

Platforms of Albanian Assemblies from 1908-1912



History

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Abstract

Albanian assemblies in the fourth phase of Albanian Renaissance took massive character and became important organizations and institutions for certain national issues. In these assemblies were addressed major national problems starting with the Albanian issue in the framework of the Ottoman Empire, grievances over injustices of xhonturk regime and generally Ottoman regime, way of realizing autonomous platform of national independence, resolution enmities, blood feuds and the solemn oath, etc. Among the major assemblies, which were held in this time period were: Assembly of Ferizaj (July 1908), Assembly of Dibra (July 1909), Luke Assembly of alder (April 1910), Grece Assembly (June 1911), Assembly of Junik (May 1912), Assembly of Vlora (November 1912) etc. This paper aims out to disclose more fully these and other assemblies, the causes that led to the organization of their platforms that emerged from them and the results that brought to the national issue.

Albanian National Renaissance in the fourth stage came more prepared, more strengthened and unified platform towards its platform realization. Among the most basic forms, which served as the foundation for the organization of Albanians to decide on the fate of the country, were undoubtedly assemblies, congresses, gatherings and meetings with political, economic, social and cultural education.

Albanian assemblies are considered among the basic institutions of self-organization and faith in the axiology and physiognomy of our national values. Albanian Assemblies of the years 1908-1912 found inspiration in the historical tradition of centuries assemblies as: Albanian assemblies of the years 1908-1912 found inspiration in the historical tradition of many centuries assemblies as: Assembly of Lezha (1444),¹³⁰ Assembly of Prizren (1878),¹³¹ Assembly of Peja (1899)¹³² etc. They played a key and unsubstitutional integrative role and had directly and influence to all popular strata, which, even tough they were presented as fractioned, still they were necessarily oriented to improving the lives and national status of Albanians within the Ottoman Empire. Albania's autonomy as political platform commensurated the controversial positions within these organizations, synthesised the Albanian national consciousness and obliged them to find ways of responding to realize this transitional aspiration at a national level. As a point of reference in the construction of this program also served the national and political project "**How was Albania before, is now, and going to be?**", the architect of which was the visionary ideologue of the Renaissance, Sami Frashëri.¹³³

In this time period, while the constitutional way, through legal and peaceful protests, memorandum requests did not receive any proper response, then Albanian assemblies became

¹³⁰ Instituti i Historisë-Prishtinë, Prishtinë. (2008). *Gjergj Kastrioti-Skënderbeu dhe epoka e tij*, f. 68.

¹³¹ Frashëri, K. (1997). *Lidhja Shqiptare e Prizrenit (1878-1912)*. Toena, Tiranë, f. 86.

¹³² Prifti, K. (2002). *Lidhja Shqiptare e Pejës*. Toena, Tiranë, f. 186.

¹³³ Frashëri, S. (2001). *Shqipëria ç'ka qenë, ç'është e ç'do të bëhetë?*, LIBRI SHKOLLOR, Prishtinë.

more efficient, since they were uniquely manifested in terms of combat operations to achieve their short-term goals. This national historic era is followed by a range of such organizations which were initiated and directed by the Renaissance popular representatives or leaders of anti-Ottoman uprisings in which took part dozens of hundreds of people. Recognition of Albanians as equal national element within the Ottoman Empire, the union of vilayets of Kosova, Shkodra, Manastir and Janina in an autonomous Albanian vilayet, opening of schools in the Albanian language and the learning development of national spirit, opening of schools in Albanian and the development of learning in the national spirit, replacement of Ottoman administration officials in Albanian vilayets with Albanian officials, performing military service in Albania etc., are some of the main issues that have distinguished the Albanian assembly platform of that period.

