

## THE ALBANIANS AND THE HAGUE

### *The Hague Peace Conferences in 1899 and 1907*



### Social Sciences

**Keywords:** The Peace conferences, Hague, 1899, 1907, Albania, Albanian question, history.

**Lulëzim Lajçi**

Institute of Albanology. Prishtina, Republic of Kosova.

### Abstract

The Peace conferences of Hague in 1899 and 1907 had aroused for nations, to whom liberty had been still a far dream and ideal, the hope that would see, owing to arbitrage, that their fate be improved and that they would have their place at the table of civilized nations of the West. However, although these Conferences entered in history with the name "Peace Conferences", there were discussed in them mainly questions of war, about engagements and rights of the belligerent parties in case of war. Patriots of the Albanian Renaissance did not cherish the hope that the Albanian question would be solved; however the activists of the Emigration Patriotic Communities felt the necessity to inform the participant states in these conferences about the Albanian demands. However, despite the Albanian persistent demands, the Peace Conferences in Hague, as it had been expected they did not put forward the Albanian question for discussion. They ignored once more the demands of the Albanian people to be affiliated as a free member to the great family of European nations, a right which also the history secures them.

The peace conferences at The Hague in 1899 and 1907 had awakened in the peoples, to whom freedom was still a dream and a distant ideal, the hope that they would see, thanks to arbitration, their fate to improve and to have their place at the table of civilized nations of the West. It is precisely with this hope that the Albanians had, through memorandums, requested from the representatives of the Great Powers to do for them what was done for the Serbs, Greeks and Bulgarians.

In May 1899, the Conference of the Great Powers on Disarmament and Peace was being held in The Hague, Holland. The LIRIA Albanian Political Committee sent a memorandum to the First Peace Conference in The Hague (May-July 1899). The memorandum stated as follows:

*"We Albanians as well, oppressed from a national point of view, friends of peace and order, we protest before the civilized world against this abnormal situation, and we ask it to save us from this and that we too, maybe now the time has come for us to be included in the concert of civilization and lawfulness. We ask for peace, precisely the peace that the Congress also wants, but which Turkey will not let us enjoy (...). We Albanians ask that it be done for us as well what has been done for Serbs, Greeks and Bulgarians; we demand the right to life, these demands are natural and right. Turkey is a negation of peace, a spreader of shameful hatred among the civilized and peace-loving peoples in the world (...). The Albanian people, the memorandum concludes, requests before the Great Powers of the world for the right to exist, to ensure for it peace once and for all, and to be recognized as a member of the great family of European nations, a right given to it by history".<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> This paper was presented on the 5th International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference (IMSC-2022) held by The Association-Institute for English Language and American Studies, Tetovo, North Macedonia.

<sup>2</sup> The memorandum, which is dated, was drawn up by the LIRIA Albanian Political Committee. It was sent to the First International Conference in The Hague (Netherlands), in the period May-July 1899, during which the Conference developed its work. The memorandum is published in

However, The Hague Peace Conference (1899) showed that the Great Powers had no intention of intervening with the High Porte in favor of the enslaved peoples. They did nothing to force the Ottoman Empire to implement reforms. Even with this, they ensured that it felt stronger to settle accounts with the subjugated peoples, because they were in favor of maintaining the *status quo* in the European part of the Empire.<sup>3</sup>

The High Porte used these international political circumstances to engage with all its forces against the Albanian National Movement.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, the neighboring Balkan states at this time had also created a disturbing and difficult situation, organizing a series of border incidents, accompanied by increased subversive propaganda, in order to encourage the riots to hinder the actions of the League of Peja, from which they saw danger, namely the main obstacle to their territorial expansion.<sup>5</sup> In order to achieve these goals, the Serbian government undertook concrete actions. In addition to agents and priests, it also sent armed gangs to the Albanian lands who terrorized the Albanian population, killing and obliterating Albanian leaders who had become an obstacle to the achievement of their goals. With these actions, the Serbian government intended to create an armed force in order to have it ready, to use it as a vanguard and as a reserve against the Albanian population at the most suitable moments and thus fulfill, with their help, the old dream of annexing Albanian lands.

