Developments of Greek–Albanian and Albanian–Greek Lexicography during the XIX – XX Centuries Up to 1990

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Abstract

In the context of this paper we will look at the social and historical conditions that prevailed during the XIX and XX century as and the impact of these conditions on the development of Greek - Albanian and Albanian – Greek lexicography. As regards the Albanian language, during these two centuries have taken place very important events in regard to the consolidation and development of Albanian literature. The interest of foreigners for Albania, the foundation of Albanology, as well as the codification of Albanian language are some of the most important events which influenced further developments. On the other hand, the Greek languages as more prestigious and cultivated language is used as Albanian’s supporter in order to help on its process of codification and crystallization. In this context we will see the most important dictionaries of these centuries, which are: Greek - simple arvanitshe Dictionary of Marco Botsari; Greek - Albanian Dictionary of Panayiotis Kupitori; Greek – Albanian Dictionary of Kotso Tasi; Albanian- Greek Dictionary of Konstantine Kristofordhi; Albanian- Greek Dictionary of Tassos Nerutsos; Albanian- Greek Dictionary of Nicholas Tsetsi; Albanian- Greek Dictionary of Niko Gjini; Albanian- Greek Dictionary of Vasil Partali.

Keywords: Lexicography; dictionary; Greek- Albanian dictionary; Albanian-Greek dictionary; language;
nation situated in the central part of Europe, was unknown and it was not part of any groups from European languages. Prof Xhevat Lloshi stresses that during the second half of XIX century started to be used some factors which affected the development of the Albanian lexicography science.

According to this, the first factor it has to do with codification of Albanian language and as a necessity to create a dictionary of its lexical asset. The attempts done toward this issue are expressed in the book of Kostandin Kristoforidhi, who designed a specific kind of Albanian language dictionary and which served also as a dual language Greek and Albanian dictionary.

To this are added even two other distinguished masterpieces, summaries of Albanian spoken language of Marko Boçari and Panajot Kupitori. To this period it belong the interest of foreigners such are Pukevill, Dozon etc.

The second factor which is related with the development of comparative - historical linguistics by the European linguists about the Albanian language. In 1854 it was published the book of Johann Georg von Hahn Albane-sische Studien which is the start point for the Albanian language science. It should be mentioned here that were K. Kristoforidhi and other co students of him at Zosimea school in Ioannina, which supported Hahn with other Albanian linguistic materials, in order to allow him to design his book, which later became the fundamental book of further Albanian language research studies.

3. Greek – Albanian Dictionaries

3.1 Greek - simple Arvanit dialect Dictionary of Marko Botsari (1809)

Since at the beginning of XIX century, we have a very important masterpiece, which it became a research object from many specialists. It is talking about the Dictionary of Marko Botsari, which was written in Corfu in 1809 under support of French council in Ioannina, Pukevill. The author himself has titled it Λεξικόν τῆς Ρομαϊκοίς καὶ Αρβανητικοίς Απλής (Greek - simple Arvanit dialect Dictionary).

The dictionary contains round 1700 words in Greek and round 1500 words in Albanian language. The Albanian words are given using the Greek alphabet.

The handwritten version is at National Library of Paris where Pukevill himself delivered it in 1819. According to T.Johallas (1980) “The dictionary of Botsari was written through the initiative of Pukevill. In the framework of its interest about the Albanian language and having in consideration its designing, in the following steps of dictionary French –Albanian language, which was included in his masterpiece Voyager dans la Grece, volume. 2, a Paris 1820, page 617 – 623. He used the case when Suliots were present in Corfu and specifically the friendship he has with the young boy Marco Botsari.”

The publication of this dictionary in an early time helps to follow some interesting language phenomena such are for example;

a. Structure of Spoken Greek-Albanian languages in Fanari area of Prevesa at the end of XVIII century and at the beginning of XIX century. Numbers of words are relatively small in number, but it has the advantage that gives straightforward subject from the spoken language of that family which belong to Tosk dialect.

b. Subject of Lexicography it give the possibility to see the dialect features of such spoken language (phonetically, lexical and grammar features varieties of different expressive forms etc).

c. We still can see the influence of Greek language in its dictionary and the influence of Turkish language or other languages.

