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**TWO PREVIOUSLY UNKNOWN GERMAN MONOGRAPHS
OF THE FIRST HALF OF THE XIX CENTURY ON
SCANDERBEG'S PERSONALITY¹**

The present paper informs about two monographs on Scanderbeg, which belong to the German historiography. The first monograph is titled *Georg Skanderbeg, glücklicher Vorgänger des Ali Pascha in Janina* (Gjergj Scanderbeg lucky predecessor of Ali Pasha of Ioannina), and the second monograph is titled *Georg Kastriotto. Eine biographische Skizze der Vorwelt, Vergleichung mit der Gegenwart darbietend* (Gjergj Kastrioti, an outline presentation of the previous world offering a comparison with the today).

These monographs were written in the second half of the XIX century and are unknown to the scholars, and to Albanians in particular. The first information about the texts of these biographies was provided in 1969 by the German scholar Gerhard Grimm in his paper with the title, "Deutsche Skender-Beg-Monographien"² in which it is given a short content of these works. In addition, these titles are also mentioned in 1881 by Georg Petrović in his bibliography, "*Scanderbeg*"³ and in the work entitled, "*Gjergj Kastrioti Skënderbegu. Bibliografi, 1454-1835*"⁴, authored by Jup Kastrati and Kasem Biçoku. The present paper introduces briefly for the first time these two monographs.

Gjergj Scanderbeg lucky predecessor of Ali Pasha of Ioannina
Monograph of Gotfried Wilhelm Becker, 1821

¹ This presentation is part of the lectures segment run from 1-2 November 2018.

² Gerhard Grimm, "Deutsche Skender-Beg-Monographien", in: *Studia Albanica Monacensia*. In Memoriam Georgii Castriotae Scanderbegi 1468-1968. München: Rudolf Trofenik 1969. (=Beiträge zur Kenntnis Südosteuropas und des Nahen Orients. Bd. VIII.), p. 87-121.

³ Georges T. Pérovitch, *Scanderbeg (Georges Castriota)*. Essai de bibliographie raisonnée. Ouvrages sur Scanderbeg écrits en langues française, anglaise, allemande, latine, italienne, espagnole, portugaise, suédoise et grecque et publiés depuis l'invention de l'imprimerie jusqu' à nos jours. Paris: Ernest Leroux 1881, p. 108, 110.

⁴ Kasem Biçoku/Jakup Kastrati, *Gjergj Kastrioti Skënderbeu. Bibliografi, 1454-1835*. I. Tiranë: Biblioteka Kombëtare 1997, p. 323, 336.

About the author

As to the author Gottfried Wilhelm Becker (February 22, 1778 in Leipzig– January 17, 1854 in Leipzig) was a German physician and simultaneously a translator, mainly from English and French languages.⁵ He studied medicine at the University of Leipzig and received his PhD at the age of 25. His books and booklets inform about staying young and in good shape, while the pregnant women are given many advices and explanations. Also, he gives advices about alleviating rheumatism, curing the sexual diseases and the eye diseases. These booklets had been published regularly. He has translated many texts from English and French. He started writing texts with historic background in 1812.⁶

The monograph

The monograph, *Georg Skanderbeg, glücklicher Vorgänger des Ali Pascha in Janina* (Gjergj Scanderbeg lucky predecessor of Ali Pasha of Ioannina)⁷ by Gottfried Wilhelm Becker was partly published for the first time in 1813 in "*Der Freimüthige*", a Berliner magazine, and it is entitled "*Georg Skanderbeg und Amurath*" (Gjergj Scanderbeg and Murat). It was published some years later, in 1821, as a separate book with the above-mentioned title. The present paper addresses this second edition.

In this study, Becker tried to create a vision of the country and events, reading the travel descriptions of Pouqueville⁸, which at that time might have been also known in Germany. We have to emphasize here that the year of publishing coincides with the fall of the Greek revolution leader Alexander Ypsilantis in Moldavia in March 6, 1821.⁹ So, the revolution already begun a long time ago. Although the monograph was written at a time when in the German speaking countries was spread a kind of Hellenism because of the war for freedom of the Greeks against the Ottomans. However, this work seems

⁵ Bibliography data by: G. Grimm, "Deutsche Skender-Beg-Monographien", p. 90.

⁶ Among other things we can also mention here the history of Frederick II of Prussia: Gottfried Wilhelm Becker, *Geschichte Friedrichs des Grossen*. Leipzig: Thomas 1846.

⁷ Georg Scanderbeg. *Glücklicher Vorgänger des Ali Pascha von Janina*. Von *r Leipzig: Erns Klein 1821. (Hereinafter quoted as: W. Becker, *Scanderbeg...*, p.).

⁸ G. Grimm, "Deutsche Skender-Beg-Monographien", p. 119.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

to not be directly related to this issue. Apparently, Scanderbeg was introduced to the author by chance, and was found attractive to the point of writing about.¹⁰

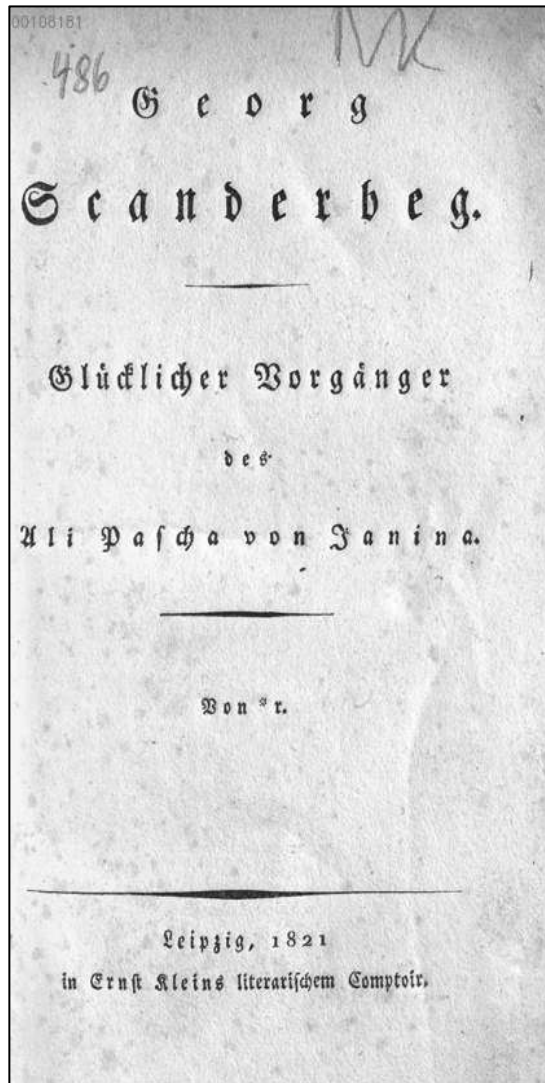


Fig. 1: Front cover of the monograph, "*Georg Skanderbeg, glücklicher Vorgänger des Ali Pascha in Janina*" by Gotfried Wilhelm Becker

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

Becker's work is 128 pages long, and it freely narrates Scanderbeg's life. This work is indeed similar with a historic novel rather than a genuine historiography work, and yet it could not be considered a genuine novel because the artistic style that might have aligned this work among the literary works lacks. However, the monologues, dialogues and the data coming from its own writing make this work complete. Except that, the different scenes of the battles and the descriptions are often detailed and colorful. What excludes this work from the genuine repertoire of the historic works, but aligns it among the literary ones is the lack of the dates of historic events. Dates are occasionally given as in the following lines.