Since the High Porte did not undertake anything in this direction, Isa Boletini himself took care of the disarmament of the Serbian population. During this action, in just a few days, Isa Boletini collected 1500 rifles with 200 cartridges from the Serbian population. This was of great concern for the Serbian government.<sup>6</sup> However; even in this case, the Russian government came to Serbian government's aid. In the second half of 1902, the Russian government, under the pretext of preserving the Slavic element, obtained permission from the High Porte to open a Russian consulate in Mitrovica. Through it, it aimed to strengthen its influence in the Albanian territories. Isa Boletini and the Albanian leaders did not agree with the opening of the Russian consulate in Mitrovica and rightly saw it as a center of espionage and diversion, as a conduit of pan-Slavic politics in the Albanian lands. Under pressure from Russia, which insisted on opening the consulate in Mitrovica, Sultan Abdul Hamid II was forced to send his friends to Isa Boletini, to convince him to go to Istanbul to talk with the Sultan himself.<sup>7</sup>

---

Serbo-Croatian in the newspaper ALBANIA, Belgrade 2/15 July 1903, from where it was translated. See in: *Akte të Rilindjes Kombëtare Shqiptare 1878-1912*, Tiranë, 1978, Tirana, 1978 (Prepared for the press by Stefanaq Pollo and Selami Pulaha), doc. 86, p 139-140.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. I. Dërmaku, *Rilindja Kombëtare Shqiptare dhe kolonitë shqiptare të mërgimit në Rumani dhe në Bullgari*, Pristina, 1987, p. 270; Dr. E. Pllana, *Kosova and reforms in Turkey*, Pristina, 1978, p. 145; Dr. T. Abdyl, *Lëvizja Kombëtare Shqiptare 1900-1903*, Pristina, 1982, p. 22; Sh. Rahimi, *Lidhja e Pejës dhe aktiviteti i saj gjatë vitit 1899*, in *JEHONA*, Skopje, 1974; *Historia e popullit shqiptar*, 2, vol. of cit., p. 246-247; Dr. Sh. Rahimi, *The Albanian Struggle for Autonomy 1879-1912*, Pristina, 1980, p. 95.

<sup>4</sup> *Historia e popullit shqiptar* 2, Pristina, 1979, p. 246-247.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. I. Dërmaku, *Rilindja Kombëtare Shqiptare dhe kolonitë shqiptare të mërgimit në Rumani dhe në Bullgari*, op. and cit., p. 220.

<sup>6</sup> F. Musaj, *Isa Boletini*, Tirana, 1987, p. 32.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43

In Istanbul, Isa Boletini declared to the Sultan himself that he did not agree with the opening of the Russian consulate in Mitrovica, where there was no Russian whatsoever.<sup>8</sup> However, the High Porte, with the strict insistence of the Russian ambassador in Istanbul, Zinoviev, not only kept Isa Boletini isolated in Istanbul, but also allowed the Russian consul, Grigor Shcherbin, to work in Mitrovica.

This increased the dissatisfaction of the Albanian popular masses. On March 29<sup>th</sup>, 1903, three thousand Albanians went to Mitrovica in order to expel the Russian consul. To closely follow the development of events, the Russian consul Shcherbin came and, upon his order, the Ottoman forces opened fire on the Albanian insurgents.<sup>9</sup>

About 300 Albanians were killed in the fierce fighting. The next morning, while the Russian consul Shcherbin went again to check the positions of the Ottoman forces and asked Sait Bey to resume fighting against the Albanians, he was shot with a rifle by the Albanian soldier Ibrahim Halit Popovci, from the district of Gjilan, who was a nizam within the Ottoman army. He had just realized who the Russian consul was, because of which 300 Albanians had been killed the day before, he shot him with a rifle. In this case, the Russian consul Shcherbin was seriously injured and died a few days later. About this event, the Russian newspaper *Moskovskie Vjedomosti* wrote that the Russian consul was killed when he was looking at the army trenches while was giving instructions to the Turkish soldiers on how to fight against the Albanian fighters. This newspaper also states that, according to Serb Trifo Popadic, Shcherbin was killed by an Albanian man named Ibrahim Halit Popovci from Gumnishta.<sup>10</sup> Following this act, Ibrahim Halit Popovci, the only son, was sentenced to life imprisonment. However, he died after two years, due to cruel torture he was subject to in the prison of Skopje.<sup>11</sup>

From that time until today, the personality of Ibrahim Halit Popovci fell into oblivion, remaining only in the memory of popular rhapsodists and in some authors who mention him indirectly, while dealing with overall issues.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> "ZASTAVA", no. 72, 20.11.1903, cited according to Dr. E. Pllana, *Kosova dhe reformat në Turqi*, work cited, p. 180.

