

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18454/RULB.2019.19.3.012>**РОМАН «НИЧЬИ СЫНОВЬЯ» РЕКШЕПА КОСЯ**

Обзор

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Аннотация

Статья посвящена изучению романа «Ничьи сыновья» одного из ведущих писателей албанской литературы в Косово Рекшепа Кося. Авторы анализируют персонажей, события, исторический контекст; а также форму и структуру романа. В 2010 году в Приштине был опубликован роман «Ничьи сыновья» Рекшепа Кося. Что касается жанра, то роман вышел вслед за трилогией: «Из таких глаз исходит смерть» (Vdekja më vjen prej syve të tillë, 1974), Одна любовь семь чувств вины (Një dashuri dhe shtatë fajë, 2003) и Ночь – это наш день (Nata është dita jonë, 2007). У всех романов Рекшепа Кося есть следующие общие элементы: озабоченность человеком и политическими системами, албанский контекст и, за редким исключением, модель и метод письма. Роман считается одним из самых авангардных, постмодернистских романов Албании; поэтому аналитический подход, используемый в статье, дает оценку функционированию такой формы в отношении содержания и литературных ценностей, представленных в романе.

Ключевые слова: роман, политические системы, авангард, постмодерн, интертекстуальность.

THE NOVEL NOBODY'S SONS BY REXHEP QOSJA

Research article

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Abstract

This paper studies the novel Nobody's Sons by one of the leading Albanian literature writers in Kosovo, Rexhep Qosja. Analyzes the characters, the events, the historical topic; as well as dealing with the form or structure of the novel. The novel Nobody's sons by Rexhep Qosja was published in Prishtina, in 2010. As to the genre, the novel follows the trilogy of the novels: The Death comes to me from such eyes (Vdekja më vjen prej syve të tillë, 1974), One love and seven guilt (Një dashuri dhe shtatë fajë, 2003) and The night is our day (Nata është dita jonë, 2007). All of Rexhep Qosja's novels have the following elements in common: the preoccupation of man and political systems, the Albanian and political systems, and, by a rare, slight difference, the model and the method of writing. The novel is regarded as one of the most avant-garde, postmodern Albanian novels; therefore the analytical approach used within this article will try to assess the functioning of this form in relation to the content and literary values that this novel represents.

Keywords: the novel, political systems, avant-garde, postmodern, intertextual.

Introduction

Are people/individuals the ones who make political systems or do political systems determine the lives and consequently the fate of the people? There has been a great debate regarding these concepts, a debate which is unlikely to end. Naturally, this debate has entered the field of literature, thus oftentimes creating great literary works, often, works from diverse genres. The concerns were the same while the writing model differed based on literary movements or formations. Such works emphasize various issues, elaborate them and offer conclusions. This tends to occur by placing these issues on literary fields, by creating prisms or different ways of illustrating or expressing them, by carefully selecting the right linguistic stylization, thus primarily turning them into literature and secondly, offering the reader, apart from information, what literature (as do all arts) offers: delight. The greatest historical phenomena, in Kosovo and Albania, like the war of Skanderbeg, the Albanian leader, against the Ottoman Empire, then communism and democracy, reached the surface or first appeared through literature; before historical personalities were recognized as such, they first entered the fictional world and became literary characters.

The novel Nobody's sons by Rexhep Qosja was published in Prishtina, in 2010. As to the genre, the novel follows the trilogy of the novels: The Death comes to me from such eyes (Vdekja më vjen prej syve të tillë, 1974), One love and seven guilt (Një dashuri dhe shtatë fajë, 2003) and The night is our day (Nata është dita jonë, 2007).

The novel Nobody's sons deals with the fate of the Albanian man in two political systems: communism and democracy; which means that the novel follows two plot lines. The alienation of the characters of this novel as a consequence of poor political movements is the main thread which binds their lives and destinies in the novel. This literary piece treats the tragedy of the man within the horrible political and totalitarian system of communism, and, as a paradox, it also treats the misuse and abuse in its antipodal system: the democracy.

