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| <p>The Elementary Education and Upbringing of the Albanians in Macedonia (1944-1950)</p> |  | <p>History</p> <p>Keywords: upbringing and education, enlightenment, educational system, elementary education.</p> |
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Abstract

The educational activity of the Albanians in Macedonia (1944-1950), as well as the people, has its own destiny, and they have coexisted through time, but specific educational and cultural phenomena and processes complement each other with mutual discoveries, truths, beauties and values. The moment of challenges, the quick awakening and exposure after the long years of suppression is quite conspicuous, and marks the entire Macedonian elementary education and upbringing in the first years after the liberation of Macedonia; analogously, the elementary upbringing and education in the Albanian teaching language accomplishes notable results as well. A special place and significance in Macedonian history belongs to the first plenary session of ASNOM. In the St. Prohor Pčinjski Monastery, on the very day of Ilinden, on August 2 1944, was held the first plenary session of ASNOM. The war was still raging, when ASNOM's presidium made important decisions of a constituent nature with special, historical significance for Macedonia. Among them, especially significant for the schools and education in Macedonia are: the Declaration of the basic rights of the citizen of DFM and the Decree for establishment of the Macedonian language as the official language of Macedonia. With this Declaration, the freedom and equality of rights of every male and female Macedonian citizen are guaranteed, regardless of their own religious and national affiliation, as well the right to free education. Item 11 in the Declaration says: "The people's government is taking care to eradicate illiteracy and elevate the people's culture and secure free education." This Declaration proclaims a wide spectrum of generally accepted democratic rights of the citizen, which are the subject of almost every constitution of democratic states. With the Declaration, every Macedonian citizen is guaranteed equality of rights without respect to their national, racial and religious affiliation. Herefrom, it is only natural that the contribution of ASNOM's Presidium in the organization of the cultural and educational life in Macedonia is quite large. The elementary upbringing and education in Albanian, after the first plenary session of ASNOM, up until 1951, was developing in rather difficult conditions, but it is a fact that, in a short time period, it achieved enviable results. The elementary upbringing and education in Albanian, indeed, the entire elementary upbringing and education in Macedonia, was forced to take its first steps in a specific general climate, by and large marked by the socially-economic conditions, which undoubtedly hindered the process of its faster change and transformation. The political and social changes that touched the whole country after 1948, brought about after the Cominform, radically changed the educational climate, and reflected itself quite favorably on the further course of the development of the elementary upbringing and education in Albanian as well. Education becomes a significant area, a need for further upbringing and education, the basis of the educational system in its entirety, which would offer every individual different possibilities for further advancement and acquiring new knowledge as part of the educational system.

Introduction

Immediately following the end of World War II (1944), in Macedonia, and analogously in the sphere of elementary upbringing and education in Albanian, radical changes occurred. These changes were from all spheres and activities. The changes in elementary upbringing and education were connected to the significant alterations in the economy. From the multitude of institutional and organizational solutions of the government, especially important are those concerning the need for creating the basis of an educational potential, necessary for the further education of professional and other profiles, but with a completely different treatment of the citizen compared to what they had in former times. Hence the need for a new, better and more successful elementary

upbringing and education in Albanian as well, as an inseparable part of the entire system of elementary education and education in Macedonia.

In the period after the school-year of 1944/45, up until 1950/51, the elementary upbringing and education occupies a central position, since it represents the basis of the entire educational system and it exerts an essential influence on its conception, content, organization and function. In the new conditions, elementary education and education is defined as the starting point of the citizen's education in the new social order, which is supposed to secure them a start for future institutional and out-of-institution upbringing and education, all-encompassing individual development, to form a modern citizen, capable of living and working in the new social conditions, who shall successfully execute the assignments presented to them, to certify their individuality and satisfy their personal needs as socio-cultural subjects.

Because of the need of society for elementary upbringing and education, the social community devotes necessary attention to its organizational and content conception, proven by plenty of bigger and smaller reform changes and endeavors, undertaken with the purpose of finding more rational and more efficient solutions in completing the assigned tasks in a more quality and efficient manner.

Between the school-years 1944/45 and 1950/51, the Macedonian education system undergoes transformation. In this period, the development of elementary education was influenced by ASNOM's decisions, upon whose principles in the further years in the following years, the socio-political, economic and culturally-educational system was further built.

In October 1945, the Act for compulsory seven-year education was passed. This Act had a positive influence in Macedonia, and included not only Macedonian children, but also children from the ethnicities and ethnical groups. The entire educational system undergoes a more visible transformation with the enactment of the first Constitution of NRM (December 31 1946), with the renewal and construction of the country (characterized by general mobility of the people), and the passing of the First five-year plan for development of national economy in Yugoslavia (1947-1951).

