

## ***Kosova: meta-textual literature***

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### ***Abstract***

The aim of the text *Kosova: meta-textual literature* is the literary criticism conducted in Kosova, as part of the Albanian literary criticism and, further, the Albanian literature in general. Therefore, the environmental determination "Kosova" does not intend to affect the status of the Albanian literature, as it forms, by stressing the common features, as much as the specifics of its development.

As already known, the context in which literary criticism was developed in Kosova, especially during the second half of XX century, is different from context of this literature in Albania, although by the end of the 60s it remained associated with, however to a moderate extent. Its *textuality*, meanwhile, affects the types, forms and methods, as well as different genres of discourses. It recognizes the *academic criticism*, the *criticism of writers*, and the *critical project*, as forms of criticism.

Our research here recognizes and seeks *models* and representative authors, meaning a number of texts and authors.

***Key words:*** lauded model, critical model, modern awareness about criticism, contextuality and textuality of criticism, forms and methods, authors and basic texts.

### ***Albanian meta-textual literature (Contextuality and textuality)***

Modernization (*original* and not because of the method it is called *transcendental modernism*) in Albanian literature is the over passing of literature of national *lauds* to *literary criticism*, above all in the critical and satirical texts of Faik Konica. Consequently, it transforms the signs of national into

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individual research, but being always linked to the life situations that begin as personal situations and end non-rare (as proportions) in national projections.

*The Contextuality* of the Albanian literary criticism, in its inception, is associated with a cultural and a national cultural project. As a *matter of course* it is related to the name Faik Konica, who proposed an *authentic literary criticism*, by considering that as part of the cultural program for the nation. Literary criticism, at that time, was seen closely related not only to a literary production, but also to a cultural environment.

The Albanian meta-textual criticism of the 50s as well as the communist ideology as a program brought also a reversion of the social concept, known for the Albanian literature of the 30s, in a very unsuitable version for it, in form of a socio-realistic criticism. In the 30s a number of Albanian writers, Petro Marko, Nonda Bulka, Selim Shpuza, Vangjel Koça, Dhimitër Shuteriqi etc., were gathered around the newspaper "Bota e re", which was published in Korça and spread the social ideas on literature. This group of creators published new ideas on literature, by attempting to codify further a theoretical lore about it. The theoretic coder of this method was Dhimitër Shuteriqi, who articulated not only theoretically the demand for a utilitarian role of literature but established also the first theory of the method: social function as an indispensable premise of literature. This demand led to the attempt to codify a new literary direction, which should create the theoretical frame for an intentional literature. He wrote three theoretical texts, where he tried to argue for the proposed theory by him for the method: *New literary directions*,<sup>1</sup> *Again about the new literary directions*,<sup>2</sup> as well as the text *About a literary direction*.<sup>3</sup> The texts follow, even complete each other. They appear as *argumentative texts*, just as texts with theoretic premises for the method. By means of these texts he created step by step his theory for the realistic method by raising thus his demand for a social function of literature and awareness about it as a social production.

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<sup>1</sup> Published in „Bota e re“, Korçë, 1936, nr. 4, p. 7-9.

<sup>2</sup> Op.cit., 1936, nr. 6, p. 9-11.

<sup>3</sup> *Përpyjekja shqiptare*, Tiranë, 1937, nr. 8, p. 100-103.

Can the literary criticism conducted in Albania in the 50s and beyond have a kind of connection to a very famous and exceedingly productive literature and the Albanian literary criticism of the 30s? I think the context of development of the Albanian literature, especially after the embracement, which was announced as a program by Dhimitër Shuteriqi "criticism of socialistic implementation", and his identification with the communist ideology as the ideology of literature, created a form of literature and a uniformly critical literature, which dominated over 50 years in Albania, and by the end of the 60s in Kosova, but in other form, as will be argued below.

The Albanian meta-textual literature in Kosova, meanwhile, developed in another context *socio-political* and *socio-cultural* unlike that developed in Albania,<sup>4</sup> although by the end of the 60s it remained associated with "theory of socialist implementation", however to a moderate extent.

