

Chronicle of Designing of Textbooks – ABC Books, Reading Comprehension and Grammar Books in Albanian Language in Kosovo 1886 – 2019

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Abstract

According to the pedagogues and scholars of the school textbooks, the textbook is a basic and mandatory school book, which serves as a basic tool and source of knowledge in the given field of study. Created in support of the education curriculum and didactically shaped, taking into account the psychophysical skills of the students, the subject matter of the course, the type of school, the degree and the profile of education. Students use it in all stages of the learning process and in everyday self-education. It is known that the existence of the scripture is mentioned by the old Babylonia when tile plates were used to write the textual content, as early as four thousand years ago. In addition to that, in ancient Egypt, the texts were written in papyrus, which was used even in old Greece and later in Rome. The parchment was used in the middle Ages, whereby it is believed that the texts were written two thousand years ago. The story of the proper text begins with the discovery of Jan Gutenberg's printing press in 1438. This is where the textbook as a massive book of education derives from. It was an epochal discovery. Meanwhile, while it is known that although Albanian is one of the oldest languages in Europe, it is however documented late. The first documents of the Albanian language are considered from the 15th century (*Formula e Pagëzimit, Fjalorthi i A. Von Harfit dhe Perikopeja e Shen Matineut*).¹ Meanwhile, Buzuku (Meshari 1555), for us Albanians, is the starting point for text design. It was the time when the didactic reformer Czech pedagogue Jan Amos Komenski (1592-1670), with the first text in Latin, illustrated *Orbis sensualium pictus* (The Sensual World in Photography), arrived as the founder of the textbook theory. However, it can be concluded that the ABC book, the literature and grammar texts in particular, and the textbook in general, in Kosovo were of multiple importance to Albanians who were deprived of the right to education in Albanian language. The history of textbook design in Albanian language in Kosovo is very new. After the Renaissance, which was marked as a bright epoch in the effort to draft textbooks for Albanian schools, "The Literary Commission" (Komisia Letrare), established in Shkodra in 1916² would join to serve in the name of this cause. The aim of this body was to gather and publish the visions of Albanian folk literature such as: *poetry and songs, tales, traditions, lessons, etc.* Recently, efforts have been made to compile literary bibliographies in Albanian language. Nevertheless, it would be useful to continue with a bibliography of Albanian Language reading comprehension books in the school tradition in Albania, Kosovo and other areas where Albanians live and are educated in Albanian language. In Kosovo, Mati Logoreci is a pedagogue, is considered to be among the first textbook writers. This patriot and intellectual is a treasure of Albanian tradition in many fields, especially of education and school, as didactic, text analyst, organizer, controversial to highlight scientific, educational, social values. Mati Logoreci has an indisputable value in the history of the Albanian didactic thinking, in particular, the current educational values, adding to these values also some features of contemporary personality traits, traditional learning, within the learning methods. Logoreci was among the first Albanian educators in Kosovo. The path to development of the book in Albanian language in Kosovo was difficult, which at the same time is the best indicator of the situation of this group of the Albanians.

Keywords: *textbook, reading, textbook design, Albanian language, Albanian school.*

¹ Dhimitër Shueriqi, *Shkrimet e para në gjuhën shqipe1332*, "Rilindja", Pristina, 1982

² "Commission (Komisia)..." dealt "with topics deriving from the subject of knowledge of Albanian language, on new and old history of Albania, on pre-history of Albanian nation, on Albanian archaeology and alphabet."

Introduction

The history of design of textbooks – reading comprehension books in Albanian language in Kosovo 1886 – 1945

It is a century-old tradition of compiling textbooks for the needs of Albanian students in Albanian schools, with particular emphasis on the design and publishing of reading comprehension books, a type of textbook, which was fundamental in the educational and methodical sense in terms of the development of Albanian language, i.e. the teaching of literacy and communication in Albanian language. This tradition became the inspiration for the successors given that the reading comprehension book is of special importance in the tradition of school and Albanian language development. During my research, in the cultural sense of the research, I have been convinced that drafting a thematic bibliography of reading comprehension books is a necessity.¹