In the years 1908-1910 were marked similar assemblies and gatherings, which have addressed political, economic, cultural and educational issues. Assembly of Ferizaj (5 to 23 July 1908),¹³⁴ First Congress of Monastir (14 to 22 November 1908),¹³⁵ Congress of Dibra (23-29 July 1909),¹³⁶ Congress of Elbasan (2-8 September 1909),¹³⁷ Second Congress of Monastir (2-3 April 1910),¹³⁸ Luke Assembly of alder near Decani (April 1910),¹³⁹ meetings and other events of local general interest, etc., are proofs that basically have combined a platform of the emancipated and free Albania in tuition, language, national alphabet, governed in administration and courts and developed in the economy and traffic. Furthermore, at the time of the anti-Ottoman uprising of the year 1910,¹⁴⁰ there weren't missing individual cases to declare a platform aimed at the independence of Albania.

It should be noted that committed to national rights of Albanians (autonomy) during this time were also Albanian colonies in Istanbul, Bulgaria, Romania, Egypt, Italy, USA etc., where to their meetings were treated and drafted requirements with the program for the autonomy of Albania.¹⁴¹

¹³⁴ Arkivi i Institutit të Historisë në Tiranë, Raporte dhe telegrame të konsujve austro-hungarez nga Shkupi dhe Mitrovica, muaji korrik 1908.

¹³⁵ Universiteti i Tiranës & Instituti i Historisë – Instituti i Gjuhësisë e Letërsisë. (1972). *Alfabeti i gjuhës shqipe dhe Kongresi i Manastirit (14-22 nëndor 1908)*, Studime, materiale, dokumente, Tiranë, f. 7-50.

¹³⁶ Më gjerësisht shih: *Kongresi i Dibrës 1909*, Referate dhe kumtesa mbajtur në Konferencën Shkencore të organizuar në Dibër më 23 korrik 2004 me rastin e 95 vjetorit të Kongresit të Dibrës 1909, Shoqata Qytetare “Votra Dibrane”-Dibër, Dibër, 2005.

¹³⁷ Myzyri, H. (1996). *Arsimi kombëtar shqiptar (1908-1912)*, Enti i Teksteve dhe i Mjeteve Mësimore i Kosovës, Prishtinë, f. 145-176.

¹³⁸ *Akte të Rilindjes Kombëtare Shqiptare 1878-1912*. (1978). Përgatitur nga Stefanaq Pollo dhe Selami Pulaha, Akademia e Shkencave e RPS të Shqipërisë & Instituti i Historisë, Tiranë, f. 208-209.

¹³⁹ Akademia e Shkencave e Shqipërisë & Instituti i Historisë (grup autorësh). (2002). *Historia e Popullit Shqiptar II – Rilindja Kombëtare vitet 30 të shek. XIX-1912*, Toena, Tiranë, f. 426-428.

¹⁴⁰ Më gjerësisht shih: Instituti i Historisë-Prishtinë. (2012). *Kryengritja e vitit 1910 në Kosovë*, Prishtinë.

¹⁴¹ Akademia e Shkencave e RP të Shqipërisë, (Instituti i Historisë). (1976). *Mendimi politik e shoqëror i Rilindjes Kombëtare Shqiptare - (Përmbledhje artikujsh nga shtypi)*, vëllimi II (1908-1910), mbledhur dhe përgatitur për shtyp nga Zihni Haskaj, Tiranë; Dërmaku, I. (1983). *Rilindja Kombëtare Shqiptare dhe kolonitë shqiptare të mërgimit në Rumani dhe në Bullgari*, Enti i Teksteve dhe i Mjeteve Mësimore i KSA të Kosovës, Prishtinë.

