

## LITERATURE OF *SOCIALIST REALISM* AND THE PROTOTYPES IT CREATED IN ALBANIA

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### ABSTRACT

*In this paper I will attempt to analyze how the literature of Socialist Realism reflected the changes and flexibility of the Albanian society during the period of Communism. And these changes and flexibility projected in philosophy and ideology in power significantly emerge in the literature of that season of time within the frame of gender roles also under the perspective of literature of Socialist Realism. In this venue, the prototypes developed by the literature of Socialist realism and scenarios conceived, as their contextual adjustment, evidenced the changes and flexibility in gender roles dressing up the characters of both genders with equal responsibilities and loaded them with importance and significance.*

**Key words:** *Socialist Realism, Communism, gender roles, New Man model/modeling, emancipation, flexibility and changes*

Literature of *Socialist realism*<sup>2</sup>, which flourished during the Communist period in Albania amazingly reflected and projected changes and flexibility the philosophy and ideology in power expected from the society, which emerged to be eager enough to appropriate the emancipation Communism<sup>3</sup> encouraged to occur. However, this emancipation postulated in developing gender roles accorded the role of the inferior sex and prized possession of both genders equally in socialist society inspired by Communist dogma.

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<sup>2</sup> *Socialist Realism* is a literary strain that dominated in the Albanian literature during the Communist regime. Also it is conceived as a literature with its own peculiarities and aspects that spot it out from all other literatures within the Albanian literature in general. As a theory, method and praxis it revolved round *New Man model/ modeling* as a reflection and expression of Communism, which has been constantly in search for security and domination, producing so literary narratives, which allegedly mirrored the reality with realism. In fact it deployed manipulative techniques and dogmatized rhetoric to afford Communist authority in domain.

<sup>3</sup> *Communism* emerged in Albania during national resistance to liberate the country from the invaders and occupiers and beyond (WWII). And it occurred precisely during the WWII, which surprisingly enough coincided not only with the National Liberation War as mentioned above, but also with its victory over Fascism and Naxism it designated the establishment of Communist ideology and philosophy in dominance as well as the development of *Socialist realism* as a strain in Literature and all other Arts in its aftermath (Communist revolution). We sense out how the spread of Communist ideas and the creation of Communist Party in Albania in 1941 hampered the substantial conditions to give birth to a particular literary theory and practice presumably as a irrevocable voice of Communist revolutionary spirit, the Communist Party attempted to disseminate among the Albanians, otherwise furthered as an instrument of identifying the Communist authority and envisaging in this manner the perspective of the country under E. Hoxha's dictatorial regime.

In this venue, the prototypes developed by the literature of *Socialist realism* and scenarios conceived, as their contextual adjustment, evidenced the changes and flexibility in gender roles dressing up the characters of both genders with equal responsibilities and loaded them with importance and significance.

This socialist and dogmatized oriented approach attempted to position the influence and also to necessitate the role and function of females as objects of *difference* for either separation from the past or dominance in Communist present or both as a sign of emancipation and evaluation of females potentialities and agency and not at all of supremacy over males. And, in this manner, the literature of *Socialist realism* positions a variety of modeling, which required (in)directness in depicting realism from the Albanian context. Enhanced by the 'muse' and enchanted by the social emancipation required and afforded by Communism, the modeling underlined *New Man* protagonist developed to resonate the expectations of Communism and also its tendencies accorded consequently in variety of roles performed by women indeed emancipated and noted for their cognitive empowerment and consciousness as well as the development of male roles accommodated within new responsibilities.

This flexibility although established in a dogmatized manner certainly revoked the concept of respective gender roles was done away for ever and signaled the economic and social changes in Albania. At this point industrialization and electrification and agricultural development and literacy and cultural development certainly opened up working positions with their respective terminology equally for both genders. Framed in this manner, I pose the question that these economic, cultural, educational and social changes in total derived from the dogmatized instrumentalization of overall changes in Albania. However flexibility and sensitivity were markers notices in the journey of character development in reality and literally speaking also in fiction entitled literature of *Socialist Realism* in quest of prototypes to cope with Communist development and in terms to political directives and guidelines constantly issued and launched in Congresses of Communist party in Albania.

