

THE EDUCATION AND ALBANIAN SCHOOLS IN ALBANIA DURING THE YEARS 1905- 1908

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Abstract

The Cultural National Movement gave a great contribution for opening the Albanian schools and learning the Albanian Language during the years 1905-1908. This was a hard work due to the unfavorable conditions at this period. The members of the Cultural National Clubs were determined to reach their purposes. Clubs were broad democratic organizations which consisted on intellectuals, officers of the state apparatus teachers, representatives of civil bourgeoisie, the small producers and traders of the city and the village, the landowners, the officers and the people who were associated with the Ottoman rulers.

Keywords: Cultural Club, Albanian Schools, the declaration of the constitution

1. INTRODUCTION

The efforts of learning the Albanian Language with a single and common Albanian alphabet for all Albanians were not separated from the war for the rising of the Albanian people through the spread of knowledge in their native language, by opening of the Albanian schools.

By opening and establishing of the Albanian schools, the spread of the national education, the rising of national Albanians and the country's progress that faced to many difficulties were impossible.

By the time that was prevented the spread of learning the Albanian language, the government of the Sultan, allowed the opening of the foreign schools in Albania, especially Italian and Austrian Catholic schools. At the end of the XIX century and at the beginning of XX century, Austria-Hungary established schools in some cities of Albania such as in Tirana Shkoder, Durrës, Milot, etc. Austrian schools in their majority were religious and were administered by Catholic institutions which were only a part of primary or simple professional schools.

2. FIRST SCHOOLS IN ALBANIA

In the early Twentieth Century, Vienna put in many of the Catholic schools in Northern Albania, instead of Italian, the Albanian language as the teaching language, in some other Austrian schools put in German language. With this measure Vienna thought to weaken the Italian influence and to enforce its influence over the all Albanian cultural movement, one of which request was the establishment of the Albanian national schools. The Italy also had raised its schools, especially in the years 1901-1906, the network of Italian schools were extended. Primary schools were opened in Shkodra, Durrës, Vlora etc.. At the beginning of the XX century, Rome under the influence of the Albanian National movement, and its request for extensive the Albanian readings and writings, put in the Italian schools although with a limited extent the learning of Albanian the Language.

In the 1905 the national movement began to be organized in new forms. The organization was defined by the needs of internal development and by the external circumstances that were created in Balkans. In the national movement started now to be activated and to have a powerful influence a whole generation of patriots, which were mainly intellectual, journalist and publisher of the organs of the Albanian press, teachers of Turkish schools, officers of the state and people with different professions.

2.1 The Secret Committee Of Monastery

The representatives of this generation reached to organize in Monastery, in November 1905, the Albanian secret committee named "For the freedom of Albania". The committee in addition to other requirements demanded the official recognition of the Albanian language and introduction of the Albanian language in state institutions and schools. The committee drafted it's statute which was pressed in the Printing House "Luarasi"

in Sofia, in Albanian and distributed it in all Albanian vilayets. The Article 13 of the statute stated:

"Considering the fact that the language is the main tool of the civilization of the people each member is obligated to help people for being educated in their own language. In the March-April 1906, the committee of Monastery had decided patriotic relationships for all cultural societies abroad, especially to those of Bucharest and Sofia. These patriotic societies made possible the supply of books and newspapers in Albanian language. The movement for national education and culture operated under the care of the Secret Committee, which protected not only the Albanian schools, but also distributed the necessary literature for them. Expressing the determination of Albanian people to save and to learn their native language, in the newspaper "Kombi" wrote in December 1907 that "whatever they are poor and the government pursues and don't let us to open primary schools, Albanian language will be also written from stones and streets"

Near the declaration of Turkish Constitution, the reading and the writing of education in the Albanian language had taken a great expansion across Albania.

The revolution of young Turks in July of 1908 and the proclamation of constitution created favorable conditions for the development of the Albanian movement, especially the national culture movement.

