no trade, no art, almost nothing. How will all of this take place in a short time?" As it is understood, it will not be possible to establish an autonomous management in Albania,*" (Ferit Vakkas, Arnavutluğa Dair, *Tercüman-ı Hakikat*,05 Aralık 1912,s.1).

Balkan wars were named as the Balkan disaster among Turks and Albanians and both nations were negatively affected by this war. Almost half of the Albanian land was lost and ten thousands of Turks and Albanians became immigrants, sheltering in the Ottoman land where they considered to be their homeland (Dündar,2002).

Italy and the Case of Albania

Even though Italy was so close to the Balkans due to its geographical location, it was not powerful enough to take part in politics of the region. However, after she had gotten a severe blow in Ethiopia and lost hope about Africa, Albania became more attractive. Due to this reason, Italy became interested in Albania. The civil servants of Albania were serving to reveal Albanian nationalism. Moreover, Albanian diplomats were indicating that invading Vlore port meant dominating the Adriatic.

It was indicated that the diplomatic rivalry between Austria and Serbia existed between Austria and Italy as well, adding the desires and concerns of Italy about the Balkans. Since Italy gained powers, Austria kept her benefits in the Albanian sea where she ruled, which forced Italy to preserve her own benefits. For this reason, there was rivalry on marine trade between Austria and Italy.

In the year 1893, the counselor of Italian Embassy in Istanbul, Marquis de Rizio, visited Albania and during the trip, some facts were revealed as a result of some correspondences. Italy started an intensive cultural campaign in Albania, trying to turn Albanians into Italians. This was done through schools and feasibilities. With this idea in mind, they opened schools, set curricula to spread Italian culture, put families of poor students on salary, awarding scholarships. During the year 1893, extra ships sailing twice a week to Brindisi and from Brindisi to Durres transported some Christian Albanians to Italy and brought them back to Albania with guns and orders (BOA,Y.PRK.AZJ., Nu.26/47).

In 1897, in a correspondence submitted to the Ottoman Empire from the Governor of Janina, there were such warnings as: "The Italian government is trying to win Albanians over by informing Albanians of the Greek attacks; however, officials of Janina, Skodre, and Kosovo have prevented any act that will cause conflict between Muslim and Christian public. Some Greek and Italian volunteers were roaming in Albania, which requires the government to take action" (BOA,Y.PRK.BŞK.,Nu. 50/59).

In May 1900, Italy, Germany, and Austria met in Berlin, where they expressed their concerns and therefore took action. Monsieur Crispi dealt with this issue in the "La Tribuna" newspaper, drawing the attention on the case of Albania. In his article, Monsieur Crispi emphasized that the public in Albania was not Slavic. They were a Balkan country with their own language, religion, and culture. He added that there were desires to invade Albania and emphasized the long-term alliance of the Ottoman Empire with Italy, the ruler of the Adriatic Sea. Furthermore, a similar article titled Albania was published in Magazine newspaper in Florence (BOA,HR.SYS., Nu.125/38).

It is known that in 1900, Austria demanded custody right over Albanian Christians according to Berlin Treaty and in 1905 she did so for Albanian Catholics (BOA,HR.SYS.,Nu. 123/12 ;HR.SYS.,Nu.123/34). In 1901, Jesuits and Capuchins were seen to have misconduct about Albania (BOA,BEO,Nu.1685/126351). In the same year, it was announced in the Morning Post newspaper from London media that Italy had no intentions to invade Albania and that they were just allies based on early law (BOA,Y.EE.,Nu.15/64).

Italy was not content with the governance of Bosnia and Herzegovina having been given to Austria in addition to Pljevlja province and the policing of the lower regions of the Adriatic. Austria's allying with Papacy in patronizing Catholic Albanians, her receiving approval from the Ottoman porte about Bosnians in Albania and opening consulates in places like Skodre, Vlore, Skopje and Prezrin were among the sources of concern for Italy. In a newspaper article, Italy's concern was demonstrated in these words: "On the day Austria invaded Albania, the Italian government anticipated that the future of the Adriatic and peace on the east coast would be at stake (Arnavudluk Meselesi, **Sabah**,26 Kasım 1912,s.2.).