An initiative for a bibliography of reading comprehension books from the first known unit to the reading books of 1943, which historically includes the period of the Albanian Renaissance, that of Albania's Independence and the efforts for the consolidation of the Albanian state, and of the cultural and political efforts of Kosovo Albanians and Albanians from Albania, who lived separately in the republics of the former Yugoslavia.² This study includes all primary and secondary school literacy books, from Naim Frasheri's first reading book "*E këndimit çunavet : këndonjëtoreja*" (1886) to the last book of this Inclusion Period - "*Libër Leximi për kursin e naltë të Shkollave të Mesme*", collected and worked under the auspices of Ernest Koliqi, Alexander Xhuvani, Karl Gurakuqi, Kolë Kamsi and Eqrem Çabej, published in Tirana in 1943 by the Ministry of Education of that time.³

The book in mother tongue in the Albanian speaking countries was prohibited and persecuted until the declaration of Albania's independence. Whereas in the lands left outside of London Albania, this continued until 1941. For these reasons, Albanian language reading comprehension books were published in different places, such as: Istanbul, Bucharest, Vienna, while the first book published in Albania is *Jeteshkrimi i Konstandin Kristoforidhit* by Simon Shuteriq, published in Elbasan and Manastir in 1911. In search of textbooks published in the tradition of Albanian education as a reading comprehension book (from the various catalogs the "*Këndime për shkollat e para*" by Naim Frasheri published in 1886, was identified as the first reading comprehension book for schools). Until the end of World War II which marks the conclusion of a cultural and political period, and the beginning of another period, we have encountered reading comprehension books with similar titles, but with distinct nuances that show dedication for usefulness of a reading comprehension *Këndime për çunat: Libri i knnoitorës shcypë; Vjersha për mësonjëtoret të para; Knnimë t'para për msoitorë filltarë t'Shcyprnis; Këndime për reshtatë filltare; Këndime për shkollat e para; Librat e para për çunat; Librat për çunat dhe për gocat etj.* In Kosovo Mati Logoreci,⁴ is recognized as the didactic and author of the first texts in Kosovo. He worked extensively for Kosovo as a precious lecturer. Based on the secular model of the Korça Elementary School, he founded the Albanian school of Prizren of 7 March 1887. Logoreci developed textbooks for elementary and later secondary schools, manuals in help of teachers, where he naturally

¹Efforts have been made to compile literary bibliographies in Albanian language, but this should have started from the first text in Albanian with the content and function of a reading comprehension book. Afterwards, it would had been useful to continue with a bibliography of Albanian-language reading comprehension books in the school tradition in Albania, Kosovo and other places where Albanians live and get Albanian education..

²B. Haliti, a zealous worker of the National Library, has published in the pedagogical magazine "Mesuesi i Kosoves", a bibliography of reading comprehension books, considered as special books, publications in Albania and Albanian colonies of the time. These books, as one of their basic functions, apart from contributing to the great dream of creating the Albanian state, had the development of education and the Albanian school

³ The compilation of such a complete bibliography would be of particular importance and an important reference for users specializing in the field of scientific research in the field of education, pedagogues, teachers and cultural historians. A bibliography that represents a relatively large number of bibliographic references, including the publication of reading comprehension books, is part of the Albanian National Library fund, therefore as such, there may be shortcomings, as here are only bibliographic units that are in the funds of this library, but a common work of the whole of Albania would be a valuable contribution

⁴**Mati Logoreci** is a pedagogue, text writer, patriot and intellectual, known as Shkodran (born in Shkodra, but also as a Kosovar (because he was acting in Kosovo). With his patriotic and educational activities, Logoreci has remained in the history of education as a prominent actor of Logoreci is a treasure of Albanian tradition in many fields, especially of education and school, as didactic, textologist, organizer, polemicist to identify scientific, educational, social value.

achieved the results of its studies in the field of Albanian language.¹ As the first text analyst in Kosovo "Mati remains a worthy Methodist even to our present day school ..., as well as in affirmation of North-South unity, for the benefit of the national cause".²³ Nevertheless, Mati Logoreci, is also known as the author of works of study in the field of linguistics, history and especially as a textbook writer⁴. Textbooks designed by this leading text analyst, were used by students who attended legal or illegal schools, especially in the territory of Kosovo. He prepared and published textbooks and manuals in support of teachers as well: "*Abetar*", "*Plotësori i abetarit*", "*Libër i mësuësit për përdorim të abetarit*" (an applicable book which is a requirement for teachers even in the present times), "*Libër leximi për shkollat e mesme*" (1920), "*Lexime për moshën e njomë*" (1934), "*Fjalorth i librit të leximit për moshën e njomë*" (1934), "*Histori e përqijthshme*" (pjesa I, 1924, pjesa II, 1926), "*Ndoli historije t'motshme*" (1911) etj. In these textbooks he touched upon the clarity of the concepts that would be instilled to students. "*Plotësori i abetarit*" contained parts and simple verses in the form of simple tales or dialogues, etc.⁴⁵

