
ACADEMICIAN GAZMEND ZAJMI (Prishtina)

CLOSING SPEECH

I believe there exists an academic sense, even a consensus in general, that the closing speech in a symposium rather marks a rounding of the procedure of the symposium rather than a genuine substantial rounding of its proceedings. The latter would be not only pretentious but it would not be preferred in the methodological aspect facing the scientific criticism.

In this case the thing that is clear and indisputable as to the conclusions drawn, is that our symposium was devoted to a capital and major topic of the Albanian question; of Kosova and of the Albanians in former Yugoslavia. More than 60 scientific papers were presented during it providing a vast extension of the topic in time, but also a vast range of aspects and topics in the context of the Symposium's axial topic. Likewise, it is worth mentioning the impressive number of Albanian scientists taking part in the symposium from the Balkan Albanian territories, coordinating their scientific potential, and a number of scientists eminent experts of the Albanian question from other peoples and states. Despite the evident difficult conditions, the symposium marks enviable achievements of cooperation between the two Albanian academies, the Albanian one and that of Kosova, giving a necessary impulse to repeat even in more confidential forms the institutional links between the two academies in the future.

I think that since this moment we can speak of general impressions that with its seriousness regarding its preparations, totally regarding the necessary scientific rigorousness of treatment, the abundance of topics and their full treatment, it might be defined not only an important symposium, as for the importance of the topic treated, but also for its scientific results.

Fortunately every useful scientific symposium, particularly when its workings are subsequently printed continues to live longer than the days of its proceedings, it continues to live in critical scientific reports, in its application in life. Naturally a certain distance in time makes the values of the scientific works more transparent.

However, I seize the opportunity to modestly express some general conclusive reflections on the proceedings of the symposium.

Not only for the sake of rationalism of time but also for the sake of the thematic treatment of the topics, our symposium righteously proceeded in two respects in that of historical topics and that of the topics treating the current political stand towards Kosova's question and of the Albanians in former Yugoslavia. Undoubtedly, both these directions form the joint bed of contemplations and scientific elaborations on the Albanian question. In general the historic themes did not lack scintillations of (contemporaneity) just as the topics treating the current political situation did not lack historical references.

Scientific work on a sound basis from the field of history testified and widened our horizons of knowledge with regard to the Albanian autochthonous ancient and

incessant continuity in the territory of former Yugoslavia and the other Albanian ethnic territories in the territory of decomposed Yugoslavia. It is this Illyrian-Dardanian continuity that later assumed the distinctive characteristics of the Albanian ethnos and later of the Albanian nation, beginning with the earliest medieval history and coming down to the contemporary national history. The glimmers of the Albanian national feeling, as a feeling which distinguished them from the others and as an integrative sentiment in the fold of their ethnos and the territory they are living on, can be traced much earlier than in the national Renaissance.

The Albanian historical-scientific surveys have a comparative and objective priority. They are not in need of myths and mythologizing to compensate any inconvenience whatsoever regarding the current ethnic structure, the course of history, or their territorial space.

The Albanian scientific thinking pertaining to the field of history is not in need and cannot allow itself even on ethnic grounds to negate the historic and cultural values of the other peoples in contact with them or who live together with them on territories with an Albanian ethnic majority.

Albanian self-respect enhanced on traditions of the National Renaissance has nothing in common with hatred or underestimation towards other peoples, and it is exactly this viewpoint that rigorously inspired in this symposium the scientific works from the field of history. Even if there was displayed any sparkling firefly of romanticism, it is up to science to pick up the ideals, but it should graft them with reality, and from reality a single mentality derives, but it can also be grafted with visions of the future.

The scientific workings from the political actuality of Kosova's question and of the Albanians in former Yugoslavia, displayed a vast range or interdisciplinary, sociological, political, juridical, economic, demographic and cultural viewpoints that were laid on the foundations of the national question in general even when the case was for extremely important topical segments extended in territory and time.

An assessment in common of these workings and of those from the field of history is constituted by the freedom of the Albanian science from ideologies, particularly from those of class nature, but also national ones, the freedom from dithyrambs, from sparing themselves, in the name of scientific dignity. Scientific and intellectual thinking in secure and long-term paths operates with its scientific background, the substantiating power in elaborating options and visions and in defining them. When speaking of national ideologemas it is not excessive to underscore the fact that in his national rhetoric every thinker and creator is menaced by a probable peril "of speaking nicely but being mistaken". This is an ingenious way of thinking to be found in Sophocles' *Electra* from the 4th century B.C.

