



Literary Sections of the Newspaper “Η Φωνή της Ομόνοιας” (1991-2012)

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Abstract

In this article we will highlight some of the most important literary sections of the newspaper “Η φωνή της Ομόνοιας” (“The voice of Omonia”), published in Albania during 1991 – 2012, where are published works of artistic literature belonging mostly to the Ethnic Greek Minority writers in Albania but also works of the Albanian writers and those of the world literature. We will widely focus in the poems and stories published in the newspaper, bringing concrete titles that had their artistic and aesthetic values, and also in the weaknesses that derived from the ideological limitations of the time they were published and by the lack of professionalism from the majority of the writers. Despite the weaknesses, these works further enriched the tradition and culture of the Ethnic Greek Minority with their values, and as such deserve to take their place in the literary criticism studies.

Keywords: literary sections, poetry, prose, values and weaknesses.

1. Introduction

The change of the political system in Albania has been accompanied by fundamental developments and transformations in the field of media as well. After the collapse of the communist dictatorship in 1990, collapsed even the state monopoly in the Albanian media market. During 1991-1997 almost all the newspapers and the magazines controlled by the communist state disappeared and were replaced by new ones that functioned merely as private entrepreneurship.

2. Research Methods

Through the historical-philological method we could outline the historical, political, economic and social context of the newspaper “Η Φωνή της Ομόνοιας” (“The voice of Omonia”). Following we have tried to reveal the journalistic profile of the newspaper embodied over the years.

The material research study was conducted in two phases. Applying the analytical method we harmonized the newspaper texts with the recent publicistic requirements revealing its real “look”, whereas by means of the synthetic methodology and through the publications alignment we approached the general remarks, statements, comparisons and conclusions.



Fig.1. Newspaper of “Η Φωνή της Ομόνοιας”, which was published on Wednesday, 8 October 1991

Several new newspapers belonged to the political parties and served mainly to convey the ideas and political stances of the respective parties. Such was the “Η φωνή της Ομόνοιας” (“The voice of Omonia”) newspaper, which was launched in October 1991 by the Omonia (Democratic Union of the Ethnic Greek Minority) political organisation, which belonged to the Ethnic Greek Minority that lives in southern Albania. It was a weekly political newspaper, and headquartered in the offices of Omonia in the town of Gjirokastra. For a certain period of time, the newspaper was published under the title of “Τα νέα της Ομόνοιας” (“The news of Omonia”), that later was published again with its original title “Η φωνή της Ομόνοιας”. During its short life (1991-2012), the newspaper faced numerous difficulties. In February 1992, the new leadership led by the political organisation Omonia underestimated the newspaper and its founders abandoned it. For a considerable period of time it was published only during election campaigns, or when there existed any other political purpose.

Despite the short existing time, the newspaper “Η φωνή της Ομόνοιας” played an important role in becoming an authentic voice of the Greek people of the Ethnic Greek Minority in Albania. It did not only convey the political messages and supported all the legitimate rights of the Ethnic Greek Minority but also expressed the longing about their origin homeland. One of the first editors of the newspaper “Η φωνή της Ομόνοιας”, Panajot Barka, wrote on one of the articles in the first edition: “...Albania’s Hellenism took the newspaper in its own hands, the tribune where it will be freely expressed without the complexity of fear and threat, prison and exile. It dreamed and waited impatiently for 50 years, in order to read a truly democratic newspaper, a newspaper whose main objective was serving the interests of Hellenism, protecting the rights of the Ethnic Greek Minority in Albania”.

3. The literary sections of the newspaper “Η φωνή της Ομόνοιας” (1991-2012)

The party’s newspaper “Η φωνή της Ομόνοιας”, which informed its audience in the Greek language, in addition to the political sections reflected in its pages even the literary’s character sections. One of its main literary sections was: “**The literature-The poetry**”, that occasionally changed its title into: “The literature-The arts-The letters”, “Z.O. Literary” and “The literature”. In this section were published works of talented poets of the Ethnic Greek Minority, such as the poems of Niko Kacalidha: “Mourning of the worried mountain”, “Wake up”, etc.; of Mina Leka: “Childish joy”, “The homeland”, “The respect”, “The lost tomb”, etc.; of Vasil Koça: “The dark shadows”, “My sons, why are you leaving?”, etc.; of Spiro Kristo: “Here in these marbles”, “The notebook”, “The voices of the field”, “Our caravan”, “The teacher”, “The way of hope”, “Mother”, “The life’s fairy tale”, “The Port”, “Waiting for the dawn”, “Trying”, “The blue eye”, “Our mountains”, “The portrait of the field’s man”,

"Kostari", "Alive, dead", "Penelopian candle", "Sea!", "The cobblestones", "Walking on the streets of my country", etc.; of Mirela Kallanxhi: "Good luck"; rhapsodies of Persefoni Gjini: "I complain to God", "Cumulus of devils", "Four cabins", "The tragedy of death", or the rhapsodic verses "Mother, don't cry!", "The cemeteries", "My Garden", "Quarrelling with the mountains"; of Niko Theodhosi: "Dropoli's people", "Dedicated to Vurgu's woman"; of Andrea Zarballa: "The tables", "The country insists", "Collecting blood" etc.; of Pano Çuka: "Mother", "Our land", "The beauty", "The aphorism", "Popular songs", etc.; of Pavlo Shuti: "The heavy storm", "The modest crown", "The darkness"; of Vasil Kuri: "The epigram"; of Vasil Gjizeli: "Like a withered flower"; of Thoma Sterjo: "The man of the rivers" etc.

