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**THE DEVELOPMENT AND RESULTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE OF THE
ALBANIAN ETHNIC GROUP IN THE SR OF MONTENEGRO***

The developmet of education in the Albanian ethnic group in Montenegro started with the establishment of the state elementary schools in bicultural environments (Ulcinj) in the last decades of the past century. In the Principality of Montenegro children of all ethnic groups and religions were equally entitled to education as the children of the Montenegrin nationality.¹ Small in area and in economic power, Montenegro, following the liberation wars of 1876 to 1878, through great renunciations and efforts, started setting foundations for an organized education in ordinary schools. The teaching was conducted in the Serbo-Croatian language for all the pupils, representing - in addition to other causes, viz. the economic and cultural backwardness of the region and religious prejudices - a great obstacle to mass education of the children belonging to the Albanian ethnic group. In the period between the First and Second World Wars, within the Kingdom of Yugoslavia members of all the nationalities and ethnic groups were entitled to education, but the teaching for all was conducted in the Serbo-Croatian language.

The schooling in the non-mother tongue placed the pupils belonging to ethnic groups on the footing of inequality in relation to the pupils whose mother tongue was Serbo-Croatian. On account of the fact that teaching was conducted in a non-mother tongue, a great number of the children of the Albanian ethnic group did not attend even the four-year compulsory elementary school, and very few children and youngsters attended the secondary schools and studied at junior colleges and universities. Thus, at the end of the Second World War, in the year 1945, the illiteracy rate among members of the Albanian ethnic group in SR Montenegro was as high as 95 per cent).²

The first elementary schools teaching either in the Albanian language or bilingually within the bicultural environments in SR Montenegro were established immediately after the Second World War in the wake of the victory of the socialist revolution, whereas the first such secondary school was launched only in the year 1965. In this area there were no secondary schools teaching in the Serbo-Croatian language either. The inauguration of the schools teaching in Albanian as the mother tongue was a significant realization of the aims and achievements of the national liberation struggle - of the brotherhood and unity and equality of rights of the peoples and nationalities. From the year 1945 on, there has been a continuous dynamic development of

* Original: Serbo-Croatian

education and culture of the Albanian ethnic group in SR Montenegro, conducted in its mother tongue. At first, the education and schoolwork at schools with Albanian as the language of instruction and at bilingual schools, went on under very unfavourable material and staffing conditions, neither were the conditions more favourable at schools teaching in the Serbo-Croatian language, owing to the consequences of the War.

Many difficulties arising from the organizing of education and schoolwork in the schools teaching either bilingually or in the Albanian language, were overcome through hard work and enthusiasm of the few education staffs and through special efforts made by the society to create the indispensable foundations of work. New school buildings were built also according to pedagogical requirements and equipped with up-to-date teaching aids. All the schools, including the four-grade primary schools in the villages, now have their school libraries consisting of books in the Albanian language, in conformity with the standards of school libraries in SR Montenegro.

The network of pre-school and school institutions with bilingual teaching and with the teaching in Albanian has developed considerably. In the five communes populated by the members of the Albanian ethnic group there are four pre-school institutions with about 200 children of the Albanian ethnic group, eleven eight-year elementary schools consisting of 42 subsidiary divisions in the village areas, attended by about 5,000 pupils, and three secondary-school centres with 1,143 pupils. The subsidiary divisions in the village areas offer four-year instruction, the upper grades of the elementary school being available at the main school. In the four most attended eight-year elementary schools located in the communal and village centres, the teaching is, on account of the mixed population, conducted in the Serbo-Croatian and Albanian languages. The same is true of all the three school centres. In the subsidiary divisions of the elementary school in the village areas, the teaching is carried out only in the Albanian language; the pupils in these schools do learn Serbo-Croatian as a compulsory subject.

In SR Montenegro, there are no junior colleges, colleges or universities teaching in the Albanian language, as there hardly exist favourable material or staffing conditions, nor the necessary number of students. Students from the Albanian ethnic group choose various professions and can be found studying at all the universities in the country, but mostly at the University of Pristina where the teaching is in the Albanian language.