There are many historic and geographic inaccuracies across the text. It is given that Mehmet II was born to the daughter of the Serb despot, with whom Murat II was already married at a very advanced age.¹¹ He also mentions a fortified castle of Scanderbeg called "Modaissa" situated in the borders of his territories.¹² This name, the author might have mistakenly read in another work, or it is a fruit of his imagination. Such a castle is not identified.

Even though the author does not mention the sources used in his paper, the influence of Marin Barleti's, whose work the author seems to have read from the many translations and elaborations already existing in the beginning of the XIX century, is clear. Among other things, Barleti's influence could be clearly noted through the battles' description, in which the small army of Scanderbeg had an outcome of few fallen, while the great Turkish armies were totally annihilated, with many prisoners, and the others fleeing away at full pelt.

Nevertheless, the author criticizes the stories written about Scanderbeg until that time, because of the many contradictions and dark points existing, and the writers who have written about his deeds are not in the same line.¹³ As consequence, the author says to those readers, who in this draft can find many different things from what they

¹¹ W. Becker, *Scanderbeg...*, p. 62.

¹² *Ibid*, p. 63.

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 113.

have previously read, to be certain that the author has always tried to find the line basing on the reason out of the chaotic data.¹⁴

So, as conclusion we might say that this monograph stands between two genres, in a word, between the historic novel and a historic study monograph and should have had the proper importance especially for the ordinary reader, because it is reflected as published work in some magazines and time's lexicons of the first half of the XIX century.¹⁵ Now let's have a look to the entire work, clearly concentrating at the end on Scanderbeg and Albanians' portrait and presentation.

The history of Scanderbeg starts with the first Ottoman invasions in Albania headed by Murat II, that according to the author occurred on 1413. Gjon, Scanderbeg's father foreboding the danger and because nobody would come to his aid, accepts the vassalage towards the sultan and achieves to preserve his kingdom, and as guarantee delivers his boys as hostages to the Turkish court. appears since the beginning as the king of Albanians.¹⁶

So, Gjergj grew up under different conditions, and later was called Scanderbeg (Iskenderbegi) meaning Alexander, as he was circumcised to become Moslem, and this happened because Murat has violated the given word. However, according the author, Alexander the Great himself has not given so much to his name as this Albanian boy.¹⁷

Scanderbeg's physical and spiritual qualities immediately caught the sultan's eye. Scanderbeg wins the sultan's heart, quickly becoming his trusty. Scanderbeg is described with rare epithets as "*schlank wie eine Tanne*" (slim as a fir tree), "*blühend wie ein Granatapfel*" (flowering like a pomegranate) and "*stark wie ein Herkules*" (strong as Hercules),

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 113.

¹⁵ *Leibziger Zeitung*. Beilage zu Nr. 73. Montags den 15. April 1822, p. 794; *Allgemeiner Anzeiger und nationalzeitung der Deutschen*. Der öffentlichen Unterhaltung über gemeinnützig Gegenstände aller Art gewidmet. Zugleich Allgemeines Intelligenz=Blatt zum Behuf der Justiz, der Polizey und der bürgerlichen Gewerbe. Einundzwanzigste Band. Jahrgang 1821. Gotha: Becker 1821, p. 1435; *Literarisches Conversations=Blatt für das Jahr 1825*. Erster Band: Januar-Juni. Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus 1825, without page number; *Intelligenz=Blatt* Nro. 45, 1822, in: *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände*. Sechszehnter Jahrgang 1822. Juli. Stuttgart und Tübingen: Gott'sche Buchhandlung 1822, p. 177; etc.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 5.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 6.

and with ardent eyes but with soft view pleasuring Murat, which heart was open.¹⁸

In addition to these virtues, the author attributes to Scanderbeg intellectual abilities also. Scanderbeg was the one who saved the sultan from the difficulties in front of the envoys from Persia, Asia, Hungary, Italy and Greece, because was exactly Scanderbeg who was the translator "deciphering" their speeches and replied to them in their languages.¹⁹

Following sultan's advice, saying to Scanderbeg that "*be also a dexterous warrior*", he zealously starts to work, passing all the day riding the horse and training, showing that he was more efficacious than the others with different kind of weapons. According the author, Scanderbeg had in his arm a birth mark in the form of the sword, and said that "*I have been created by the destiny for war and victories*"²⁰ and very soon he truly started to win in games and also in true wars.

Before his 18 birthday, Murat appoints Scanderbeg sandjak-bey and head of an army of 500 knights and sends him in Anatolia's region first, and later across Asia to subdue the princes who might oppose him. From there, Scanderbeg returned with the flags of the countries he had subdued with peace or war, and with many assets whose the hero didn't hesitate to distribute, without taking into consideration his personal interest.²¹ The author in his point attributes another virtue to our hero; the generosity.

As to his earlier youth in the Ottoman Empire, the author mentions some duels, whose data source might be Barleti, although the sources of information are not cited. Here he mentions the duel in Adrianople against the Tatar with whom Scanderbeg fights within a hole²², naked and armed with a dagger only. In addition, he describes the duel against two Persians, whose heads were place at the sultan's feet.²³

The relations between Scanderbeg and the sultan broke after the death of Gjon Kastrioti, Scanderbeg's father, in 1432, as he was not granted his father territories and his throne by the sultan, because

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 6.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 6.

²⁰ "Ich bin zum Kampf und Sieg bestimmt". *Ibid*, p. 7.

²¹ *Ibid*, p. 7-8.

²² *Ibid*, p. 8-9.

²³ *Ibid*, p. 9-10.

according to the author that the sultan feared that this young brave man, there in a remote country, part of the empire was not going to stay faithful to him. Consequently, wining over those territories would have been difficult.²⁴

The confidential relations between Scanderbeg and the sultan are also ruined due to the murder of Scanderbeg's brothers by the sultan who allegedly was heartbroken and comfortable towards Scanderbeg, who was forced to put the mask of faking and intrigues on, by pledging to the sultan his devotion and loyalty, both with deeds and expression such as: "*In you,*" he says to him by kissing his silk shawl (kaftan), "*I see again both my homeland and my brothers.*"²⁵ The chance of detaching from the sultan came with the war that erupted between the Turks and Hungarians in 1443. Scanderbeg benefits therefrom, and together with 300 warriors abandons the battle, takes by force from the sultan's secretary the decree that he needed to take the possession of Kruja's castle whose people joyfully welcomes Scanderbeg and helps him to take the city from the Turks.²⁶

Here begins the Scanderbeg epeopee against the Turks, which starts with Scanderbeg's war with 15.000 troops against Ali pasha's army made up of 40.000 men. It took to Murat six months to assemble and prepare his army, while to Scanderbeg, it took only 6 hours to beat and disperse the army as the wind disperses the straw yarns.²⁷ It is reported that Scanderbeg needed to eat and drink a lot throughout this battle, because according to him "*the courage and bravery are found in a full stomach.*"²⁸

There is information about the war against Vladislav of Hungary, Scanderbeg's alliance with him and the Scanderbeg facing the bulwark of the despot of Serbia whose daughter was married to Murat.²⁹

After two plundering wars of Mustafa Pasha and then after the war against the Venetians on Danja's castle, sultan Murat himself is presented against Scanderbeg with an army made up of 150.000 men,

²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 11.