In such circumstances when the Albanians had not yet lost the belief in the new constitutional regime and they hope that in these conditions will realize their national aspirations. Nearly all the Albanian political forces were united in the opinion that the national movement had to evolve by respecting this regime and taking advantages of the freedom declared of it. But even in these conditions were seen differences between the Albanian patriots, who belonged to the radical group and patriotic who belonged to moderate group. Radical groups expressed that the situation was favorable for Albanian autonomy, while the moderate group supported the opinion that Albanians due to these new conditions don't have to apply political requirements but were limited only to educational and cultural requirements, to work about spreading the education in Albania, through cultural clubs and Albanian schools, at least for a period of 10-20 years

2.2. The Role of Cultural National Movement

Activists of all political forces, of the national movement, the radicals and the moderates found common language, formulated rational and realistic thought and saw it as useful to exploit the freedoms of Albanians that were given from the constitution to develop legally the National Cultural Movement for opening Albanian schools in all sides of country to spread the Albanian language by introducing it in all foreign schools in Albania, for further promotion of it by a single alphabet. The development of cultural national movement was seen as one of the most important tools for raising political awareness of the people and to encourage the national unity of Albanians. For this purpose were raised national clubs which were spread in all towns and villages of the country, and in other centers of the empire where Albanians were present. Albanian schools began establishing, developing learning native language in foreign schools in Albania and efforts were made for the approval of the use of a single alphabet for Albanian. On 31, July 1908 was established the club "Bashkimi i Manastirit" with these members:

Fehim Zavalani the Chairman of the club, Gjergj Qirjazi the Vice-Chairman of the club, Naum Naci the Secretary of the club,

3. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CULTURAL CLUBS IN SOME CITIES OF ALBANIA

Under the example of Monastery club, were formed during August to September 1908, the cultural Clubs of Korca, Elbasan, Shkodra, Skopje, Selanik, Pogradec, etc.

Later in Albania were formed cultural clubs as in Tirana, Durres, Berat, Gjirokastra, Oher, Diber, Tepelene etc. According to the press of that period, all over Albania were formed more than 40 clubs. Clubs were broad democratic organizations which consisted on intellectuals, officers of the state apparatus teachers, representatives of civil bourgeoisie, the small producers and traders of the city and the village, the landowners, the officers and the people who were associated with the Ottoman rulers. While under the leadership of their intellectuals belonged to people who were distinguished for earlier patriotic activities.

These Cultural Clubs did not have a single and a common program. Each of them had its own statute, but almost all the statutes of the Albanian nation, demanded that the Albanians had to enjoy all freedoms that was guaranteed by a constitutional regime as well as the right of native for learning Albanian language. This was really a hard work for the unification of the Albanian nation, by imparting knowledge, for the extensive of the education in Albanian language and for the promotion of its cultural, encourages people for opening schools, printing presses, and publishing newspapers and books.

3.1 The Great Role of the Proclamation of Constitution, In The Opening of Albanian Schools

In the first period after revolution, the Young Turk had not oppose to the clubs and were forced for a time "to agree" with the Albanian cultural and educational movement. In this attitude a great impact had factors such as: the situation in Albania after the announcement of the Constitution, a big role that was played by Albanians in the July Revolution of 1908, and the fact that the Young Turks had not yet stabilized their military dictatorship. Under the direction of cultural clubs Albanians began to realize their century's aspirations, the right for written their own language and the right for establishing national schools, which was one of the main requirements of national renaissance.

The Turkish Constitution by declaring them as "Osmanllinj" and Turkish as the official and obligatory language for learning in schools denied the right of Albanian to be educated in their native language and to have their national schools. In these conditions, the opening of Albanian schools and spread of learning Albanian language as before, remained an attribute of the Albanian national movement, and in particular of Albanian patriotic and societies clubs.

With the initiative of the clubs and the active support of the people in all the cities and villages in Albania, immediately after the declaration of the constitution began to open Albanian schools and spreading learning the Albanian language. In early August of 1908 primary schools was opened in Elbasan and was taught with the primer book of Sami Frasheri. After this two Albanian schools were opened in Berat, Korca, two other schools in Tirana, Gjirokastra etc.. Albanian School were opened in a number of villages as in Gostencke of the Skrapar, in Nistrovo of Reka in Dibra etc.. Besides the daytime schools were also opened schools and evening courses for adults to learn to read and write Albanian. These were opened in Elbasan, Monastery, Korce, Berat, Tirana, Durres etc.. Until November 1908 were opened about 20 "daytime" and 15 "evening" schools.

In all day and night schools gave lessons distinguished teachers as patriots like Petro Nini Luarasi, Nuci Naci, the sisters, Parashqevi and Sevasti Qiriazzi, Josif Bageri etc.. Due to the fact that the teachers weren't sufficient, learning of Albanian language became a matter of honor and a patriotic duty to all those who could do it. Besides in the schools, learning of Albanian language was spread rapidly even individually or in small groups and attempts were made to introduce learning Albanian language in Turkish schools and other foreign schools in Albania. Since the beginning of August of 1908, was reached to enter learning for Albanian language in Turkish and Greek schools of the city. The club "Bashkimi" and patriots led by Akif Pashe Elbasani, reached in the autumn of 1908 to enter the Albanian language in Turkish schools in the city of Elbasan.