Junior colleges and universities have an enrollment of more than 500 students of the Albanian ethnic group. Most of these students have received scholarships or student loans. Most of them study at the teacher-training faculties: philological, faculty of sciences and mathematics, and arts, followed by the faculties of law, of economics, medicine, agriculture and technology. A number of these students study at the University of Titograd. They are more favourably treated regarding the enrollment and accommodation in the halls of residence than are the students of Montenegrin and other nationalities.

The organization of the educational work at schools teaching either in the Albanian language or bilingually was for the first time legally regulated under the Act on the organization of the schools teaching in the language of an ethnic minority in the People's Republic of Montenegro, passed in the year 1960,³ and based upon the General Schools Act.⁴ Under this Act it was laid down that the schools and their divisions where the teaching is conducted in the language of a national minority form part of the uniform education system in SR Montenegro and in the SFRY, and that these institutions implement the common and special aims of educating and schooling. Under this Act the teaching of the pupils belonging to the Albanian ethnic group was carried out in their mother tongue, yet the pupils were obliged to learn the Serbo-Croatian language as a special subject of instruction in the elementary and secondary schools, starting from the third grade of the elementary school "for the purpose of an active participation of the members of the ethnic minority in the life of the SFRY and of the PR of Montenegro." In this Act the emphasis is laid upon the role played by the educational work through extracurricular activities "giving incentive to, and developing, the approaching and mutual acquaintance of the pupils of various nationalities or ethnic groups."⁵

The pedagogical documentation in bilingual schools as well as in those where the teaching is conducted in Albanian, is issued in the mother tongue, and only the main official book and school documents are kept in both languages. The new Act regulating the elementary and specialized training at the secondary level⁶ has retained all the main provisions of the special Act on the schools for the members of the national minorities.

At the elementary and secondary schools education is carried out according to the uniform curriculum and educational programme for all the pupils, excepting the mother tongue and literature which additionally contain, for the pupils of the Albanian ethnic group, specific contents from the national literature. The history programme is uniform for all the pupils in the Republic, so that it includes also the contents specific to the Albanian ethnic group. In the elementary school, since the school year 1984/85, the new educational programme with the built-in common educational-instructional core courses⁷ has been implemented; these core courses are included in the educational programmes of most of the Republics and of the Socialist Autonomous Province of Vojvodina. The new curricula and educational programmes, with the built-in core courses, secure, more so than up to the present, mutual acquaintance of the cultures and achievements in all the spheres of the nations and ethnic groups of Yugoslavia. The new curricula and educational programmes for the Serbo-Croatian language and literature and for the Albanian language and literature represent a considerable progress in relation to the preceding ones as there is, in the programme for the Albanian language and literature, much more content from the literature of the Yugoslav peoples and ethnic groups, while in the programme for the Serbo-Croatian language and literature, the Albanian literature is represented more fully. The implementation as to quality of these programmes will considerably contribute to a better knowledge of the national literatures and cultures of the peoples and ethnic groups, and facilitate and improve mutual understanding and respect.

For a successful performance of the curricula and of the educational programmes, a professional and pedagogically and methodically qualified teaching staff is urgently needed. Immediately after the War there was no professional staff for teaching the Albanian language, and special efforts were made to educate, as soon as possible, teachers for the needs of the elementary and secondary specialized education at schools with the teaching in the Albanian language and at schools teaching bilingually. The teachers compensated for their insufficient qualifications and pedagogical unpreparedness by their assiduous work in school and through their in-service professional and pedagogical training. There were organized courses and seminars to qualify them for the teaching profession. A considerable number of the persons having completed elementary school were directed towards the teaching profession by being granted scholarships and student loans. Most of them were trained at the teaching-training schools and at the faculties in SAP Kosovo. This situation has gradually improved, so that at present, the instruction at elementary schools with teaching in the Albanian language and at bilingual schools is completely professional. At the secondary schools, however, there is still a lack of teachers of mathematics and specialized subjects of instruction.

The number of educational workers of the Albanian ethnic group has considerably increased, so that at present there are 140 teachers working at the elementary schools, 116 of whom have two-year post-secondary education and 22 have university education. In the developed environments, the schools are fully provided with teaching staff, and now a considerable number of students are being trained for teachers, too. At present there are 69 teachers with university education, 14 teachers with two-year post-secondary education, and 3 students who have complete course requirements working at the three school centres of specialized education.

