

## CHAPTER 7 INNOVATIONS IN EDUCATION

### "HISTORICAL NOVELS OF ALBANIAN LITERATURE IN THE MODERN ERA" (THE TYPOLOGY AND CHARACTERISTICS)

#### 7.1 The typology of Albanian historical novels

##### 7.1.1 Models of European historical novels in Albanian novels

Studies on Albanian historical novels dating approximately 30 years ago are mainly developed on the structure of literature type in general avoiding the theoretical and historiographical background based on which we find attempts over abstract models.

Such a method distinguishes the dominating features of the type from lateral ones or those of new elements, which are highlighted to later define the structure of a new type of fiction.

It is nearly two centuries ago that historical novels are being written in other European literature, while in Albanian ones, it points out the beginning of the genre with "Shkodra e Rrethume" of Ndoc Nikaj in 1913.

Historiographical studies claim that historical novels in the Balkans showed up after national independence. From this point of view, we may talk about cultural changes in Albanian reality political ideals intersecting with Romanticism aesthetics only in the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The main characteristic of the novels in this period, where the historical narration makes the most developed type of fiction, is the intersection of romantic spirit with the national affair. The presence of the novels in Albanian Literature is the result of complicated changes among the genre, which created the "literary conjuncture". As in other European literature, intermediary types like narrative poems, which were often seen as novels, lyrical romance or poetical texts preceded it where we "*meet the embryo of novelist life*" as the researcher Nasho Jorgaqi says<sup>48</sup>.

Both European and Albanian historical novels were written on romantic awareness, but the later preserved it longer due to existential motives rather than political ones. The main feature of our novels is its "impetuous" development in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century based on models of European classical historical novels in which emerged elements of romanticism, sentimentalism and realism too.

Albanian historical novels are later in time than both European and Southeastern European novels. Nevertheless, it is studied in the context of the European type in general, out of which we may outline the research over "Shkodra e Rrethume" of Ndoc Nikaj under the genre models of historical novels of Manzoni and Scott<sup>49</sup>.

Historical novels of the first phase could not create the stylistic formations, which were fully consolidated in European literature.

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<sup>48</sup> Jorgaqi, Nasho, *Anthology of albanian aesthetic thought*, (Tiranë: Plejad, 2003), p. 12

<sup>49</sup> Critical studies, in which, Nikaj's novels give the impact were influenced by Scot's novels, Gjovalin, Kola, Ndoc Nikaj "Dhe burimet e romanit shqip", and Bajram Krasniqi, "Poetika e romanit historik shqiptar"

In the development of Albanian novels, we find the historical past parallel to simultaneity, the emerge of historical fiction under postmodernist structures. The Albanian historical novels of the 20<sup>th</sup> century developed nationalism and fiction, attacked simultaneity and protected political stability. Albanian literature gradually developed some distinguishing features and poetical elements, which avoided the structure of the type and the primary, secondary inclination. The personality of the character and the plot serving the character were features of the novels development.

We should outline the features of historical novels in some authors of the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, such as Sabri Godo, Bilal Xhaferri, Ismail Kadare, Dhimiter Shuteriqi, Skender Drini, Zejnullah Rrahmani, Mehmet Kraja, Mira Meksi, etc.

The above-mentioned preserved historical awareness outlined realistic features, which developed fiction and historical anthology serving the actuality. Another feature is that it does not contradict the classical novels but benefits elements and poetical techniques from it. In general, it is characterized by critical awareness towards history, which in fact is unbundled patriotic awareness.

Modern historical novels is going into thoroughly the philosophy of history avoiding intrigues, strengthening contemporary thoughts in the recreation of historical characters portrayed in universal colors<sup>50</sup>.

The combination of the types is a sign of inner development of the literature; it emerged after the changes that sociocultural Albanian structure suffered after 1990s. V. Shkollovski says: *"The canon of the novel may be easily subject to modification"*<sup>51</sup>.

### **7.1.2 Scott's and Manzoni's model in the historical novels of Nikaj, Harapi, Postoli**

The physiognomy of Albanian historic novel was determined by W. Scott's novel, who represents the most influencing model of the continent, which had a great influence on the prose of N. Nikaj, Z. Harapi, and F. Postoli<sup>52</sup>.

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<sup>50</sup> Kodra, K. (2009). "Romani elitar dhe romani i masës", në *Aktet e seminarit ndërkombëtar për gjuhën, letërsinë dhe kulturën shqiptare*. Prishtinë: Fakulteti i Filologjisë, p. 158.

<sup>51</sup> Flaker, A. "Çështje të romanit" (Prishtinë, 1980), p. 303.

<sup>52</sup> Hamnnet, B. (2011), *The historical novel in nineteenth century Europe* (Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 74-78.