Textbooks of Albanian language of the period up to 1945

The place and role of the ABC book, reading comprehension book (literary) and the grammar school textbook (language knowledge) in teaching, education and learning process is evaluated from different points of view.⁶ It engaged an important role in the acquisition of initial reading and writing up to the progress in the development of language culture, expressive skills of students. "*The basic work of a teacher in a classroom is related to the elaboration of a teaching unit in the classroom. Thus, the primary goal should be to select the methods and the adequate organization of its activity to achieve the objectives of the unit*".⁷

School textbooks were instrumental in spreading and expanding the Albanian language school network in in Kosovo, in gaining and preserving the knowledge that was necessary to develop and master national goals, deepening and systematizing the knowledge gained from the culture of Albanian language and literature over the centuries. To continue with the chronicle of the history of the development of the book by Albanians, we are highlighting the examples of other nations in order to prove the analogy of the use of the textbook by our ancestors.⁸

¹ The monograph "Mati Logoreci" Tirana, 2000, was written by Prof.Dr.Musa Kraja, who by using the main sources from the Central State Archive, where many direct and indirect materials are located, through the files on Ndre Mjeda, Gjergj Fishta, Gjeçov, Literary Commission, Education Directorate etc., etc. Moreover, archival and library researches were also used in the Linguistics Institute at the National Library, in the family. The book "Mati Logoreci" is a complete multidimensional biography about this outstanding lecturer..

²Prof. Dr. Musa Kraja, "Mati Logoreci" Tirana, 2000, p.7 (According to M.Kraja, Logoreci was also the author of the Albanian language – one of the first contributors to its enrichment, purification and unification. This cause would be served by drafting texts, approving, correcting and publishing textbooks through the "Literary Commission", which was established in Shkodra in 1916. "Komisia (Commission..." dealt "with topics deriving from the subject of knowledge of Albanian language, on new and old history of Albania, on pre-history of Albanian nation, on Albanian archaeology and alphabet." The aim of this body was to gather and publish the visions of Albanian folk literature such as: *poetry and songs, tales, traditions, lessons, etc.* All those who were wholeheartedly willing to contribute for the development of the Albanian language, the progress and flourishing of its literature, gathered and "they will not spare their precious help and try to honor and adorn the pages of this temporary with their precious writings ..." Logoreci was among the first Albanian didactics in Kosovo. He helped open Albanian schools in villages, but also in the city.

³ M.Logoreci, Luigj Gurakuqi being the general director of education and Mati Logoreci director of education for Shkodra, they contributed significantly to the expansion of education throughout the country and in Shkodra

⁴ It was a difficult and dark period of persecution and terror. It was this time when the struggle for the school was closely related to the struggle for the nation and its existence, many patriots attended and protected the Albanian school of the new generation, by providing to them the "food" of the soul-book.

⁵Prof.Dr.Musa Kraja "Mati Logoreci" (monographs), Tirana, 2000, p.29.

⁶Given that the textbook a long and difficult history, starting from more than 4,000 years before the new era, we can conclude that the ABC books, texts of literature and grammar in Kosovo were of multiple importance. The history of the literal text begins with the discovery of Jan Gutenberg's printing press in 1438. This is considered the source of textbooks as a massive learning book, and thus the new textbook. It was an epochal discovery. However, the most massive printing of textbooks dates back to the late eighteenth century.

⁷ Kastriot Gjika: "*Reforma shkollore dhe mësimdhënia e letërsisë*", a press release held in scientific conference "*Gjuha dhe letërsia në shkollë*", organized by FHL of UT,Tirana.

