

ALBANIAN OFFICIAL REPRESENTATION AT THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE 1919 (POLITICAL AND MEDIA REACTION)

Rudina MITA

Prof. Assoc. Dr. at the Faculty of Humanities, "Aleksander Xhuvani" University, Elbasan, Republic of Albania

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ABSTRACT

Some events in Albanian historiography have been interpreted in different ways in different periods. Before the 90s of the XX century, in Albania there was the same political force, which had won World War II. This governing force had as a vital principle the expression "We won the war, we write history". History was not compromised in scientific chronological accuracy but in its interpretive mode. Events that contradicted communist ideology were either left in oblivion or distorted in interpretation. One of these events was the participation of the official Albanian Representation in the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. The purpose of this paper is to shed some light on this important historical event for Albania and Albanians. The paper itself aims to present the circumstances in which the official Albanian representation was elected, the participation in this conference, its position, the lobbying carried out in the interest of Albania and the Albanians, and the influence of the pro - Italian wing in it. The article is based on historiographical, memorial and media sources. The methodology used is that based on scientific research and research, as well as comparative methods in the interpretive confrontation of this event within the boundaries of the two Albanian historiographical periods before the "90 and after" 90 of the XX century.

Keywords: representation, allies, peace forum, albanian national issue, italophile, mandate.

1. Introduction

Albania after the end of the First World War, appeared in the stage of an economically backward country, militarily damaged. The country during this period was turned into a battlefield, and divided into several occupation zones under the hegemony of the states participating in the war. So, a serious situation was created despite its neutrality in this worldwide conflict. The country was at a crossroads not only in terms of the moment, but also of its own future. In this period of time, the Albanian state did not function. There was no leading government in the country. The local political elite in particular and the Albanians in general considered the necessity of the

formation of a provisional government as the only solution, and the representation of Albania as a separate state with its official delegation at the Paris Peace Conference. The situation was not good not only within the Albanian political climate but also in international diplomacy, especially in relation with Albania`s neighbors.

The circumstances that conditioned the organization of the Durres Congress were difficult. The organization of the Congress was judged as a phase of compromise temporarily established between Albanian politicians in support of the current interests of the country. What was important for the country was the hope for the revival of Albania, which ignited and released the first sparks with the convening of this congress. The unfavorable international situation dictated to the Albanian congress and political caste a pro-Italian attitude for securing national sovereignty and for the further progress of the fate of this country. Regarding such a political climate, the historian Muin Çami said that: "Found, on the one hand, in the face of the disregard of Albanian national rights and, on the other side, of supporting the expansionist claims of neighboring countries by representatives of the three The Great Powers that won the war, in the first place the claims of Italy, a part of the members of the Government of Durres, as a salvation found the way of compromise with the representatives of the Government of Rome...". (Cami, M., *Albania in the course of history 1912-1924*, (2007), pp. 98-99)

The victorious Italian state from the First World War was seen as a lifeboat for survival for some of the Albanian political circles of the time. With the support and mediation of Italy, it was possible in record time, the creation of a Government, as well as an Albanian representation in the Peace Conference. Even with the insistence of Italy, driven by its direct interests, the idea of the Albanian issue under Italian auspices was lobbied at the conference. The Italian lobbying and strategy presented openly, already at the conference, caused a series of political and media reactions, inside and outside Albania.

2. Composition of the official Albanian Representation at the Paris Peace Conference

Albania came to the Peace Forum in Paris with an official delegation selected, issued, and legitimized by the decisions of the Durres Congress, December 25, 1918 and with six other delegations representing the Albanians in the diaspora and Kosovo.¹ In addition to the official delegates, the Representation of the Pan-Albanian Federation "Vatra" (Hearth) in the USA², the

¹ The delegation of the non-Albanian Federation "Vatra" (Hearth) of Albanians in America, the delegation of the National Political Party of Albanians of America, the delegation led by Esat pasha Toptani, the delegation of the Albanian colonies in Istanbul, and Romania, the representation of the Kosovo Albanian Defense Committee.

