

## ROLE OF ALBANIAN NOBILITY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAMIC CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION

During the Ottoman Era, many distinguished Albanian families such as Skuraj, Mahmut-Begolli, Vloraj, Aslan-Pashalli, Sinan-Pashalli, Bushatlli, Kurt-Pashalli, Bargjinolli, Hoxholli, Rrotlla, Rexhep-Pashalli, Gjinolli, Toptani, Biçakçi, Tepelana, etc., inherited the family right of holding offices and positions in high state levels through exercising their, almost, autonomous power in different administrative units inside Albanian ethnic lands. The crucial ideas for the fate of the Albanian people were developed and shaped in and by those families. Those families had all characteristics and the role of authentic Albanian nobility.

Besides their active participation in the day-to-day political life and the governance of the country with a particular role on securing peace, order and other security issues of the country, the Albanian nobility played a significant role in cultural development of the country as well.

The role and contribution of the Albanian nobility towards the development of the Islamic culture and civilization among the Albanians was comprehensive, exclusive and decisive. That role was expressed in the four following points:

1. They established several new kasabas, such as Korça, Kavaja, Gjakova, Kaçanik, Tirana, Peqin, Zinova, Rogova, etc., through which they established a new era of Islamic urbanization;

2. They built several religious, cultural and educational institutions, such as madrasahs, libraries, mosques and tekkies, which were centers where the Islamic culture, or better say the Albanian culture with the Islamic influence, was created, developed, cultivated, learnt and further distributed. To this end, there were several Albanian nobility women distinguished for their contribution towards the establishment of those

abovementioned institutions;

3. They were active in the cultural life by participating in literary, scientific and religious creation, and.

4. They supported and encouraged the knowledgeable people, writers and artists.

During the whole period of the Ottoman Empire, the Albanian nobility supported greatly the art and knowledge, in general, as well as cultivated the taste for the beauty and the magnificent.

The role of the Albanian nobility in the cultural development of the country during the Ottoman Era will be clearer after a careful study of the inherited manuscripts in oriental languages created by Albanians, or created in the Albanian lands during that time. It will be even clearer after studying, inquiring and publishing the *Vakýfnameh* as the most relevant documents in the cultural, educational, religious history of the institutions of that period.