²⁵ "In dir", sagte er, ihm den Kaftan küssend, "finde ich Vaterland und Brüder wieder". *Ibid*, p. 13.

²⁶ *Ibid*, p. 16-18.

²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 24-28.

²⁸ "Der Muth sitzt im Magen", *Ibid*. P. 27.

²⁹ *Ibid*, p. 30.

and in the beginnings make the Scanderbeg's war against him appear as "*the war of a dwarf against a giant*."³⁰ The outpost of this army arrives on May 13, 1449 in front of Sfetigrad walls, while the sultan himself arrives with the other part of the army the next day. The war between the Albanians and the Turks becomes fierce, and Scanderbeg troops attack as they were not 10.000, but as if they were tenfold much. Nevertheless, the castle fell because of the poisonous water coming from the well due to a dead dog that an unfaithful citizen threw in. Even here, the influence of Barleti's story is unquestionable, because the author the presentation of these events is based on sources referring to the historian from Shkodra.

The Christian and superstitious defenders of the castle, regardless the vows of Porlat (Perlat), they preferred to rather die of thirst than to drink water, even though the well was cleaned.³¹ The defenders' army, after giving up the castle, was free to go. The prince Mohamet (Mehmet) also participated in this war, and when he saw the small army of 100 warriors killing thousands of the best Ottoman troops, asks his father to put them all on the stake, but Murat not only keeps his word, but also praises his enemies for their bravery and gives them presents, because "*the violation of the given word, is the first tool that pushes the enemies' courage to the limit of desperation*."³² Scanderbeg, retries to take Sfetigrad, by calling to his aid and paying French and German forces in gold, among which there were masters of manufacturing guns (*Büchsenmeister der Reichstädte*) coming from the imperial cities.³³ The city was besieged by his forces from 30 September to 23 October, but he didn't succeed in reconquering the castle and having it under his command.³⁴

After these events Murat (Amurath) and his son Mehmet get ready for the conquer of Albania. The siege and the occupation of Kruja was part of their plan. The Ottoman troops arrived on April 1450, by first presenting a force of 40.000 Spahi (Turkish cavalry men), who in the beginning do not meet a fierce resistance. Scanderbeg attacks the camp

³⁰ *Ibid*, p. 44-45.

³¹ *Ibid*, p. 51-52.

³² "Wortbrüchigkeit", sagte er ist das erste Mittel, die Tapferkeit eines Feundes zur Verzweiflung zu bringen". *Ibid*, p. 52.

³³ *Ibid*, p. 53.

³⁴ *Ibid*, p. 54.

of the Ottomans at night causing them many losses. The description of this siege is several pages long, and sometimes takes the shades of a literary work, by adding even some dialogue. At the end, after five months of siege, Murat in his tent, tired of his senility and illness, dies under the walls of Kruja, aged 85, leaving to Mehmet his last will: "*Avenge me ... may it be an eternal war between you and Scanderbeg, until he is doomed, because until then, I will not enjoy the pleasures of the faithful. Learn from me to never contempt the courageous enemy, no matter how small he is. If someone near you stands against you, crush him immediately with all your power.*"³⁵

Kruja is liberated and Scanderbeg covers his warriors with presents. The news of the victory is spread all around Europe, which is delighted from his victories against the Ottomans and sends aids to him. A year later, Scanderbeg is married with the daughter of a vassal, and starts to fortify the country, a work that even his father has not previously done.³⁶ The author does not give the right importance to the description of Scanderbeg's marriage, and don't even mention the name of his father-in law, Gjergj Arianiti. On the contrary, the author is mostly concentrated in describing the characteristics of the new sultan, Mehmet II, which he mistakenly describes as the son of Serbia's Despot, by attributing him the following characteristics: barbarian in the most complete sense of the word, uncouth and ignorant, a person that does not have any faith, but mocks both the Koran and the Gospel; with a small body and slim yellow face.³⁷ And this man now would fight Scanderbeg.

After Scanderbeg refuses to pay a modest tribute to him, in Albania is sent Ahmet Pasha, which is defeated.³⁸ For the first time Scanderbeg employs in this fighting a new company called *stratiots*, which thanks to Scanderbeg tactics in their preparation are famous in the following years, fighting among the Italian and French armies, and according to

³⁵"Räche mich ... ewiger Krieg sey zwischen Dir und Scanderbeg, bis er vertilgt ist. Ich werde nicht eher die Freuden der Gläubigen schmecken. Lerne von mir, keinen kühnen Feinde zu verachten; wenn er auch zu klein ist. Erwächst Dir einer, so erdrücke ihn gleich selbst mit Deiner ganzen Kraft". *Ibid*, p. 59.

³⁶ *Ibid*, p. 61.

³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 62.

³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 64.

the author were similar with the brigands.³⁹ Ahmet Pasha is captured and because of his good behavior is well treated by Scanderbeg, and set free towards a ransom of 150.000 zecche from the part of the sultan. After this he becomes an internal friend of Scanderbeg.⁴⁰

A Sandjak bey from Serbia and of good reputation was sent to attack Scanderbeg. He demands from the sultan only 15.000 troops for this campaign. During the fight he is killed by Scanderbeg himself with a spear. The name of this Sandjak bey is not mentioned.⁴¹

In the book is also mentioned the siege of Berat by Scanderbeg and the two-week peace that he granted to the Turkish soldiers within the castle, one of the Scanderbeg mistakes, because at their aid the sultan Mehmet sent an army of 44.000 troops, something that surprised Scanderbeg's army, playing havoc on them.⁴² Scanderbeg withdraws from this enterprise and achieves to save 2/3 of his troops.

The author presents in this work also the sultan's effort to win over Scanderbeg's fellow warriors, and thus wins over Moisi Golemi. Moisi betrays, arrives in Adrianople, where is welcomed by the sultan and appointed commander of an army of 15.000 troops.⁴³ On 23 February 1453, Moisi heads to Albania, to occupy his lands. Also, he promised sultan that if he didn't succeed, he would have paid the shame with his life. This is the year when Constantinople is conquered.

On Moisi arrival, Scanderbeg heartbroken prepares to fight against him. Once, he was one of his most faithful and closest friends, and now was leading the army of the greatest enemy. Using the old tactics (for example night or surprise attacks, etc.) was useless, because Moisi knew all the tricks. Bravery and courage were the only tools for a successful war. Even though the plan of Moisi was well thought and his troops divided into three groups, they are quickly attacked and lose the order formation. Nonetheless, a knight rushes against Scanderbeg and hits him at the belly part and he falls from the horse, but it's not killed because the armor protects him.⁴⁴ Because a Turkish soldier surmises that Scanderbeg is dead, exults and screams "*Victory, victory,*

³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 65, see the note.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, p. 66-68.

⁴² *Ibid*, p. 70-72.

⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 76.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 78.