<sup>9</sup> E. Durham, *Brenga e Ballkanit dhe vepra të tjera për Shqipërinë dhe shqiptarët*, Tirana, 1990, p. 336.

<sup>10</sup> *Moskovskie Vjedomosti*, no. 93, March 30, 1903, cited according to Dr. E. Pllana, *Kosova dhe reformat në Turqi*, work cited, p. 180.

<sup>11</sup> Dr. E. Pllana, *Kosova dhe reformat në Turqi*, op. of cit., p. 180.

<sup>12</sup> D. Shala, *Këngë popullore historike*, Pristina, 1973, p. 388.

## The Second Hague Peace Conference in 1907

Despite the unfavorable Balkan and international circumstances, the Albanian people continued their struggle for freedom. In June 1907, the Second Peace Conference was held in The Hague, therefore Albanian societies and committees decided to make their case once again before this conference, proving to the world public that Albanians do not demand their rights only with weapons, but also in a peaceful way. Russia, England, Germany, France, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, China, Spain, Italy, Japan, Belgium and dozens of other European and Latin American countries participated in the Conference. Neighboring countries of Albania were also represented: Serbia, Greece and Romania.<sup>13</sup>

However, although it has entered history under the name of *the Peace Conference*, The Hague Conference, in addition to Articles 1 and 2, which dealt with the rules for the peaceful resolution of controversial international problems, included 11 other articles, which were dedicated to issues of war, commitments and rights of parties to the war and of neutral parties in case of a war.<sup>14</sup>

The renaissance patriots who already knew well the policy of the Great Powers, and based on the the attitudes towards Albania at The Hague Conference in 1899, did not have any hope for a fair solution to the Albanian issue even in this "*peace conference of 1907*". In expressing the opinion of the Albanians, Shahin Kolonja's "*Drita*" wrote in August 1907: "*The gathering of diplomats in The Hague is nothing but a comedy. The purpose of this Conference comes from the intrigues of a couple of Great Powers*".<sup>15</sup> This is how Dervish Hima thought about this conference: "*I know, he wrote in July 1907, that we will not get anything good from such conferences, which turn into masquerades.*"<sup>16</sup>

However, Dervish Hima and activists of patriotic societies of the exile found it necessary to make the Albanian demands known to the countries participating in this conference.<sup>17</sup> Since Albania, as part of the Ottoman Empire, was not invited to the Conference, Dervish Hima was proposed to the patriots of the patriotic societies of Bucharest to send an Albanian delegation there. This delegation, according to him, should not only consist of Albanians from Romania, but also of those from Egypt, Sofia [Bulgaria], Austria, Italy, America, etc. Among others, Dervish Hima mentions the following names for representatives of the delegation: Sh. Kolonja, N. Ivanaj, K. Luarasi, P. Evangjeli, Mr. Skirion, Dr. Turtulli and Adhamidi from the Albanians of Egypt, as well as Faiku (Konica) Extravagant", etc. He also required that there must be two people from Albania, well-known people of some profession.<sup>18</sup>

In the early August of 1907, Dervish Hima was in The Hague, where the Peace Conference was conducting its proceedings. He went there as a journalist and as a member of an Albanian

<sup>13</sup> K. Prifti, *Dervish Hima*, 1987, Tirana, 1987, p. 133-134.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134.

<sup>15</sup> "DRITA", Sofia, August 14, 1907, no. 92, p. 2, cit., according to K. Prifti, *Dervish Hima*, op. and cit., p. 134.

<sup>16</sup> K. Prifti, *Dervish Hima*, work. of cit., p. 134.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*; *Historia e popullit shqiptar*, 2, vol. of cit, p. 267-268.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 135.