\* The Historical novel appeared for the first time in literature scene in 1814, with "Waverley", from Walter Scot, more than a decade later it would mature and create a full autonomy, and this was the fact that made the author known as "Homer of the historical novel" and his act was known for the next decades as the genres prototype, with an extraordinary success in the first middle XIX century in Europe, and also the predecessor of realistic novels. After the anonymous publication of "Waverly", Scott would fully dedicate himself to the historical novel, firstly by focusing in the last time of Scottish history and the relationships between Scotland and England. From 1819 and later he adjusted his events outside Scotland even in earlier time, mostly in the medieval times, in novels that would testify his extraordinary skills, in the resurrection of the past, which would testify that Scott feels better in his territory, in the novels of the first period, when he faces with the latest Scottish events, in which he was involved. Meanwhile, more than 60 years later, new perspectives, in all types of historical situations created the right clime for the writing of fictional novels (prose), which were related with the past; the difference between the returned past in the historical novels, which were based in a careful study of books, documents, archives and the "fluent" past in a historical novel that imagined the emotional responses of fictional characters, who had lived a time ago than the writer himself, which was argued and placed in his framework, known as the novel of traditions (costume novel).

The first two based on Italian translation of Scott's novels and later on English ones during his stay in the USA. The following make up homogenous grouping:

- "Goca e Kacanikut" (1911) of Milto S. Gurra;
- "Shkodra e Rrethueme" (1913), "Fejesa n'djep ase Ulqini I marrun" (1913), "Bukurusha" (1918) "Burbuqja" (1920), as well as others by Ndoc Nikaj;
- "Pushka e Tradhëtarit" (1914), "Peng a rob" (1930-1933) by Zef Arapi;
- "Për mbrojtjen e Atdheut" (1919), "Lulja e Kujtimit" (1924) by Foqion Postoli;
- "Miq të Vezirit" (1943), "Shtregullat" (1940) by Luigj Thaci;
- "I fundmi i Kastriotëve" (1944) by Andon Frashëri;
- "Kalorësi i Skënderbeut" (manuscript, published in 1968) by Haki Stermilli;
- "Kthimi i Skënderbeut ne Krujë" (1929) by Llambi Dardha.

The above-mentioned novels have one thing in common with the Scott's model: *the role that history plays as picturesque background where love intrigues are set*<sup>53</sup>. The plot develops into two parallel lines: the war for national liberation and love between youngsters. This feature mainly characterizes romantic historical novels.

The intrigue of "Shkodra e Rrethueme" is inspired from the political and warfare episodes of 1908-1913 in Shkodra. The escape of the main character from the Turkish Army and the war in Tuz and Shkodra suburbs reveal the writer's attitude towards the historical situation. Parallel to the historical development we find the love intrigue between Ndoci and Lezewhose's father wanting her to marry a rich man from Shkodra. The happy-ending matches Scott's, Manzoni's and Hygo's genre.

The narration misses some features of classical historical models such as the chivalric spirit and archaism. Nikaj's aim to find historical truth has harmed the aesthetical values of the novel.

Another feature of Scott's classical model is the *heroic spirit some protagonists transmit*; we may mention here Ndoci at "Shkodra e Rrethueme" or Dhimitri at "Lulja e Kujtimit" who are characterized by passion closely related to ardent love for their country<sup>54</sup>.

*"Tomorrow night I have to leave Shkodra, while I have sworn to give my life for my country, Albania, you should give your heart to it"*<sup>55</sup>.

The making of Nikaj's characters through frequent travelling or abductions remind us of tales, legends as well as traditional ballads.

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<sup>53</sup> Ndoc Nikaj; Marcja (1898). *Shkodra e Rrethueme (pjesa I-II)* (1913); *Tivari marrun* (1915); *Bukurusha* (1918); *Ulqini marrun (dorë e dytë)* (1918); *Lulet në thes* (1918); *Berbuqja* (1920); *Motra për vllan* (1924)

<sup>54</sup> Welsh, A. (1962). *The Hero of the Waverley Novels* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), p. 62

\* Referring to the independent past of Scotland, Scott created series of heroic characters, undefeated warriors, related closely to the tradition, with customary life and its Celtic past. In his study "Hero of Waverley" (*L'Eroe Della Waverley*), through which A. Welsh aims to specify the characteristics of the modern novel, its prototype is seen as a representation at "Waverley". The author claims that Scott is not purely a realistic. It means that he is not a mimetic design of the modern life or the past. He points out that the Scottish author never criticized the society of his time and never fully reached to get in the tradition of romanticism, as a writer who has "full knowledge of the heart". According to the critic, the characters of Scott are insensitive, with a few exceptions.

<sup>55</sup> Ndoc Nikaj, *Shkodra e Rrethueme* (Tiranë: Publisher "Naim Frashëri", 1961), pp. 96-97

In Nikaj's and Postoli's narration, *fiction characters interact with real historic people*. Nikaj matches Scott's model through the fact that famous historic characters play secondary roles, they appear to be stylistically motivating the novel composition when important historical events are being described through historical reminiscence and time resettlement in the future (*analepsis*, *prolepsis*).

We find some exceptions in Skenderbeu, Hamzai, Sultan Murati II at "Kthimi i Skënderbeut në Krujë" by Llambri Dardha or "I fundmi i Kastriotëve" by Andon Frashëri. In Nikaj's Postoli's and Harapi's novel, protagonists appear to be fiction characters representing the "average hero" (not mediocre)<sup>56</sup>. They are characterized by virtues as wisdom, stability and moral dignity but not by extraordinary qualities. In Nikaj's novel as well as in others of the grouping, the narrator is in third person. He often combines with first person integrating with characters through epistolary discourse.