Method

The present study of this novel is, based on structural, intertextual and postmodern studies.

Discussion

The main character of the novel, who at the same time plays the role of the narrator, is Miran Bushati. The first and last names of this character are not a extraordinary selection or discovery. They are familiar, they don't surprise the Albanian reader. Quite naturally, in our opinion, this does not occur by chance, especially in this type of novel. This naming aims at interrelation (communication), not singularity or originality. It aims at pre-existing names in Albanian literature. Herein lies the "originality" of this choice, due to the fact that it signifies, and as such, is more than naming.

Names that make use of the adverb or the adjective *mirë* (good, adv.), *i mirë* (good, adj.) can be found in Albanian literature. Usually, it is to be found in such works in which the character is the positive character, the good character, the protagonist. The name of the main character: *Mir-an*, *Mir* = *mirë* (good). The selection of the name in *Qosja's* case does not mark the similarity but the opposition, the ironic opposite placement. Postmodern works do not create the great hero or protagonist; rather, they create the opposite, the spiritual mocker [1, P.234].

The name *Miran* has also been regarded as an anagram of the name of *Marin Barleti*, the first author that fictionalized the personality and the most important events of Albanian history, i.e. The history of *Skanderbeg* [2, P.222]. Even the last name begins with the same letter. Additionally, the last name *Bushati* is most definitely connected to the famous family of *Bushatlinjëve* of *Shkodra*. We think that the association continues with a fictional place named *Kurnajë* (a signifying name), which is clearly *Shkodra*. *Shkodra* is a city in the north of *Albania*.

Miran Bushati is an Albanian expatriate living in *America*, he is a writer who has studied anthropology and ethnology, which equips him with the ability to better understand people and places, which adds up to the fundamental events that the novel explores. Curiosity and interest excite him to accept the offer of a fellow Albanian expatriate, *Gjinush Saraçi-Nushi*, to find the tracks of his father, *Tarik Saraçi*. The offer is not only to trail his past, but also to write a book, a literary work, on him. It would be a historical piece on his life and death.

Miran Bushati has never been to *Albania* or *Kosova*. He is a young man acclaimed at writing historical novels. Thus emerges the new man, distant from the events which will be treated there, representative of the new spirit which differs from the tradition.

Although I have grown up with them, unfortunately I don't trust them, says *Gjinush Saraçi* about contemporary authors because, as he believes, they think "in the old way, like the old bayraktars (...) they have not freed themselves of the phraseology...folkloric or tribal (...) they cannot pronounce a thought without meeting it with gunpowder" [3, P.20]. This statement, a metanarration, categorizes two generations, two different approaches toward history, but most importantly, two ways of writing. We think that it is a point of view that stands opposite bayraktarism, a way of writing which opposes hymnization, with which Albanian literature has been identified for years.

The life of *Tarik Saraçi* will thus be examined from this point of view, not of the second, but of the third generation, in order to reach objectivity. The novel in its entirety, with its narrative games and all the various forms that it brings together, asks for this objectivity. It is an objectivity which is not based on inspiration, but on facts. Hence, the novel combines fiction with the process of documenting.

In its essence, the novel examines humanity-moral-ethics in generations, in power, in people, which surfaces as deep, almost philosophical problematic, and it is portrayed as such.

It is no coincidence that the plot begins at the *Museum of Natural History*, in a place that is distinguished for its democracy i.e. in *New York*. Here is raised, to the main character and to the reader, the dilemma begun by *Newton*: "whether the ability of man to relate cause and effect or to stand straight (...) to keep balance was developed first" [2. P.8]. Both dilemmas deal with mechanical life as much as with ethical life, and especially the latter which associates the ethical position with standing straight. This first sign, which appears at the very beginning of the novel, synthesized all the other interconnections of the novel. Between these two binary oppositions the main characters and the systems are to be tested and evaluated.