² The Representation of the Pan-Albanian Federation "Vatra" (Hearth) consisted of personalities: Fan Noli, Rasih Dino, Anselmo Lorekio and two honored and well-known representatives for the support they had given so far to the Albanian cause Telford Ericson and Aubrey Herbert. This representation was later joined by Mihal Turtulli and Mehmet Konica.

Representation of the "Partia Politike Kombetare" (National Political Party) in the USA,³ the Representations of the Albanian colonies of Turkey, Romania, the virtual Representation of the Committee "Komiteti Mbrojtjes Kombetare" (National Defense of Kosovo)⁴; were present in the French capital, and the Representation headed by Esat pasha Toptani.

The Albanian official representation, despite the changes made, was composed in such a way that it was dominated by politicians of all religious faiths that existed in the country. This is a very important precondition in achieving political peace in the country. In the status of the delegate there were elected: Turhan pasha Përmeti - Chairman (who was later replaced by Luigj Bumçi), Mehmet Konica - delegate for Foreign Affairs, Mihal Turtulli, Luigj Gurakuqi, Mehdi Frashëri (who were replaced at a later period of time by Mehmet Konica) and Gjergj Fishta.⁵

Mustafa Kruja was in the capacity of the assistant to the official delegation or representation. Many other Albanian personalities, not part of the representations were in Paris in support of Albania and the Albanians. ("The Sun", (Dielli), Newspaper, March 5, 1919) In the beginning Mehmet Konica and Mihal Turtulli were an important part of the official Albanian representation. During the development of the conference proceedings, based on the created circumstances, there were discrepancies in thoughts and actions between the members of the Albanian official representation. The issue of the Italian mandate over Albania was also the point of contention between them, which led to their removal from the official Representation. Both personalities were identified with the delegates of "Vatra" (Hearth). This union was carried out for the fact that, they, felt and predicted how far the Italian goal and intentions on Albania could go. Even in the debates with Turhan Permeti, they defended and strongly supported the idea that "...we should not ferment our policy with the Italian Government". ("The Sun", (Dielli), Newspaper, March 5, 1919) In the reaction that these personalities showed towards Turhan Pasha, the deviation from the goals of national interest was opposed, for which they had supported the government and the representation headed by him. They realized that the national

³ The US Political Party consisted of: Ismail Qemali (and after his death on January 24, 1919 he was replaced by Nuredin Vlora), Parashqevi Qiriazi, Mihal Grameno, Nikola Ivanaj. Her honorary representative at the Peace Forum was Ismail Qemali.

⁴ This representation could not participate with its delegate Hasan Prishtina dueto obstacles created by the Government of Turhan pasha Permeti. Her presence was felt through protest notes, telegrams and articles published in the press of the time. He informed not only through a telegram American President Willson, on the situation in Kosovo, but asked him and the Peace Conference that on behalf of the two million Albanians to enable his participation on behalf of the Committee of National Defense of Kosovo in this event. From the side another through a series of correspondence with other Albanian personalities, informed them about the situation in the Albanian territories and the obstacles created for his non-participation in the Peace Conference. Many letters were addressed to the Peace Conference through the members of this

⁵ Lef Nosi and Sami bej Vrioni were also nominated. The first due to important work in Elbasan could not come on time, while Sami Vrioni shouted to be in service within the country. In their place were appointed Mustafa Kruja and Luigj Bumçi as assistant representatives.

goal was being avoided and from this beneficiary with concrete goals in Albania, was Italy. They raised their voices for reflection, which did not come clear, which forced them to withdraw from being part of this representation. Based on the data presented by the memorialist of the time, Sejfi Vllamasi on this act, he said: "Mehmet Konica and Mihal Turtulli parted from their comrades and joined the delegates of Istanbul,⁶ of Romania,⁷ which were led by Halil pasha Alizoti and by Pandeli Evangjeli". (Vllamasi, S., *Political confrontations in Albania (1897-1942)*, (2000), pp. 412-413) Both determined and obedient personalities, in their position, judged that only the support of Anglo-American diplomacy was the main chance of Albania's future. In the opinion of Mustafa Kruja (one of the important politicians within the Government of Durres, pro-Italian in his convictions) the attitude of these two personalities was not directly related to the program of official representation, but to the manner of its implementation.