Its *textuality*, however, affects types, genres of different discourses, by attempting a consolidation of the method. At this time appeared also the first critical texts, which in terms of forms including the *academic criticism*, the *criticism of writers* and the *critical project*, with Mitrush Kuteli and Krist Maloki. Also, during this period of time special critical research, *thematic and psycho-analytic research* (Maloki)<sup>5</sup>, *immanent research*, by keeping to the forms (Kuteli), *research of literary essence* (Pipa, Draçini), *research with a social background* (Noli) etc. appeared.

### *Kosova: meta-textual literature (Self-criticism)*

The critical thinking and literary self-criticism related to the sign of environmental belonging leads to the research of **Pjetër Bogdani**, rhetorical research for the *Bible* which marks the first degree of theoretical research, and literary interpretation in Albanian papers. Let us recall immediately: according to the medieval theory, Bogdani recalled the research for the

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<sup>4</sup> Dr. Ibrahim Rugova: *Kahe dhe premise të kritikës letrare shqiptare, 1504-1983*, Instituti Albanologjik i Prishtinës, 1986, p. 167.

<sup>5</sup> Vehbi Miftari, Maloki: *Fryma nacionale në letërsi*, "Shpresa", Prishtinë, 2006.

interpretation of the *Bible* by searching for the essence of literary, implying that Saint Jeronimi regarded it as *papers* by flattening the borders between poetry and philosophy and, further, between poetry and scriptures.

If the intercommunication with the creation of awareness for criticism at the beginning of the XX century is considered as a criterion, the first sign of this literature is ascribed to **Krist Maloki**, born in Prizren, but formed in Graz Austria. The prominent literary ideas that start as sources in the psycho-biography of the writer to complete the mentality of them - the first time, national and ideas - the second time, are attributed to him. Maloki - user of thematic-logical and psycho-analytic methods recognized the ideology of the text readers, through the psycho-biographical research of the writer. By seeking signs of the text, Maloki preferred the overcoming when searching for ideas.

The interpretation of text, according to the requests for its treatment, as a tool to reflect the social reality, a known premise of socio-realistic theories, articulated as a program by Dhimitër Shuteriqi was applied in the 50s. As literary criticism was institutionalized in Albania by a cut of its development as well as of political ideas and ideologies, in Kosova, it could not be developed inseparably, the more if keeping in mind its contextuality and especially its textuality or its "missed object".

**Esad Mekuli** spread his program for a literary criticism "by using a national form and a socialist content".<sup>6</sup> He wrote critical recensional texts. Vehap Shita expanded the forms of writing, by writing sometimes recensions and sometimes critical reviews.

In the 60s the critical thinking began to open in foreign schools, mainly in the ideological field, by not marking the overcoming of the method based on utilitarian principles and ideological format in interpretation, but by underlining the abandonment of the solid socio-realistic concept, institutionalized as theoretical knowledge in Albania. At this time the ideological concept became the concept for literature as well as for the committed and free writer,

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<sup>6</sup> Esad Mekuli, *Mbi letërsinë dhe punën letrare*, "Jeta e re", Prishtinë, nr. 1, 1949.

according to the method proposed by Sartri. After the papers of **Ali Aliu, Rexhep Qosja** is the first who brought this awareness to criticism. Based on universal principles of interpretation, although ideology remains the hold of his texts, he builds a particular research method, which is based on cultural and historical premises by displaying this method: the biographical cultural and historical research, a kind of an integrated research where the life and critical premises are critical seen at same level. Relying on dialectical principles, he opened this modernized method, which was until then refused. His critical *praxis* in the research for forms of ideology in the present text, created a tradition of extending the boundaries of interpretation, preparing the basis for more specialized researches.

In the 70s he finally institutionalized the critical thinking in Kosova and in Albanian letters in general. The tendency to open criticism in schools and new critical methods is also the subject of debate, sometimes in a silent manner and sometimes to display the next younger critics, who demanded for a removal of criticism on new methods, and the definition of criticism. The so called *zhenetian* terms *meta-textual* literature, as awareness, has emerged in the 70s, when in addition to criticism of its methods, displayed a tendency for its theoretical definition.