1. Hygienically-Pedagogical Conditions

The schools that taught in Albanian worked in quite unfavorable hygienically-pedagogical conditions.

The pupils spent a portion of their time in schools, and should have elevated themselves culturally and educationally, however, the truly poor hygienic conditions influenced them negatively in the teaching process.

In the school-year of 1949/1950, there was 238 elementary schools that taught in Albanian. Over 62% of these educational facilities did not have satisfying hygienic and pedagogical conditions. The school buildings in the vicinities of Skopje, Tetovo, Gostivar and Kumanovo were

in a very poor condition. Most of the facilities were property of the state. There was a high percentage of schools that worked in private buildings, above all in unhygienic objects or in premises immediately next to mosques. The school premises were small, and one classroom had a large number of students. There were schools, teaching in Albanian, where there was one chair for three or four students. Such instances were registered in the Skopje area, Gostivar area etc. Furthermore, there were schools where the students sat on ordinary desks placed around the walls. (Dr. Nada Jurukova, *The Elementary Upbringing and Education in Macedonia (1944-1950)*, Skopje, 1990, 86-88).

In this period, Macedonia was in an exceedingly hard material situation, and the finances that the regional and town government agencies set aside annually from its budget were minimal. Thus, for example, the Regional NOO Struga, in 1949 allocated 8,000 dinars for the repair of the schools which taught in Albanian and Turkish in its region.

The schools could not include all children, and consequently, it was necessary to build new school premises. According to the plan of the Ministry of Education from 1949, another 15 schools for students of Albanian and Turkish nationality were supposed to be finished.

There was a plan for building 106 new schools for students of Albanian and Turkish nationality in Macedonia. Due to problems, mostly objective, there were no conditions for realization of the plan. But it is a fact that each year were created better working conditions in all Macedonian elementary schools, and accordingly, the pedagogically-hygienic conditions in the schools that taught in Albanian were also improved. Thus, in 1950, the elementary school teaching in Albanian in the village of Studenichani worked in a newly built object. In the same year, the school in Glumovo – Gjorce Petrov also works in a newly built school building. In Tetovo, in the 1950/51 school-year, the students from the elementary school that taught in Albanian performed classes in a newly built school facility. (Dr. Lenka Gogoska, *The Elementary Upbringing and Education in Skopje*, (1944/45-1984/85), Skopje, 1996, p.41-44).

The state set aside finances according to the possibilities for building new schools, but still could not satisfy the accumulated needs. Between 1947 and 1954, a sum of 6,500,600 dinars was spent for building school areas, which is a significant amount regarding the total state finances. From this amount, around 16,7% were used for building school areas with the Albanian teaching language. The First five-year plan in PRM began a process of more intensive building of schools which taught in Albanian.

Between 1945 and 1951, the cultural and educational conditions in general, and accordingly the hygienically-pedagogical conditions in the schools that taught in Albanian, as a result of the politics and the measures undertaken by the governmental state agencies, mostly by the education agencies, got more and more improved. The amount of finances intended for building new school facilities increased, renovation and adaptation of the existing schools took place, the schools were equipped with school inventory, teaching aids, schoolbooks and other kinds of literature. The help provided by the regional, town, community and the local government agencies

is evident; moreover, the people themselves helped the adaptation and building of the schools in different ways. (Dr. Nada Jurukova, *Cultural and education phenomena and processes in Macedonia (1944-1953)*, Skopje 2003).

2. Teaching Staff

Alongside with the expansion of the network of elementary schools in Macedonia in general, the scope of school obliges increased as well; naturally, this was the reason to expand the teaching staff in elementary education. In the first school-year of 1944/45, the teaching staff in Macedonia did not satisfy the needs at all. The situation was even worse with teaching staffs in elementary schools that taught in Albanian. Hence, there are many examples of an elementary schoolteacher working with pupils from two or more classes, who taught even more than 50 students.

The problems connected to the teaching staffs in schools that taught in Albanian were mainly concerned with the small number of professional and educational staffs of Albanian nationality, which they received in different forms of education. In the first years after the liberation, the deficit of professional and educational staffs of Albanian nationality became a serious obstacle for the students, not only in the four-year elementary school, but also for the students between 5th and 7th, or 5th and 8th grade. This problem was felt in Skopje, Tetovo, Gostivar, Struga, but it was more noticeable in the hills and mountain regions. Due to the lack of a skilled pedagogical teaching staff, the elementary schools that taught in Albanian employed teachers who lacked necessary qualification, and part of them had only completed primary education. In the period which is the focus of our study of elementary schools teaching in Albanian, this need was constantly present. (Dr. Nada Jurukova, *Cultural and educational phenomena and processes...* Skopje 2003).