Scanderbeg is dead!"⁴⁵ This makes Scanderbeg stand up and continue this battle. In this battle Scanderbeg does not wear his helmet of gout head, but instead had a flock of feathers to notice him. As conclusion, the efforts to conquer Albania fail and the Turkish army withdraws by taking Moisi by force.⁴⁶

This failure makes Moisi experience difficult moments in Constantinople. Those who called him friend, pity him. Those who envy him, hate him and call him traitor. This makes him come back to Scanderbeg, who together with his officers welcomes him with open arms. Becker makes this description to the situation: *"He kneels down regretfully. Weeping does not let him speak. Scanderbeg is surprised, asks and imagines, and his good heart forgives everything. No rebuke, no word for his action comes out from his mouth. He raises his old friend and embraces him"*.⁴⁷

Later, Scanderbeg is betrayed by Hamza Kastrioti, his nephew, after his wife gave birth to a boy. Hamza deserted from the army and went to the sultan because he presumed that the throne was his. After the sultan welcomes Hamza with a great generosity trusts him an army of 50.000 troops, with the aim to become the ruler of the Albanian territories.⁴⁸ At the head of the army is placed Yousuf Pasha of Rumelia (in the text Romania), who comes to Albania with 40.000 troops. Hamza with his army is surprised by Scanderbeg killing 20.000 men and he is defeated.⁴⁹ Later Hamza, on Scanderbeg's knowledge escapes again in Constantinople, because there were his wife and child. There he dies poisoned.⁵⁰ Sometimes later, after the peace efforts between Scanderbeg and Mehmet fail because of the latter refusing to free Berat and Sfetigrad, Scanderbeg goes again in Naples, helping the son of the king Alfonso.⁵¹ Meanwhile, the sultan puts Athens and its surroundings under bondage and forces Persia to a humiliating peace with him.

⁴⁵ "Sieg, Sieg, Scanderbeg ist todt", *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

⁴⁷ "Da warf sich der Reuige plötzlich zu seinen Füßen nieder. Vor Thränen vermochte er kein Wort zu reden, Scanderbeg staunt, fragte, erräth, und vergessen ist Alles in seinem guten Herzen. Kein Vorwurf, keine Frage nach der Ursache jenes Schrittes, fließt über seine Lippen. Er hebt den alten Freund auf und drückt ihn an seinen Busen". *Ibid.*, p. 80.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

After these events, in Albania marches again a Turkish army of 40.000 troops chaired by the officer Karassa, who is obliged to interrupt the battle against Scanderbeg and escapes annihilation thanks of a torrent rain that helps him run.⁵² When Mehmet finds out that was impossible for Scanderbeg to be defeated, offers him peace and kindness with the only condition; Scanderbeg has to send his son to him. Scanderbeg from his side sends other conditions for peace, which Mehmet accepting and recognizing Scanderbeg as the legal king, gives up all his claims on Albania.⁵³ Nevertheless, this was not a long-term agreement, because the Pope and Venice were preparing for war against the sultan. Consequently Scanderbeg, an ally theirs, torn apart the peace agreement of 1461 in 1463, because to him is promised the leadership of a crusade.⁵⁴ The peace violation started with the incursion of Scanderbeg in the territories of Macedonia where he ransacked a lot.⁵⁵

Delighted and with the most beautiful dreams that he had ever imagined, Scanderbeg impatiently was waiting for the Pope's herald, that was going to foreshadow him the news of the Papal army landing, but to his surprise, he is informed that the Pope Pious II suddenly died in Ancona aged 59, while getting ready to sail to Albania.⁵⁶ The army was assembled, and dispersed again, something that disappoints Scanderbeg, who was waiting for the moment to get Albania united with other countries, and even to renew the Greek kingdom.

Sultan Mehmet (Mohamet by the author) sends to Albania another army composed by 20.000 knights, this time under the leadership of the Albanian Bellaban (Ballaban) who showed his skills in the conquer of Constantinople and from the slave status was raised at the rank of a high officer.⁵⁷ After negotiations, which demands were ridiculed by Scanderbeg, the armies got ready for the war. Bellaban manages to escape from the battlefield, but during the battle he took Moisi as prisoner, and sent him in chains in Constantinople,⁵⁸ where he was

⁵² *Ibid*, p. 93.

⁵³ *Ibid*, p. 95.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 96.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, p. 98.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 99.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p. 100.

peeled alive for 14 consecutive days to death.⁵⁹ So, this was Mehmet's revenge towards him and Scanderbeg, who was not conceding to defeat.

The Albanian renegade was once again sent to Albania with an army by the Sultan Mehmet who says to him, "*Albania's Pashalik is yours, if Scanderbeg is at my feet dead or alive.*"⁶⁰ Also, the end of this army is the same. Albanian wanted to revenge Moisi and play havoc on the Turks and force them to withdraw in Macedonia, taking from them a lot of stuff.⁶¹ Bellaban, tries to justify himself in front of the sultan with the proposal of defeated that Scanderbeg by attacking him at the same time at both flanks with two different Ottoman armies.⁶² This attempt also fails. Bellaban runs away for his life, meanwhile his army is dispersed.⁶³ The second army experiences a big defeat. The commander was killed with a spear throw at the lower part of the belly.⁶⁴ Even this time Albania escapes invasion.

The sultan decides to go himself and fight against Scanderbeg, but first he tries to achieve his goal by other means. He sends to Scanderbeg two renegades that allegedly have betrayed the sultan and wanted to put themselves at Scanderbeg's service. Then, when would be presented the occasion, they have to try to poison Scanderbeg. Suddenly, for something unimportant they start quarrelling unveiling the secret.⁶⁵ The tortures force them to reveal many other things, and at the end they die as they deserve. There was nothing left to the sultan, but the war for the placation of his revenge feelings.

The author dedicates to the siege of Kruja some pages and gives details that probably are due to his fantasy. The sources of information are not mentioned. The huge army is set on march, and Bellaban leads its vanguard. The Turkish army during its way does not meet resistance, and annihilates with sword and fire everything on its road.⁶⁶ Kruja is besieged and suffers cannon shots day and night. The

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, p. 101.

⁶⁰ "Der Paschalik von Albanien ist Dein, wenn Scanderbeug todt oder lebend zu meinen Füßen liegt"! *Ibid*, p. 101.

⁶¹ *Ibid*, p. 102-103.

⁶² *Ibid*, p. 104.

⁶³ *Ibid*, p. 108.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p. 109.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p. 111.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*.

defensive army undertakes occasionally blitz attacks, while Scanderbeg has interrupted all the supply roads for the Turks. The siege was enduring and the sultan now feared that he might be forced to withdraw in shame and with damages.⁶⁷ He is upset and leaves the siege under the command of his pasha officers. The Turks this time were very attentive to the traps, and hoped to take profit from some imprudence of the defending troops within the castle.

Meanwhile Scanderbeg secretly travels from region to region and to the neighboring countries to secure support. Later, he arrives in Rome and begs Pope for mercenaries. In Rome he is welcomed, because is considered the defensive wall of Italy and all the southern Europe.⁶⁸ There he achieves to secure money, and through Venice he quickly comes back to Albania. On the way back, he meets the troops sent to his aid. Thus, the travel to Italy proved to be useful. The established army had 13.000 troops, and was assembled in the island of Lissa. We think that here the author refers to the Ishull Lezhë (Lezha's island).⁶⁹ The plan to save Kruja is prepared in Shkodra (Skutari), while in Durrës arrive other forces from Venice.⁷⁰ From the other side, the brother of Bellaban with reinforcements comes to aid to the Turkish army, but falls together with his son at the hands of Scanderbeg, who had a big quantity of gunpowder.⁷¹

Bellaban was feeling unsafe, and during an attack with the victory appearing on the side of Scanderbeg, plans the withdraw from the siege, before finding himself prisoner. Nevertheless, he plans a last surprise attack, that maybe would bring him at the last moment what he has not succeed till then, the victory. Meanwhile, in a high tower of the castle was standing Gjergj Aleksii (Georg Alexis), who watches Bellaban and gives order to be fired a falconetto*. Bellaban falls from

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, p. 112.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p. 113.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*. This toponym at the end of the book, the author writes it "Lyssa" and in the notes describes it as island, situated in front of the Venetian Dalmatia shores "*Insel, dem venetianischen Dalmatien gegenüber*". *Ibid*, p. 121.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p. 114.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, p. 115.