**Ibrahim Rugova** made the first major opening of European critical approaches in schools and the final departure from the critical research with a ideological and social basis. By sticking to the theories, he intended to do the interpretation of the text as a result of reading and not as a theoretical premise applied in the text. Rugova seeks the large definitions in literature, to read then the literature as an autonomous institution and to accept multiple readings, although the research led him more to theories than to interpretations. By dealing with the theories and methods he built a method of theoretical researches which avoids the chronology and seeks for huge typologies.

**Sabri Hamiti** avoids the reading schemes and prefers the options. By institutionalizing that what Barti called *author's death*, he saw the literary and critic text as *possible legalization* and not as *prophetic formula*. He presents together with Rugova the type of a meta-textual researcher who displays *multiple*

*readings, reading versions*, which also imply an age of reading. Hamiti, unlike Rugova, did not tend to theoretical definitions, but read and wrote the critical text as a *possible option of interpretation*. His researches are still effective for the Albanian literature. Before him, Kurteli declared a specific critical project.

**Mensur Raifi** read the traditional and modern text by seeking thus the signs of *psycho-analytical reading*. Unlike Maloki, Raifi interpreted the texts of Noli and Migjeni by avoiding the psycho-biography as the center of originality of the text analysis and by defining the analysis of modern myth with premises of psycho-analysis as the center of literary work.

In the **80s** a wide sphere was developed, which brought searchers and texts with heterogeneous contents, not only in terms of forms, but also of theoretical concepts, but without leaving a visible mark on any of them. At that time, criticism has become institutionalized as a *possible research*, but the size of this research did not extend spaciouly. At that time, research was developed primarily within universities, as well as literary periodic.

The **90s** mark perhaps the most interesting period of critical research in Kosova.

At the time self-critical awareness led to search for samples and modernism, being identified with a self-criticism with a huge sign of the environmental culture, developed in the 30s. The *cultural recall* is followed by a *textual* and *research recall*: the excluded and excommunicated authors are the subjects of research to create the creative picture in Albanian letters. The knowledge for criticism of the authors of this period is divided into: results from former researches in the 70s - on one hand, and the results provided by the European critical and literary schools, and the new U.S. criticism, marked by total opening to ideas and to the method - on the other hand. The inter-textual and intermediary researches are a sign of the major crossing of research, their formation in relation to the schools and the results of European criticism.

### ***Kosova: meta-textual literature (Form and Method)***

The Albanian meta-textual literature in Kosova has different forms and methods of research. If the short informative articles (notes) and recensions of Konica belong to the first critical articles in the Albanian letters, these genres will be present in all Albanian literary criticism, so even in that of Kosova. Qosja, Rugova, Raifi and Hamiti wrote *critical projects* or specific studies by linking the research symbol to the consent of genre. Another consented and known form in Albanian letters from Lumo Skendo (Mit'hat Frasher) and others was the *monograph*, the first biographical type, and later, also known as an esthetic one according to Qosja, Rugova Hamiti, which exceeds the scheme of research of classical monograph of Mit'hat.

**Pjetër Bogdani** wrote a rhetorical and philosophical text about a biblical text by structuring it according to its *text-object*. The text of Bogdani vis-a-vis the Bible. Its author, preacher and defender of the values of Christianity, transforms at once the medieval writing to modern writing features. The critical writing is compared with the literary one by giving the same level of structure, as much as the discourse of ideas.

This type of interpretation is applicable to the criticism, especially by identifying the type of *author criticism* according to the *tibodeane typology*, in which the author's discourse is similar to the discourse of the text object, by preferring the genre also: the essay and commentary.