The situation of the official representation was slightly shaken when the personalities Turtulli and Konica said that regarding their position they had found the support of Mit'hat Frashëri. Regarding this personality, Mustafa Kruja said that he represented a politician with weight and well known not only in Albanian political life but also internationally. In his argument, despite the fact that he seemed to feel a steppe, he tried to clarify that: "... I do not know for what legal reason they mention the name of Mit'hat Frashëri, who unfortunately is in Helvetie (Switzerland) without being able to come and cooperate with us in Paris. "Our envoy lacked the close work of this idealistic patriot." ("Assembly"(Kuvendi) Newspaper, Rome, July 8, 1919).

Two well-known personalities, Lef Nosi and Sami Vrioni, known for their format of high-caliber politicians, were nominated for vacant positions in the Albanian Official Representation. Both candidacies refused to be part for objective reasons. Lef Nosi, despite refusing to be present as part of the official Representation "...he had been among those who submitted the request for a free Albania at the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919 and 1920...". (Jacque, E., *Albanians, History of a people from antiquity to the present day*, (1995), p. 481) The Catholic priest Luigj Bumçi (Dervishi, K., *History of the Albanian State 1912-2005*, (2006), pp. 89-90) and the politician Luigj Gurakuqi were elected new members of the Albanian official representation.

⁶ This delegation was present in Paris in February 1919, being stoic in their support against the decisions of the Secret Treaty of London, and with one voice and heart supported the memorandum addressed to the American Delegation to the Conference on March 7, 1919.

⁷ According to the created circumstances, the representatives of the Albanian colonies of Istanbul and Romania were convinced that Italy sought to expand its goals not only over Vlora (Treaty of April 26, 1915) but also had even longer-term appetites. In this regard, Vllamasi judged that Italy, with the capture of Vlora, "... automatically caused the disintegration of Albania in 1913 and there was only one Muslim Albania left to mock between the Vjosa and the Mati River, but also this under the protectorate of Italy. So this profit was provided by the Italian friendship, which the official Albanian delegation was afraid of and did its best to break with Italy." Taken from Vllamasi, S., "Political confrontations in Albania (1897-1942)", (2000), pp. 413-414

In the press of the time, among other things, on the necessary and effective changes made, it was emphasized that the appointment of Luigj Bumçi at the head of the Delegation was made after "... this personality with religious power had influence and enjoyed sympathy in the influential circles of Paris, especially in Catholic districts...". ("Assembly", (Kuvendi), Newspaper, Rome, July 8, 1919) Even the appointment of this honest and Catholic priest had the approval of Italian politics. At trial of Mustafa Kruja was clearly defined appreciation for Luigj Bumçi as this, was for this personality, the lucky moment to serve the homeland in the best way. M. Kruja, among others, said that Luigj Bumçi: "... He will be happy if he can do any service to our homeland with this burden that the Nation has placed on him in Paris." Bumçi enjoyed the greatest sympathy and respect in Albania and among Muslim and Christian Albanians. (Ibid) Luigj Gurakuqi because of his political career, good image he enjoyed among political circles and among Albanians inside and outside the country, was judged as a good candidate in the official representation.