* Falconetto was light artillery weapons firing cannon-balls of a chicken-egg size, with great precision and can be dangerous until to 12.000-18.000 steps. Perhaps has been used in the time of Scanderbeg, because is recognized as a weapon of the second half of the XV century. For more see: Louis Blesson, *Geschichte des Belagerungskrieges oder der offensiven*

the horse getting seriously wounded, while the attack begins to lessen.⁷² Scanderbeg, already has broken the siege and breaks through more and more towards the gates of Kruja, which are opened to welcome the winners. After the complete debacle caused by the troops of Scanderbeg which were eager to get their war reward, a small contingent of Turkish troops escaped and entered the territory of Rumelia.

The news of Scanderbeg's victory was spread even in Constantinople, where his name begun to be mentioned with fear and admiration, because there considered Scanderbeg's quick voyage to Italy his escape.⁷³ Mehmet (Mohamet) was badly sad and angry, because now he feared his throne, and wanted to face once more Scanderbeg on 1466, to personally achieve what he previously hadn't. In the spring of that year he crisscrossed Albania bringing with him manufacturers of all kinds who constructed in *Fusha Farsale*⁷⁴, at *Sommos* or *Sommini*⁷⁵ river bank a city, or a stronghold to be used as central station for all their military interventions.⁷⁶

Sultan thought that with this fortification he would become lord of this country, but suddenly was spread the word that Scanderbeg himself had entered the city, something that panicked the lines of the Turkish army. However, the sultan noticing that his military glory was in danger, advanced with his army in front of Kruja walls, but after realizing that had been standing there in vain for entire months, without conquering it, decided to go towards Durrës where during his march was nothing left but destruction.⁷⁷ He also conquered there a small castle built by Scanderbeg. The unprotected fields around Durrës were forced to pay for the resistance of Durrës and Kruja. The villages were burned, and the screams of elderly people and women while burning

Befestigungen. Eine Skizze. Mit zwei Kupfertafeln. Berlin: In der Schlesinger'schen Buch- und Muehandlung 1835, p. 156-159.

⁷² W. Becker, *Scanderbeg*..., f. 115-116.

⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 117.

⁷⁴ Here the author confounds geography, and calles *Fushat e Krujës/Fields of Kruja* (*Fushë-Krujë*) and *Fushat e Elbasanit/Elbasan's Fields* as *Fushat Farsale*. Farsalas is not situated in Albania, but in Northern Greece...

⁷⁵ Here have to do maybe with a wrong reading of the Shkumbin river (*Scumpini*), which the author mistakenly presents as *Sommini*.

⁷⁶ W. Becker, *Scanderbeg*..., p. 118.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, p. 119.

inside their homes, or running through by the swords of the Spahi were everywhere heard.⁷⁸

Scanderbeg who never confronted the sultan, was chasing him uninterruptedly, provoked him and cut off all the supply ways. After five months there was an unexpected rupture of hunger and different epidemics within the Turkish army, and every day death was present to "its rich assets"⁷⁹ forcing the half of the world's terror (the sultan) flee in the beginning of winter from this small corner.

If once ago Greece defeated the Persian army, now it was Albania on the west, who was not even its tenth, but faced for twenty years the courageous Turkish armies leaded by the best officers and the sultans themselves who were victorious over kings and emperors and were the terror of Europe.⁸⁰

In Lezha, which the author calls Lyssa and specifies as an island in front of Venetian Dalmatia, Scanderbeg calls an assembly made of his vassals, princes and Venetian envoys, aiming that the next summer to take revenge on the Turks for the past summer.⁸¹ However, he feels that there was coming an enemy that was undefeatable, the death. He falls ill in bed, but calls the ambassadors of Venice and Naples in order to trust them the country and the family. Venice should protect his family after his death. There comes the news that the Turks have come close to the walls of Kruja once again, he jumps at his feet and orders to be brought his sword and armor, but the strengths are no more with him ,and he again falls to bed and tired by the disease, dies aged 63, on 17 January 1467*, and was buried in Lezha.⁸²

After his death, Albania and Dalmatia were conquered by the Turks, who also occupied Lezha, where they found Scanderbeg's tomb. The janissaries opened his grave, took his rests and distributed them among them.⁸³ Very happy that possessed a part of the rests of this great warrior, they carried his rests in their chest as talisman within golden

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ "Der Tod hielt alle Tage eine überreichliche Erndte". *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p. 120.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, p. 121.

* According to some historical works, the author gives the date of death Skanderbeg's on 17 January 1467. But, in reality Skanderbeg dies a year later, on 17 January **1468**. Barleti gives the date of Skanderbeg's death on 17 January 1466.

⁸² *Ibid*, p. 122.

⁸³ *Ibid*, p. 123.

and silver keepers to bring them luck in the war. They honored the rests of the hero as much as they feared and hated him while he was alive.⁸⁴

The presentation of Scanderbeg's figure

Here Scanderbeg takes on some dimensions'; he is a Christian hero "*Kämpen Christi*"⁸⁵ and a leader to his people. So, he can be defined as a national hero and extraordinary and courageous strategist. About his war in the defense of Christianity, the author at the end of his book writes that he had the conviction that was he fighting in the defense of Christianity, but in reality Albanians entered this war for their cities and fields, and to please their vice of plunder.⁸⁶

Scanderbeg is presented as a communicative person; with both people and soldiers, and after the victories he is very generous and rewards his warriors with different stocks as furs, money and horses, etc.⁸⁷ Here we can mention the protection of Kruja from Murat II. He was modest with his vassals, something that is shown by his presence even for the less important of his soldiers.⁸⁸ Even though he is merciless during the fight, he is very correct and merciful and sometimes friendly with the Turkish prisoners and hostages, as in the case of Ahmet Pasha (Achmed Pascha) who is friendly treated, and in a such a way that it could be seen by all the prisoners (and an amount of 15000 zecche was paid by the sultan Mehmet II), and Ahmet remains a friend of Scanderbeg for the rest of his life.⁸⁹ Scanderbeg has shown himself merciful even with one of his closest officers Moisi (Moses), when the latter betrays him by putting himself at the sultan's service and fighting against him,⁹⁰ and then returns to Scanderbeg regretfully.⁹¹ So, with the enemies Scanderbeg was sometimes so friendly and merciful that they would have preferred to find him more as a friend rather than as an enemy.⁹²

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 76-79.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 125.