By reckoning products of E. Kadare, D. Agolli, Dh. Shuteriqi and others, we will explore how these writes have displayed the changes and flexibility in gender roles as a common phenomenon instructed by and oriented from Communist perspective in Albania and how these roles certainly evoke the great social transformation in Albania although under the spectrum of Communist dogma which produced a social identity (dominant Communist identity) on the basis of *New Man* model/ modeling.

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*Socialist Realism*, which flourished in Albania during the Communist regime, was perceived and envisaged in the literature of that time as the only theory, method and praxis to be embraced and developed by the Albanian writers. Granted so, this kind of literature a reflection of the philosophy and ideology in power created its domain and thanks this it produced works of extraordinary proportions within the borders and approach of *Socialist Realism*.

In itself *Socialist Realism* sought for fundamental sources to spell out the orientations and guidelines of Communism "emancipating" by authority and

punishment - a form of violence - the entire society, which was conceived to ideally appropriate and transmit the values explored in literature and other arts. Nonetheless the tendency to aide the machine of the state and accelerate the application of Communist tendency of critical thinking and reasoning, the literature of *Socialist Realism* actually paved the paths for substantial implementation of models and modeling system and technique in confront to depiction of motifs and character development in literary narratives set up to realistically reflect the reality in Albania.

As the literary narratives mirrored or at least attempted to mirror faithfully the reality in Albanian by realism in fact it produced a distortion of it as the topics and characters it produced were too far from the real Albanian context which accelerated the social class struggle and all forms of punishment as well as prohibition of human rights. Although in these literary narratives certainly we perceive unquestionably a social emancipation in all aspects and personality development, but this evolution of characters was accomplished under the Communist dogma, which reinforced reciprocally the fundamental value Communism in Albania was in constant struggle to set up. Setting up this fundamental value we see how the security and proletarian dominance emerged to be established soundly on grounds of remarkable literary narratives, which displaced readership from concerns of real life framing them in this manner only within the confines of Communist dogma pleasures.

And as the intentions of this short research fall on the role of genders in literary narratives and how they have been flexible and changed as well, actually make me evoke all that literature which I can not assert embarrasses me at this moment because of the dogmatism and Communist 'fetishism' it attempted to establish - I acknowledge that this sort of literature should be treated as such, - and forwards me to the models the literary narratives absorbed as an expression of Communist tendentiousness of the writers; on the contrary it obligates me to undress the characters even created and deployed by writers specifying the model they all have derived from accounting the significance of gender differentiation in terms to gender roles and functions not only in the family but also beyond. Under this spectrum we will perceive how the genders equally became functionally accepted and respected in the new society and as such they were in constant claim to be appropriated and recommended as such as well.

At this point we see how the characters are depicted from all levels of life – rural and urban locations, family space and social space, individual space, collective space, private space and public space. And in the realm if these strong dichotomies, the characters offspring of New Man model/ modeling<sup>4</sup> evolve in the narrative praxis echoing the intentions of the writers, be them males or females,

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<sup>4</sup> New Man model/ modeling certainly assisted the Albanian writers of *Socialist Realism* to write their literary narratives (Dado, F. 2010). The character conceived within the features of New Man model really reflected what Communism as an ideology and philosophy in power expected society to become. And as such this *New Man* model certainly through cloning approach attempted to educate the readers who perceived in him, the features and personae Communist system attempted to dress up the individuals and transform the society. *New Man* model constantly dogmatized the society and laid grounds for critical reflections on the benefits and advantages of Communism thus the fundamental value, which Communism was eager enough to consolidate and reinforce, cemented the revolutionary proletarian relations in the Albanian society.

and postulating instructive and moral stands and reflections derived from oppressive Communist propaganda like all other dictatorial systems have ever functioned in this world.