Results

The novel *Nobody's Sons* is realized as criticism against the dictatorial communist system in *Albania* and *Yugoslavia*. The search for the most important man (*Tarik Saraçi*) who is missing at the time of communism, the whereabouts of whom are unknown, forms the itinerary of this criticism. The search of the individual destiny turns into the collective destiny. "It is not only the death of one man that is at hand here, it is the death of a reality as a consequence of the birth of an ideology" [4, p. 23].

The declarations on instructed and controlled literature and science within the text of the novel, the opening of the files (one of the most taboo topics) which have become integral part of the novel, the controlled system of life, dress, behavior, time of meals, etc. add up to the main idea. The remains of communism would last, as long as communism has lasted.

The novel *Nobody's Sons* was created in accordance with postmodern poetics. It is constructed in the form of a collage, in which the whole is created by its constituents (or parts): declarations, files, brochures, schemes, pentagrams, mathematical formulas, etc. Various documents and citations are employed and functionalized within the novel. Thus, this paper makes use of structural studies, intertextuality and postmodernism.

According to researchers *Jaus* and *Iser*, information retrieved from the *Theory of Receptivity* is utilized in order to evaluate the function of the reader in such novels in which the work of art requires a knowledgeable and elitist reader.

We used the intertextuality methodology on certain passages of this paper in which the novel or its constituents are investigated in relation to previous literary works within the canon of Albanian literature.

According to Albanian scholars (such as *Ag Apolloni*, etc.), this novel has been claimed to be one of the most avant-garde postmodern Albanian piece of writing. Naturally, the choice of this particular form is not an issue of coincidence or trend. Its form suits it or it has been carefully selected to adjust to its themes, a selection which fulfills the literary and receptive values of the novel.

Linda Hutcheon dubs such novels "historiographic metafiction, where theoretical awareness over history and fiction displays itself as constructions of man; historiographic metafiction has created the conditions for reevaluating and reworking on the form and content of the past" [3, P. 20].

As a consequence, there is the great focus of the novel on the past, as can be read at the beginning of the novel: "When one does not find what one wishes for in the Present, one returns to the Past. With the Yesterday you substitute the Today" [4, P.8].

In the postmodern text, the following must be determined: the role of the document and the citations; (...) the role of the discursive forms, narration, description, contemplation, lyricism, dramatism, questions, answers (...) the balance between mimetic illusion and photography [3, P. 20].

It is in this way that the character and narrator, Miran Bushati, defines this sort of writing, this poetics, if one may consider it as such.

This type of novel cannot be created, it can be compiled. Within the novel, through a metacreative approach, in this compilation and not creation, as the narrator (and author) says, it is assumed that the people included or the ones who are co-authoring the work are all those who help to attain the information, which may even include the reader. Together we write, no, we compile the lifewriting of Tarik Saraçi [5, P. 22], he addresses the reader, in order to join in the first person plural form – we. Having in mind the principle of the theory or aesthetics of reception which recognizes the cultivated, well-prepared reader, who is ready to merge the parts of such texts of postmodern poetics, he can be considered an active participant. This has been called the elite or the creative-aesthetic reader. According to the theory of receptivity, the reader “concretizes” the literary work, which is no more than a list of black dots aligned in a single page [5, P. 59].

In his book *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response*, Wolfgang Iser supposes more than being a subject which must be defined, the work of art is an object which must be experienced. In a way, this bids the function of the receiver, who, according to Iser, would be more than a receiver; he would experience, accumulate, and be part of the work of art [5, p. 61].

The most efficient literary work for Iser is the one that imposes its reader a new critical awareness against his codes and hypotheses which he randomly uses [4, P.62]. It is this category which best suits Qosja’s novel, a novel that is in itself different, an avant-garde novel which confronts previous forms created in Albanian literature.

It is a postmodern novel which clearly answers the framework of this movement. According to its constituent, Linda Hutcheon: Postmodernism is a contradictory phenomenon, one that uses and abuses, installs and then subverts, the very concepts it challenges [3, P.17], a categorization of postmodernism not only in literature, but in other fields as well.