"delegation", sent there by the patriotic societies of Romania, Egypt and the USA.<sup>19</sup> Dervish Hima distributed to the representatives of the Great Powers and other countries his memorandum, drafted up in *French and presented in "the name of the Albanians of all three faiths"*.<sup>20</sup>

*"(..)Under the pretext of preserving today's fragile balance of Balkan powers, the memorandum states, the principle of nationalities is set aside; the natural distribution of nationalities is not taken into account at all; it is allowed for the powerful, predatory nations, to oppress the weak, even if they constitute the majority, and even, to facilitate the oppression, someone divides the oppressed.*

*The Albanian nationality, the first and the strongest among the Balkan ones, is thus left, through violence and arbitrariness, outside of civilization. Attempts are being made to destroy the Albanian nation, as a nation.*

*Sovereigns that it hates have been imposed on it, in order to weaken and annihilate the people; they have divided the Albanian territory as spoils of war and as prey, among all the neighboring peoples. Serbia, Montenegro, Greece and Bulgaria oppress and destroy a part of the Albanian nation, while the rest are subjected to abhorrent exploitation by the Istanbul government.*<sup>21</sup>

*The Albanian nation, according to scholars and historians, is the first and the strongest of the Balkan nations.*

*It is the most alive, the most beautiful, the purest of all. (...) Albanians do not address you as defeated and as humble supplicants. Being aware of their strength and rights, they tell you:*

*'You who want to ensure peace in this world, be careful! War rages on in our mountains and valleys, we are armed, ready for anything, to win our freedom. There will be no peace in the Balkans, no stability and balance in the East until our rights are restored to us. We no longer want the status quo. We don't even want to become a victim for the success of futile accounts of European diplomacy. The war will rage, terrible and merciless, if a just decision is not made for us. Our will is steadfast. We're telling you what we want. We warn you; since you are honest and want to be fair.*

*If you cannot do anything for us, if you are not able to make a right decision for us, we will not think of reprimanding you. We only want the civilized world to know that, if we are going to unleash the calamity of war in the Balkans, if we are ever going to seriously upset what you call*

---

<sup>19</sup> "KORÇA", December 24, 1908, no. 10, cit. according to K. Prifti, *Dervish Hima*, p. 136; Dr. I. Dërmaku, *Rilindja Kombëtare Shqiptare dhe kolonitë shqiptare të mërgimit në Rumani dhe në Bullgari*, op. and cit., p. 220.

<sup>20</sup> For the first time Dervish Hima's memorandum was published in the *ALBANIA* newspaper, in Bucharest, in French. Together with it, the memorandum of the Albanians of Constanta and that of the Committee of the Albanian Colony of Egypt were published. This memorandum was later published in the newspaper *KOMBI* (Boston, August 16, 1907) in French, as well as in the newspaper *Shpnesa e Shqypnisë* (Trieste, September 30, 1907) in French. See in: *Akte të Rilindjes Kombëtare Shqiptare 1878-1912*, act. cit., p. 172-173.

<sup>21</sup> Greece and Bulgaria at this time did not have parts of the Albanian lands under their rule.

*the European balance, it means that we have been forced to do such a thing because of the injustice that has hit us, from the foul and hypocritical violence that is done on us (...).*<sup>22</sup>

*If you wish, gentlemen, to secure peace in the East, persuade your respective governments to use their influence over the Hamid's government, in order to meet our demands as follows:*

*We are looking for Albanian schools, where our children have the opportunity to learn; we want national schools, where our language, which has been suppressed and prohibited until today, can be taught. We remind you that the national motto accepted by our committees is as follows:*

*Light, or death.*

*We want extensive administrative reforms (...); we want an autonomous, honest administration, an administration worthy of a civilized people.*

*Our requests reach as far as this point. (-)*

*Our demands are by no means excessive. We are not, in fact, revolutionaries, we are just tired of living in anarchy and we are ashamed to see that our beautiful country has become like a boil and as a shameful disease in the ribs of Europe.*

*We want Albania to belong to Albanians.*

*We demand the right to civilization. We want to get rid of barbarism, we want to break the shell that constricts us, in a word, we want to live.*<sup>23</sup>

*Let justice be given to us, the memorandum concludes, because otherwise the civilized world will call you responsible for the terrible consequences of the inevitable war that will break out for the benefit of the unity and independence of Albania".*<sup>24</sup>