In addition, in the discourse structure of Albanian historical novels, *we find the combination of various discourses such as historiographical, literary, epistolary, ethnographical, etc*<sup>57</sup>. A special function is attributed to the love letters exchange, like Ndoci and Leza by Nikaj and Dhimitri and Olimbi by Postoli. In Nikaj and Harapi, we frequently find examples when discourses come out as chronicle or proof.

Generally, Nikaj's novel is characterized by a heterogeneous structure. Historical elements are transformed into literary ones, while historical language is substituted by artistic truth. One of the most important qualitative restrictions of Nikaj's novel characterizes the lack of representing characters with their real mental, intellectual life and psychological characterization. They are the result of Nikaj's concepts of history. To the author, real artistic values of the novel consist in its plot where characters face many difficulties and in the end, they got married and educate their children a patriotic spirit.

Even though Scottish novels had a great influence on the literature of the continent, Nikaj's and Harapi's prose were mainly dominated by Mazoni's model.

Traces of the historical novel "Të fejuarit" by Mazoni are generally seen in "Fejesa n'djep" (by Nikaj) and "Pushka e Tradhëtarit" (by Harapi) whose characters strongly believe in God.

Talking about similarities, we can draw attention to the way Renzo and Lucia/ Ndoci and Leza fall apart because of historical circumstances.

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<sup>56</sup> Scott with his selection and the creation of heroes, in his novels, expressed his conviction that people, being ordinary in appearance, do not reach to express their feelings in the most powerful way. This is the reason, that even though he knew the commercial value of certain names like, Alfred or Elisabeth in England or Wales, Bruce in Scotland; he showed maturity in the scale of putting such names in novels, which were related to past events, would exaggerate the expectations of the book sellers or the reading public

<sup>57</sup> Marchese, A. *Il testo letterario* (Torino: Societa Editrice Internazionale, 1995), p. 169. \* According to Bachtin, the narration is a "polystylistic, polydiscursive, polyphonic phenomenon". Stylistic because it mixes heterogenic stylistic units placed in different plans of language, discursive, because the novel reflects a society stratification of language (dialects, jargon, professional ways of speaking), which carries a rich ideological dialectic, polyphonic because narrating means giving the word to as many characterized voices in the social aspect, even more, being in contrast with each other

According to the researcher Ali Xhiku, *these authors base on thematic-structural archetypes of historical novels, which drew attention to the fight between right and wrong; thank Goodness, the first always prevailed*<sup>58</sup>.

Even Koliqi claimed such resemblance. The greatest resemblance of Nikaj and Harapi's novels to the Mazoni's is the illuminist character and didactic spirit; alongside war, we find attempts to cultural emancipation<sup>59</sup>.

For both Mazoni and Nikaj, historical novel conveys political, social, cultural and religious ideas. The history from Scanderbeg time to the declaration of independence is the foundation to understand actuality and social perspective of Albania. Nikaj appears to be a traditional innovative writer whose novel bears modeling macro structural effects; it carries a new way of composition, which did not exist before. In conclusion, we may say that Nikaj's, Harapi's and Postoli's novels are greatly influenced by Scott's and Mazoni's historical classical model.

Historical novels of this grouping represent romantic thoughts, even though we find sentimental and realistic elements in them. Idealism and schematization of many important topics of Albanian literature are obvious here<sup>60</sup>.

History, to most of these novels, remains an ornamental scenario where narration bases on, while characters lack simplicity and psychological characterization.

Albanian historical novels of the first period could not create stylistic formations, which in European literature were fully consolidated. This genre, up to 1944, was edition restricted. In general, this genre, until 1944 had a limited production, like all the artistic prose of that time, which showed visible changes in the trends and in its novel<sup>61</sup>. We conclude that, *historical novels of the first phase, based on European models, make brief tradition and appear to modestly cultivate the genre*.

Drawing attention to the historical past of Albanian literature of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century is an important aesthetical guarantee to promote national Albanian identity.

Author's tendency to set narrative stories into historical background, except for their patriotic spirit and romantic historicism, should be considered as means of expressing political crisis and lack of spiritual and cultural life in Albania.

Outlining the most characterizing features of Albanian nationality was basic in creating collective historical awareness on classical European historical novels which, written a century ago, claimed that social destiny is historically predestined.

Revaluation of the past serves the national affair by strengthening the writers' historical feelings. The changing of later social condition *lead to an even more*

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<sup>58</sup> Xhiku, A. *Letersia shqipe si polifoni* (Tiranë: Dituria, 2004), p. 54

<sup>59</sup> Koliqi, E. cit. në: Gjovalin Kola, *Ndoc Nikaj dhe burimet e romanit shqip*, (Apollonia, 1997) p. 10

\* Harapi never hides the intention of following the example of the Italian novelist Manzoni, the author of "Betrothed", in the descriptions, in the characterization, but his mind and his morality and social sensitivity are far from Manzoni

<sup>60</sup> Kuteli, M. *Shënime letrare* (Tiranë: Grand Print, 2007), p. 488

<sup>61</sup> Qosja, R. *Shkrimtarë dhe periudha*, (Akademia e Shkencave të Shqipërisë, Tiranë, 2005), p. 47. \*Most of the Albanian writers of this time would still support their writings to the past, at the myth, at the history, now this would be rarer and known as the distant past, but a few would support mostly in the historical and social topicality. The past and the history for the writers of this trend can be beautified, but at the same time can be commented from a critical standing

*conscious narrative.* The story of the literature carries the basic function of its recreation that, through artistic forms, reveals the spiritual and creative evolution of the nation<sup>62</sup>.

