
Review

Januzi M. *

University of Prishtina, Prishtina, Kosovo

* Corresponding author (merita.bsaj[at]gmail.com)

Abstract

This paper studies the content and the nature of the book: The History of the Albanian Literature, published by the Academy of Sciences of Albania (ASHT, 1983). Like all the scholastic stories of Albanian Literature written so far, this book is written with dedication to the school system. Careful observation will be paid to which authors and what works are considered subtypes, which ones are which are treated briefly, but also which ones do not appear at all as the literary value of the time. We always bear in mind the fact that the 1983 edition and the 1989 reprint are burdened with socio-cultural problems of the time and ask why some authors are reduced in value and why some others are left out altogether? This paper tries to answer this question.

Keywords: History of literature, Albanian, ideology, tradition, experiences, individual explosions.

Background of the history of literature

Looking at the contents of this book (a scholar book), we will look carefully at what is left and what is lost, as Genette said, who appreciates that the History of Literature gives both permanent alterations and changes: "It seems to me that in literature the historical object, which is simultaneously stable and changeable, are not works: are the constitutive elements of works … forms: rhetorical codes, narrative techniques, poetic structures … " [12 P.80].

Undoubtedly, the history of literature is linked to the whole of the facts and does not stop only with great authors and masterpieces, but also with young authors who bring something new, something different. The change in literature is marked by its value, and the literary discourse of change produces the change in the established system. Generally with the term "history of literature" itself we see the historical development of a literature, the literary evolution of a nation, and beyond, to other levels up to the worldliterature. According to the formalists with evolution in literature we understand sublime texts rising at the level of scriptures that shake a field of literary values. Thus, the claimed value, verified and praised as granted, is arranged in the work of the history of literature. Within it we see tradition, experiences, individual explosions, all together.

The history of the Albanian literature of 1983 is a collective work made under the direction of Dhimitër S. Shuteriqi. It does not include what would eventually be called the contemporary literature, not even the oral literature as the basis of the written literature. Here we see that there are different criteria for naming each period: the first is arbitrary, like old literature; the second is a national cultural, as Renaissance literature; the third is state policy, like Albanian state literature. The authors who in the foreword under-line: "When it comes to periodization, in this new work the known periodization was adopted, according to the stages of the history of our people" [3 P.5].

This story of Albanian literature, albeit with academic claims, suffers terribly from the ideology of the state system of communist Albania of the time when it was published, and as such, this story excludes our eminent authors who were considered as adversaries and traitors of the country. This paper outlines these authors.

The idea for the history of literature dates back to the XVIII century, but its writing dates back to the XIX and XX. Albanian scholars have consistently tried to offer texts of historical nature by offering the chronology of Albanian literature since its beginnings. See a series of works such as: Justin Rrota: The Literature of Albanian (1925), Gaetano Petrota: Albanian

As we can see, "The writings of the historical nature on the Albanian literary culture have begun with manuals, the analogies commented, followed with traditionalist historiographic texts. Further, the history of a formation / romantization (Rexhep Qosja) has been claimed, ignoring the fact that the literary formation is a synchronous literary manifestation. Eventually, it met the typology of a literary domain / criticism (Ibrahim Rugova). This order is also added to other languages with historiographic and informative claims, thus promoting Albanian literature and culture. The stories of Albanian literature remain linked to the national and political history of the Albanians, the author's life or readings of concrete works, the work of literary criticism." (Kujtim Shala) [4 P.147]. Over time, there have been political and cultural problems and we have remain linked to the national and political history of the Albanians, the author's life or readings of concrete works, the work of literary criticism."

Fortunately, now we have prominent scholars who write stories on literature history based on what literature is at different periods of time to derive literary and artistic values as precious pearls throughout each period and for every period.


What does The History of the Albanian Literature (1983) include and exclude?

Since this paper focuses on the albanian literature history of 1983 (Tirana), we will not elaborate on other works of the literature history, but by analyzing the book in question I will try a little bit of comparison with the predecessor book and with what follows to look at the prospect of developing this type of book.