In this venue, I allow myself to add that actually the Albanian female writers tended to pose the language as decisive power of female to establish and protect her rights given by socialist relations enhanced throughout her life by the Communist ideology and policy in power. Given so, the power of female language started to constitute the female realm although indoctrinated by the Communist ideological and political principles that found expression in literature of *Socialist Realism*. Under this spectrum of being indoctrinated under Communist inspirations and ideals the *New Man* produced by female writes used to echo the potentiality and power of females also making the position of women at home, at work, at school, in the street etc more challenging to themselves and to their male counterparts in the social phenomenon occurring in whole Albania of that time.

The language utilized to achieve this which gradually turned to be a norm as linguistic as cultural, in the *Socialist Realism* at that time constantly shaped the frame of female body in a likely manner that the feminine body and female difference in language and text defined the regulation of phallogentric system with emphasis to emancipate the female character of course within Communist inspirations. And indeed this female figure, who previously is observed in the Albanian literature to experience patriarchal and marked out for prejudiced features, later on with the establishment of Communist regime this description vanished away as slightly as harshly as both genders were equal bodies in society performing multifunctional roles in full rights.

In this light the argument generally can be made that *Écriture feminine* functioned as a nutritive instrument in complete opposition to patriarchal expression initially existent in Albania. Further more, the feminine determinateness, *Écriture feminine* of *Socialist Realism* “attempted to establish, a degree of cultural and historical validity projected by that season of time (Shockett – Qafleshi, E. 2012)”. Thus *Socialist Realism* has particularly been an instrument to explore into the past pointing out the decadence noticed and ignorance observed in gender relations and inter-relations by applying a variety of modeling during its reign in Communist Albania which has resonated females’ potentialities and agency and not at all their supremacy over males and hate or scorn on them.

In doing so, this kind of literature in general enlightened out the revolutionary tendency and designed new perspectives certainly opened to the Albanian society, which inevitably was prized to be dogmatized and instrumentalized by the ideology and philosophy in power. Thus the changes in gender role performing and cognitive and linguistic development of prototypes, be them male or female, illustrate that investment the dictatorial regimes expected to be taken back – Communism reigned for almost 50 years in Albania (Elsie, R. 1997) and this is a fact that should never be ignored but rather likely discussed and interpreted theoretically and scholastically.

In pursuit to my intentions to make explicit to you gender roles and discourse I reckon some characters like: *Cuca e Maleve* from *Cuca e Maleve* [The Girl of Highlands] written by Loni Papa in 1967 who turned out to be a very interesting

and promising activist and teacher right after National Liberation War ( WWII) in Albania. This drama illustrates the women emancipation under the Communist enlightenment, who attempted to educate herself well and project progressive criticism oriented by Communist dogma in open fight against religion and backward prejudices; *Stavri Lara* from *Kënetë* [The Swamp] written by Fatmir Gjata in 1959, who actually emerged to become not only too nationalist and patriot as he contributed in the national Liberation War, but later on with the triumph of Communism he turned out to be a very accomplished Communist Secretary who skillfully guided the whole process to drain a tremendous swamp performing the function of a technician a profession he obtained recently; *Afërdita* from *Afërdita në fshat* [Afërdita in the Village] written by Sterjo Spasse in 1955, developed a very interesting personality under the Communist inspirations which eventually became reflected in her persuasive discourses as signal of her ideological emancipation and Communist maturity and her professionalism based on the lessons of Communist Party and dictatorial E. Hoxha; *Din Hyka* from *Përsëri në këmbë* [ Again on Feet] written by Dhimitër Xhuvani in 1970 actually reflects that optimism and enthusiasm dressed up to people by the ideology in power. He is conceived as a model of 'positive hero' – a worker, a real proletarian - and a good source to analyze the proletarian discourse elaborated in terms to Communism in Albania. *Lahja* from *Përballimi* [The Encountering] written by Teodor Laço in 1975 certainly reflects the emancipation and development of female role in the post-WWII in Albania. Not only described as a very energetic Communist Secretary in service to the concerns of the common people, but also as a promising activist, she involved herself in an application of an extremely radical policy regarding the distribution of essentials during 1948-1949 avoiding in this manner a possible conflict between the peasantry and working class – the latter was emerging to become rather dominant in the whole society in Albania. And all this polarity of stands towards the period of economic crisis overcame by her actions and eventually we perceive the new tendency postulated on phenomenon through her discourse. Also it points out her agency to convince people and require collaboration with all parties to suffice the temporary intentions which reckon not only the overcome of the economic difficulty – fame and starvation, but the consolidation of the fundamental value Communism expected to be cemented either 'ontologically' or violently. On the other hand her figure firmly asserts out how her actions really predominated in a highly persuasive manner and how she succeeded in instrumentalizing the ideology she was product of for the benefit of the society she belonged to.