*To writers, historical novels have always served as a means to consider concerns of representation, nationality and identity; they have as well reflected over contemporary politics.*

### **7.1.3 The model of realistic historical novels in Albanian historical novels**

Taking into consideration the characteristics presented in the Albanian literature, we find the following under realistic model: "Zjarre" (1972); "Zgjimi" (1974); "Pishtarët" (1975); "Ja vdekje, ja liri" (1978); "Kryengritësit" (1983) by Sterjo Spasse, which were later collected in the cycle "Rilindasit"; "Të mundurit" (1961) by Hasan Petrela; "Për mëmëdhenë" (First Part 1961; second part 1962) by Thoma Kacorri and "Vraje tradhëtinë" (1980) by Skender Drini.

We will try to point out some common characteristics with models of Bulwer, Dickens, Balzac and Tolstoy<sup>63</sup>.

*Spasse accustoms his narration in the Renaissance epoch* by including all the socio-historical processes, which were present in late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in Albanian society. Events in "Rilindësit" originated in 1885-1887 were strongly related to the historical events of opening the first Albanian School in the city of Korça.

Novels of this cycle have some things in common, which are the national ideal as well as historical and fiction characters. Chronological events reflect various degrees of national awareness as well as social condition. The hero of the novel is the same: in Themistokli Gërmenji's "Zgjimi", he first appears as an average fellow of modest contribution to the national affair; later he becomes an enthusiastic patriotic.

Spasse functionalizes history to let the reader know historical truth and to strengthen collective memory. His work makes up some kind of National Renaissance encyclopedia, where the author under materialistic reasoning, presents historical process as a severe encounter between contraries. In Spasse's novel, fact materials are basic of the narration, while imagination is restricted because the author avoids

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<sup>62</sup> Dado, F. *Sfida teorike të historiografisë letrare* (Tiranë: Bota Shqiptare, 2009), p. 5

<sup>63</sup> Hamnet, B. *The historical novel in 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe*, (Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 182. \* In European literature, the realistic historical novel is mainly highlighted from authors like Dickens, Bulwer, Eliot, Thackeray, H. Balzac and L. Tolstoy, whose writings distinguish for the realized unity, for the relationship created between the elements of fiction and the historical truth. The historical development based on the actual exploration sources and methods, after the first half of 19<sup>th</sup> century, made it possible that the historical novels experienced a difficult condition because the differences and contradictions between the fact and the imagination were made visible. Historical romance, which was spotted for its highlights over emotions, or the dominance of the fictional to the worst of historical reliability, created controversy with serious historical novels, saving the balance between the above-mentioned components and for the means and the tools that the authors choose in the process of searching the most accurate thing. If the historical novels would continue, being a kind of forefront writing it would have to find a solution to the problem of tension between these two elements. Technical elements that authors of the historical novels like Bulwer and Dickens added to this genre repertory were the contrast between relative shortness and the unstable timing of human history and the stable order of nature the problematic relation between the actual reality and the declaration of this reality.

inner motifs, which would force the character to undertake specific action. Fiction serves as a means to reinforce the sublime, magnificent and the ideals, which could be seen through the main national character and other characters too.

Spasse's socio-historical novel matches Bulwer's model in "Ditët e fundit të Pompeit" (Last Days of Pompeii)<sup>64</sup> especially through the technique of conversion of historical people to heroes of the novel as well as in the support of events in the registered career of their lives.

In Skender Drini's "Vraje tradhëtinë" (*Kill the betrayal*) narration accustoms in the same historical background of early 20<sup>th</sup> century, exactly in the surrounding of Shkodra in Balkan's wars, in popular resistance to defend it, in invading attempts of Montenegrin chauvinistic groupings and the diplomatic dissensions of Great Powers over Shkodra issue. Historical movements in this novel are realistically reflected; the present appears because of the past while the past as a pre-history of the present.

Skender Drini's "Vraje tradhëtinë" matches Scottish classical model in the fact that fiction characters become real protagonists of the narration. The portrayal as second hand of such historical characters as Riza Pashai, Esat Pasha, and Kral Nikolla aim the generalization of their portraits through resemblance with real people. Ordinary people like Braho Shkreli, Bixh Turku, Kol Idromeno and Kel Kodheli are the invincible heroes of the novel; they carry out their historical mission in critical circumstances.

The originality of Drini's heroes relies on the fact that they are not characterized by adventurous spirit; they move towards death when summoned by history, myth and awareness; they are well known for their pagan heroism, which, in historical context, is explained with social development and romantic spirit actualizing old heritage, beliefs, cults and popular mythology.

The procedure that highlights the hero of the novel Braho Shkreli is the combination of epic elements with lyrical pathos; because of these events sometimes sound lyrical or dramatic.