3.2 The Barriers of Establishing The Albanian Schools And Spreading Education In Albanian Language

Near the club "Bashkimi" of Elbasan was set up a monthly course of preparing teachers for the Albanian language. Also in Korce, with the initiative of the club of city in the early November the Albanian language was introduced as a subject in the Turkish primary schools. Attempt to introduce Albanian language in the state schools of Turkey, even for their transformation in Albanian schools did in September 1908 Skopje the club and especially Nexhip Draga, who was one of its leaders. Situated in front of the Albanian population persistent demand for the establishment of Albanian schools the Ministry of Education issued in October 1908 a legal order which said that the Albanian language was introduced as part of lessons in Turkish state schools, in the primary schools (mejtepe), and middle schools (rushdije). But the government through the local administration set up numerous barriers for the implementation of this ordinance. However publication of this Ordinance gave a new impetus to the movement for the introduction of Albanian as all classes in state schools. Taking advantage of its, the club 'Bashkimi' of Janina, decided to introduce Albanian language in all Turkish schools, and to establish Albanian schools which will serve to prepare Albanian teachers.

Even the pupils of Prishtina's school and they of high school of Monastery, benefited from the decree of the Turkish government, through the petitions sent to Istanbul requested the Albanian language be learned in schools. The Turkish government accepted this request and ordered that the Albanian language was also learned in schools (idadie) of these cities. In the autumn of 1908 the Albanian language learning was introduced in the high schools of Turkish stat of the Monastery.

The opening of the first schools brought a great joy and enthusiasm for all the Albanian people and this was expressed not only in numerous letters that were addressed to Albanian clubs, but also in their moral and

material support that gave people for maintenance of these schools. Being established by the initiative of the patriotic and the Albanian Clubs, Albanian schools were established by different religious of all faiths, Muslim and Christian. Learning of Albanian language and the spread of written Albanian in school was transformed into a broader movement that included patriotic masses that appear a great desire to learn their native language.

This fact is confirmed by the club correspondences are required Monastery where hundreds of thousands of books primer Albanian from the cities and villages of Albania. In a letter of RA .Dakos, secretary of the society "Bashkimi" in Bucharest led by Gjergj Qiriaz, dated 28 July 1908, sending Albanian books and the needs of being recognized as a nation by the Turk government, wrote "... Honor Mr. Qiriaz, today we sent three coffers with 45 books in Albanianif there is a need to write more books we will write and then send to you".

3.3. The Need of Having Albanian Books And `Profesional Teacher To Spread Albanian Education

For the moment the society has nearly 20,000 books. In another letter of RA. Dakos. dated 5 August 1908, addressed to Albanian club in Bitola, for sending books in Albanian language, said: "today was have been sent 8 crates with 2,000 books, after 3-4 days we are going to send some other books, we have taken letters from whole areas of Albania, that want Albanian books from us.

In a letter of Andre Ikonomit, from Durres dated 7 August 1908, sent to the society "Drita" in Bucharest, was written: "All the Albanian people, children, adults and other people with different age Want to learn their language, is a great need for sending books especially in Tirana, Elbasan, in other places of Albania all have opened Albanian schools, so gently and kindly please send to us some primer books for now.

Although that in address of "Bashkimi" club of Monastery, came every month thousands of the primer books in Albanian from the societies of Sofia and Bucharest, the requests were so big for Albanian books.

Despite from the opening of a considerable number of the day and night schools, the main direction for national education also in this period was the spread of learning Albanian individually and in small groups.

Although were missing professional teachers, in every city of Albania and in all provinces, as well as in the Albanian Diaspora, were found Albanian elements who worked with full of passion for learning their compatriots how to write and read, to distribute Albanian primer books, to set up courses with adults, and to spread the Albanian press. Especially the learning of Albanian language was spread in the cities of Tirana, Durresi, Elbasani, Korca, Skrapari, Dibra, Struga, Cameria etc.

Luigj Gurakuqi in October 1908 wrote that: "he was very happy" after he saw that Albanians are trying together for the promotion of the spread of the Albanian language."

An important role in the Albanian national movement and in the fight of opening the Albanian Schools in this period had the Albanian press, which published books abroad. In the Albanian press had rendered the main issues and events of cultural and political movement of the years 1908 to 1912.

They became supporters of national ideas and protectors of political and cultural program of this movement, efforts for Albanian schools for extensive Albanian language and to establish a common alphabet for all Albanians.

Albanian patriots made the impossible in Albania, to turn all the foreign schools into national schools.

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