In another work by the same writer titled *Të gjithë lumenjtë rrjedhin* [All Rivers Run] written in 1987, the main protagonist named *Arben Morina* is specifically denoted a hydro - power engineer in charge of an important project through which he displayed his intellectualism and innovative thoughts and courage to cope with difficulties and to nurture a specific consoling discourse at the times of encountering them. At this point, the prevailing dramatic tension called for ideological formation not only of the main protagonist *Arben Morina*, but rather likely so even the other characters which make up the literary narrative in its entity.

Helena Kadare in her novel *Bashkëshortët* [The Spouses] written in 1981, has discussed about a very striking topic which certainly coincided with the approaches implemented by the ideology and philosophy in power with reference to individual development and individual improvement. Inscribed in this manner I could stress out that characters like: *Shpresa, Linda* and more certainly confined into the family context and in the broader context, demonstrate their skills they have obtained through education line to become even leaders of the society they belonged to. They are doctors and as such they are situated in various circumstances including the family circumstances where we observe closely their clashes with their respective husbands. Emancipated strongly and equipped with the right agency and professionalism we envisage them also in real life as such with all those up and down they happened to encounter bravely. Alongside this, we observe also, their ideological background, which eventually positioned them as Communist activists or at least adherents and leaders in their small communities. The specific discourse elaborated and articulated by them indeed oscillates the world context the characters became oriented explicitly and further more the dominance of the ideology in power and also their potentiality to exercise their responsibilities and duties in confront to their communities/ society they appertain.

In addition, the political concerns prevailing at international level/ context become intertwined with the personal and social and professional life of the characters, which pose questions that expose their political maturity and Communist stand. Further more, the model they represented echoes faithfully the intentions of Communism in Albanian. The displacement of questions and concerns ranging them from mini- context to macro- context has assisted the writer to build up a sort of memory with reference to the political allies and alliances of Albania.

Diana Çuli in her novel *Dreri i trotuarave* [The Deer of Pavement] written in 1990 has developed *Vera* who is a very unique in her nature and character. From this point we cannot say that D. Çuli has managed at least to describe her protagonist's individual *psyche* and actually however we gradually perceive and eventually envisage her with both repressed drives and desires equally balanced. Rather likely we obviously notice out that she has pretty well balanced the material to highlight her political unconsciousness source for which indeed was her sexual liberal affair with *Fredi*, another protagonist.

We envisage this paradigmatic interpretation of the novel as the rhetoric explored in it expresses out noticeably the impact of ideology to create *New Man* model through Communist modeling approach and as a result of this the building up of the Albanian identity conditioned by the Communist context in Albania and signals flexibility to lead to democratic changes later on and also clarifies the roles of genders within that paradigmatic segment of the protagonists' life. Further more as *New Man* was conceived as part of society deprived of vices and misdeeds, *Vera* proved to be the *otherness* – a segment thrown away as rag because of her action which was not in terms to ideology in power but conceived as signal of moral degradation – thus she is perceived in a different role and functions as such; and

this makes up the reason she naturally couldn't bring up a child in her context, although she seemed to be so much tugged on her affair and its result.