In the news of Tanin newspaper titled Montenegro Intrigue dated June 22, it was mentioned that Italians caused destruction on the Montenegro border for the purpose of causing difficulty for Turkey and that there was information from trustworthy sources about Italy sending financial and military support to the region (Karadağ Entrikası, **Tanin**,22 Haziran 1913; BOA,HR.SYS.,Nu. 147/65). On June 25, the same newspaper stated that Italy took advantage of Albanian riot to cause difficulty to Turkey (Balkanlarda, **Tanin**,25 Haziran 1912). Adding that Italy especially caused trouble to the Ottoman Empire during Balkan Wars, Tanin newspaper described Italy as the country to take advantage of Balkan turmoil. She was the cause of the loss of Tripoli by imposing peace besides being responsible from the loss of Albania by imposing decentralization in Albania and Macedonia (Harp ve Sulh, **Tanin**,06 Ekim 1912).

In the news article of İkdam newspaper titled "The Case of Albania", it was indicated that the claims of Austro-Hungaria on Albania affected Italy not only by economic means but also by other aspects on the Balkan Peninsula and that Austria tried to share the Ottoman heritage by demanding the autarchy of Albania (Arnavudluk Meselesi, **İkdam**,05 Aralık 1912,s.4). In 1904, the declaration of

Italy's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Monsieur Titovni, overtly revealed the utilitarian aims of Italian and Austrian governments on Albania: "We only care about the ports [of Albanians]".

Italy and Austria were two great powers that had rivals on Albania. Therefore, the two allies signed a treaty in 1897 to guarantee their disinterest on Albania and not to be at odds for this reason. The Romana newspaper commented that Italy would oppose the dependency of Albania to Serbia or another Balkan government. Austria, on the other hand, demanded autocracy in Albania in order to open the gates of the Adriatic since she had annexed Bosnia Herzegovina (İtalya ve Arnavutluk, **Tercüman-ı Hakikat**,28 Kasım 1912,s.2).

The rivalry between Italy and Austria showed its presence in the phase of determining the regime of Albania. In the news of Sabah newspaper with the title "Albania's Regime", it was stated that even though Russia leaned towards the idea that Albania be governed autonomously under Ottoman governance, Italy had concerns about this possibility. Her reason to argue against this project was the concern about the probability of Austria's custody of Catholic Albanians (Arnavudluğun Tarz-ı İdaresi, **Sabah**,29 Nisan 1913,s.1).

Albanian riots could not receive the support they hoped from Bulgarians but from Italy. She provided arms and financial aid to Albania during the days of riots. Italian hookers sailing in Albanian waters transported material and armament. Several vessels under the colors of Montenegro approaching the port of Vlore were allotted for transport of armament (Karadağ ve Arnavudluk Meselesi, **Tercüman-ı Hakikat**, , 19 Temmuz 1912, s.2).

For putting an end to Turco Italian War as soon as possible and elicit a peace treaty to her own benefits, Italy continuously provoked Albanians against us and used Montenegro as a tool (**Resimli-Haritalı Mufassal Osmanlı Tarihi**, C.VI s.3482).

In the news of Sabah newspaper dated November 30 and titled "Albania's Future", it was indicated that Ismail Kemal Bey paid official visits to Rome about independence of Albania, visited Italy and Austro-Hungarian consulates and asked for support for her independence which was about to be proclaimed soon. It was also added: "*In his meeting with the consulates of Italy and Austria, Ismail Kemal Bey stated that Albania's future depended on principles of total independence and neutrality and Albania was appreciated by great powers.*" (Arnavudluk'un İstikbali, **Sabah**,30 Kasım 1912,s.4).

Again on the following days, Italian and Austrian delegates indicated Ismail Kemal Bey that their governments had a positive opinion about the Albanian nation, cared about the development and wealth of Albania and that they would give moral support to Albania (Ferit Vakkas, Arnavutluğa Dair, **Tercüman-ı Hakikat**, 4 Aralık 1912, s.2).