⁸It is known that the existence of the scripture is mentioned by the old Babylonia, when tile plates were used to write the textual content, as early as four thousand years ago. In addition to that, in ancient Egypt, the texts were written in papyrus, which was used even in old

For Albanians, the first traces of existence of the Albanian language are found from 1332 to follow with the three pieces of evidence¹ of the first documents found as a proof of the Albanian language, up to the first book of Gjon Buzuku "Meshari" 1555.² That was the time when J. Komenski formulated the thesis by which he determined that the textbook content should be complete and based on scientific premise.³ These international developments in the world of the book, with some delays, were reflected throughout the history of the Albanian nation who, while struggling to preserve their identity and language against the assimilation efforts of the rulers of these lands, has made many sacrifices and much blood was shed for this cause.⁴ The publishing of textbooks in Albanian language was of special importance because the schools could not function effectively without textbooks. The members of *Renaissance* paid special attention to the Albanian language textbooks, who, among other things, sought that the books would have national, patriotic and liberating content, free from foreign political and religious influences.⁵ The members of Renaissance were also compilers of first textbooks with didactic and scientific content. This important period of history began with *Naum Veqilharxhi* (compiled the first ABC book in Albanian language), *Konstandin Kristoforishi* (Gheg and Toske dialect ABC books as well as the book of Grammar of Albanian Language), *Naim and Sami Frasheri*, who laid the foundations of national education. The school textbooks compiled by the members of Renaissance: *Naim and Sami Frashëri, Jani Vretoja, Gaspër Benusi, Gjergj Qiriaz, Thanas Sina, Petro Nini Luarasi, Nuçi Naçi, Ndre Mjeda, Andon Xanoni, Luigj Gurakuqi, motrat Sevasti e Parashqevi Qiriaz, Sotir Peci, Aleksandër Xhuvani, Kristo Dakoja, Mati Logoreci etc.*, all of them being teachers or school leaders.⁶

Whenever the historians of Albanian education have looked into the chronology of the development of Albanian language education in the depths of the centuries, it was noted by them that there have been many attempts and openings of schools where the Albanian language was taught. Those schools were marginalized and short-lived but very important for the history of pedagogical thought, the history of didactics and the language teaching, literature being important for Albanian text analysis and the history of education in Albanian language in general. Up until the period of the National Renaissance, the books written in Albanian language were made with different alphabets and were mainly printed outside of our lands. In addition, up until the opening of national schools, textbooks were mainly of religious character.

However, in addition to these efforts, the most serious and concrete action for the development of current Albanian language education in the territory of Kosovo is the period between 1915-1918 when the Austro-Hungarian invasion took place in Kosovo, which continued very seriously during the period of 1941-45, when the minister of education of "non-dependent" lands E.Koliqi had sent over 600 teachers to open Albanian schools in Kosovo. However, until 1945 in Kosovo there were very few schools in Albanian language and very few textbooks of Albanian language. Therefore, it is documented that very advanced state-level public schools have operated in the period of World War I in 1915 - 1918 and during the World War II in 1941-1944. It is well known that during 1915-1918, the texts compiled by foreign authors, e.g. in Italian language (in Prizren) and some textbooks of Albanian authors were used in the Albanian language schools.⁷ Thus, Ndre Mjeda and Anton Xanoni had designed the textbook *Këndime për shkollë të para të Shqipërisë*, book I, II, III, Vienna, 1902, 1908 and 1912, which were applicable until 1918, and later in primary schools in Prizren.⁸ During the time of Austro-Hungary, Albanian students in Gjakova, Peja, Gurakoc, Mitrovica, Vushtrri, etc., have used the textbooks published in Vienna and in Albania. In this period, the remaining Albanians in the areas occupied by Bulgaria have been denied of

Greece and later in Rome. The parchment was used in the middle Ages, whereby it is believed that the texts were written two thousand years ago.

¹ The first documents of the Albanian language are considered from the 15th century (*Formula e Pagëzimit, Fjalorthi i A. Von Harfit dhe Perikopeja e Shen Matineut*).

² Dhimitër Shueriqi, *Shkrimet e para në gjuhën shqipe1332"*, Rilindja" Prishtinë, 1982. (After Buzuku, which for us Albanians, is the starting point of writing of the text, other advanced things took place in Europe in the world of books. It is when the didactic reformer, Czech pedagogue Jan Amos Komenski (1592-1670), who has special merit in the compilation of the contemporary textbook. With the first text in Latin, *Orbis sensualium pictus* (Sensual World in Pictures), is considered the founder of the textbook theory, as well as of the presentation of theoretical principles of writing the textbooks, which are even existing to this day.

³ Dmitrij Dmitrijević Zujev, *Školski udžbenik*, Belgrade, 1988, p. 14; see Aleksandër Stipčević: *Povijest knjige*, Zagreb, 1985 for more about his text and history.

⁴ Nuhi Rexhepi, *Letërsia shqipe në tekstet shkollore të Kosovës (1945-1990)*, Prishtina, 2002, p. 17.