3.2 Greek - Albanian Dictionary by Panajot Kupitori

Another important masterpiece that was designed at the end of this century is the Albanian- Greek dictionary by Panajot Kupitori.

Kupitori with origin from Ydhra Greece, where was spoken Arvanit spoken language, and wrote a dictionary which was titled “ Small Greek- Albanian Dictionary, from the Greek new language into Albanian Arvanit spoken language of Greece, with an approach of principal words and other dialects such were Tosk, Geg and spoken language of Arber in Italy.”

Explanations of words in Albanian language are done using Greek alphabet. The handwriting of Kupitori consists in 1226 pages. There are still unknown the reasons why author did not publish its masterpiece while he was alive. One year after the death of Kupitori, in 1882, his sister sold the handwriting at Council of France in Ioannina Aug. Dozon. In 1926, Association of History and Ethnology in Greece purchased the Dictionary and gave it to publish to the Designation Centre.
of Historical Dictionary of Athens Academy with under the tutoring of prof. Titos Johallas. For the very first time Dictionary brought the second part of the masterpiece by Titos Johallas, «Үдор өңөңөңөңөңөңөңөңө» (Ydhra the forgotten language) which was published in Athens in 2006 (Stillos 2011). In 2011 Nikos Stillos published the Kupitori’s Dictionary for the Albanian readers with the preface in Greek and Albanian language. In this publication Stillos has fit the Albanian part with the nowadays alphabet.

3.3 Albanian - Greek Dictionaries

During the XIX century, was not designed or published any Albanian- Greek dictionary. According to Prof. Memishaj (2011) this didn’t come as the result of Albanian language situation, as a spoken language, unwritten one, not codified before and without any explaining glossary, which offered the necessary lexicographical material for a bilingual dictionary in Albanian and Greek languages (Thomai 2006).

4. Greek- Albanian and Albanian – Greek Lexicography in XX Century

The XX century comes with important events especially for the Albanian nation. In 1908 was held the Manastir Congress which decided finally about the alphabet of Albanian language. In 1912 Albania it was declared an independent country and it started its progress among the other Balkan countries. It was defined the official border and a part of Greek population it was included within the Albanian State territory. This part of population gave its contribution in all development fields of social life, but also at the field of lexicography where we have referred to about this article.

Albanian Lexicography during the 20 century was established on the scientific bases. Were designed the explaining glossaries of Albanian language, which was an extraordinary support even for the designing of bilingual dictionaries, It was established the Archive of Albanian lexis, were published hundred bilingual dictionaries covering from the geographical point of view all main languages of the world.

It happen the contrary with Greek- Albanian Lexicography or Albanian –Greek Lexicography, where as the result of isolation of Albania from Greece, Greek nation was seen as an enemy nation and not any more as a friendly nation with which Albanian population have co lived in harmony for several centuries despite the historical positive and negative events

Situation changed in favour of positive issues after 1990 when Albanian it open its borders and allowed further collaborations in different fields.

Lexicography of XX century according to Jani Thomai (2006), is showing three periods of time that are fit to the historical division.

- Beginning of XX century – 1944 (after the end of Second World War)
- Period of time 1944 – 1990, which is known as an isolation period for Albania
- Period of time 1990 – present.

4.1 Greek –Albanian Dictionaries

4.1.1 First Period

During this period of time it happen only two events in the field of Lexicography

- It is republished the Dictionary of Marko Boçari by Lumo Skëndo, in 1926 (Albanian Lexicography , 2005).
- In 1928, Koço Tasi (1928) published Lexicon helleno – alvanikon (Greek- Albanian Dictionary), which had 272 pages (Albanian Lexicography , 2005).