Scanderbeg is mentioned in the book as a founder of a new cavalry, of *stratiots*, or the *Albanian cavalry* (*albanische Reiterei*), as the author calls it, which were similar with the hussars of the western European armies.⁹³ His war against the Turkish invader is seen as an act, which also the most powerful nations of the time didn't dare to undertake.⁹⁴ The author shows his ability as a strategist: he was tireless in this job, he minutely controlled the positions, received detailed information on the enemy, when during the night where all were asleep, he was preparing the battle plan, which he would personally lead.⁹⁵ On his way of fighting catches the eye the fact – writes the author – that Scanderbeg could resist with few means even to a great enemy power.⁹⁶ As about Scanderbeg's military art, the author also mentions his ability to make friends and allies whose arrived until within the sultan's seraglios and Divan, from whom he received information on the armies to be sent against him and was especially interested on their weak points.⁹⁷ Also, another positive side who helped his war was also his capability to find and multiply the money.⁹⁸

As conclusion, according to Becker, Scanderbeg is listed among the most admirable men of his time, which through his courage and undertaking spirit achieved the limits of the impossible.⁹⁹ As about the hero's morality, the author adds that is difficult to value him if he was negative or positive, because the circumstances, the education, the iron law of necessity, time and place oblige to forgive many things and at the same time are an excuse.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless his nation owes so much to him.¹⁰¹

The presentation of the Albanians in Becker's work

At the beginning of the book, Becker writes in Albanians courage and character, comparing it with that of the Swiss that defended the throne of almost Christian countries in Western Europe. Here, the

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

Ottomans have found "their Swiss", so Albanians or the Arnauts, which almost performed the same function. The author says that, "everywhere he may go, at every pasha, would find the terrible bodyguards, which at only a hand move, and the person against whom is raised the knife immediately dies at the door-step of the palace."¹⁰² So, the Albanian from Becker, is described as a savage warrior, which indeed is either Christian nor Moslem (Turkish), but his capability to kill equipped with an unbroken loyalty is unified with a fierce courage and a greedy envy to grab.¹⁰³ So, in the whole, this people was wild (*wildes Volk*).¹⁰⁴

The homeland of the best and most fearful warriors (*besten, gefürchtesten Krieger*)¹⁰⁵ is described by the author as a wild country with rocky mountains covered in snow, and in the west wet by the sea waves, where they had come from the Caspian Sea because were banished from there.

According to Becker, still today (year 1821), the Arnaut is not a powerless slave, as the descendants of the noble Greeks are, but of him are afraid and try to have good relations with him.¹⁰⁶ He is considered a Turk, even though he is Christian.¹⁰⁷ If this population wouldn't have exercised the power at the time of Scanderbeg, so if it was aware of its ability perimeter, it would have been very difficult to escape from his grave fate, prepared either by himself or by all his neighbors.

II

Gjergj Kastrioti, an outline presentation of the previous world offering a comparison with the today. Monograph by Heinrich Gottlob Gräve, 1828

Two words on the author

The second monograph was published in 1828. This monograph is a historic study, and it is entitled "*Georg Kastriotto. Eine biographische*

¹⁰² W. Becker, *Scanderbeg...*, p. 3.

¹⁰³ "[...] die grimmigen Krieger, die, nicht Christen, nicht Türken, nur Sinn für Mord mit unbiegsamer Treue vereinen, nur wilde Tapferkeit mit unersättlicher Raubgier mischen können". W. Becker, *Scanderbeg...*, p. 4.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*, p. 124.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, p. 4.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, p. 128.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*.

Skizze der Vorwelt, Vergleichung mit der Gegenwart darbietend" (Gjergj Kastrioti, an outline presentation of the previous world offering a comparison with the today).¹⁰⁸ The author of this work in the foreword has put the initials "G. K. August 1827 (G., K. im August 1827)¹⁰⁹." The author until some months ago was anonymous, and his name was Heinrich Gottlob Gräve¹¹⁰ (or Gräfe). As the author's biography we are giving the following data. *Heinrich Gottlob Gräve* was born on February 7, 1772 in Budissin, Oberlausitz Duchy. He was a German jurist, historian and ethnographer. Gräfe was the son of a master tailor with a humanist formation, from the school bench of his birth place. From 1790 to 1797, he studied law in Leipzig, and some years later, in 1800, he became a lawyer of the superior office in Bautzen and later member of the council and senator in Kamenz. On 1821 (or 1822), he became member of the Oberlausitzischen Sciences Society (*Oberlausitzischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften*). He was interested in ethnography and the history of his region, that was reflected in many editions, especially in the last 30 years of his life. He authored many monographs and papers. He died on April 30, 1847 in Kamenz.

The monograph

The foreword expresses since the beginning the sympathy of the author for Greece, which is called a loving country blessed by God (*in diesem lieblichen und von Gott gesegneten Land*). Also, he describes himself as a supporter of the Greeks whose in those times were fighting for freedom, and thousands of them were in vain shedding blood. Meanwhile the Europe was still discussing the legitimacy of the rebellion, by putting on the political weight the question to help or not

¹⁰⁸ *Georg Kastriotto*. Eine biographische Skizze der Vorwelt, Vergleichung mit der Gegenwart darbietend. Mit Kastriotto's Bildniß. Meißen/Leipzig: C. E. Klinkicht/ J. G. Mittler 1828.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*, p. XVI.

¹¹⁰ The biographic data by: Friedrich August Schmidt, Bernhard Friedrich Voigt, *Neuer Nekrolog der Deutschen*. Fünfundzwanzigster Jahrgang, 1847. Zweiter Theil. Weimar: Bernhard Friedrich Voigt 1849, f. 825-826; Brigitte Emmrich, Heinrich Gottlob Gräve, in: *Sächsische Biographie*. [http://saebi.isgv.de/biografie/Heinrich_Gottlob_Gr%C3%A4ve_\(1772-1847\)](http://saebi.isgv.de/biografie/Heinrich_Gottlob_Gr%C3%A4ve_(1772-1847)) (19. 10. 2018). See also: *Neues Lausitzisches Magazin*. Im Auftrag der Oberlausitzischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften. Herausgegeben von Gustav Köhler. Band 34. Görlitz: Gustav Köhler 1858, p. 212.

this nation, like a Hamlet who stays and theologizes and philosophizes on the question, "*to be or not to be.*"¹¹¹

The author considers this work as a warning about the Turkish danger: "*because who guarantees that – perhaps, for the last time – the Ottoman power would not renew and as a extinguishing flambeau, will now again spread its fire in a freaky way, and thus the Turk would be again dangerous for Germany?*"¹¹². Because their empire has not weakened, as somebody believes, and nobody can tell us that these [the Turks] are wild and unformed hordes, because the ignorance and the lack of discipline along with the religious fundamentalism and savage desperation – from which the Ottomans have been more strongly nourished, especially their soul rather than the Christians by the Gospel – show their dangerous destructive forces.¹¹³

The author describes the Turks somehow as barbarians, like the once Gaul and Huns, who found it much easier to kill with their hands and destroy rather than build.¹¹⁴ Except that the sultan Mahmut II has money and the capability to find new ways of support.¹¹⁵ On the other hand, there is no geographical and military obstruction between his empire and Germany that could prevent the German territories from being penetrated.¹¹⁶

He is against the annexation of Greece by a definitive power, e.g., Russia, because according to him, the Russians are destroyers of culture,¹¹⁷ which is exemplified by the author by quoting a Tatar who was staying under the shade of a fig tree in a wonderful place but not viable: "*since the Russians became rulers here, those [the Tatars] have diminished, and everything that is sown, is eradicated from the face of the earth by them[the Russians].*"¹¹⁸ So, the author concludes that in

¹¹¹ Georg Kastriotto, p. III.