For a successful fulfillment of the instructional-educational tasks and better quality of teaching, there are very important, in addition to material conditions and teaching staff, also textbooks and textbook literature. The schools with the Albanian as the language of instruction have so far used mainly textbooks published in SAP Kosovo and textbooks written in the Serbo-Croatian language. In recent years, the Republican Board of Education - its BOAL for the publishing of textbooks and textbook literature has started publishing textbooks - manuals and readers in the Albanian language. Over 30 titles have been printed: a primer, readers for all the grades of the elementary and secondary specialized-education schools, and some home readers. The publication of new textbooks and readers has been planned. The question of textbooks and textbook literature was, and still is, a very urgent problem, in particular because new educational programmes are being introduced. So far, there has also existed a discrepancy between the curricula and educational programmes adopted in SR Montenegro and the textbooks and manuals prepared according to the curricular and educational programmes of SAP Kosovo. On account of the small number of copies printed, it will not be possible to publish textbooks for the mathematics and sciences group of subjects nor for specialized subjects of instruction; thus, the textbooks from SAP Kosovo and SR Macedonia will be used.

Through joint efforts of the society and of the instructional-educational organizations in the bicultural environments, considerable results have been achieved with respect to the enrollment of children and youngsters of the Albanian ethnic group and the realization of the equality of rights and unity in education as a whole. The practice and results have so far shown that the organization of the instructional and educational work and the quality of teaching at these schools are constantly increasing, thus contributing a lot also to the improvement of the educational-pedagogical services within the Republic and regions giving an all-round professional of the school-centres with bilingual teaching, the pupils belonging to the Albanian ethnic group are able to choose among 22 vocations. It is true, nevertheless, that the number of specializations at schools with the Serbo-Croatian as the medium of instruction is considerably larger, so that a number of pupils of the Albanian ethnic group continue their schooling in the schools with Serbo-Croatian as the language of instruction, or in SAP Kosovo.

It is characteristic that the interest of the parents and pupils of the Albanian ethnic group in a more thorough learning of the Serbo-Croatian language has been very much increased. In some environments the parents require to increase the number of the lessons of the Serbo-Croatian language, beyond the legally prescribed norm, for the purposes of enabling the children to master the Serbo-Croatian language as perfectly as possible, thereby enabling them to be undisturbedly employed at all places in Yugoslavia. At the individual elementary schools (the eight-year school Ostros) the number of lessons for learning the Serbo-Croatian language have been increased. In the same way there has been an also an increased interest to learn the Albanian language in the mixed environments (Ulcinj), where 161 pupils of the Montenegrin and Muslim nationality learn the Albanian language. It is evident that the interest in a greater mutual acquaintance and the knowledge of the cultures has been increased. At the school centre of Ulcinj, the pupils publish a paper written in the Serbo-Croatian and Albanian languages, being given the opportunity for a better acquaintance with the non-mother tongue.

Very sound and rewarding is the co-operation of both teachers and pupils within the framework of professional bodies - teachers' councils, class boards, professional active groups, as well as within self-management bodies, school councils, and pupils' communities. In the pupils' organizations and associations there co-operate the pupils belonging to both the Albanian ethnic group and the Montenegrin nationality.

Parallel with the economic growth and social development and the raising of the educational level of the members of the Albanian ethnic group, a significant cultural activity has developed as well. The cultural climate in bicultural environments has changed through the existence and activity of a large number of educational workers and experts in various fields - physicians, engineers, economists, lawyers, as well as secondary-school and university students of the Albanian ethnic group. In the communal centres, libraries, bookshops, and cinemas have been opened. The libraries stock numerous books written in the Albanian language. Booksellers have their prominent selling points in the town centres. Books have become accessible to lots of users, including

the citizens belonging to the Albanian ethnic group. School libraries have enviable stocks of books exceeding 40,000 books written in the Albanian language, meeting the needs of both the teachers and the pupils.