⁵ Prof. dr. Hysni Myzyri, *Rilindasit tanë për tekstet shkollore*, "Historia e Arsimit" 2, Tirana, 2002, p. 86.

⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 87.

⁷ Akademik Jašar Redžepagić, *Çitanke i çitaonice na Kosovu*, Libri Shkollor, Prishtina, 2/1985, p. 142.

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 142.

instruction in Albanian language as well as of the use of textbooks in Albanian language. This period marks the use of the textbook *"Abetari për msojtorë filltare të Shqipërisë"*, published in Shkodra, printed in "Nikaj" printing house.¹ In addition to Vienna, prior to 1915, textbooks in Albanian language were printed by our patriots in societies abroad, Bucharest and Sofia. Although on the way to the homeland, they were often subject to the strict control by the Turkish army, they however managed to penetrate in Kosovo through various Albanian societies and patriots.² These ABC books and textbooks were secretly taught in Albanian towers, mosques, masjids and churches by the Albanian clergy. During this period, more than 30 textbooks for primary schools were used in Albania as well as in Kosovo, Several ABC books were in use in Kosovo such as the one by M. Logoreci, N. Lako, "Stërviçetoret", P. Qiriaz "Abetaren për shkollat e para", Th. Papapano "Shkëndillat e para", J. Minga "Abetare kombëtare shqip" etc.³ Apart from the ABC textbooks, there were other subject textbooks published such as "Këndim i shpejtë e i spjeguem", etc. Textbooks from Albania were also used in primary schools in Kosovo which was under the rule of Austro-Hungary. This is proven by the letter of the Directorate of "Mësojtorës Popullore Shqipe" (Albanian national school) in Mitrovica, who had requested from the General Directorate of Education in Shkodra "...400 ABC books, 200 grammar books, 200 song books, 130 Albanian history books, 30 General Geography books, 130 nature reading books, Albanian – Albanian dictionaries, etc".⁴ On 18 March 1918, Mati Logoreci informed L. Gurakuqi with regards to these requests, noting that he had loaded 5 arks with 320 kg weight towards Mitrovica.⁵ The dark period of Kosovar and other Albanians that remained outside the territory of London Albania restarted from 1918.⁶ However, with the change of the invaders, for Albanians outside Albania comes a "better day"! The World War II era in Kosovo marks the opening of Albanian schools, whereby the texts used in Tirana were being used. These textbooks were designed by Albanian authors and printed in Tirana. In addition to the ABC book, during 1941-1944, the reading comprehension books for grades I, II, III, IV and V as well as some other textbooks which were a type of summary of works from various scientific fields such as math, zoology, chemistry, physics etc.⁷ were used in Kosovo. Not all the subjects were covered with adequate textbooks and they were partially applicable after 1945 up until 1948.⁸

World War II is the "Birthday" of Albanian language and literature books in Kosovo

The normal development of the teaching of the Albanian language was hampered by the lack of textbooks. Old texts were inherited and passed through generations, often copied by handwriting. Numerous scientists have dealt with the theoretical and practical problems of the textbook, noting, in particular, that "Literature is a human activity that like no other unifies the human mind and heart, the reason and the feeling, literature respectively comprises what can be called the full of the human world. Through it, the mind is enriched, but the soul of man is also ennobled".⁹ Mr. Abdyl Ramaj dealt with issues of the textbook and the didactic shaping of the textbook in the Albanian lands. Even though trace the beginnings of the compilation of texts in Albanian by F.Bardhi, A.Bogdani, P.Pogdani etc., as early as the 15th century¹⁰, ever since the first schools in Albanian language were opened in Kosovo, respectively the one in Prizren in 1891, up until the violent separation from Albania – from the trunk, the obstacles that we had to overcome in the area of national education and culture were not known to any Balkan nation.¹¹ Addressing the book and textbook issues, A. Ramaj, who was also the author of some textbooks, especially for the lower grades, was also a multi-year editor of textbooks as well as the author of the bibliography for textbooks,¹² is

¹ Murat Z. Gecaj, *Nëpër udhët e shkollës shqipe*, Tirana, 2001, p. 125.

² Dr. Svetozar G. Čanović, *Specifični problemi nastave u školama Kosova i Metohije*, Prisina, 1967, p. 71.