While the media interpreted the issue in this aspect, abroad, the vacancy which occurred with the yielding of the Ottoman forces within a few weeks caused an international conflict. Serbia suddenly expanded, invaded Albania and proceeded to the Adriatic, which frightened Austria and Italy. News articles mentioned that Italy would forever oppose the dependency of Albania to Serbia or another Balkan government and that Austria was for the autonomy of Albania (**Tercüman-ı Hakikat**, “İtalya ve Arnavutluk”28 Kasım 1912.). In this respect, Austria chose to use an independent Albania as a means of pressure on Serbia. As a result of the support of Italians for this issue, Albanians proclaimed their independence on 28 November 1912. Russia’s support of Serbia required France, Britain, and Germany to support their allied country. When the dispute caused by the case of Albania reached a critical level, the British Minister of Foreign Affairs, Edward Grey, proposed to handle the case at an international conference (Halaçoğlu,1995).

Meanwhile, Italy, having benefits over Albania, became involved in the subject. This was considered in Tercüman-ı Hakikat newspaper as follows: Italy would explore any avenue to pulverize Austria’s any attempt on Albania, while Austro-Hungarian government was preparing for solitary intervention in favor of Albania, and in need of partial intervention, not only Austria but also all great powers would intervene and the Italian government would never allow Austria to do this on her own (**Tercüman-ı Hakikat**, “Arnavutluk, İtalya ve Avusturya Rekabeti” 9 Ekim 1913).

Montenegro’s declaration of mobilization caused rumor that Serbia and Montenegro were about to organize “Great Serbian Union”. Following this development, on the night of October 17, 1913, Austria sent an ultimatum to Serbia, demanding that she withdraw her armed forces in Albania in 8-days-time. In the ultimatum, it said: *"Otherwise, Austria would have to take the necessary measures to reveal her demands"*. Having been panicked by the possibility of war, great powers asked Serbia to approve of the decisions of London Conference of Delegates. Seeing Russia do the same, Serbia had to bow to the ultimatum of Austria. After the Albania crisis ended this way, a peace treaty was signed between Serbia and the Ottoman Empire in Istanbul. In fact, the empire did not have common borders anymore since she had lost Roumelia. However, the treaty signed with Serbia depended on common issues (Savaş,2000).

Conclusion

The nationalist movement which affected the world and especially Europe in the 20th century had an impact on multi-national countries. This negative impact was experienced both in the east and the west of the Ottoman Empire. Abandonments from the Ottoman Empire, nationalist movements, studies, and activities would mostly serve the great powers which had their eyes on the Ottoman.

The last nation to abandon the Ottoman Empire was Albania. Her exposure to the idea of nationalism started with the political movements of 1878. After this date, Albanian nationalism began to flourish in a country of different elements. The greatest work was done in making the language national. While studies continued to set Albanian to be the language of education, these demands and attempts would lead to struggling for independence.

While these developments and changes in Albania motivated the three governments -Austria, Italy, and Serbia-, even Greece would start to show interest in Albania. For this reason, the competition to receive a share from Albania, attempts to ignore the Ottoman Empire, and especially Greece and Italy's plans to deploy by means of cultural impact were revealed. In the struggle between 1878 and 1920, the most profit-making country was Italy.

Italy especially worked on educational issues in Albania. She opened schools, awarded scholarships to children, and expanded the Italian culture. In the armed struggles, she even supplied armament to Albania. In order to dominate in the Adriatic and to increase her powers in a conjuncture leading to the First World War, she supported Albania's struggle for independence. This, however, made the Ottoman Empire hemorrhage as the last nation state in the Balkans was abandoning the Ottoman Empire. In this war of separation, Albania owed a lot to Italy since she tried to seem to be filling in the vacancy left by the Ottoman Empire in Albania.

The case of Albania is a subject to be repeatedly searched since it proves that cultural penetration is more effective than political penetration. Furthermore, nationalism policy in Albania was the first event to show that Pan-islamism policy, brought forward by the Ottoman Empire in order to survive, had come to an end. It is also a sign that unity of religion and language lost their importance among the nations of the 20th century and that real unity is in the idea of nationalism.

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