4.1.2 Second Period

4.1.2.1 Greek- Albanina Dictionary by Themistoklis Papadhimas (1897 – 1978)

- It is not published and remained handwriting with a total of 1684 pages the Greek- Albanina Dictionary by Themistoklis Papadhimas (1897 – 1978) from Nivica of Himara. Based on the Greek roots of this Dictionary, it was created the dictionary with three volumes of New Greek language by I. Stamatakos. These roots introduce both forms of intellectual language and folk language (katharevusas and dhimotiqis) and are given
many synonyms of these words. If we refer to the Albanian words Papadhimas used the Albanian Language published in Tirana in 1954. It used again a series of small dictionaries in Albanian-French-Russian languages for the terms of Botany, Optician, Mathematics, Acoustics, and Chemistry etc which are published lately in Tirana. So the explanations in Albanian language represent mainly the linguistic situation in Albania as it is introduced after the Second World War (Johallas 1980).

- During this period of time we have the republishing of Marco Botsari Dictionary in Athens in 1980 prepared by Titos Johallas.

4.2 Albanian –Greek Dictionaries

4.2.1 First Period

4.2.1.1 Albanian-Greek Dictionary by Konstandin Kristoforidhi (1904)

The most important Albanian – Greek dictionary, as it is expressed by Johallas (1980), was designed by Konstandin Kristoforidhi (1830 – 1895), from Elbasan, central region of Albania who have studied in Zosimea School in Ioaninna. The Dictionary, a masterpiece of Kristoforidhi, it was published in Athens in 1904 with the title «Λεξικό της αλβανικής γλώσσας» (Dictionary of Albanian Language).

It is accepted by linguistic critics that in general it is a bilingual dictionary –Albanian Greek ones, where it is not noticeable the effort to give the Greek words which are equivalent of the Albanian words, but the explanation of Albanian words it is done using Greek language (Memishaj 2011).

The Dictionary it was redesigned by A. Xhuvani and it was transcript in an Albanian alphabet. It was published in Tiranë in 1961 with the title «Λεξικόν Αλβανο – Ελληνικόν» (Albanian- Greek Dictionary).

According to Johallas (1980): « This Dictionary it is distinguished for the proper translation of the Albanian words into Greek words and for the great number of examples which are used in lexicography for the metaphorical contexts of any word in Albanian language. The language of this dictionary it is reflecting the dialect of Central region of Albania.»

The Dictionary has a specific documentary value, because it served to dictionary designers and comparative researchers. K. Kristoforidhi collected from different sources many expressions and words and their number reached 12 000 words.

Albanian- Greek Dictionary by Tasos Nerutsos

Doctor Tasos Nerutsos (1826 – 1892), distinguished for its archaeological and historical studies, dealt also with the designation process of an Albanian- Greek dictionary. Nerutsos had a good knowledge of spoken Greek- Arvanit spoken language of Attica from his mother. This was stated by a letter sent by G. Meyer. Meyer informed us that after the death of Nerutsos, his wife delivered handwritings of unfinished dictionary, but he didn’t give any explanation if it was in Albanian- Greek or Albanian –German languages, but the last one had more possibilities to be. In the following, such glossary was published by Meyer in Albanian- German languages, but this consisted only for words which start with letters A-L1. Prof Johalla said that from the research studies done by him about the masterpiece of Nerutsos, found out that he had a very good knowledge of the spoken dialect of Attica. For this reason the material of Nerutsos dictionary should be considered as a proper one and suitable for the research study of spoken Greek- Arvanit spoken language in the second half of 19 century.

4.2.2 Second Period

4.2.2.1 Albanian- Greek Dictionary by Nikolla Tsetsi(1959)

“55 years after the publishing of Kristoforidhi Dictionary, in 1959, was published in Athens a small Albanian-Greek Dictionary (Alvano-hellenikon lexicon) by Nikolla Tsetsi from Gjirokastra (1910 - ) with 253 pages (Albanian Lexicography , 2005), about which we have other data, to introduce them in this research study. This kind of dictionary contains mainly words from the Tosk dialect, which has the advantage of containing words referring to different scientific fields.” (Johallas, 1980)

4.2.2.2  Albanian – Greek Dictionary by Niko Gjini (1971)

In 1971 was published the Albanian - Greek Dictionary by Niko Gjini. This was the very first effort to design a bilingual functional dictionary in Albanian and Greek languages, useful in everyday use. Author through his experience and the love for both languages gave us an important masterpiece for the time, which was designed and published later. The lack of analogue dictionaries in Albanian and Greek languages made more difficult the work of author, but didn't forbid him to create a masterpiece of modern dimensions and qualities.

