

History of Albanian Military Education Until 1945

Edit Bregu

University College Wisdom, Albania

Abstract.

This paper addresses the origins of the Albanian military education and the changes it has undergone through from 1912 until now. One hundred years ago in Albania there was no practical possibility to prepare military officers in the country. This is because at that time there was no army, and, therefore there was no national military school in which military officers could get the proper education that they needed in order to serve to the Albanian country and to the Albanian people for defensive purposes. The paper deals with issue why in Albania in the years after the declaration of independence until the 1940s, military training and education in proper academies was impossible. The main reasons of course are strongly related to the lack of military educational institutions in the country. In this material will also be presented the innovations in the military education as well as the empowerment and size that it has undergone through during monism and the years of democracy, highlighting the advantages and the role of the military education in 100 years of the Albanian state.

Keywords: military school, military academy, military education, qualification, state

1. Historical experience of the Albanian army in the middle Ages

During the great historical challenges of the Albanians through the centuries, the military art became one of the most ancient and loved practiced by these people. As a people with ancient traditions, it could not exist without its army. Based on the historical experience, comes out that in some periods of time the Albanians had a standing army, in some other periods it was improvised, that was in cases of invasion. The army itself needed educated people in emergencies, those of traditional military education. The fighting equipments found in archeological excavations tell us that the ilirians represent testified elements that are very meaningful and detect us that at that time the military education and the other well known ones were developed. By these data results that the military and physical education was practiced a lot. Later were formed the Arbëresh communes like civitas, skutarjensis, civitas drivasti, etc., which had their own statuses. Furthermore, there were the Arbëresh families like the Balshajt, Muzakajt, Dukagjinasit, Topiajt (Hasani, Bregu, 20123). They had their own flags and badges, and in some cases even their own money. They held officials and military personnel in their courtyards. It results that in their wars/fight they had military education elements and the basis of this education were the attempts to defend their freedom, independence and their individuality as Arbëresh. The Turkish occupation found the Arbëresh state due to this military education development, so their war had a conscious

character and based on that time's needs itself. In the Skanderbeg's era, the army was a standing one and very dignitant compared to the other European armies, which marks the culmination of the military education that at the time gains new features with military education elements. Still, there are no data that during the "State of Arbëri" there were military schools in Albania or elsewhere, where sets or groups of Albanian feudal fighters were trained. While in the Skanderbeg's army were developed various trainings, the military games were more practised, were held competitions, and different actions were taken, etc.. On the other hand, we know that the exiles in Venice had established a school to educate and train their children. This means that Albanians wanted to educate their children in "The Albanian School".

2. The Albanian army from the 18th century until the establishment of the communist regime

Introduction

In the XVII-XIX century, at the time of Albanian great Patriarchies blooming in Shkodra in (1757-1931) and in Ioannina in (1786-1822) we face elements and even separate institutions of the military education. These are more obvious and precise in the Patriarchy country of Ioannina under the command Ali Pashe Tepelena. It was he who gave the idea and tried to build the institution of the military education. Ali Pasha encouraged, supported and pushed into projects scheduled courses about military education like the reverse artillery, etc. He ordered and complemented the foundation of the artillery school in Bonila, Ioannina, putting at their disposal considerable funds for the programs, training, and basic materials. The school was attended by Albanian boys. Ali Pasha got well-known French specialists (Boppe, 1999) to help with bringing the new updated concepts and techniques at school. About the existence of this school has written even the French consul in Ioannina at that time, Pukevili who is a master of writing history. He is "the essential source for our people's history in the XIX century (Pouqueville, 1999). At that time was also thought to open a school for infantry officers in the Patriarchy's territory. In the following years, there were many detached attempts in the country, but it was impossible to build a school and a military educational system under the occupation's conditions in the country.

The article must be divided into chapters. *Introduction* and *conclusion* are obligatory. It is recommended to adjust body of the paper to the common organization structure of scientific papers – *IMRaD (Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion)*.

Methods

Through this paper, we managed to use a qualitative research methodology, with primary and secondary data which are the result of reviewing a fairly extensive contemporary and archival literature regarding to the purpose of the study that this topic will follow to the researchers. The implementation and realization of the goals and objective, this study tries to achieve through the implementation of a scientific Methodology where the base is in-depth research and comparison, and analysis through the facts arising from archival sources in the historic

area, documentary collections, as and utilization of assets, documentary material and published domestic and foreign historical literature. The primary research is based on quantitative research through archival sources in the Central Archive of the Republic of Albania, as well as Russian, French, Turkish, Italian and Austrian archival documents.