Since the flame of anti-Ottoman uprising of the year 1910 had passed to the Vilayet of Shkodra¹⁴² and that the dissatisfaction of Albanians against the xhontur regime had gained, in 1911 multiple assemblies reflected in the southwest and northwest of the Albanian territories, leaving aside here the other areas within and outside the national trunk, but at a slower rate. Thus, in the actions of Dibra fighting units (January 1911),¹⁴³ in Cetinje meeting (April 1911),¹⁴⁴ at the meeting of the delegates of “Black Society” in Himara of Vlora (May 1911),¹⁴⁵ in the General Assembly of Podgorica’s village Greçë (23 June 1911),¹⁴⁶ in the Assembly of Labëria (July 1911),¹⁴⁷ at the gathering of leaders in the south of Vlore, Drashovica Bridge (July 31, 1911),¹⁴⁸ at the gathering of Tepelena (18 August 1911),¹⁴⁹ at the gathering of Shkupi (2 October 1911)¹⁵⁰ etc., after the discussions held, it was reached the programmatic drafting content for political, economic, social and cultural education in Albanian areas, that meant the realization of autonomy of Albania under the sovereignty of the Sultan, as a transitional stage towards full independence.

The year 1912 increased the Albanian revolt against the Ottoman government, so the idea that only through a widespread anti-Ottoman uprising, could be realized national rights, had begun to find widespread support among Albanians. To demonstrate in practice this purpose, from January to August 1912 were organized dozens of assemblies, rallies and meetings in Albanian areas and outside, such as: Meeting of Taksim (January 1912),¹⁵¹ Assembly of Krasniqe (April 1912),¹⁵² Assembly of Kruma (21 April 1912) also known as Assembly of Four Flags,¹⁵³ Gjilan secret meetings (April 1912)¹⁵⁴, Meeting of Shala of Bajgora (6 May 1912),¹⁵⁵ Assembly of Gjurgjevik (17-18 May 1912),¹⁵⁶ Assembly of Junik (21-25 May 1912),¹⁵⁷ Meetings of Pozheran (July 1912),¹⁵⁸ Meetings of Prishtina (July 1912),¹⁵⁹ in the gathering of Sinja’s neck in Berat (July 1911),¹⁶⁰ Meeting of 12 leaders of the Revolutionary Committee of the Kaza of Vlora (4 August

¹⁴² Gjermëni, S. (2011). *Kryengritja Shqiptare e vitit 1911 në optikën e diplomacisë evropiane dhe ballkanike*, Toena, Tiranë, f. 11-211.

¹⁴³ Abdyl, R. (2004). *Lëvizja Kombëtare Shqiptare 1911-1912*, Libri 2, Instituti i Historisë-Prishtinë, Prishtinë, f. 21.

¹⁴⁴ Rahimi, Sh. (1978). *Lufta e shqiptarëve për autonomi (1897-1912)*, Enti i Teksteve dhe i Mjeteve Mësimore i KSA të Kosovës, Prishtinë, f. 180.

¹⁴⁵ *Akte të Rilindjes Kombëtare...*, f. 220-221.

¹⁴⁶ Gjermëni, S. *vep. e cit.*, f. 234-239.

¹⁴⁷ *Akte të Rilindjes Kombëtare...*, f. 227-228.

¹⁴⁸ Abdyl, R. *vep. e cit.*, f. 116.

¹⁴⁹ *Akte të Rilindjes Kombëtare...*, f. 228-229.

¹⁵⁰ Abdyl, R. *vep. e cit.*, f. 137.

¹⁵¹ Prishtina, H. (2009). *Nji shkurtim kujtimesh mbi kryengritjen shqiptare të vjetit 1912*, Rrokullia, Prishtinë, f. 10-12.

¹⁵² Rahimi, Sh. *vep. e cit.*, f. 202.

¹⁵³ Bajraktari, J. (1998). *Gjakova me rrethinë (1878-1912)*, Instituti i Historisë-Prishtinë, Prishtinë, f. 266.

¹⁵⁴ *Kryengritja Shqiptare e vitit 1912 në dokumente serbe*, (2008). Përgatitur nga Zekeria Cana, Instituti Albanologjik i Prishtinës, Prishtinë, f. 148.

¹⁵⁵ Po aty, f. 199.

¹⁵⁶ Po aty, f. 218.