We think that the reason Rexhep Qosja chose this form, and especially emphasized it in this novel (*Nobody-s sons*), can be related to the theme or the problematic which it elaborates.

Conclusions

The novel discusses the “red” ideology of communism as much as it discusses democracy, i.e. the alienation of contemporary man in democracy.

It creates an irony of the negative phenomena of both systems until it reaches their greatest depths. It is full of irony and sarcasm against actual phenomena, against the democracy of the old communists, and against images of art, politics and religion in Albania and Kosova. Honest men, powerless to the abuse, corruption and the immorality of the “new” society, march through the novel. Moral and social values fall to the ground.

We have always substituted the bad one with a worse one, the novel claims [6, P. 45]. This is the law of Albanian dialectic. We appreciate that the communist mask of the motherland turns into a mask that murders, that lies, robs, cheats, and takes bribes. It is a place in which, yet again, the one who is in power sentences, kills, and severs others, against the law. It is a place in which every year the parties change, every year the politics change; where the dog has never known its master and it will not know him for a long time [3, P. 207].

It is unsparing irony and sarcasm for those who in the near past were gravediggers of European and American decadent literature, who were ideologists of socialist realism and pretend to be decadents today. These are those that the politics of The Laborers Party had declared historical National politics, which today are proclaimed the Honor of the Nation [7. P.46].

More and more will we come to face a new phenomenon, entirely new for us – the phenomenon of political conversion, whereas its bearers will be given the name which will be frequent in our discourse – the convertites [8, P. 72].

We think that, the novel, *Nobody-s sons*, gradually creates the conviction that if communism limited people, democracy in Albania and Kosova did not do the opposite, i.e. it did not bring forth, as was expected, its main values: morality, culture, freedom, equality. Instead, the vices and the inherited evil deeds erupt even more.

Tarik Saraçi is imprisoned and runs away from Albania to Yugoslavia. He returns later in order to continue his work, but this is to his disadvantage: he falls in a mine, in the borders. His body is separated into two parts: one falls in Kosovo, the other in Albania. He is, thus, a dissident in his attitude and in his creations. This is quite symbolic. Tarik Saraçi’s life, and especially his death, turn into symbolism. The partitioning of his half body indicates the tragedy of the two countries, which, although belonging to the same nation, remain separate. Tarik Saraçi, also, symbolizes the tragic in the life of an intelligent man living in a totalitarian system.

With regards to the female character, Delina Derti, her last name signifies her problem (the word *dert*, in Albanian, means “problem”): the constant silent worrying. It is also felt by Miran Bushati, who falls in love with her. As her relationship with Miran Bushati reaches its zenith, she commits suicide. The life and death of Delina Derti become a symbol of the life lived in fear, of the life that is insecure and is never realized in a disoriented democracy.

It is here, quite naturally, that the fate of the narrator, Miran Bushati, is also interrelated. His motherland also murders his love, the hope to have a relationship with Delina. Hereon, it also ruins his opportunity to reconnect with his homeland.

Tragic fates of people in and out of this homeland, si Tarik Saraçi, Premt Dukagjini, Delina Derti, Tol Ymer Ashiku etc. march through the novel. These are expatriates whose homeland does not allow for their return, does not accept their contribution; these are talented and loveable people that are persecuted, tortured, suffocated. These people must be subdued, must start bribing and forming connections in order to survive, in a word, people that must be deprived of their morality. Daughters and sons that have “no parents”, no homeland. They cannot find their selves in any place; therefore they are called “the sons of nobody”.

In particular, the novel *Nobody’s Sons* by Rexhep Qosja creates the irony of the lack of progress and social emancipation, the loss of faith in perfection, in the sanctity of race, which was declaimed by almost all literary periods in Albanian literature, reaching its zenith in the literature of socialist realism.

Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

Conflict of Interest

None declared.

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