3. Pro-Italians of the Government of Durres and the Official Representation in Paris

The pro-Italian orientation for a part of the politicians of the Government of Durres and of the official Albanian representation, was a definition that we encounter both in the press of the time and in the Albanian historiography. Such an orientation was evidenced and expressed in their beliefs, attitudes and orientations in defence and favor of the Albanian cause, but also in accordance with the interests of the western ally of Albania (Italy). Such an attitude was reflected from the beginning of the works until the end of the peace event. It remains to be noted that the supporting and victorious power of the First World War, Italy was seen as the main support for the representation of Albania with an official Representation at the Paris Peace Conference. They judged that this support best served the current interest of the Albanian national cause. The pro-Italian wing in the Albanian Government and in the Representation not only saw the hope of saving the country in Italy but those in the Peace Conference they advanced further by speaking in favor of the Italian mandate over Albania. One of these politicians was Mustafa Kruja. In his convictions, regarding the attribute given to the Government of Durres as a government with a pro-Italian orientation, he emphasized that such a policy was pursued in the name of national interests and not personal ones. It which was more important for Albania and Albanians,- according to him, was the identification as an independent state, with its own territorial integrity, despite the mandatory costs of one or the other major international power. So concisely stades the purpose justified the means. Under this motto, according to him, the Government of Durres expressed not only pro-Italian orientation, and this as a sign of gratitude and interest in the

support given by Italy in the difficult moments in which Albania was. Mustafa Kruja⁸ in defense of his position and conviction emphasized that: "We do not like to mention that the men who from the provisional Government of Durres are driven by greed for power or small interests to take over this weight. We are glad to believe that they only postponed their patriotic duty... with such heavy responsibilities, in order to serve the Homeland in its darkest days, and we are also glad to believe that each of them will be thought and would have measured himself before taking the high place that the Homeland left him at the moment when his destiny was being played." ("Assembly", (Kuvendi) Newspaper, Rome, July 8, 1919) Following the reactions to the Italian mandate or guardianship in Albania, the politician Myfit Libohova expressed herself openly and clearly in the press of the time. Libohova compared the same Italian protectorate to the policy pursued towards Albania by the Ottoman Empire.

Immediate and controversial was the reaction of The Newspaper "Dielli" (The Sun) in USA because the basis in politics could not be put between the Italian guardianship and the Ottoman government. They based this on the fact that: "Turkey summed up several different elements, Albania was a homogeneous people, without any national hatred between them." ("The Sun", (Dielli) Newspaper, December 14, 1918) This reaction aimed at reflection was addressed not only to the stakeholders in the Albanian issue, but above all to Myfit Libohova and the caste pro-Italian Albanian politicians. The newspaper reaction "The Sun" (Dielli) was not accidental but intentional, as the politician Libohova in December 1918 had published in the press the political program of the government he represented and his political concept for the three Albania: Albania of 1913 according to the Conference of Ambassadors of London; Albania of 1915 created by the decision of the secret Treaty of London; Albania independent with the friendship and protection of Italy as proclaimed by the Italian Government on June 3, 1917. (Ibid) All three concepts were essentially in favor of Italian intentions in Albania.

What should be underlined was the fact that all the personalities selected in the official Albanian Representation in the Peace Conference, were almost in unison in their opinion regarding the mandating power over Albania. The personalities who opposed him broke away from her and became part of the Diaspora⁹ representations at this conference. Therefore, the attitude, judgment and expression of members of the official representation and pro-Italian politicians on Italian custody in the country were naturally understood. The eyes and minds of an entire people were directed by this conference. Delegates of the official Representation demanded work and responsibility as it was the Nation, the one who had entrusted its representatives, its fate. This

⁸ Mustafa Kruja and other politicians came from Italy to Albania in the period when the Congress of Durres took place. It was the pro-Italian wing in it, and among the monitors of the best informant of the situation in the country in favor of Italy.

⁹ Diaspora - Albanian emigrants in foreign countries

was a test in which history had put him. Success was in favor and failure was cost, for Albania and Albanians.