Results and Discussion

By adhering to the data, documents used so far, it appears that the vast majority of Albanian officers and NCOs of the period until 1912, when independence was proclaimed in Albania were educated, titled and qualified in the Ottoman military schools. Among them there were a whole famous constellation of patriotic officers, from the First Minister of War, and First Chairman of the Army General Staff, to the commanders of the subunits of the military forces (Hasani, Bregu, 2013). In the first years after the independence was proclaimed, the country's conditions were quite difficult so we cannot think of opening schools for different categories even for short courses to prepare officers, NCOs, etc. Time since 1914, when the Albanian government came to power from Prince Vid (March-September), which follows the period of the First World War (1914-1918) until 1919, there were only a few events of a military character that were the result of a military commands foreign military forces Austro-Hungarian, Italian and French, that settled in Albania. Therefore in 1916, when the country was divided into zones between the participating forces in World War I, the Austro-Hungarian command in Albania selected in about 40 Albanian boys who were sent to military schools in Austria (Selenica, 1938). Most of them returned to Albania only after the war and joined the Albanian military service. In 1917 in Shkodra Albanian aspirants were prepared in a course organized by the Austrians. But these are only isolated and solitary cases. It was only in 1919, with establishment of the Provisional Government of Durres, because of the needs of the organization and running of the Albanian paramilitary police, that in Tirana opened a special school with a 6-month program that would prepare officers, aspirants and gendarmes on the basis of term courses (Central Military Archive, 1921). Despite the difficult economic situation of the country in the '20s of the twentieth century, in the Albanian Parliament dominated the opinion on the necessity of a national army force providing "the vitality of the state" to protect the "national honor". Selami Shkoza, the war minister not only designed, but also demanded from the Prime Minister's signing an agreement with the European countries for education and training the Albanian officers in their military schools. Meanwhile, there was a current candidate school for the army. Such a course started back in 1920, ended March 12, 1921. The existence of this school is recognized by a letter, where the Ministry of War replied to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Albania to the request of the Nations Society Commission, in 1921, asking for information about the Albanian Armed Forces. In this reply, in paragraph 5, were announced that for the military needs they had for officers, had been opened a within 6-month- school in Tirana graduating aspirants (Hasani, Bregu, 2013). The school was closed after their needs were fulfilled. But now they would reopen courses to complement theoretical knowledge and practical skills of the existing officers in the army. Further development received military education at the Republic time during 1925-1928. The numerous requirements of the system for leading officers of the the training was meant to be coped through a series of courses spread throughout the year. More indispensable was considered an immediate opening of the course for the aspirants who were appointed to this rank by the new government, and NCO

candidates for aspirants, who were selected by commanders of various levels of the military structures. Such a course opened on 1 March 1925, in Tirana and in November, of the same year opened the first complete course for the preparation of aspirants, with a time span of 6 months. Aspirants' annual courses, which ended in January, 1927 prepared 64 aspirants infantry and 6 aspirants for artillery (AQSH, (1927). Fund. Military Command, D.2, Sheet 1. Annex 3). Western military having attended the higher education in Italy, Austria, France, Greece (in the latter study a naval military group), would be added to the military contingents prepared in the country. The increased in number of corps of artillery, which was organized in large formations of a battery, such as the organization of artillery group, conditioned the opening of school in Tirana profile aspirants' artillery, with 20 students (AQSH, (1927). Fund. Military Command, D2, FL.4, Revelation No. 2 368/11). These students, for of the difficulty of acquiring the specialty itself, came from high school upper secondary schools or technical school in the country. At the same educational level were 70 candidates for aspirants to be educated in school leadership preparation mitraliere formations and special weapon, which was opened in the town of Durres (AQSH., (1937). Fund of the Prime Minister, D-H-191, Annex, 659). Compared to the changes that took place in the organization of the new army, it was thought that preparing aspirants was better to begin in homepage military schools using the Austrian military cadets school experience. The change of the political system and the transition to the Monarchy was followed by some changes to the forms and content of the military school. Hence, by decree dated October 26, 1928 was inaugurated in Tirana, the Royal Military School (AQSH, Fund 647, File 55, Year 1941, Fund 3) and on November 15, 1928 The School of Artillery. Priority was given to military education abroad, mainly in Italian military schools. Basis to prepare the rank and file officers were military schools, which continued to operate in the country. Thus the Royal Military School continued to develop regular programs teaching until 1933, when it was closed for budgetary reasons, which shocked all spheres of the Albanian Army structures (History of the Albanian Army, 2002). Another school which continued its work in the '30s of the XX-th century, was that of the student-officers Completion (Completion School) in the center of Tirana, which was frequented by high school graduates or graduate students in various branches, employees, etc. Since 1929, functioned the Perfection of Officers School, in Tirana, too (History of the Albanian Army, (2002). Army Publishing House) in which they came to complete and increase their professional knowledge, different levels of officers, after which they were given the successive degrees. In 1934 the state budget significantly decreased. The project of 1936, creating a military academy was not applied. Upon entering into application the new project of reorganizing, it was expected to reopen the army officers completing courses of perfection. All schools would be open during the winter season. In the completing school were sent several heads and secretaries of the commune. While after graduating the university, the officers would attend the school completion and be appointed sublieutenant reserve. The main base of education and training became the military schools abroad. Another level after the academic qualification, was attended by a limited number of Albanian soldiers, but abroad as well. Such were the college (school) in Turin War, San-Sir France (History of the Albanian Army, 2002). In the framework of the Second World War, in all formations of the UNÇSH levels have commanded both types of staff, leaders of officers. In the first category belonged and operated career military, educated in the Albanian military schools, a good number of them educated and skilled in Military Academies schools of countries, like in Italy (Rome,