³ Instituti i Studimeve Pedagogjike (Pedagogical Studies Institute), *Historia e Arsimit Shqiptar I*, Tirana, 1990, p. 284; Ilir Kanin, *Arsimi në Shqipëri në vitet e Luftës Parë Botërore*, Tirana, 2001, p. 126.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 285.

⁵ Ilir Kanini, *vep. e cit.*, p. 126.

⁶ The year 1918 marks the wild re-occupation of Kosovo and the abolition of schools in Albanian language in Kosovo. Those Albanian students who decided to attend the lesson could use this "right" only in Serbian language, with texts compiled and published in Belgrade. Instruction in Albanian language and the texts of this language were strictly forbidden even with the legal acts of that time, while for the Albanian book was declared a "new indictment" and for patriots and distributors of Albanian characters persecutions, imprisonment and torture! Two years after the invasion of Albania, this is occurred in other areas inhabited by Albanians.

⁷ Revista "Shkolla shqiptare", Tirana, 1941, p. 458.

⁸ Akademik J. Rexhepagiq, *punim i cit.* p. 143.

⁹ Hysen Matoshi: "Tekstet shkollore letrare dhe formimi letrar", IAP, Pristina 2008, p. 105.

¹⁰ Shefki Osmani, Fjalori i Pedagogjisë, Shtëpia botuese "28 Nëntori", Tirana 1983, p. 649.

¹¹ Hysni Myzyri, *Shkollat e para kombëtare, ISP-Fakulteti i Historisë dhe i Filologjisë*, Tirana, 1973, p. 255.

¹² Abdyl Ramaj has written three books dedicated to textbooks (see literature).

recognized as the most comprehensive author of this field to the present day in Kosovo. Sami Frashëri's definition would serve as an illustration of Albanian's path towards schools and textbooks in Albanian language, who said: *"The Albanian is taught to make school in squares and without books, with pencil in hand"*! This was the state of our education and culture among centuries, especially until the beginning of the Albanian National Renaissance. The century-old captivity deprived Albanians from having the textbook as compulsory book in the hands of Kosovar children. However, in some historical stages (at the time of Austro-Hungarian, Italian and German occupation and during Yugoslavian socialism) textbooks of Albanian language primary schools were of particular importance because they were compulsory and, regardless of their content, carried out an important mission. It is understandable that textbooks of the Albanian language, like all others during these stages of the history of Albanian education in Kosovo, had to be approved by the professional body of the Ministry of Education - Pleqësia e Arsimit (The Seniors of Education). The textbooks (reading comprehension books, grammar and school literature books), especially in elementary schools, were of extraordinary importance. There was little hope for school textbooks for Albanian pupils from the first Constitution after the World War II of the RFPJ. Article 13, for national minorities, allowed "national minorities in the RFP to enjoy the rights of cultural development and the right of free use of their language,"¹. However, at the time, the party was above the law and the state, whereby in practice it had many deformities. Until 1966, a severe climate dominated in Kosovo and every written word was super monitored. During this time, textbooks in primary education were divided into basic textbooks and workbooks. In order to use the basic textbook and workbooks, there was a need for teacher's books which would have been didactic-methodical guidance for each teaching unit in particular, which at the time were missing. The publication of textbooks of the Albanian language, as the most powerful teaching, education and educational tool had the same fate as the development of the Albanian schools. The establishment and expansion of the school network, the preparation of the qualified teaching staff, as well as the political climate in Kosovo was reflected in the increase of the requirements and content of the Albanian language school textbooks. The book writers were convinced that "... apart from the mind, literature influences significantly, essentially even, the advancement of the feelings and the spirit of the young man and of these age groups in particular."² Thus, an important age for the textbook in Kosovo can be considered the period of the first ABC book by Kolë Xhumar *"Këndimi im i parë"* (1945), which together with teachers from Albania during 1941-45 marks a very delicate era of the Albanian alphabet until the confrontation with the compilation of textbooks by Serbian and Albanian authors in Serbian language to be translated later into Albanian until the years 1974-1981, when the school textbooks flourished.³ Literature, as a subject, was included in all curricular categories: literacy in the I-IV grade of the lower cycle, literary reading in the V-VIII grade of elementary school and literary history in grades I-IV of high school. Therefore, the textbook in Kosovo is as old as the Albanian school in these areas.⁴

Literary texts – Reading comprehension book from 1945 to 2019

The first books in Albanian language that reached the hands of students after the "liberation" were the texts that were inherited from the past.⁵