In Macedonia, in the 1944/45 school-year, in the 60 elementary schools that taught in Albanian there were 70 teachers, of whom 15 had teacher's education, 7 had one-year pedagogical course, and some of them had finished a religious or some other school which did not have the rank of secondary education. Also, many teachers had only completed elementary four-year education.

In the 1944/45 school-year, the elementary schools in the city of Skopje and its vicinity had 246 teachers in total, of whom 38 (regardless of the degree of education) taught in Albanian and participated with 15,44%.

The fulfillment of the needs for a teaching staff with a formed, professional education naturally represents a fundamental requirement for the development of schools and increasing the number of school obliges. Because of this, the agencies of the people's government took measures for creating a professional teaching staff for the schools that teach in Albanian. For this purpose, many short-lasting (15 daily teaching courses), three-month summer courses, as well as one-year pedagogical teaching courses. In parallel, a regular system for educating teaching staffs was being

created. In the 1950/51 school-year, a teaching school in Albanian was opened. (Zlatku Avni, *The Upbringing and Education of Children From the Ethnicities and Other Peoples in SRM*, Skopje, 1985).

The teaching staff for multiple subject teaching in Albanian was educated at the Pedagogical Academy *Kliment Ohridski* in Skopje, where groups for all school subjects, in Albanian, were formed.

In the 1945/46 school-year, there were a total of 1,935 teachers in Macedonian elementary schools, of whom 264 (13,64%) taught classes in Albanian.

Six years later, in the 1950/51 school-year, in the vicinity of Skopje there were 428 teachers in total, of whom 82 teachers taught in Albanian in the elementary schools; they participated with 19,15%.

In this school-year, the teaching staff in the multiple subject teaching area, in Albanian (53,48%), was without appropriate professional education. These situations changed quite difficultly, even though through the educational institutions, in the Albanian teaching language, a staff for the elementary four-year schools was permanently formed, as well as for the multiple subject education from 5th to 8th grade. (Rushiti, Ibrahim Islami-Agim, *Veteran Albanian teachers in Kumanovo and its vicinity (1945-1950)*, Skopje, 1998).

The particular deficit of staff with appropriate professional education in teaching in Albanian can be also explained with the migration processes of the Albanian people between villages and towns, as well as the high birth rate in their families.

In the multiple subject teaching in the elementary upbringing and education between the 1944/45 and 1950/51 school-years, there was permanent deficit of professional teaching staff, especially noticeable in the following subjects: Mathematics, Physics, Biology, Chemistry, foreign languages and other teaching disciplines.

In Macedonia, the need for a professional teaching staff in the elementary schools, who would teach in Albanian, was a consistently present problem and was one of the factors that influenced the development of the school network, the ambit of the students and the quality in the education process. (Dr. Nada Jurukova, *The Elementary Upbringing and Education in Macedonia (1944-1950)*, Skopje 1990, 90-94).

In Macedonia, between the school-years 1945/46 and 1950/51, out of the total number of teachers in elementary schools, the staff with the Albanian teaching language increased in size. In Skopje and its vicinity, in the first 5 school-years after the liberation, the growth of the teaching staff is 242,1 indexes. This growth of the teaching staff in Macedonia in the elementary school, in the Albanian teaching language, was a result of the politics to increase the range of students of Albanian nationality. This tendency to increase the size of teaching staff in elementary schools, teaching in Albanian, increased in the following years as well.

3. Establishment of the First Elementary Schools

In the period between the first plenary session of ASNOM (August 2 1944) and the second plenary session (December 28-30 1944), the Presidium of ASNOM, at the time of its sojourn in the Kozjak mountain, and especially during the time of its stay in the village of Gorno Vranovce, near Veles, and after the liberation of Skopje, performed activities which, in their entirety, were quite rich and multi-faceted, even on the field of establishing elementary schools.

In December 1944, in Macedonia, there were teaching staffs consisting of only 70 Albanians and 30 Turks.

In Macedonia, the education agencies of the government were also engaged in opening elementary schools in the Albanian teaching language.

The agencies of the government of the people's liberation insisted on establishing as many schools in the Albanian teaching language as possible. But the deficit of teaching staffs was felt everywhere.