Milan, Padua, Turin, Napoli, etc.), Austria and elsewhere, during the years 1920-1930 when served in the Albanian National Army. Some of them helped since the organizing and running the first partisan formations, like bands of battalions, and several other formations outside the FNC's (Hasani, 1999). The creation of the General Staff marked the organizing to a high degree of war, as well as increasing UNÇSH formations. After that, the Albanian theater of war began to operate larger formations, like partisan groups, the attack brigades, first operational area, divisions and korparmata. Undoubtedly, in the leading roles of command and staffs of these formations were established and formed personalities and famous officers who were distinguished military for their genuine patriotic reputation (Hasani, 1999). We notice that these accounted for 25% of leading cadres military brigades, 75% of executives in the first Operating Zone, 20% of heads of divisions, 50% of the main leaders korparmatave, etc. (Hasani, 1999).

3. Conclusion (TNR 14pt., bold)

The main and massive orientation of preparing the staff was undoubtedly the way of "graduation" in its wars and its performance. Here belonged a constellation of prominent leaders, certainly not career military policy command. In this category there were between them popular leaders well known for bravery sterling outstanding patriotism who with the reputation of military leading skills have made their name in the warsearlier against various invaders Albania (Hasani, 1999). Undoubtedly the most massive part that realized the running of National Liberation Army formations during the military operations, was what came out from the school and war, mainly by the masses of the volunteers who filled the National Liberation Army formations. This professionals' mass, was necessary to be educated and qualified in order to enable the realization of their tasks in the chain of commanding the military formations. In this context National Liberation Army General Staff and the staffs of formations and partisan units organized special short courses or theoretical seminars, to accomplish the tasks to increase the military capabilities of the leaders of various levels' formations and various specialties existing in the National Liberation Army. Clearer and more comprehensive forms of organizational and programmed military preparation for the commanders of National Liberation Army began there in their last month, even on the eve of the liberation the the country. At this time some short courses were held for one month. They were focused and regular courses to certain levels of leaders, who appreciated their future service in the National Liberation Army formations. Courses of that size and such levels, including general preparation, as well as special military and theoretical seminars raising political leaders in several offensive brigades, were organized into divisions and korparmatën, but also from the headquarters of National Liberation Army. Such was the one-week course in Br. V. S etc. On November 8, 1944, on the eve the the full liberation the the country, in the liberated city of Berat opened the first course of the officers, with the participation of deputy battalion and company commanders, Divisions I, II S, Br. II, VIII, IX, X, XI, XVI, XX S a total of 220 people (Hasani, Bregu, 2013). The regular course lasted one month. Immediately after the completion of first course, with direct orders the the Commander General the the National Liberation Army, was held in Tirana, the second course Korp officers. I, II National Liberation Army. This course was organized at the engineering barracks, where he had set up himself Command Military School. The course was opened on 14 January 1945 (Documents

of the Party House and the Party Committee, 1976). It is worth recalling that, at this time a number of young partisans were taken in the Yugoslav military schools. But this did not last long. In 1948, the relations with Yugoslavia collapsed. Those who had begun to study there were sent to the former Soviet Union (Hasani, Bregu, 2013).

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