¹⁵⁷ Abdyl, R. *vep. e cit.*, f. 236-244.

¹⁵⁸ Po aty, f. 326; Halimi, N. (2001). *Lëvizja Kombëtare Shqiptare në trevën e Karadakut (1908-1912)*, Kumanovë, f. 242.

¹⁵⁹ *Dokumente ruse për Lëvizjen Kombëtare Shqiptare më 1912*. (2006). Hulumtuan, përzgjedhën dhe përgatitën: Prof. dr. Muhamet Shatri dhe Prof. dr. Ramiz Abdyl, Instituti i Historisë – Prishtinë, Prishtinë, f. 186.

¹⁶⁰ *Akte të Rilindjes Kombëtare...*, f. 245-246.

1912),¹⁶¹ Assembly of Ferizaj (6 August 1912),¹⁶² Meeting of Fieri (August 1912)¹⁶³ etc., reflected programs of local and nationwide character. Since the platforms that were drawn from these assemblies and meetings were not unique, then weren't missing calls to the Albanian patriots to organize an inclusive parliament in Shkup to define a common national platform, but such an assembly failed to be held.

It should be noted that the demagogic, obscurantist and reactionary politics of xhonturks,¹⁶⁴ in the causality of the situation and circumstances in which Albanians were passing, essentially dictated the need for administrative-territorial autonomy of Albania, not a single doctrine of the Renaissance platform, but as temporary designed component in conformation with the whole Albanian actuality, the Balkans and beyond.¹⁶⁵ This program of self-governance of Albanians under the Ottoman Empire has consistently and linearly followed the fourth phase of Albanian Renaissance until November 1912.

Seeing that the fragile political situation within the Ottoman Empire had created the preconditions of actions of the Balkan Alliance at the expense of Albanian ethnic lands, then the National Movement acted in accordance with its platform to finally decide on the future of Albania, for an autonomous or independent Albanian state, which was underlined in the extraordinary meeting of the Committee "Pështimi" (Salvation) and of the "Black Society" in Shkup (14 October 1912).¹⁶⁶ Meanwhile in Bucharest meeting (November 5, 1912) directed by Ismail Qemajli, who organized it together with Luigj Gurakuqi, it was decided to establish a Steering Committee to take over the government of Albania.¹⁶⁷ In order to be crowned with success all these events, albeit in tight circumstances as a result of the Balkan War, but to a natural process dating back through centuries, on November 28, 1912, in the nationwide Assembly of Vlora, unanimously and in a sublime way was approved the platform so "*Albania... gets separated, free and independent*".¹⁶⁸

Conclusion

As noted above, we can conclude that the Albanian Assambles of the years 1908-1912 and their platforms, contributed to raising the awareness and adopting the national progressive ideas, to the unification of Albanians and their organization for the combat activities. They were characterized by autonomy program of Albania, weakened the foundations of the rule of the Ottoman Empire in Albanian areas and after the great historical assemblies in Prizren and Peja, articulated and prepared the appropriate scene to declare the independence of Albania in Vlora in 1912.

¹⁶¹ Po aty, f. 249-251.

¹⁶² AShSh&IH, *Historia e Popullit Shqiptar II...*, f. 489.

¹⁶³ Po aty, f. 490.

¹⁶⁴ Po aty, f. 418.

¹⁶⁵ Më gjerësisht shih: Frashër Demaj, F. (2011). *Britania e Madhe dhe çështja shqiptare (1875-1913)*, Instituti i Historisë-Prishtinë, Prishtinë, f. 155-237.

¹⁶⁶ *Akte të Rilindjes Kombëtare...*, f. 255-256.

¹⁶⁷ Po aty, f. 257.

¹⁶⁸ Frashëri, K. (2008). *Shpallja e Pavarësisë së Shqipërisë (28 Nëntor 1912)*, Akademia e Shkencave e Shqipërisë, Tiranë, f. 164.