After the primary preparations were finished, in January and February 1945, the first elementary people's schools that taught in Albanian began to work.

In the beginning of February 1945, in Skopje, a primary school in the Albanian teaching language began working.

In the 1944/45 school-year, in the Skopje region, in the elementary schools, between 1st and 7th grade there were 10.466 students in total, of whom 8,545 students were between 1st and 4th grade, and 1,921 student between 5th and 7th grade. In the 1944/45 school-year, in Skopje and its vicinity, there was 1.280 students in total, of whom 1.268 between 1st and 4th grade, and 12 students in the 5th grade. (Dr. Lenka Gogoska, *The Elementary Education and Education in Skopje*, (1944/45-1984/85), Skopje, 1996, 94-98).

In Bitola, in the premises of the building of the present elementary school *Dr. Trifun Panovski*, where there also were classes in the Macedonian teaching language, on February 1st 1945, the classes with Turkish students and classes with Albanian students began working. In the Turkish classes there were totally 174 students, divided into four classes in the 1st grade, and in three classes in the 1st grade, the teaching was done in Albanian, and they consisted of 168 students in total. Out of the classes, taught in Albanian, in Bitola, was formed the people's elementary school *Fahri Ibrahim*. In the Bitola region, in the beginning of 1945, schools that taught in Albanian were opened in the villages of Lera, Suvodol and Trnovo, with 82 students in total. (*Statistical Yearbook of FPRY*, Belgrade, 1953).

In Macedonia, as we mentioned at the establishment of the schools that taught in Albanian, a big problem was the lack of a qualified, professional teaching staff. Immediately after the liberation of Macedonia, an action was begun to remove the veil and the hijab.

In this regard, the teacher Elisaveta Miho from Slupchane says: “I have to say that the biggest difficulty in establishing the schools was the staff, especially the registration of female children. We had issues with the female Albanian about her taking down of the veil”. (*Statistical Yearbook of PRM*, Skopje, December 1954).

The leader of the schooling organization in the Albanian teaching language was Nexhat Agolli, a judge from Debar. In the 1944/1945 school-year, the first successes with the establishment of the first schools that taught in Albanian were noticed in Tetovo, Gostivar, Struga and their vicinities, and other regions populated by Albanians.

In the 1945/46 school-year, in Macedonia, 142 elementary schools taught in Albanian, with 281 classes in total, which consisted of 15,454 students, and the teaching was done by 264 teachers. (*Statistical Yearbook of FPRY*, Belgrade, 1953). In the 1946/47 school-year, in Macedonia there were 148 schools that taught in Albanian, the number of classes was 317, the elementary schools comprised 15,980 students, and 269 teachers were employed. (*Statistical Yearbook of FPRY*, Belgrade, 1953). In the 1947/48 school-year, there were 166 that taught in Albanian, there were 417 classes, the elementary schools comprised 20,714 students, and 314 teachers were employed. In the 1948/49 school-year, in Macedonia, the teaching in Albanian comprised 25,399 students and 376 teachers. In the 1948/49 school-year in Macedonia, there were 209 schools in the Albanian language, the number of classes was 540, there were 26,385 students and 421 teachers. In the 1949/50 school-year, Macedonia had 209 schools which taught in Albanian; there were 540 classes that consisted of 26,385 students, and 421 teachers worked there. (Dr. Nada Jurukova, *Cultural and Educational Phenomena and Processes in Macedonia (1944-1953)*, Skopje, 2003). In the 1950/51 school-year, there were 214 schools that taught in Albanian; there were 556 classes consisting of 26,702 students, and 409 students were employed. (Dr. Nada Jurukova, *Cultural and Educational Phenomena and Processes in Macedonia (1944-1953)*, Skopje, 2003).

From the previously stated statistical data, we can clearly see that between the school-years 1944/45 up and 1950/51 there was an increase in the number of elementary schools teaching in Albanian, of classes, school obliges and the number of teaching staffs. Especially in the period between 1945 and 1950, and even later, in all communities in Republic of Macedonia with Albanian inhabitants, the range of children grown and capable of schooling was always on a lower level than the anticipated minimum.

This problem of exclusion of the children in elementary schools was present in the rural regions of Skopje, Tetovo, Gostivar, Struga, Kumanovo etc. The education agencies of the government collided with many problems with the purpose of increasing the number of children obliged to go to elementary school. There are many examples of many Albanians, especially from the rural regions, who did not want their daughters to go to elementary schools. As a result, there was a small percentage of females in the elementary educational system, and above all, in the higher grades.

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