The publishing activity in the Albanian language has been started. Besides the Republic Institute for the Promotion of Education and Instruction, and the publication of textbooks, manuals and school readers, the publishing house Pobjeda issues books written in the Albanian language. Admittedly, so far their number has not been impressive, but a number of new publications have been planned. At present, there is in Montenegro an insufficient number of qualified translators covering the Serbo-Croatian and Albanian languages; therefore, collaboration with the translators from the SAP Kosovo has been established.

There is also Koha, the review for literature, science, culture and social problems. Published since the year 1978, it is a bi-monthly review publishing works of the Albanian writers from Montenegro (there are eight) and from elsewhere, as well as translations from the Yugoslav and world literatures.

The publishing house Pobjeda and the Republic Institute for the Promotion of Education and Instruction employ a number of editors who belong to the Albanian ethnic group.

Significant creations have been achieved also in the visual arts. The artists of Albanian nationality organize individual and group exhibitions, among them those who have won the greatest recognition - the prestigious Thirteenth July and the October Awards. The cultural activity in both the bicultural environments and those where they live only the members of the Albanian ethnic group, is performed within the framework of the amateur cultural-artistic societies, existing in all the local centres and villages. Educational workers, students and pupils are in the vanguard of these cultural activities. Most attention is paid to folklore and folk songs. The amateur cultural-artistic societies take part in revues and guest performances within the Republic and throughout Yugoslavia; some of them have been on tours abroad, too (the U.S.A.).

The Montenegrin Academy of Sciences has started research in the field of the language and literature of the Albanian ethnic group, as well as the interaction with the Serbo-Croatian language and literature.

Members of the Albanian ethnic group are also working in and collaborating with a number of cultural and scientific institutions in SR Montenegro: the Institute of History, the Montenegrin People's Theatre, "Veljko Vlahović" University, etc.

Distinguished educational workers of the Albanian ethnic background work as educational advisers and editors at the Republic Institute for the Promotion of Education and Instruction and at the Inter-Communal Institutes.

Within the information services there are employed a number of journalists who are members of the Albanian ethnic group. The Titograd Radio Station daily broadcasts two transmissions in the

Albanian language and the weekly paper *Titogradska Tribuna* (The Titograd Tribune), published at Titograd, has a regular page in the Albanian language.

The postwar development and the results obtained in education and culture of the Albanian ethnic group in Montenegro so far present an obvious confirmation of the materialization of the goals of the socialist revolution and of its basic principles: brotherhood and unity and the equality of rights of the peoples and ethnic groups. The results obtained and the experiences gained in the work done so far are even greater in the light of the fact that they have been realized within a relatively short time and achieved in an environment which initially had a very low economic basis and a low level of cultural life. By now, the mixed social environments (inhabited by the members of the Albanian ethnic group and by the Montenegrin and Muslim nationalities) have already reached, in terms of the network of school institutions and the conditions of life, the level attained by the other environments in Montenegro. The general progress made in all the spheres of social and cultural life and its rapid growth are obvious, and all this contributes to the development of brotherhood and unity, and to a better understanding and collaboration of the members of the Albanian ethnic group with the members of the nations living in Montenegro.

Notes

1. Rade Delibasić, 1980, *Razvoj školske i pedagoške misli u Crnoj Gori: 1830 do 1918* (The Development of the School and Pedagogic Thought in Montenegro: 1830-1918), Republic Board on the Promotion of Education, Titograd.
2. For information about the schools using Albanian as the language of instruction in SR Montenegro and about the textbooks used in these schools, see: the Republic Secretariat for Education, Culture and Science, Titograd, 1981.
3. The Act on the organization of the schools teaching in the language of an ethnic minority, see: *The Official Gazette of the PRM*, No. 22/60.
4. The General Schools Act, see: *The Official Gazette of SFRY*, No. 28/58.
5. Ibid.
6. The Act on Elementary Education and the Act on Secondary Specialized Education in SR Montenegro, see: *The Official Gazette of SRM*, No. 22/83.
7. The common programme core courses contain the contents from all the subjects of instruction for the elementary and secondary school that should be, or are, built in the educational programmes of the Republics and Provinces; they represent from 50 per cent (mother tongue) up to 100 per cent (total national defence and social self-protection) of the programme content.