**Krist Maloki** wrote texts which, regarding the form, belong to the type of *informative texts*, before him applied by Konica, but also by the discourse they resemble more the type of *writing cultural discourse*. With these articles he intended to provide information for Albanian literature, while the textual plans go through the literature and its derivation due to environmental circumstances. Consequently, Maloki intended to create the context of Albanian literature, before he intended its interpretation.

In the **50s** mainly the genre of *recension* was known and, further, the *criticism of newspaper*. The main role in the development of this form of criticism was played by periodic, more precisely, the paper "Rilindja" or "Zani i rinisë", in which an "expository" was created, space for various books and authors,

mostly in contemporary Albanian literature. Authors like **Vehap Shita**, **Hasan Mekuli**, **Hilmi Agani** etc., provided the first ventures of "institutionalization of genre" in the Albanian meta-textual criticism although the crisis and non-institutionalization of genre are features of the development of criticism.

In the **60s** in terms of the critical research not only *recension*, but also *critical review* and, further, *the monograph*, or biographical literary research, according to the historical literary concept, was known. **Rexhep Qosja** writes mainly research texts and monographic historic literary texts: when writing a specific text about Naim, or giving premises of an Albanian literary history. **Ali Aliu** cultivated mainly the *publicity criticism* or *newspaper criticism* as forms of criticism, and its dominant genre: the *recension*. In addition, the theoretical research belongs to his field of interest, by influencing the critical awareness of that time. As already stated, the *monographic research* was also known in this period: **Ali Jasiqi** published the monograph for Josip Rele and Rexhep Qosja for Naim.

The **70s** marked the great opening of the Albanian meta-textual literature in schools to the methods, and brought a pluralism of forms and methods of critical researches. The opening to the schools, and the increased number of literary texts and of its forms, influenced the creation of an authentic critical literary in Kosova. **Mensur Raifi** wrote criticisms based on the psycho-analytic method in another way of research unlike those of Maloki. The submission is different, but preserves the theoretical and practical signs of the psycho-analytic criticism. In his text about Noli and Migjen he showed signs based on psycho-analytic theories. By submitting the psycho-analytic premises to the modern theory or anti-myth he created a special method in Albanian papers, which leads the mythical basis to the modernism in critical research. With regard to the forms, his texts emerged as critical reviews and specific studies, by expanding the boundaries of the formal expansion in Albanian papers. Such are his texts about the Albanian poetry and prose.

**Ibrahim Rugova** selected the *essay* as the preferred form, insisting that literary criticism is a writer's activity and the essay an *open form* which allows the making of theories by



considering the theories, what especially Rugova intended, or to interpret special texts and authors, what Hamiti intended. The essay was applied by Konica and especially by Kuteli and Maloki and composed the *selected form* of critical writing (known as the various literatures choose different forms), however an also known genre remains the recension, which was firstly cultivated by Konica. Furthermore, the *essay* remains his chosen form, as *criticism of the writer*.

**Sabri Hamiti** deals with theories to build an own system of reading, which knows the options, even those different ones of the time. His research for non historical poetics but for forms, ideas and Albanian literary awareness, marks the first essay of investigation of signs of the text not only by knowing and accepting the versions of reading, but also of writing, always giving them a great stamp of personal communications with the texts. His favorite genre remains the essay, whether in monographic writings for special authors such, Sulejman, Rrahmani, Konica and Xhaferri, whether in the exponent texts of different authors of Albanian literature.

In the **80s** the research for signs of literature introduced the so-called *reconsolidation of genre*. Various authors extended further the possibilities of critical writing in the existing genres and forms, and sometimes even new forms of critical writing were experienced. These two premises might create a picture for the existence of criticism and its communication with the literature and public: out of a variety of texts and authors with heterogeneous forms and methods; from an extensive space of writing to a consolidation of existing forms. In terms of the method, this period does not distinguish the tendency of embracing the models or schools. It collects and allows their presence, even without restricting theoretically the theoretic research, but does not differentiate any method which marks a trend of institutionalization of research.