Regarding the prose works of the Ethnic Greek Minority writers in Albania, we can mention mainly the stories of the most famous authors, as Telemak Koça: "Under the worried sky"; of Spiro Kristo: "Spring without nightingales", "The sentenced", "The epilogue of a dialogue", "The marble seat"; of Petro Çerkezi: "The gull's broken wing", "The portrait of a journalist and the mural of an epoch", etc. In the newspaper were also present the humorous stories, such as: "The science of Vasil Hularai", of Mihal Naçi, "The man who saved my life" of Filip Çakuli, etc.

Another literary section of the newspaper was "**The literary voice of Omonia**" under N. Kacalidha care. In this section, were published many poems from Greek literature, such as those of Kostis Pallamas: "The little Greek", "Homeland", "The victory", "Your light magician", "May blessings"; of Taso Livadhiti: "People in the Wonderland"; of Menelaos Ludemis: "Morning executions"; of Ioanis Polemis: "Christ arouse"; of Stelios Sperancas: "The Renaissance", "Twenty one"; of Rita - Bumi Papas: "Melpomeni"; of Haris Saqellariu: "25th March"; of Alexandros Palis: "Kanaris"; of Dhionisios Solomos: "The disaster of Psara", "Hymn for freedom"; of Angelos Siqelianos: "The resistance"; of Odhiseas Elitis: "Crazy ship", "The winds", "The sun"; of Janis Ricos: "Romiosini", "Cultivated earth", "The trial"; of Georgia Dhrosinis: "Christ arouse" etc.

Amongst the stories of the Greek prose writers, published in this section, we can mention Menelao Ludemis's "Death lessons" etc., and Sotiris Dhimitri's novels: "Wishing you all the best" etc.

In this section were also published poetries from Cypriot literature such as Kostas Montis "Songs for our big brother", "Nicosia's girls", "Greek poets" etc., as well as stories of Hrisilios Hrisiliu: "Greek's nectar" and so on.

In the literary section "The literary voice of Omonia" were published worthy poems of the Albanian literature, such as the poem of Migjeni: "The prologue of prologues", and special stories of Ismail Kadare: "The hairstyle" adapted in the Greek language by Dhori Qirjazi, and so on.

There were also found in this section poets of the world literature, such as Pablo Neruda with the poetries: "Seeking for silence", "The fear", "Sonata with some firs" etc.

In the "Η φωνή της Ομόνοιας" newspaper there were a few other important literary sections, such as "**Critical book**", which included critical notes for various poetry collections. In this context we may mention the critical notes titled "101 poetries where love for the homeland extends" by Spiro Christos written for the poetical collection of Andrea Zarballa's "101 poetries for a piece of land".

Another section of the newspaper was the one entitled "**Book presentations**", where various books were presented, such as: the books of Sotir Dhimitriu "Wishing you all the best" and "In the beyond shore"; the book of the writer Telemak Koça "On 11th August in Bodrishtë": Presentation of the novel of the writer Telemak Koça "In the beyond shore" etc.

In the "**New books**" section, were published articles of different authors like the poetical collection of Niko Kacalidha: "Imprisoned songs", of Mula Leka's entitled: "A passionate poetry", "Loving peace" etc. In this section are also included the titles of various books launched in certain periods, such as the book "The great opening" by Menellao Dhaliani, "The book of the Greek-Albanian relations" of Dhimitër Dhuci, the book entitled "Love and tear" of Jorgo Shukura etc.; poetic collections such as: the second volume of Persefoni Gjini entitled "Pogoni spring" etc.

The section entitled "**Through the pages of 'Popular Tribune'**" was also successful. There were re-edited articles from the newspaper "Λαϊκό Βήμα" ("Popular Tribune"), which was published during 1988-1991 and reflected on its pages the spiritual world of the Ethnic Greek Minority in Albania, dedicating special importance to its traditions, literary and artistic creativity. Some of the

relevant articles are: "Lost words", "Our popular song writer" and "The legend of Monoviza" by Thoma Sterjo; "The trees in the meadow" by Andrea Zarballa and so on.

There were also published papers of great literary interest in the section titled "**Children's section**", which was launched on 21 May 1993. This was a monthly section and included various writings referring to the mythology, the history, the culture, and the personalities of the Ethnic Greek Minority in Albania etc. Some important creations of this section are: "The donkey and the cicada" by Jani Perjaliti; "The wolf and the lamb" by Mihali D. Stasinopullu etc. There were also published poetries or stories written by the children of the Ethnic Greek Minority, even drawings or essays, as well as impressions from school life, and articles about their issues and demands.

4. Conclusions

"Η φωνή της Ομόνοιας", which was a party newspaper, aimed to become the spirit and the soul of Hellenism through the Ethnic Greek Minority in Albania. Enver Hoxha's previous dictatorial regime denied many rights to the Ethnic Greek Minority and the purpose of the newspaper was to try reflecting everything, to analyze it, and to draw conclusions. Many journalists responded to this purpose of the newspaper, who provided valuable models, comments, and political analysis.

By means of the newspaper "Η φωνή της Ομόνοιας", were published not only the ideas and the political platforms, events, data and documents deliberately hidden by the communist regime, and the references to the millennial history of the Ethnic Greek Minority, stigmatising any anti-hellenic acts of the past and the present but also works with literary character.

In the literary sections of the "Η φωνή της Ομόνοιας" newspaper, were published not only the literary papers belonging to the best writers of the Ethnic Greek Minority in Albania in that time, but also the literary papers of the best Greek, Albanian and various countries of the world.

The literary works of the Ethnic Greek Minority in Albania, who published their creations in the pages of this newspaper had their artistic and aesthetic values, and also their the weaknesses that derived from the ideological limitations of the time they were published and by the lack of professionalism from the majority of the authors. Despite the weaknesses, these works further enriched the tradition and culture of the Ethnic Greek Minority with their values, and as such deserve to take their place in the literary criticism studies.

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