Should this character be picked out for moral degradation, this feature definitively could have led her to social punishment. And rather likely legal punishment could have worked out properly as the reason could have been a class enemy tendentiousness, which has propagandized opposite to features of *New Man* – representative of Communist collective consciousness, but on the contrary her Communist political unconsciousness definitively pushed her to suicide shifting the analysis towards personal oriented punishment due to commitment of social fault. In this manner she has vested herself with another role – the failure.

With a very prudent and convincing rhetoric the author has persuaded us narratively to the labyrinth of thought and conduct during the season of Communist ideology and politics in Albania. Although we perceive sexual liberation and illegal abortion, this novel really evokes an appealing accompanying a very specific role and function female was dressed up with in Albania. And alongside this in general we digest the prevailing discourse of her protagonists and we conclude that their language is totally ideologized and in this manner behind their affair there is a prediction justified by the ideology in power.

The language we encounter while reading the literature of *Socialist Realism* includes terms like: *revisionist, Communist Party member, Communist secretary, Communist Party Congress, proletarian consciousness, Communist adherents, hydropower engineer, teacher, activist agricultural Headmaster, doctor, class enemy, kulak, diversant, people's enemy* and so many and along them we notice how the characters are designed professionally due to their education and culture which eventually are conceived denotatively positive in terms to the requirements of Communism.

Further more other authors of the same line - thought are: Ruzhdi Pulaha, Pëllumb Kulla, Dritëro Agolli, Naum Prifti, Natasha Lako, Aleko Likaj and so many.

## CONCLUSION

In this final touch of the issue as a conclusion I actually reinforce strongly that literature of *Socialist realism*, which flourished during the Communist period in Albania amazingly reflected and projected changes and flexibility the philosophy and ideology in power expected from the society beside other expectations the Communism was eager enough to obtain. In this light I could express out that the society, which emerged to be eager enough to appropriate the emancipation Communism encouraged to occur changes and apply flexible orientations towards gender roles and discourse as well. However, this emancipation actually postulated in developing gender roles accorded the role of the inferior sex and prized possession of both genders equally in socialist society inspired by Communist dogma.

In this venue, the prototypes - which certainly will push you to reading the narratives they are taken from, - developed by the literature of *Socialist realism* and scenarios conceived, as their contextual adjustment, evidenced the changes and flexibility in gender roles dressing up the characters of both genders with

equal responsibilities and loaded them with importance and significance. This is the reason we equally perceive the females as important as males in all aspects of Communist social life.

However this socialist and dogmatized oriented approach attempted to position the influence and also to necessitate the role and function of females as objects of *difference* for either separation from the past or dominance in Communist present or both as a sign of emancipation and evaluation of females potentialities and agency and not at all of supremacy over males. And this justifies topics related to attacks towards backward prejudices and social involvement of females.

In this manner, we perceive the literature of *Socialist realism* positions a variety of modeling, which required (in)directness in depicting realism from the Albanian context and we envisage the literary narratives they take breath and develop their personal identity in conformity to the dominant identity Communism established solidly. At this point, the modeling helped a lot and that one underlined *New Man* protagonist developed to resonate the expectations of Communism and also its tendencies accorded consequently in variety of roles performed by women indeed emancipated and noted for their cognitive empowerment and consciousness as well as the development of male roles accommodated within new responsibilities afforded by new social relations. This flexibility although established in a dogmatized manner certainly revoked the concept of respective gender roles was done away for ever and beside this the discourse enjoyed the same perspective tendencies and value for both genders.

By reckoning products of E. Kadare, D. Agolli and so on, I exposed out the attempts of these writes to display the changes and flexibility in gender roles as a common phenomenon instructed by and oriented from Communist perspective in Albania and as a responsibility vested onto them by Communism.

Communism just like other dictatorial systems in the world exercised its authority through revolutionary violence and as such to preserve its existence and dominance it worked out systems and mechanisms to suffice its intentions for its fundamental value. Thus the roles it designed were assigned to females and males dressing them up with responsibilities and functions, which flexibly reflected the creation of new identity the ideology tugged on mostly. At its best this new identity reflected and transmitted through *New Man* model what really concerned the Communism in general and the literature prototypes certainly contributed a lot in this aspect.

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