**Ramadan Musliu** is a typical example for this period. He knew and applied some of the results posted by the Albanian literary criticism in Kosova, but did not focus on a particular type of research. Beside him, other authors, like **Milazim Krasniqi**, **Basri Çapriqi** etc., provided some research results, starting with critical recensions, to complete the series of theory

number, or in a reciprocal way, from the micro and macro structure of the text, so by the series of theory, in frequent critical writings.

In the **90s** the research recalled the huge sign of the identical research for the status of criticism, as well as the research of affiliation based on the European and American theoretical knowledge, on the other side. The identical sign is recovered through a research to identification with an existing critical awareness, but also with a large project based on national-cultural paradigm. Moving along and in line with a large cultural and political project, and by experiencing the return of prohibited authors or the discovery of unknown or partially known authors, and by stimulating the modern transcendental way of research for Albanians, the criticism sought its identification with these transcendences, designed primarily to culture, through the research of national identical symbols, and then in the literature and in the research for literary and critical values.

The author, who started the application of this model of cultural critic in Albanian letters, and particularly in Kosova, is Kujtim Rrahmani, doctor of literature, who uses mainly the research of oral cultural models in his texts, their removal in the written literature and permanent connection with the sign and environmental awareness. The literature project is equivalent to the project of spreading its major identical signs and for their influence on the literature of a nation, so the search for these models in the work of some of the best authors of Albanian literature, according to the method of inter-textual research, is the most precious essay, which included the project of pronounced cultural ideality in the search for oral models, as a sign of literary origin.

The *study*, or forms of academic criticism, according to the definition of Tibodes who is in line with theories, from the structural to the post-structural and postmodern ones, is a preferred form of his generation by marking the resumption of critical awareness, in addition to the awareness of its forms, both derivatives of critical awareness, exercised in the early or original modernity as called at the beginning.

### ***Kosova: Meta-textual literature (basic texts)***

**Bogdani** wrote the first article with theoretical and interpretative signs in Albanian letters. The *Cunneus prophetarum* is an identifying text of philosophy and theology and beyond the philosophy and poetry, applied in the interpretation of the Bible as literary text. Furthermore, not only the interpretation but also a structure intended such identification. The greatest scholar of his work, the researcher of the national identity and other major identifications of philosophical concepts of Bogdani, Dr. Rugova analyzed the structure inside by interpreting also their internal relation "structure and idea" and "idea and thought." The theology is applied in the form of signs, and translated into the idea of "*Ente indipendente*": Lord and his presence affect the construction of the system of thinking. A glamorous formula, perfect in identifying the content of discourse, as well as an excellent test to build a communication strategy with the text. The first part of the *book*, identifiable with the *Old Testament* or *the kosmogonine*, is identified as philosophical treatises, which wants to apply the theology and philosophy as a structure of thought over a literary text. The part has an open structure in order to reinforce intentionally the idea about the text, as an open text open (Remember the concept of Barti and Eko about the *open book*). The second, meanwhile, is identifiable with New Testament, or with text that "confesses" the life of Christ. In literary terms, it is a practical application of philosophical and theological lessons, summarized in the first part, by creating the model for literature: the text as identification with the ideography of the author.

**Maloki** applied the thematic and psycho-analytic methods, by determining also the type of research, *criticism of thematic codes*, who recognized the ideology of the text reader through the psycho-biographic research of the writer. The thematic criticism of the romantic background and the psycho-biographic criticism of Freud in his text were subjected to the criterion of national ideology. The passage from subconscious to awareness leads to return forever more to the research of the national spirit of literature, as a preference also for the essence of literature: *literature of national spirit*.

Author of polemical texts, Maloki wrote two articles which in essence are like specialized critics, *Naim Frashëri* and *Is Lasgush Poradeci a poet?*. It seems to me that Maloki's type of research was based on psycho-analytic and thematic criticism at that time when Albanian literature was dominated by the national idea and the demand for its spirit in literature. The literary criticism of Krist Maloki started at the time when for the Albanians the national project was still a fundamental project of ethnicity and culture.