Even Spasse in "Rilindasit" displays a lot of *historical figures and parables* like Themistokli Germenji, Bajo and Cerciz Topulli, Mihal Grameno, Petro Nini Luarasi, Dede Gjo Luli, Isa Boletini, Miss Edit Durham and Esat Pashë Toptani. The author realizes Themistokli Germenji's character based on historical truth; fiction serves the

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<sup>64</sup> Wesseling, E. *Writing History as a Prophet*, cited, p. 64. \* Bulwer (Edward Bulwer Lytton: 1834), differently from Scott, with his historical novel, "Last days of Pompeii", aspired high standards of historical accuracy, through a systematic and aware research. He did not only consult authoritarian historiographical studies but also checked previous sources. Bulwer changed the historical people into heroes of his novel and supported the event in the registered career of their lives, so he could reach a closer following of the historical facts. This strategy gave him the right reason to pretend that in his novel, the main parts were composed of factual materials and the role of the imagination was limited from the deviation of inside motives, which may have obliged the subject of his narration to create specific actions. This technique resulted in the creation of one kind of historical fiction, which became a trend in 1830 and 1840. Bulwer had more claims than Scott did because the historical aspect of his novel appears more concentrated. More than describing the official historiographical authority, Bulwer convinced himself that he had to correct the view painted from the historian notes, rehabilitating the historical actors, who he feels had taken a rough and unfair treatment from them

case too. Through chronological narration of events, Spasse aims to make the reader follow the patriotic and politician since his youth (at Zgjimi) generalizing this way the portrait of patriotic boyhood of the time<sup>65</sup>.

The author realizes the realistic character of Dedë Gjo Luli by combining historical documents with fiction, facts with artistic condition, tradition with his original vision. The technique used to demystify the historical character and the narrated events in socio-historical novels of Spasse show that they were influenced by the epic model<sup>66</sup> of Tolstoy "War and Peace"; especially concerning the way through which the Russian author transforms historical characters into human ones.

The author, influenced by 19<sup>th</sup> century's humanist culture, realized sensitivity, vision and philosophical, social, ethical-moral curiosity in the poetics of great realists.

The tendency to realistically represent historical condition, which characterizes Spasse's novel, bases on such influence; it basically appears in the creation of literary characters that generalize social reality by personalizing them as types belonging to certain social classes. This claim determines the dominant feature of literary realism, which, according to Auerbach, is the novel's ability, as an open genre and style combination, to realize a serious form of social and literary study<sup>67</sup>.

Skender Drini's "Vraje tradhëtinë" matches both the Manzoni's model where the typology and characters' attitude are closely related to historical, socio-cultural characters of the time and the realistic model in terms of the way the author bases his narration on psychological terrain of historical or fictitious characters<sup>68</sup>.

*The omniscient narrator* of Spasse's historical cycle plays an important role in defining the poetical structure of the novel; he makes us think he is everywhere and nowhere at the same time<sup>69</sup>.

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<sup>65</sup> Spasse, S. *Zgjimi, Vepra Letrare I*. (Tiranë: Publisher "Naim Frashëri", 1980), p. 27

<sup>66</sup> Krasniqi, B. *Poetika e romanit historik shqiptar*, cited, p. 45. \*According to Bachtin, the meaning of the novel like a new epic shape defines life in its universal meaning, and the numerous forms of humanity like reflexes of specified social reports is mainly known in universal literature, notably in the Russian literature, to which Albanian literature is fully open

<sup>67</sup> Auerbach, E. *Mimesis, Realismo nella letteratura occidentale*, Vol. II (Torino: Einaudi, 2000), p. 272

<sup>68</sup> Manzoni, A. *I Promessi sposi*, (Torino: Einaudi, 1971), \* In the novel "I promessi sposi" from Manzoni, XVII century is not just a simple historical frame for the main plot but has an importance for the narration, in these aspects, characters are strongly related to the century. The typology and their actions are in a strong connection with historical, social and cultural characters of the century. "Minute" events (extremely small) of the protagonists are lit from important historical events, for example, Renzon, in the mess of Milano, as a dissolution of the event. Through the subject of the event, narrated in the novel, it describes the 17th century. If the events of the characters at the "Promessi sposi" are lit from "official history", it is also true that Manzoni narrates the history of the 17th century through the adventures of Renzo and Lucia. Through the odyssey of Renzo, the reader learns step by step the conditions of the humbles, the alliance of the private power of the princes with the judge, the culture used as an instrument of power, the essential motive found as "latinorum" of don Abbondio, in the application of doctor Azeccagarbugli at Renzo, and "the disclosure of punishment" at the tavern of Milano. All this has made that many critics claim, that the real protagonists of the novel are not Renzo and Lucia, Don Abbondio or Fra Cristoforo, but the 17th century itself, which in some sort of way is a reaction in the form of the tired medieval definition, is a symbol of all the everlasting bads, a summary of all the Italian tradition (crime is organized by the most powerful people, the representatives of the law from the criminals, of the bad governance, the evangelical life of the disable clergy, etc.); and at last, the 17th century is maybe a general metaphor of the spiritual condition.

<sup>69</sup> Krasniqi, B. *Poetika e romanit shqiptar*, cited, p. 68 \* esoteric: the narrator acting everywhere and nowhere.



Considering folkloric, historical documents, reports, sights (eyes), the narrator may predict dramatic situations, comments on feelings and characters' thought gaining this way to the reader's faith.