4. The aims of the Albanian political elite through the Congress of Durres and the official Representation in the Peace Conference in Paris

The Congress of Durres was held on December 25, 1918. He elected the Government with Prime Minister Turhan pasha Përmeti and the representation for the Peace Conference. The government consisted of both national-based politicians and Albanian politicians led by Rome. Among the latter we mention Myfit bej Libohova, Mehdi Frashëri, Mustafa Kruja etc. (State University of Tirana, Institute of History and Linguistics, History of Albania, (II), (1965), p.462)

On January 2, 1919, according to the memoirs of Eqërem Vlora, the Congress of Durres handed over its decisions to the Italian authorities in accordance with national interests. The goal of the Albanian government was clear and direct "Italian cooperation and support", which above all served and would serve the national interest. The Albanian reality of the time but also the clash of European chancelleries required a quick and efficient maneuver in politics. Given these circumstances but also the inability to cope alone, Eqërem Vlora stated that: "Albania, in the created political and military circumstances, especially the government, of course they could not do anything alone, but in Paris with the help of the Italians, French and Americans it achieved at least the acceptance of the principle to create an independent Albania based on the decisions of Conference of Ambassadors in London." (Vlora, E., Memoirs (1912-1925), (II), (2001), p. 144)

Italy in the circumstances and historical-political moments in which our country was, appeared ready to influence the Peace Conference, for the Albanian issue within the framework of its interests of the moment or perspective. The Albanian official representation, given the great danger that threatened the country, in those moments saw in the Italian support a certain guarantee regarding the further steps that the European diplomacies would take for the future of Albania and the Albanians. Aiming at Italian support, the Albanian side expressed its guardianship or mandate over Albania. The wave of reactions that followed such a proposal, made that the same proposing party (Official Representation) quickly softened the wording of Italian aid or support to Albania. This support was considered in mild grades as " a temporary benevolent aid to Albania". It was understood that no matter how fabricated or rigid the consideration of this support was, one thing was clear, Italy was looking for space to achieve long-term goals for Albania and the Western Balkans.

The importance of holding and organizing the Congress of Durres was great for the historical political circumstances in which the Albanians had time and fate. Albania's Representation in the Peace Conference was also important. Italy could have hindered us or allowed us to participate in

it. The choice of Italian support as a guarantor power in representation, was judged prudently by the Albanian political caste of the time, but without passing to an appendix dependent on it. The participation and delegation of this representation according to Eqërem Vlora "...destroyed the plans of the Italians during the conference proceedings, no longer as a tail of the Italian delegation but as a representation of an independent state." (Ibid, p. 144) Through this judgment It was clear that the purpose of the Albanian official representation was not to supplement the Italian political goals.

It had accomplished an important mission for the time and place, the international awareness on the existence of an unknown state like Albania and the real possibilities of considering it, of recognizing it as an independent state.

5. Historiography for the Congress of Durres and the official Albanian representation

One thin numerous assessments have been made in the Albanian historiography on the Congress of Durres and the official Albanian Representation in the peace forum in Paris. Opinions given by memorialists, by politicians and members of the Durres government; Albanian historiography in the period before and after the `90s of the XX century; contemporary local and foreign authors and opinions from the press of the time. In his judgments, the politician and memorialist Mustafa Kruja regarding the official Albanian representation judged that: "The delegation issued by the Congress of Durres on December 25, 1918 was to represent Albania and defend the Albanian state...". ("Assembly", (Kuvendi) Newspaper, Rome, July 8, 1919) Based on the judgment of the official Albanian historiography of the pre-90s regarding the position and orientations of the official Albanian Representation in Paris, it was emphasized that even within the representation there were different attitudes. "The group which included the representatives of the colonies and some members of the delegation of the government of Durres they called the unmasking of Italy's anti-Albanian policy urgent... The other group led by Turhan Pasha... expressed its support for Italy and a cautious attitude towards it." (State University of Tirana, Institute of History and Linguistics, (1965), p. 466) Contemporary historian Lush Culaj in his judgment stated that "The Congress of Durres was a congress with national goals as ...aimed at political independence, territorial integrity...determined on the basis of ethnic criteria,..." (Culaj, L., Albania and the national problem: 1918-1928, (2004), p. 66) For the realization of its mission, the congress was not only in favor of the current borders but was for the review of the decisions of the Conference of Ambassadors in London and the restoration of the ethnic borders of Albania. The purpose is clearly stated and configured in the content of the Representation program ("Assembly", (Kuvendi) Newspaper, Rome, July 8, 1919) approved and issued by the Congress of Durres, summarized in two points: 1- The freedom of Albania as a State with as many friends as they want us to be friends; but lord and king in our house we wish to be ourselves. 2- The issue of borders. The purpose of the representation was clearly stated and