The critical formation of Maloki seems to have "something common" between psychoanalysis and thematic, or between the criticism of *author's vision*, thematic criticism and that of *his subconscious*, the psycho-analytic criticism.

**Rexhep Qosja** is the author of the monograph of Naim Frashëri as well the writer of the *Albanian history of literature - Romance*, in three volumes.

According to the biographical method, namely cultural-historical, he explained the formation and role of representative authors of Romance in Albanian literature.

**Ibrahim Rugova** is a researcher of theoretic signs in Albanian literature, having a great system of research and interpretation. In the first level of major theoretical definitions, the largest research of Dr. Rugova remains *Kahe dhe premisa...*, whereas in the field of critical research was the multiple study about Bogdani, *Vepra e Bogdanit*, which affects the structure and status of the text by actualizing continuously the reading and the research.

*Kahe dhe premisa të kritikës letrare shqipe*, as was said, is the largest research in the field of great theoretical definitions, which is followed by the texts: *Kah teoria* and *Strategjia e kuptimit*. The text aims to provide a description of the development of the Albanian literary criticism, and to be in line with its results, seeing it from the angle of the commentator. This is a kind of critical meta-textuality, which according to the dual formula of Bogdani, can be summarized in *descriptive and commentator texts*;

Herewith, Rugova provides a chronological overview of the Albanian literary criticism, by fulfilling the searches for the bibliography of criticism, as well as an independent judgment

and much more so far about the Albanian literary criticism from its beginning until the 80s of last century.

*Bogdani's work*, meanwhile, marks the third degree of structural and poetic identification: that of Rugova's text beside the text of Bogdani, which, as mentioned, is written based on biblical analogies.

Rugova divides the research into two parts: the genetic of work and analytic of text, by preserving the idea of kosmogonine and practical life of Jesus Christ in the biblical text or philosophical-theological tract, in the first part and literary practice in the second part of the text of Bogdani. The discourse of Rugova's text, therefore, is the discourse of the text and concepts of the author which are interpreted, meaning reading at another time and by aiming the identification with it, at the level of discourse as much as at the level of the method. While maintaining the structure of the text of Bogdani in the reading text, Rugova makes a description of the concepts and their interpretation, by investigating the sings of Bogdani's system. Consequently, the research determines the method: the research of structures according to the structural method and the research of sign system according to the semiotic method. Such a structural/semiotic model of research was applied by Rugova in the text for Bogdani

**Sabri Hamiti** wrote various articles under the motto "venture for a poetics" by explaining the method of research: reading of the text, which is personal, and therefore possible as well as the version of reading, or the escape from ideology to return to the literary eternity. From *Versions and Albanian Letters*, he seeks the escape from the schematic methodology and embraces the freedom of reading and venture, which means an opportunity of interpreting and communicating with the text and the author.

The research is concluded with the *Bioletër*, which is a personal theory of writing and reading, so a text which seeks theoretical definitions, as much as the writing as an act of communication of subjects. However, the theoretical rating does not intend to be a crown of the writing, which aims the return and sticking to the personal freedom; it is the result, but not the framework.

**Kujtim Rrahmani**, wrote the crown of research, *Itertekstualiteti dhe oraliteti – Kuteli, Koliqi, Fishta*. As the critical distance is necessary for an objective judgment we content ourselves with this definition.

### **Conclusion**

As proved, the basic texts of meta-textual literature in Kosova, at least by the end of XX century, when literary criticism was recovered to defined principles at the beginning of XX century, are inseparable linked to the emergence of the *critical model*, which was represented especially by Konica, Maloki, Kuteli etc., by creating a continuous return of the signs of critical modernity, as well as of research models.

As literary criticism in Kosova was emerged and developed in a somehow other social and cultural context as in Albania, there were similar codes of socio-realization, by posting the biographical literary criticism, then the great opening of methods to schools, institutionalization of criticism, but by recognizing the heterogeneity as essential until, the end, in the 90s it turned immediately to major cultural and literary codes by embracing the knowledge about literature as a return to the essence of research.

*Translated by Dafina Vezaj*

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