Even at "Vraje tradhëtinë", the omniscient narrator manages to successfully rebuild the atmosphere of the time through original discourses with symbolic meaning making it possible that realism gains existential form by making out the character's inner side.

The studier F. Dado claims that the narration of this novel is characterized by a very special feature: *the author often emerges with the character; it seems that they both judge as one*<sup>70</sup>.

This is clearly seen when the author describes spiritual conditions or reactions of Braho Shkreli, Bixhi, etc. The author clearly matches his hero's inner thought and the effect is as such: two voices in one and two emotional conditions.

Compositionally speaking the emerge of author's point of view with that of the character, generates from the fact that the first aims to give narrated events an incredible spiritual and physical strength; narration concentrates on the heroic characters rather than events. Description as a narration technique, except for the Scottish and Manzoni's historical novels, play as well a very important role even in socio-historical novels<sup>71</sup>.

In "Rilindasit", we encounter the idea of visual effects through plastic display of scenery, portraits, landscape in which characters develop.

In the first two novels of "Rilindasit" the author, besides national physiognomy, has portrayed Korca's traditions, culture, psycholinguistic elements and in general the values and virtues of a much emancipated city regarding time<sup>72</sup>.

A very important role in Spasse's novel plays the scene where the character shows off as a warrior or fictitious character.

*"They entered Osmanlli, which Misto knew well. It was one of the best hotels of the Monastery. There on the second floor, door no. 5 a brave man was smoking. He knew Bajo and opened the door. As they were entering, they saw a broad-shouldered man with full lips who resembled to Bajo. His white fez shined through sunlight, which penetrated through windows and city's roofs covered in snow.*

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<sup>70</sup> Dado, F. *Teoria e veprës letrare, Poetika* (Tiranë: Shtëpia Botuese e Librit Universitar, 1999), pp. 138-139

<sup>71</sup> The rise of the biography as an important form of the 19<sup>th</sup> century written history, with its sacrilege of important men and women as heroes of their time, make this form of historical fiction of Scott, look surprising and not historical, used from the European and Hollywood cinematography technology. Scott is the first novelist, in all the languages who made the presence of the scene a special element in all the acting. The cinema took after him the idea of history as a visual code, the moment of the dress details, the royal details, traditions and social manners, natural and built environments. The historical details, taken after Scott, in the art of cinematography created a totally new genre on this field: the film capturing traditions, which reached its success through "historical painting": the acting, traditions that imply a "past time", known and mutual. With the novel "I promessi sposi" of Alessandro Manzoni, the cultural industry showed for the first time the process of producing the same acting so many times, based on different communicative equipment from the original text: a text mostly literary, like the Manzoni book, which was an inspiration for innumerable paintings, which were later transformed in a cinematographical movie, television drama, successful theater and musical acting

<sup>72</sup> Spasse, S. *Pishtarë, Vepra Letrare* 8. (Tiranë: Publisher "Naim Frashëri", 1980) p. 32

*Welcome! He greeted them and first hugged Misto. Then, after glaring at each other, they hugged again*"<sup>73</sup>.

***The scheme of realist historical novel, the historical novel of a realist model***

*The possible:* Real events seen in novel point of view; fictitious events into real historical context.

*Characters:* Real or fictitious; representatives of all social classes; youngsters experiencing transformation time.

*The omniscient narrator:* Knows facts and social dynamics; interferes with the character.

*Representatives:* Sterjo Spasse ("Rilindasit"), Skënder Drini ("Vraje tradhëtinë"), they both treat events of nearly the same time.

**7.1.4 History as complimentary practice of fiction  
in modern historical novels<sup>74</sup>**

(Poetics of the subtext and allegory matches historical novels of Flober and Stendal)

Because art comes out of reflections not spontaneity, the first allows us to look back into specific terrain of historical novels. We may question whether Albanian historical novels undertake new aesthetic literary functions and visions or just serves cognitive nature.

A group of historical novels like "Krastakraus" (1967) by Bilal Xhaferri; "Kështjella" (1970) by Ismail Kadare; "Koka e prerë" (1990) by Kico Blushi; "Shënimet e Gjon Nikoll Kazazit" (1982) by Jusuf Buxhovi; "Sytë e Simonidës" (1980) by Dhimiter Shuteriqi; "Sheshi i unazës" (1978); by Nazmi Rrahmani; "Muret e Krujës" (1968) by Gjergj Zheji; "Miti i Haxhi Qamilit" (2010) by Uran Butka; through some new features answer the above question, as an example of modifying and enriching the genre in Albanian literature.

From this point of view, "Kështjella" by Ismail Kadare is the best example of using history as a creative opportunity. Through some original coverage of history, Kadare suggests that we see it from an "upper sight"; such a method, as he himself claims, is borrowed from the successful Flober's model in "*Salambos*"<sup>75</sup>.