reinforced by Mustafa Kruja, who insisted in his statements that: "The Government and the Albanian Delegation in Paris will respond to the nation morally and materially if we do everything in their power, not only to preserve the territorial integrity of the Albanian State in hand determined by the London Conference, Florence in 1913, but also to save the purely Albanian areas that make up half of the real Albania and that are groaning under the heel of centuries-old enemies". (Ibid) The request for Kosovo and its unification with Albania was defended by the Albanian delegates in Paris stating that: "...Albanians had been there "since time immemorial." (Macmillan, M., Paris 1919, (2006), p. 420)

Historian Nina Smirnova regarding the organization of the Dures Congress said: "... For their part, the Albanian patriots, meanwhile, tried to take advantage of the inexhaustible interest of Italian politicians in Albania, in order to achieve their goals, protection of its independence... ". (Smirnova, N., History of Albania during the XX century, (2004), p.90). Regarding the official representation, it was stated: "... that in the position of the Albanian delegation there was noticed during the conference a kind of shyness to submit independent requests... the Italophiles (pro-Italian) could not give up the efforts for a direct agreement with the Italians to secure "a temporary assistance" to the Albanian state...". (Ibid. pp. 94-95). According to the author Smirnova, "the Albanian Catholic press justified this necessity of this support to "...hand of strong and civilized of the true friend" as long as the people were not prepared to such an extent for a life of their own "neither mentally, nor economically, nor politically". (Ibid. p.95) This would be a kind of support which he found in Italy.

6. Aspects of the activity of the Albanian Official Representation in Paris

Among the first steps of the activity of the Albanian official representation in Paris, was the presentation by it of two memoranda (February 12, 1919, March 1919) left unanswered by the international peace forum; as well as the speech of Turhan pasha Përmeti before the High Council of this Conference. In the content of the memoranda the starting point was the request to change the decisions of the London Conference of Ambassadors, 1913; the expansion of the borders of the Albanian state (restoration of the borders), and in the end it was concluded with the international law of self-determination of the people. It was clear from their content that the wishes and hopes of the Albanians were great. Their future and caring for them in trials, solutions and orientations, Albanians appeared divided. At first, the fate of the country was entrusted to America and the Peace Conference.

Regarding the request of an American mandate over Albania for a limited period of time, the chairman of the official Albanian delegation Turhan pasha Përmeti also expressed an idea which on March 7, 1919 he had submitted to the French Prime Minister Clemenceau. This was also evidenced in the content of the first memorandum which stated that: "... The principle of the

nation that was so clearly and solemnly proclaimed by President Willson and the great allies would not be violated, and that their rights, which had hitherto been trampled upon, would be respected... notwithstanding the rights and mistakes committed the past, the Peace Conference remained a door of destiny open for Albanians." (Ibid, p.420)

Based on this right regarding the fate of Albanian territories outside London Albania, (Albania named in this way after the decisions of the Conference of Ambassadors in London) it was requested to determine the organization of a plebiscite with the assistance of a US administration in them with a time frame of 1-2 years on the future of these territories. (Smirnova, (2004), p. 94)