If we compare the structure of The History of the Albanian Literature (1983) with two books: History of Albanian Literature (1975) and History of Albanian Literature (1980), but also with Robert Elsi's latest book: The History of Albanian Literature (2001), we will see that the structure determines the periodization of literature, which varies from book to book. For example, The history of Albanian literature (1975) has this structure: Albanian Folklore, Old Albanian Literature and National Renaissance Literature. The history of Albanian literature (1980) is structured with the following chapters: Old Albanian Literature, Albanian Literature of the National Renaissance, Albanian Literature of Socialist Realism. The history of Albanian literature (1983) begins with the Old Albanian Literature, continues with the Albanian Literature of the National Renaissance and concludes with the Albanian Literature of 1912-1939. The three books make a periodization not according to the nature of literature, but a time periodization (the old, the Renaissance, years 1912-1939) that reflects more of the historic era. Even the latter two are too ideologically charged by the communist system of those years. Such periodization is not proclaimed by any genuine scholar. Uelek mentions that the history of literature can be written considering periods, literary movements or schools, phenomena, domains (like literary criticism), etc., and as such is a valid foundation for a literary history of literature.

Fortunately, now we have prominent scholars who write stories on literature history based on what literature is at different periods of time to derive literary and artistic values as precious pearls throughout each period and for every period.
not come from historical periods, but from cultural and literary circuit. He distinguishes three pre-historic literary cultural
circles:

- The Catholic Circuit of Northern Albania, the Albanian-Italian Circuit, the Orthodox Circuit of Southern Albania and, 
finally, the National Literary Circle, 19th-century national literature” [4 P.13]. Robert Elsi periodizes Albanian literature
according to historical development and with the cultural-time criterion, e.g. The Early History of Albanians, The Birth
of Written History in Albania, The Beginnings of Literature in Albania. The XVI and XVI centuries, the Excellence of the Orient,
the Muslim literature of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century, the Byzantine Heritage, the orthodox tradition in the 18th
and the beginning of the 19th century, the Arbresh literature in the 18th and 19th centuries, the Renaissance Period,
Literature of Albanian national awakening, Albanian literature current from the beginning of the 20th century to 1944,
Literature under Enver Hoxha's regime (1944-1985) and getting out of isolation, Albanian literature in Kosovo,
Our crumpled Literature of Albanian national awakening, Albanian literature current from the beginning of the 20th century to 1944,
18th and the beginning of the 19th century, the Arbresh literature in the 18th and 19th centuries, the Renaissance Period,
the Muslim literature of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century, the Byzantine Heritage, the orthodox tradition in the
Written History in Albania, The Beginnings of Literature in Albania. The XVI and XVI centuries, the Excellence of the Orient,
time that are claimed to the masses / readers.

As noted above, this book of literature history (1983) divided literature into three periods:
1. Old Albanian literature,
2. Albanian Literature of the National Renaissance,
3. Literature of the period of the Albanian state of the years 1912-1939.

As such, the book lacks a lot of literary interpretations alongside literature periods and authors, and ideo-artistic novelties.
For example, the structure of a chapter is as follows: Part II Albanian Literature of the National Renaissance: Introduction,
Historical Conditions, Ideology and Politics, Cultural Activity, Artistic Activity, Renaissance Literature Development Stages,
General Characterization of Renaissance Literature, Topics, Tools and Gender, Aesthetic and Critical Thought, Conclusion.
Although this structure has the logic of the general perspective and there is plenty of valuable information on the
aforementioned developments, but the longest part is Ideology and Politics out of all others. This implies and decodes the
dominant function of this literary history, full of history of socio-political circumstances, alongside them with the course of
This study presents the Albanian Literature History (AShT, 1983), where among other things it is stressed that the studied book does not sufficiently represent the history of Albanian literature, because it contains major deficiencies. Dictated by the ideological scheme of the communist state of Albania, it neglected major authors (such as Fishta and Konica), treats briefly and not enough authors such as Kutel and Poradec, while the authors of the period 1912-1939 treats and evaluates according to the preferences of power, so we also have errors, lack and unprofessional literary access.

Despite the barriers and tendencies of ideologically dictated interpretations, Albanian literature moves on and develops, i.e. stands out and grows outside the alleged frames. Along with its development, numerous valuable studies of the process of drafting a new history of literature are also underway. We have a number of advanced studies that fill the gaps so far and come as a good to the labelled, denounced authors. Here we consider Gjergj Fishta's studies (A. Plasari, S. Hamiti, A. Berisha, K. Shala), for Bilal Xhaferri (S. Hamiti, K. Shala), for Ernest Koliq (A. Berisha, Y. Berisha, Xh. Beqiri).

**Conflict of Interest**

None declared.

**References**

1. Çabej E. Për gjenezën e literaturës shqipe / Çabej E. – Hylli i Dritës, Shkodër, – 1939

**References in English**