¹¹² "Denn wer bürgt dafür, daß nicht jetzt – wahrscheinlich zum letzten Male – sich der Osmanen Macht noch einmal ermannen und gleich einer verlöschenen Fackel ihren letzten Glanz furchtbar verbreiten und der Türke noch einmal Teutschland gefährlich werden möchte", *Ibid.*, p. VI.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. VII.

¹¹⁴ "Auch die Barbaren haben Hände, sie vermögen zu metzeln und zu verwüsten, und lechter fällt zu zerstören als aufzubauen". *Ibid.*, p. VII-VIII.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. VIII.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. IX.

¹¹⁷ G. Grimm, "Deutsche Skender-Beg-Monographien", p. 96.

¹¹⁸ "Seit die Russen Herren des Landes sind, haben sie sich verringert, und was ja noch angepflanzt wird, rotten sie aus!". Georg Kastriotto, p. XIV.

this case, "Turks' tyranny" would suit better to the Greeks rather than "the Russians' humanity", also quoting the words of a Montenegrin.¹¹⁹

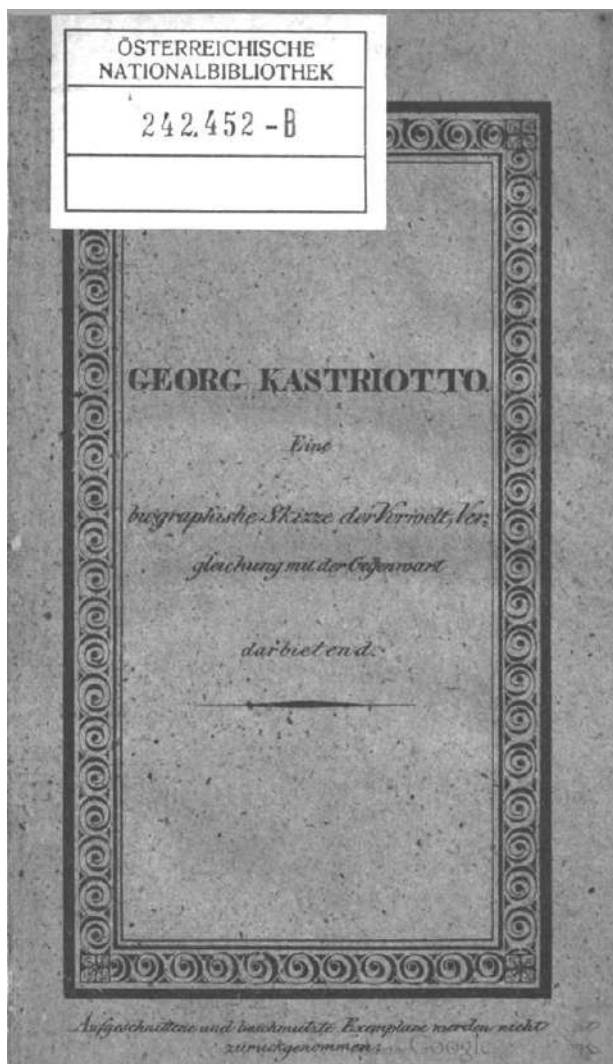


Fig. 2: Frontispiece of the work "Gjergj Kastrioti, a presentation outline of the previous world offering a comparison with the today" by Heinrich Gottlob Gräve

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. XV.

The author is also against a British protectorate, because the Greeks would develop their national aspiration only in an independent state.¹²⁰ About the British protectorate, the author also quotes the saying of an educated mainiote, who when was asked by a British about Greek acceptance of the British protection, the latter replied: "*Better the Turkish skewer rather than the British protectorate*".¹²¹ The preliminary condition on that already existed, because the majority of the warriors of freedom had fallen for their homeland, and through these heroic deaths was at the same time also extinguished the critic on Greek vices that had previously existed.¹²²

Except for the introduction which is 16 pages long, the monograph is 128 pages. About the history of Scanderbeg, the author has set to himself the duty to present the hero since the beginning as more historical as it is possible, by leaving his pen to be ruled by the truth and free from by the romantic glorifications of the time.¹²³ However, since the beginning the author gives wrong information.

The author considers the Greeks and the Albanians (differently he calls them Arnauts) as the same people and draws Scanderbeg among the greatest heroes of this people,¹²⁴ and begins narrating on Scanderbeg by pretending that the Kastrioti family, have ruled in Albania since 710,¹²⁵ without referring to a given source on that data. So, Albania as in the case of Albanians, is presented as part of Greece. Scanderbeg's father, Gjon Kastrioti, as the head of the family ruling in Albania, makes him king, and the name of Scanderbeg's mother is wrongly given; as "Vorsava" and not Vojsava, which belonged to the tribe of Tribals.¹²⁶

The author continues further with inaccurate data, when says that Gjon and Vorsava had in the beginning five daughters who were killed

¹²⁰ G. Grimm, "Deutsche Skender-Beg-Monographien", p. 96.

¹²¹ "Lieber am türkischen Spieß, als unter Englands Protektion". Georg Kastriotto, p. XV.

¹²² G. Grimm, "Deutsche Skender-Beg-Monographien", p. 96.

¹²³ Georg Kastriotto, p. XVI.

¹²⁴ Georg Kastriotto, p. 1.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

in 1408 by the eunuchs*, while their four sons Konstantin, Johann [Reposius], Stanislav [Staniza] and Gjergj, the youngest among his brothers, born in 1406, they were forced to surrender as hostages in the court of sultan Murat, after he conquered Greece.¹²⁷

The history of Scanderbeg continues up to the page 86, where it is spoken about the Scanderbeg's death. There are brought again fragments from the hero's life and activity. On the above-mentioned work of Becker, there are certainly found entire parallels, but Gräfe is more accurate and continuously presents the dated events. Scanderbeg's death is wrongly dated, on January 17, 1467.¹²⁸ The author also mentions the opening of his tomb by the Ottoman soldiers in Lezha, but not as a sign of hate to disgrace him, but to take his rests which were divided among them as a fortune relic from the body of this warrior.¹²⁹ Also, the author mentions an Ottoman agha called Reis Efendi who lived in 1780 and had in his possession such a relic to be prevented from being stabbed on his back and protected from the war.¹³⁰ The author himself had met the son of Reis Pasha who told him that his father, indeed was not killed in battles, because he was protected by the bone of Scanderbeg, but was later executed by the sultan through a silk rope, and only in this case the bone had not the power to protect him.¹³¹

According to the author, the ruins of his grave on the hill became a pilgrimage place, where the *Greeks* continuously went until some decades ago.¹³² Therefore, here the author makes Scanderbeg also a hero of the Greeks, and as we previously said, it was not clear to the author who the Albanians were, by confusing them with the Greeks. Shepherds, Christian pedestrians, Jews and Moslems (in the text Turks) pass by the tomb, and seriously say: "*Here it is the tomb of the great Kastrioti! – Ah, he was so good, so big, so brave and so right.*"¹³³

*As its already known, the sisters were not murdered but married in different noble families.

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 3.

¹²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 84.

¹²⁹ *Ibid*, p. 99.

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, p. 99-100.

¹³¹ *Ibid*, f. 100.