The tactics of official representation through memoranda in addition to the importance it had in itself, in its intentions tried to coordinate the interests, strategy and appropriate steps for their finalization. According to Professor Arben Puto, the Albanian representation "Under the tactic of attack as the best way to defend oneself and under the principle." To give everyone what belongs to them... aimed at laying the foundations of a lasting peace in The Balkan Peninsula. (Puto, A., (2009), p. 226) The content of the two memoranda was as clear as it was confusing, but in most cases they were used only as ideas aimed at restoring the former territorial space of Albania before 1913. Through memoranda, the official Albanian delegation declared to international diplomacy that Albania in its positions during the First World War, the principles of neutrality and neutrality were adhered to and the demand of Albanians for territorial unification was natural. This was clearly stated on February 27, 1919, when Turhan pasha Përmeti was given the right to speak at the High Council of the Peace Conference, in which it was stated that: "Legitimate desire to return the Albanian brothers to Albanian family and the unjust claims of our neighbors who are not satisfied that they have forcibly separated so many territories all Albanian and now ask the Congress (Conference) to take even more." (Ibid, p.228) Being confused was presented in the ideas put forward by the Albanian Government, of recognition as territories of Italy, the Isle of Sazan, Karaburun and Zvernec. So from what could be understood within the messenger itself there were currents which acted and exerted influences at certain moments. This was evident even in the absence of a unity of thought. This was especially evident in the mandating power, times for the US and again for the Italian mandate over Albania.

The presentation at the Conference on the three reports was another from of information, namely two general reports "For our rights, a mere one just for Northern Albania". In relation to Southern Albania, procedures had been initiated for the publication of a documented book. Another step was the written submission of two diplomatic notes. The first note called for the mediation of the American Government to provide solution to the problems with the Greek neighbors on the issue of Chameria and the Serbs and Montenegrins on the issue of the Eastern and Northern borders. The second note in content had the protest of Albanian official

representatives against the Slavic massacres in Kosovo;¹⁰ against the Secret Treaty of London against the Italian claims on Vlora, and the Italian mandate for our country. Regarding the support and support from abroad for a small people and for a powerless state like Albania, the conviction was created that that it could not face the difficulties without the mediation of powerful states. In his opinion, Mustafa Kruja regarding such a conviction expressed confidence in the potential and power of the Albanian people, who despite the difficulties that arose in the first phase of his independent life as a state, was ready to walk on his own and without anyone's crutches, thanks to the ability of the Albanians. But the difficulties and obstacles to achieving such a goal were both external and internal. According to Kruja "... We must say that our inability to given on our own rather than from the inside depended on the outside..., - he goes even further when he stressed that in order to face it we must "To be loyal and not foreign mandates and gentlemen in our house..." ("Assembly", (Kuvendi) Newspaper, Rome, July 8, 1919) The emphasis in coping with the situation was especially on the disruption observed during the proceedings of the Peace Conference in the positions between the Albanian representations in Paris.

This was intolerable at the moment because above all it harmed the national cause and the Albanian people. According to him "Division harms even the strongest and largest nations of the world, not the Albanian people who were so small, weak, surrounded by enemies, without having a powerful and faithful supporter who could protect them."(Ibid) Union of Albanians, - according to him, it had to be done according to the strategy defined by the Congress of Durres and on the basis of the support of the official representation legitimized by this congress. In its program, it was clearly stated that the Albanians should give generously the help of the soul and the arm in order to: facilitate and not to complicate the work of the government, to support its activity for lobbying in the European chancelleries, for the connection of relations with them, in the context of the support they would give to the Albanian cause at the Conference of the Paris Peace. This thing, -according to him, the Albanians organized around associations and political parties such as "Hearth" (Vatra), "Political Party in the USA", Albanians of Rome, of Switzerland, of Romania, etc. (Ibid) Government of Durres called these centers irresponsible ones. According to them, the irresponsibility stemmed from the representation, from the presentation of programs, the drafting of memoranda and notes of protests separately without unity of thought and action, on the wishes and rights of the Albanian people. The representations of the Albanian Diaspora in the Conference opposed "the pro-Italian" wing of the Government of Durres, which allegedly started from common interest between Italy and Albania to determine their final goal. Even the news that a secret agreement was signed between the two neighboring countries with Albania (Italian - Greek) had further inflamed the anger and reaction of all

¹⁰ Kosovo had been part of the Albanian territory before the decisions of the Conference of Ambassadors of London, which left it outside the borders of the Albanian State after 1913, joining the Serbo – Croatian - Slovenian Kingdom.