Among the first textbooks in the area of today's Kosovo, I would mention the first ABC book *"Këndimi im i parë"*, published in 1945 by the Directorate of Education, whereupon 20 thousand copies were released in the printing house *"Laurasi"* in Tirana, whereas a new page was turned for Albanian schools and Albanian language in Kosovo after the World War I where over 95 percent of the population was illiterate. The true history of publishing the textbook in Albanian language, by Albanian authors of Kosovo, begins after 1946. These authors were coerced to compile them in Serbian or adapt them from Serbian. Among the first Albanian authors of this period are: T. Hatipi, M. Gjevori, S. Kostari, A. Çetta, M. Krasniqi, A. Zajmi, D. Shala, G. Lubeteni, R. Hoxha, R. Kelmendi, etc.

Until 1948 similar to many other texts, those of the Albanian language, designed and published in Albania were used for the purposes of the Albanian schools in Kosovo, this because the diplomatic relations up to that year were good and there

¹ Boris Zheri, *Zadaci naseg skolstva i naucnih ustanova*, "Savremena skola", pedagogy magazine, nr.3, 1946, p.151.

² Bardhyl Musai, *"Metodologjia e mësimdhënies"*, Tirana 2003, p. 112.

³ By the year 1990, over 400 titles of Albanian literature textbooks were published. Most of these titles were dedicated to elementary schools which was less than of textbooks for secondary schools.

⁴ Shefik Osmani, *Fjalori i pedagogjisë*, Tirana, 1983, p.374.

⁵ Abdulla Vokri, *Zhvillimi i shkollave dhe arsimit në komunën e Mitrovicës (Development of schools and education in the municipality of Mitrovica)* (1945-1975).

were no ideological differences. Based on political movements, on program and legal changes in the former Yugoslavia, textbooks of the Albanian language can be broken down to four development periods:

- *Period of 1945-1961;*
- *Period of 1962 – 1969;*
- *Period of 1970-1991 and*
- *Period of 1992 – 2019.*¹

Indeed, this periodization is argued in multidimensional levels with evidence of proportional representation of Albanian, Yugoslav and world literature, with a content and ideological criteria in programs, texts, teaching, etc.² At that time, many authors feared the pursuit of the Serbian police, especially those dealing with the writing of textbooks for the courses of Albanian language and history. Nevertheless, they continued to collaborate in compiling textbooks, even outside the workplace.³ For primary school, the textbooks were mainly designed by co-authors, while textbooks for high school, mostly by one author. The *Libri Shkollor* editorial with its commitment to writing textbooks has carried out a lot of valuable work. The special bibliography of primary education publications in Albanian language in Kosovo and in the former Yugoslavia in general is limited to a special cultural, historical and political period of Kosovo Albanians during the existence of artificial creation of the SFRY, the state, which includes the period of 1945 - 1999. Nonetheless, in the fund of the National and University Library of Kosovo, there is a collection of publications that include reading comprehension books published not only in Kosovo, but also in the republics of former Yugoslavia, such as Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro. Perhaps, for a more comprehensive and specific search, a greater dedication would have been necessary in a process of a research also through publishers and authors who have kept track of these kinds of collections of school editions.⁴ The chronological order could have been made according to the years of publication, but I have chosen the order made in the division by grades of primary level of education. The reading comprehension books for mandatory education were found with following entries: *Kendimi (singing); Liber kendimi (Singing book); Lexim (reading), Libër leximi (reading comprehension book), Lexim letrar (literary reading), etc.*⁵

It is worth mentioning that the function of textbooks of Albanian language and literature when it came to introduction of patriotism at students, was super controlled and censored by the monistic policy. The first grade ABC book contained very limited national spirit.⁶ To illustrate this, the first text for the students, when analyzing the 1974/75 school year editions, when the ABC book by author Mehmet Gjevori⁷ was in use, it did not contain any characteristic that expressed any element of national value. Only two contents were with national association: "Festa" (p.39), whereby the national flag is shown in the illustration, however, it was together with former Yugoslavian flag and *Vendlindja ime*". In addition to that, in the academic year 1977/78 to 1981/82, when ABC book by author Mehmedali Hoxha⁸ was in use, still there was limited content that reflected any kind of national aspect. The nationalism was compensated by the authors with the texts about the leader "Tito", p.42, "Me Titon përpara", p.44, "J.B.Tito", p.93, "Emri i shokut Tito", p.94. Occasionally the texts about NLW were in "fashion" such as: "Zana partizane", p.81 and "Qyteti Hero", p.95), which in their content reveal some human-national values and patriotic message "The freedom is not a gift, it is fought for". From academic year 1982/83 until 2003,

¹ Bajram Shatri "Historia e arsimit fillor në Kosovë" I-II, Pristina, 2000, p....