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<sup>73</sup> *Ibid*, p. 569

<sup>74</sup> *Sintagme used from Jeremy De Groot, at his critical book "Historical Novel", to define the differences between the main modern historical novel and the classic one*

<sup>75</sup> *Jeremy De Groot, The historical Novel, (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 46. \* The relation with the history would make the French author Gustave Flaubert, the innovator of the 19th century, in this genre, through reaching the truth, which is most wanted from historical novelists, but created by him in a different and very original form. Flaubert needs the historical truth; he understands that "misunderstandings" creations from the past can develop new literary possibilities. Genesis of his novel, Salammbo, is related to the above-mentioned idea from the author, over an exotic subject, but also with 5 years' preparatory work done by him, in studying different historical, geographical, ethnological and botanical sources, facts that explain the rare and realistic precision that the narration of Flaubert is characterized by, which succeeds in passing to the reader a special and impressive atmosphere. With Salammbo, Flaubert tried to create a historical novel, by merging with the characters of ancient Cartagena, with the optic, psychic and the language of that time, a method which leaves an impression of authenticity and reliability. The realistic way, how Flaubert writed, has made it difficult to be understood, it even leads to different misinterpretations by the critics, when it was published. In the short préface of Salammbo, while he expressed his disappointment at the interpretation of his novel as fantastic, Flaubert says: "I have made a historical archeological rebuilding". The novel "Salammbo" is a reflection of the fate of the 19th century historical novels, which passed through the creation of a strong, imposing, safe "narration pact", in which the historical element intervenes with an important contribution and where the history is a protagonist and her documentation of events is an additional practice of literary fiction*

Drawing an allegorical symbolical parallel makes it possible for the history at "Kështjella" to move beyond the simple war chronicle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century into 60-70s Albania.

The studier R. Elsie claims that *this novel that reminds us of "Il deserto dei Tartari" (1940) by Dino Buzzati, leads us to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the epoch of Albania's national hero, Scanderbeg (1405-1468). The novel, through fine details and a solid composition, reflects the surrounding of a medieval Albanian castle (an Albanian symbol) attacked by Turkish during one of punitive expeditions to undergo Albania*<sup>76</sup>.

"Krastakraus" by Bilal Xhaferri, written at the same time as "Kështjella" but published in 1993, would announce a new level of Albanian historical prose. Xhaferri's novel has inherited some features of Scottish and Manzoni's historical romantic model, which become evident in such characters as Lekë Balsha, Martin Urbini, Strez Piroli created after the archetype of "middle" heroes.

Psychological motivation of the characters may lead even the modern reader move to the past and identify with medieval heroes, through straightforward contact to history. Xhaferri makes these characters an important part of local colors, which are included under a classical historical novel stamp<sup>77</sup>.

Even in narrative plan, Xhaferri follows Scott's model regarding the way he transforms the scene into an essential element of action<sup>78</sup>.

Besides that, under Scottish influence we may mention the writer's ability to read time in space, psychologized scenery, the idea of history as a visual code (scenography function of the environment) as well as elements of folkloric coloration of the time, which follow Xhaferri's work<sup>79</sup>.

We find Manzoni's influence at "Krastakraus" through symbolic value that space gains in narration expressed through the *modern allegory concept*, which transforms into some special form of expression<sup>80</sup>.

"Krastakraus" points out the skills of an excellent model of synthetized historical work, which is characterized by many features, some of them you will find below:

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<sup>76</sup> Elsie, R. *Një fund dhe një fillim, Gjurmime të botimeve letrare shqiptare 1985-1994, World Literature Today (Prishtinë: Publisher Buzuku, 1995), pp. 256-263*

<sup>77</sup> Wesseling, E. *Writing History as a Prophet. Postmodernist Innovations of the Historical Novel* (John Benjamin Publishing, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, 1991), pp. 47-55

<sup>78</sup> Scott is the first romancer that added the presence of the scene as the main element in an action. He knew Scotland, and the atmosphere of that place, the presence of the mountains can be found in any one of his Scottish novels. The place, overall, is well selected, described in such a way that the acting looks natural, in the place that it happens

<sup>79</sup> Bachtin, M. *Speech genres and other late essays*, (University of Texas press: New York Times and book review, 1986), p. 53 \* One of the most visible discursive elements in the book of Walter Scott is the local folk, which aspects are more effective in his historical novel. The deep nature of his artistic thought and the ability to read the time in the space is inherited from the previous period, as the elements of the folk nuance of the time are as well (historical-national period)

<sup>80</sup> The space, at the "I promessi sposi" has a special structural importance because it connects the act with a space extension of strong symbolic meanings; creating contradiction between the open spaces (where the street, the city represent the places of acting, of danger, adventure but also knowing yourself) and the closed spaces (houses, castles, convention, taverns, which serve to the moral and social characterization of the characters)

- Author's attention toward Scanderbeg's epoch, in historical moments of victories and drawback that will help to create an open work of art for reading simultaneity.

- Placing historical truth in service of fiction, making this way narration show the continuous epistemological crisis, which divides historical documents from literature.

The last feature serves as a determiner for the use of the term "modernist" by pointing out the novels, which are characterized by the passing from epistemological aesthetics into ontological aesthetics, from aesthetics based on cognition into aesthetics based on beings<sup>81</sup>.

Xhaferri's historical novel, through techniques of Flober's, Tolstoy's or Stendal's modern narration, *give the reader the possibility to have philosophical, aesthetical and historical reflections*.

At "Koka e prerë" by Kico Blushi, "Muret e Krujës" by Gjergj Zheji, the recreation of the past is achieved through naturalistic inclination of the authors to reach some kind of "*historical realism*" and the characters' attitude where narration matches optic and psychic. This gives the reader the impression of authenticity and credibility.