Albanians inside and outside the country, both media and political reaction. Their reaction came on behalf of the Albanian people and addressed the European chancelleries and the peace forum. Reaction, which expressed concerns about the future of the Albania state, came from personalities of Albanian letters, Sotir Kolea,¹¹an Albanian from Lausanne, shocked by the painful realities on which the fate of his homeland was at stake, addressed an appeal to the Italian poet Gabriele D'Annunzio, for the praises he uttered for Italy and its intentions: "Poet, do you think that Italy will become great, if it manages to detach from my homeland, the defenseless Vlora? And that he will be covered with honor to remain in the brightest pages of history, if you devour the freedom of a small and weak people who never hurt them? Do not these people deserve a different behavior?" (Smirnova, (2004), p. 94) His call was a form of protest but also awareness about the danger of his future country.

The official Albanian representation issued by the Congress of Durrës was declared illegal in January 1920 by the decisions of the Congress of Lushnjë. Congress, which was organized with the initiative of Albanian nationalists and patriots, who saw the hope of Albania's salvation only in Albanians, the European chancelleries and the United States of America, outside any foreign mandate or protection. At the Peace Conference, the personalities Luigj Bumçi, Mehmet Konica, and Mihal Turtulli were sent to the official Albanian Representation instead of Myfit Libohova and Fejzi Alizoti.

Conclusions

The Albanians in the Peace Conference or the determinant of the future of the peoples, were divided into: representations, programs, thoughts and orientations. Relying on memorialists of the time one of whom was Nikola Ivanaj in relation to this reality that was felt at that time, he said: "... In Paris I found Albanians-delegates divided on two fronts: the protectionists represented by the Federation "Hearth", (Vatra) and those in favor of full self-government represented by the National Political Party."(Ivanaj, N., History of New Albania, (I), (1943), p. 74) .

The Albanian representations in this event conveyed the voice of all Albanians, who loved their country and their people. They were representatives of the "Vatra" (Hearth) Federation who defined the idea of an American mandate for Albania, idea which in principle was also discussed by the chairman of the official Albanian Representation in Paris Turhan Përmeti. The idea that dominated the main part of the politicians of the Government of Durrës was the Italian mandate over Albania. The media noise created regarding the request of the Albanians for the

¹¹ Collector of folklore and publisher of the newspaper "Shqypnia" (Albania). Taken by Smirnova, N., History of Albania during XX century, (2004), p.94

establishment of an American mandate for Albania remained more an impact of the awareness made by the Albanians themselves in the press for the future of Albania as well as to attract diplomatic attention in conditions when the existence of this nation was endangered. What was highlighted the most and which was uniquely revealed to all missions was the unification and protection of Albanian territories before the London Conference of Ambassadors as an important factor for peace in the Balkans and the future of this people divided and suffering by the political and diplomatic factor.

The manner of achieving, the time, the ways and the means used were different, which determined the orientations, even if these were wrong, but justified that these constituted the proper way of reaching the final goal. The official Albanian representation emerged from the Congress of Durres despite the currents within it, in its official positions as well as that of its chairman was for: "... The creation of a European state based on the principles of freedom, equality and justice...", under the Italian orientation. (Puto, A., (2009), p.245). Italian influence was necessary in the created international and Balkan situation. Italy was the best monitor of the situation in Albania. Despite having established control over the Durres government and having pro-Italian politicians behind her, it felt insecure. Its insecurity had manifested itself from the creation of the Government of Durres until the separation of the members within the Representation.

Despite the encouragement by Italy of pro-Italian politicians in the Albanian Government and Representation, for press lobbying, there were other international factors and actors who weighed, judged and made important decisions on the future of Albania and the Albanians.

Upon incomplete arrival of The purpose of the Government of Durres, ie to ensure not the borders before 1913 but those that defined the status of a state called "London Albania", its policies and representatives in the internal and external sphere became part of the already established and strengthened Italian influence and authority in Albania (control over Vlora and the island of Sazan) according to the decisions of the Peace Conference.

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