¹³² "Noch vor weniger, als einem Menschenalter, wallfahrteten die Griechen zu den Trümmern seines Grabhügels [...]", *Ibid*, p. 100.

¹³³ "[...] und mit erfurchtsvollem Schauer ging der Hirt und Krieger, der christliche, jüdische oder türkische Wanderer bei der heiligen Städte vorüber, sish die Worte: "Hier ist des

According to the author, the Turks definitively achieved breaking of the wonderful kingdom of Kastrioti (*dieses herrliche Königreich*) a year later (1468), and further economically destroying it by doubling the taxes.¹³⁴ The author shows here his lack of knowledge on the history of Albanian territories, many of which were conquered ten years after Scanderbeg's death, as in the case of Kruja which was occupied by the Turks on 1478.

Scanderbeg's figure

Scanderbeg is presented in this monograph as a military leader with natural physical and spiritual characteristics, because "his courage was strong as the rock."¹³⁵ Except that force, the author describes the hero as a man with simple human characteristics, radiating kindness, softness and friendship, characteristics these that has made him a warrior winning over many hearts.¹³⁶ Even in this monograph, Scanderbeg is presented as a Warrior of Christianity (*Kämpfer des Christentums*)¹³⁷ and with spiritual qualities such as *goodness, greatness, courage and righteousness*,¹³⁸ as was above mentioned by the author.

Conclusions

According to Grimm, Gräfe is a better historian than Becker, because he is more careful with his references that in fact are the translated versions of the works authored by Barleti.¹³⁹ The sources that the author uses are:¹⁴⁰

Großen Kastriotto's Grab! – wie gut, wie tapfer und wie gerchet war er! Bedeutungsvoll zuraunend". *Ibid*, p. 100.

¹³⁴ *Ibid*, p. 98.

¹³⁵ "Kastriotto war überhaupt von natur mit allen den Eigenschaften, welche zu einem großen Feldherr gehören, im reichlichen Maaße ausgestattet, indem er mit seiner ungeheurn Körperkraft einen felsenfesten Muth...", *Ibid*, p. 92.

¹³⁶ "jene Freundlichkeit, Gute und Milde, welche so leicht der Krieger Herzen gewinnt....", *Ibid*.

¹³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 85.

¹³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 100.

¹³⁹ G. Grimm, "Deutsche Skender-Beg-Monographien", p. 98.

¹⁴⁰ Georg Kastriotto..., p. 128.

1. The work authored by Marin Barleti, published in Strasbourg on 1535.¹⁴¹ Translated into German by Johannes Pinicianus. Frankfurt am Main 1577 and Magdeburg 1606.¹⁴²

2. A work authored by Samuel von Pufendorf entitled, "*The History of Gjergj Kastrioti Scanderbeg*."¹⁴³

3. The History of the Great Kastrioti, called Scanderbeg, king of Albania and archduke of Epirus. Translated from French in 1780.¹⁴⁴

4. A history of Scanderbeg published in Vienna in 1784 entitled, "*Kastrioti the Great of Albania*".¹⁴⁵

The data extracted from the sources are time after time commented and sometimes criticized. Here we can mention his critics towards the chronicler who says that in the battle of Dibra e Poshtme (Lower Dibra) only 26 of the Scanderbeg soldiers were killed, while there were 22 000 Turkish fallen soldiers.¹⁴⁶ The author distances himself when saying that in this case he was only presenting the sources he at his disposal, and such irrelevant losses could also be met in other authors, e.g., Caesar, who when speaking for his losses, gives a small number (*pauci de nostris ceciderunt*).¹⁴⁷

¹⁴¹ De vita, moribus ac rebus praecipue adversus turcas gestis Georgii Castrioti, clarissimi epirotarum principis, qui propter celeberrima facinora, Scanderbegus, hoc est, Alexander Magnus, cognominatus fuit, libri tredecim per Marinum Barletium Scodrensem conscripti, ac nunc primum in Germania castigatissime aediti. Argentorati Apvd Cratonem Mylum. Mense Octobri, Anno M.D.XXXVII

¹⁴² About this edition, the author gives us some other details. He mentions the other translator of Barleti, Gabriel Zschimmer from Dresden who translated the work on 1664. Grefe also mentions that the work was translated even in French, Italian and Portuguese languages. Also, he informs that a fragment from the work has been drafted by Georg Pontanus from Breitenbergu in Hanouiae 1609, which Poncet used in his work *Historie du Scanderbeg par Poncet*. a Paris 1709. See: Georg Kastriotto, p. 128.

¹⁴³ Samuel von Pufendorf, *Georgii Castriotae, Scanderbeg vulgo dicti historia compendio tradita*. Stade 1684. See also for more the bibliography: G. Pérovitch, *Scanderbeg...*, p. 85.

¹⁴⁴ *Geschichte des großen Kastriotto, genannt Scanderbeg, König von Albanien und Großherzog von Epirus*. Aus dem Französichen. 1780. On this work we couldn't collect data. This work is mentioned on the bibliography: G. Pérovitch, *Scanderbeg...*, p. 100.

¹⁴⁵ *Der Grosse Kastriotto von Albanien, eine Geschichte* Wien, 1784. On this work we couldn't collect data. Its mentioned on Pérovitch's bibliography: G. Pérovitch, *Scanderbeg...*, p. 101.

¹⁴⁶ Georg Kastriotto, p. 11.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p. 11-12, ref. Compare also: G. Grimm, "Deutsche Skender-Beg-Monographien", p. 99.



Fig. 3: Scanderbeg's protrait on Gräfe monograph

There are other cases where he appears inattentive and uncritical as when he quoting Barleti's the antiquity fragment, where Scanderbeg according the ancient Greece custom hangs his sword at his father's bust.¹⁴⁸ Another mistake to be mentioned is the Scanderbeg's bury, which is called pile of soil or burial mound (Grabhügel) that his fellow warriors cover with the flags they have captured from the enemies in war;¹⁴⁹ or when he mentions archbishop of Durrësi named Johann Mikrowick=Juanis, son of Petri Gardar from Pastor=Vecchio, Archbishop of Durrës (*Johann Mikrowick=Juanis, Sohn Petri Gardar von Pastor=Vecchio, Erzbischof von Durazzo*),¹⁵⁰ etc.

He is more accurate than Becker about the details by trying to give accurate data.¹⁵¹ The Albanian events are strongly placed at European politics of the time, but without leaving behind the oriental

¹⁴⁸ G. Grimm, "Deutsche Skender-Beg-Monographien", p. 99; Georg Kastriotto, p. 71.

¹⁴⁹ "[...] die Krieger welche er oft zum Siege geführt hatte, pflanzten um seinen Grabhügel die den Feinden entrissenen Fahnen, und errichteten Trophäen von der iren Gegnern genommenen Beute [...]". Georg Kastriotto, p. 86.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

¹⁵¹ G. Grimm, "Deutsche Skender-Beg-Monographien", p. 99.

background.¹⁵² He does not hesitate to present Scanderbeg's defeats and through that he becomes more credible.¹⁵³ The Gräfe's way of thinking politically is clear regardless the censorship of the press of the time. Influenced by Hellenism, the author presents the Greeks and Albanians as the same ethnic group. There are other mistakes found. His book on Scanderbeg is for sure better than the book by Becker, because it is more accurate, more critical and more closed the German scholar Gerhard Grimm has the same opinion.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*