The main aim of this dictionary is to help the pupils of minority schools, who were monolingual, Greek language speakers to face the difficulties during the transition period of elementary school to comprehensive 8- year school system. This was done especially to face the scientific terminology of the school text books.

Niko Gjini due to his patience and experience was skilful how to use the few materials disposed by him and founded the modern Albanian – Greek lexicography, which he developed them in the highest peaks through his masterpieces Greek- Albanian Dictionary of 1993 and the Albanian- Greek Dictionary of 1998.

Dictionary of 1971 is a product of his living period and of social-political conditions of that time.

4.2.2.3  Albanian- Greek dictionary of Vasil Partali (1986)

In 1986 it was published another Albanian- Greek dictionary by Vasil Partali. This dictionary was the second of its type which circulated 15 years after the publication of Albanian – Greek by N. Gjini. This was a dictionary of small type designed to help the minority pupils”

The aim of designing such dictionary it is given in its preface where it is mentioned: “This small Albanian- Greek dictionary it was designed specifically to help pupils of minority groups of 8 year comprehensive schools, to learn Albanian language” (Partali, 1986).

The dictionary has in total 245 pages and as we are informed from the author, “it contains 5000 used words of Albanian offical language and some words used from terminology of sciences which are studied in the schools” (Partali 1986). Both dictionaries are published from Publishing House of Educative Books.

Small dictionaries in Albanian and Greek languages are designed even by Lluka Bellos (1848 – 1913) and Thimi Mitko from Korça (1820 -1890).

We cannot let without mentioning here the Albanian- Greek glossaries of Arvanit spoken language in Attica «Ὅνατη Αρβανίτικη Ελληνική Γλώσσα» (Greek- Albanian spoken language of Attica) 1932-33, of Petro Furiqi (1878 – 1936) from Salamina and of Kr. N. Petru Mesojitu (1909 – 1944) «Ελληνικά λέξεις εν τω ιδιώματι των αλβανόφωνων της Αττικής» 1940 (Greek words in idioms of Albanian speakers of Attica)."

5.  Concluding Remarks

From the given data included in this study research, we found that during the last two centuries Greek-Albanian and Albanian - Greek Lexicography despite the fact that were less developed as the result of different factors we treated in above mentioned paragraphs, anyway we have to accept the fact that contacts of Albanian Language with Greek Language have been more evident in relation to other languages. Greek language as a more prestigious and more cultivated language has functioned (especially before the Congress of Manastir) as a tool to help Albanian language in its codification and crystallization process. During XIX century we found distinguished efforts of Albanian intellectuals who have been educated in Greece, to help the language and culture of their nation having as prototype the Greek language and culture. Here we can mention names as Frasheri, Vreto, Veqilharxhi, Kristoforidhi and many others.

If we refer to the field of Greek –Albanian and Albanian -Greek lexicography we can say that have acted people who have relations at the same time with two languages. They can be included in three different categories of people who designed the dictionaries, such are:

- They have origin from different parts of Albania where was used the Greek language, but who have also studied in Greece or are part of different social and cultural movements of Greek nation such are: Konstandin Kristoforidhi from Elbasan, Thimi Mitko from Korca, Konstandin Tasi from Përmeti, Nikolla Tsetsi from Gjirokastra, Themistoklis Papadhimas from Nivica of Himara etc.
- Names that come from Arvanit spoken language of Greece used at the same time the Greek and Arvanit spoken language, where Arvanit spoken language it was inherited from their families, such are: Panajot Kupitori, Tasos Nerutsos, Marko Boçari, Petro Furiqi, Kr. N. Petru Mesojitu, Lluka Bello etc.
- The third category consist on authors with origin from Greek minority who were living in Albania, such were
Niko Gjini, Vasil Partali etc.

Last years have changed for good issues. After 90- we find out very good lexicographical masterpieces between two languages that fulfilled the modern lexicography standards such are bilingual dictionaries in Greek-Albanian and Albanian – Greek languages of Niko Gjini, Konstandin Papafili, Hysen Sinani etc.

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