² The compiling of texts over these years in Kosovo was faced with many obstacles, both technical and political. Some authors after bidding on the design of any text had reservations about the possibility of publishing them. They resonated to draft the text, but if it would not be published for various reasons, their efforts would have been wasted or even if published, would they be adequately compensated for the authorship. Some of them doubted that even if the texts published, the financial return would be difficult, as there may not be sales etc.

³ In 1992 all authors (coauthors) dropped off the financial compensation and authorship over the texts.

⁴ During the 90's, when under the influence of violent Serbian measures, the compulsory specimen in Albanian it was not allowed to enter created a large gap and obstacle to compiling a complete bibliography

⁵ Revista (magazine) "Mësuesi i Kosovës", Bukurije Haliti, Libri i leximit në gjuhën shqipe në ish-Jugosllavi... (1945 – 1999), Pristina, 2013.

⁶ For the purposes of analysis of this dimension of education of Albanian students in Kosovo, I have taken the textbooks of elementary (primary) school (grades I-IV) schoolbooks in Kosovo, which were in use during the academic year 1974/75 and hereafter. This period was taken due to the positive constitutional changes that had raised the degree of autonomy of the ASA of Kosovo (especially in the field of education).

⁷ Mehmet Gjevori: Abetare, ETMM të KSAK, Pristina, 1974.

⁸ Mehmedali Hoxha: Abetare, ETMM të KSAK, Pristina, 1979.

the ABC book of author Qamil Batalli ¹ was in use for the longest period, whereby as a national particularity is that that time, among four flags (SFRY, CPY and RS) was also our national flag (p.76). As a part of national education, the love for the mother could be included as well ("*Nëna qëndresë* ", p.78) which emphasizes some traits of patriotism such as: resistance, bravery, etc., and the poem ("*Gjuha jonë* ", f.87) whereby the love of mother tongue is expressed by our famous poet N. Frashëri: "**good, sweet, clean...**", as well as some texts with NLW theme as "*Valojnë flamujt tanë* ", "*Boro e Ramizi* ", p.76, which are among the limited "national" content. Neither do the reprints of this ABC book until 1991, up to fifth edition (1991),² mark any change. In that year, some illustrations have been removed and replaced with some other illustrations, but lacking any kind of national symbol. The "*Rruga e Titos*" poem had been removed and replaced with the "*Rruga jonë*" poem.

Conclusion

Texts with national content were not included and have been quite symbolic until the compilation of the Albania-Kosovo joint ABC book (2012). Patriotic messages on reading comprehension books in Kosovo schools were similar to those of ABC books. The patriotic spirit of Albanian language and literature texts and their influence on raising national awareness was controlled by the censorship guardians of the Yugoslav politics until 1990 when the education system of Kosovo was completely separated.

Throughout the century-old history, the Albanian people have fought to preserve the language against assimilation efforts.³ In this endeavor, the patriotic intellectuals have consistently worked on the unification of the alphabet and the compilation of the rules of spelling and grammar of the Albanian language. Therefore, it can be ascertained that "... *the book was the most important source for the acquisition of comprehensive knowledge, a source of all knowledge ...*",⁴ hence this was especially true of the Albanian language books. Nonetheless, even "*in the present era of a real explosion of modern tools, such as computers, audits etc., the textbook remains the most widespread and undoubtedly the most effective instrument of the learning process.*"⁵

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¹ Qamil Batalli: Abetare, ETMM të KSAK, Pristina, 1987.

² Qamil Batalli: Abetare, ETMM i Kosovës, Pristina, 1991.

³ Nuhi Rexhepi, Letërsia shqipe në tekstet shkollore të Kosovës (1945-1990) Logos, Pristina, 2002.

⁴ Dr. Josip Malić, Ugraditi u udžbenike sve ono što nas spaja i što nas daje krila za let u bolje sutra, "Libri Shkollor", Pristina, 2/1985, f. 21-22.

⁵ ISP, Grup autotësh, Hartimi dhe vlerësimi i teksteve shkollore (ISP Group of authors, compilation and evaluation of textbooks), Tirana, 2003, p.11.

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