Another common characteristic of the proceedings of this symposium about political relevance, besides the scientific objectiveness in elaborating the themes, was the high responsibility and natural common concern of the authors regarding the crucial crossroad and moment the Albanian question is facing, respectively Kosova's question and that of the other Albanian ethnic territories in Macedonia, Montenegro and the South of Serbia (Preshevë, Bujanovc, Medvegje).

The concern is natural if we take into consideration the fact that a general rule of every long-term occupation system is, to strive to transform through overt or

covert annexation, the state of occupation of a certain territory into a state of internal political and juridical order of the occupying state, if the bitter historic experience regarding the tight sowing of the Albanian national costume by international tailors is borne in mind.

Science and in general democratic political thinking can prove by means of a vast number of convincing arguments that there does not exist any ethnic, ethic, democratic, political-constitutional and juridical-international basis to say Kosova is in Serbia's possession, the less so to speak of occupational possession. Even if there existed a federal multinational Yugoslavia in the framework of which a respective juridical constitutional relation was structured between Kosova and Serbia, such a Yugoslavia does not exist any longer; if we are speaking of the population's will for such a structuring, at a juridical constitutional level, such a will does not exist. At present there exist a clear institutionalized will regarding Kosova's independence, the free functioning of the Republic of Kosova.

Science, from the field of multi-ethnic relations, proves that there does not exist any argument against the political subjectiveness of the Albanian people in Macedonia on the basis of parity, against the political subjectiveness of the Albanians in Montenegro and in the South of Serbia on the basis of political and cultural autonomy. Science proves that no argument can stand up against the vision of Albanian national unification in the Balkans in the peaceful democratic way on integrations in Europe.

Naturally, science elaborates and determines the scientifically substantiated basement of Kosova's independence and of the political subjectiveness of other territories of the Albanian ethnic majority in the territories of former Yugoslavia. But it cannot pretend to eliminate the naked force of power and physical nakedness of the ratio of forces. It cannot pretend to attribute to itself the biblic characteristic: "God spoke, and light was made" and claim to eliminate through its final word the eventual non-principled international pragmatisms regarding Kosova's question and that of other territories. But science has the right to claim that it becomes one of the vectors of force in arousing international consciousness, the most favourable awareness regarding Kosova's question in the framework of the Albanian question. It strives to attain the most favourable and immediate results, as well as long-term solutions based on the principle of self-determination, and always depending on the various developments in the long run.

Science is dutybound to document that the current question of Kosova and of the Albanians in the territories of former Yugoslavia, alongside the enhancement of awareness regarding Kosova's question and that of the Albanians in the territories of former Yugoslavia in the context of the all-Albanian question calls for a solution, respectively international verification at a level of democratic observation of the principle of self-determination. It is science that should prove that this issue has a long historic continuity, a prolonged pulsation of the people's will, in spite of the numerous oppressive suppressions, and nowadays it is strongly knocking on the doors of historic crossroads and solutions. If this symposium has made a contribution in this respect, its productivity is marked.

Colleagues and guests,

Finally, allow me, not for protocol, but with most sincere feelings to dictate an expression of profound gratitude to the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Albania as the hosting Academy and particularly to its Institute of History for the contribution to the successful organization of this symposium. Allow me, on your behalf, to thank the employees of the Palace of Congresses, I would add the Palace of pluralistic Congresses, for their help in the successful proceedings of the symposium and to the mass media for the precious work carried out to acquaint public opinion with its results.

In closing this speech, allow me, on behalf of the Organizing Council of the Symposium and particularly of the Academies of Sciences, to voice profound gratitude and thanks to all participants of this symposium for their precious contribution, be it through the papers or discourses, as well as to all other participants who pursued the proceedings of the symposium with great interest.

See You future meetings. Let Providence make possible that these meetings are held in the profoundly advanced stages of the Albanian national question, particularly of the question of Kosova and of the Albanians in former Yugoslavia.