Dervish Hima did not limit himself to the submission of Albanian memorandums at The Hague Conference, but at the same time, he conducted a dense diplomatic activity. He met with the representative of the French Delegation *D. de Costane*. He also made contacts with the first representative of the Austrian delegation *Meray*. Hima described the situation in Albania to these diplomats at length, the lack of Albanian education and the backwardness caused by the policy pursued by the High Porte towards Albanians.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> *Akte të Rilindjes Kombëtare Shqiptare 1878-1912*, deed. of cit., p. 173.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 174.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 175.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*



**Bajram Curri dhe Dervish Hima**

Also, Dervish Hima himself, wrote, in the letter of August 5<sup>th</sup>, 1907, that in addition to his memorandum, he presented three other memorandums to The Hague Conference: one signed by the heads of the Albanian societies of the USA, drafted in Boston on the July 8<sup>th</sup>, 1907, another sent by *the Committee of the Albanian Colony of Egypt in August 1907*<sup>26</sup>.

Unlike Dervish Hima's memorandum, which was, in fact, an accusation and a threat to the European Great Powers that trampled on the legal rights of the Albanian people, the memorandum of the Albanian societies of the USA almost completely characterized by a diplomatic language. The initiator of this undertaking was Fan S. Noli, who, on behalf of the US companies, sent the memorandum signed by them to the Peace Conference in The Hague, where asked the Great Powers to stand on the side of the right and to see the suffering of the Albanian people.<sup>27</sup> These requests are summarized under three points:

1. *Turkey shall officially recognize Albanians as a separate nationality regardless of religion.*
2. *Turkey shall not hinder the intellectual development of the Albanian people.*
3. *Turkey shall ensure commercial freedom in Albania.*<sup>28</sup>

Even the Albanian colony of Constanta (Romania) addressed a memorandum to the Peace Conference in The Hague, through which it drew the attention of the members of the Assembly to the horrible situation of the Albanian people.<sup>29</sup> Among the demands, the colony of Constanta the

<sup>26</sup> K. Priest, *Dervish Hima*, work. and cit., p. 138-140.

<sup>27</sup> L. Maksuti, *Memorandumi i shoqërive shqiptare të Amerikës drejtuar përfaqësuesve të Fuqive të Mëdha në Konferencën Ndërkombëtare të Paqes në Hagë*, p. 246-263; See in: *Fan S. Noli - në 100-vjetorin e lindjes 1883-1983*, Albanian Institute of Pristina, Pristina, 1984.

<sup>28</sup> The memorandum was signed by the presidents of the Albanian societies of the USA: *BESA-BESË*, in Boston, Mass.; in *LIDHJA*, in St. Louis Mo; n2 *MALLI I MEMËDHEUT*, in Jamestown, Ny, and *KOHA* in New York, NY The memorandum was published in Albanian and French in the newspaper *KOMBI, MASS* August 1, 1907. It was reprinted by *ALBANIA* magazine, London, no. 10-11-12, 1907. See in: *Akte të Rilindjes Kombëtare Shqiptare 1878-1912*, vep. e cit, f. 133; Dr. Sh. Rahimi, *Lufta e shqiptarëve për autonomi 1897-1912*, act. of cit., p. 133.

<sup>29</sup> Dr. I. Dërmaku, *Rilindja Kombëtare Shqiptare dhe kolonitë shqiptare të mërgimit në Rumani dhe në Bullgari*, op. and cit., p. 134.

following were pointed out: the opening of Albanian schools, the best administration of justice, the granting of freedom in accordance with modern civilization and the progress of humanity.

*"Today in Albania, the memorandum, inter alia, states: write, read or learn, but education is like that of a moving, unstable school in those regions, where unfortunately due to the intrigues of the Greeks, the Sultan orders them to be followed, surprisingly, even the country's teachers".<sup>30</sup>*



**Dervish Hima dhe Aleksandër Xhuvani**

A similar appeal was addressed to the Peace Conference in The Hague by the Committee of the Albanian Colony in Egypt.<sup>31</sup> This too, in the name of the Albanian people, demanded from the Conference a fair approach "to which every brave, courageous, honest and intelligent nation is entitled, such as the one that makes up the ancient nation of Albanians".<sup>32</sup>

The memorandum of Dervish Hima, as well as that of the Albanians of the USA, the colony of Constanta and the Albanians of Egypt are also mentioned by the Austrian consul in Shkodër, Carl, in the report he sent to Vienna on August 28<sup>th</sup>, 1907. He also had attached the complete copies of the aforementioned memoranda.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>30</sup> The memorandum was published in French in the *KOMBI* newspaper, Boston, August 24, 1907, from where it was also translated in the newspaper *La Nazione Albanese*, Pallagario (Catanzaro), October 15, 1907. See in: *Akte të Rilindjes Kombëtare Shqiptare 1878-1912*, vol. cit., p. 176-177.

<sup>31</sup> Dr. Sh. Rahimi, *Lufta e shqiptarëve për autonomi 1897-1912*, op. of cit., p. 133.

<sup>32</sup> The memorandum was drafted in French by the Committee of the Albanian Colony of Egypt and was sent to the Hague Conference. The memorandum was published in French in the newspaper *KOMBI*, Boston, August 16, 1907, from where it was also translated in the newspaper *La Nazione Albanese*, Pallagario (Catanzaro), October 15, 1907 (Italian). It was also reprinted in the volume of documents entitled *Albania*, no. 2 (la Parte), 1920, p. 147-150 (Italian), see in: *Akte të Rilindjes Kombëtare Shqiptare 1878-1912*, op. and cit., p. 177-178.

<sup>33</sup> K. Prifti, *Dervish Hima*, work. of cit., p. 136.



## Conclusion

Despite the persistent demands of the Albanians, The Hague conferences, as expected, did not discuss the Albanian issue. The Great Powers once again continued to adhere to the policy of maintaining the status quo of the Ottoman Empire and to oppose any request that contradicted them. Once again, The Hague Conferences (1899, 1907) showed that the Great Powers were not interested in doing anything to ensure for the conquered peoples, including the Albanians, liberation through justice and independence. The Hague Conferences once again ignored the requests of the Albanian people for Albania to be accepted and recognized as a member of the great family of European nations, a right given to it by history. How great the despair of the Albanians was, after these peace conferences, can best be seen in the appeal that the BESA society addressed to its brothers.<sup>34</sup>

*"It is not true that our destiny lies in foreign hands, as some think, be they even the Great Powers. No! Our destiny, whatever it may be, good or bad, is only in our hands (...) We have nowhere any true friends, neither as a state nor as an individual! We dare not in any way trust any more to empty promises and comical kisses! Therefore, we dare not rely on anyone even to beg in memos and notes to the heartless, stupid, careless, unaware and inflated representatives of some even worse governments, such as those at the so-called peace meeting in The Hague. Strange and bitter irony! The peace conference (?), while there is no question of establishing peace and order where they are most needed! And this for a very simple reason, perhaps such a thing is not their duty, but they have been called on to create an international code on war and on occupation and who knows what other agreements, which are unnecessary for peoples in the XX century. (...) As for us, they don't even want to hear that we live with a knife under our throats and under an animal-like confinement.*

*(...) So give up, dear, brothers, from further sending memoranda and notes to the cabinets and conferences, perhaps they won't help us any more than the first ones, which (perhaps without being read at all) have probably been thrown into the waste bin (...) Come, then, let's try, unite, work and, survive until we are in the right time, let us not disgrace ourselves and our great ancestors for the rest of our lives and if such a thing will cost us all our lives and wealth. Come, then, you apostles of freedom and knowledge, who are in exile, come to your homeland! Join us, apostles of liberty in all mountains and plains, in order to lead the people as easily and as well as possible, showing them the true path of freedom and salvation!"<sup>35</sup>*

We remain hopeful that The Hague of these days, namely The Hague Tribunal, which was founded to prosecute people responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law, will not continue the tradition of almost 100 years ago and will not remain this time again in the memory of the Albanian people for bad.

<sup>34</sup> The BESA Society was founded in the summer of 1907 in the Province of Kosova to defend the national rights of the Albanian people against the Ottoman rulers and neighboring chauvinists. See in: *Mendimi politik e shoqëror i Rilindjes Kombëtare Shqiptare*, volume 1, 1879-1908, (Prepared for the press by Zihni Haskaj), Tirana, 1971, p. 17.

<sup>35</sup> Mehmet Alia, *Letër nga Kosova*, in "Shpnesa e Shqypnis", Trieste, no. October 15, 16, 1907. See in: *Mendimi politik e shoqëror i Rilindjes Kombëtare Shqiptare*, volume 1, 1879-1908, vep.e cit., p. 180-182.