At "Sheshi i unazës" (1978) by Z. Rrahmani, historical existence resurrects, disappears, renews and continues forward.

The special way of conceiving the novel is expressed through the alternation of the two lines: the legend as one of allegorical function and the real one, which describes the city, massacres, defense, etc. There exists a significant subtext.

The idea of resistance is seen in the analogies of classical genre where the subjective discourse (besides biblical discourse) is dominant and the dramatic situations are expressed through lyrical colloquialism.

Despite the fact that symbolic classing, subjectivism, narrative structure of palimpsest and discourse combination make "Sheshi i unazës" a modern novel, the author stands by historical genre such as pretext, epilogue, disproof of history manipulation by Serbians, the combination of colloquialism serving historical facts:

*Pretext:* A narrator once said that all events repeat many times. Events happened some centuries ago... (*Një kallëzimtar i "Sc" thoshte dikur se të gjitha ngjarjet janë përsëritur dhjetëra herë e së gjithmonë zhvillohen sipas ligjeve të përcaktuara të ndodhisë së tyre. Ngjarjet e këtij libri kanë pasur të njejtin fat; kanë ndodhur dikur moti, para disa shekujsh*)...<sup>82</sup>.

*Epilogue:* I waited long for the narrator to continue, but his silence lasted and I contracted out from the power of his words...<sup>83</sup>.

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<sup>81</sup> Georg Simmel, researcher, who made a summary of all the main topics of modern literary, claims that modern art represents the most important issues of contemporary life, topics that generate from the individual request to protect the autonomy and the individuality of his own existence, against social forces, cultural inheritance, external culture and the technique of life

<sup>82</sup> Zejnullah Rrahmani, *Sheshi i unazës* (Tiranë: Publisher "Naim Frashëri", 1982), p. 3

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid*, p. 322

Pretext and epilogue<sup>84</sup> play a very important structural role while organizing narration in historical novels<sup>85</sup>.

A late XX century historical novel shows modernity through existing elements of classical model (pretext, notes, travelling motifs, legends, and iconography) is "Sytë e Simonidës" (written in 1980 and published in 1998) by Dhimiter Shuteriqi.

Despite the fact that its plot is based on documented historical truth, the author recreates it through specific literary means, image, illusion, symbols making it possible that the reader deeply relate to the past<sup>86</sup>.

Considering the link between truth and fiction, at "Sytë e Simonidës" we find common features with Flober's historical novel (Salambo) out of which we would point out:

- The variety of suggestibility details, in Shuteriqi's narration, to describe Balkan-European medievalism<sup>87</sup>;
- The way the author fully knows about history, and how he realistically describes it; he considers Russians a more dangerous enemy than Byzants; he asks Albanians to better try themselves rather than ask help from Eastern or Western allies.

Talking about characters, in contrary to Flober's model, we see some kind of romantic idealization of them.

Similar to Scottish models, there is poetic coloration in the idealized description of the main heroine of the novel, Simonida, and the young Gjon Skuraj.

This feature relates to the didactical educational communication of historical novel, which Lukacs, referring to Scott's historical novel, considered it as of great importance.

"Sytë e Simonidës", being an artistic segment of troublesome survival of Albanians, is considered as rich in cognitive and educational values to young generations as well as a response to Serbian historiography and literature.

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<sup>84</sup> Fabio Dal Busco, *La storia e la favola. Il modello manzoniano nel romanzo storico contemporaneo* (Longo, 2007), p. 34. \* Pretext as one of the most characteristic elements of the historical novel is the place where the author and the reader consult with each other. In fact, the author explains the reasons for choosing the genre and combines a discourse semi narrating, justifying the relationship between the history and the novel. The importance of explaining this report stands as a need for verifying what will be narrated through the pretext where the author places the basis for a similar narration

<sup>85</sup> Gérard Genette, *Nuovo discorso del racconto*, (Torino: Piccola Biblioteca Einaudi, 1987) [tit.or.: *Nouveau discours du récit*, Seuil, Paris. 1983], pp. 130-60

<sup>86</sup> The events in the novel "Sytë e Simonidës" lie in about 6 centuries, but they mostly focus on Balkan-European medievalism, through the artistic rebuilding the author created the main heroine of the novel, Simonida, on who the writing is built. A lot more than visible indicators, make the reader feel the presence of historical reality of the 14th century, the time in which Shuteriqi wrote in the story over the historical motive, which is the marriage between the daughters of the Byzantine emperor, Andronikos the II. and Karl Uroshi of Rasha (the rebuilt kingdom of the neighboring Serbs)

<sup>87</sup> Jeremy de Groot, *The historical Novel*, (Routledge, London and New York, 2010), p. 343. \* The novel "Salamambo" has gone through a long process of refinement from Flaubert. He corrected the historical, geographical, botanic, ethnological sources for about 5 years, time in when he made a trip to Tunisia, to the ruins of Cartagena, after staying for a long time in the Orient. These facts explain the rare realistic precision, that the narrating in "Salamambo" is characterized, a novel which is based on a rich documentation and reaches to give a special and impressive atmosphere to the reader

Novels of this grouping are distinguished by the relationship between history and myth, by the way how respective authors functionalize the latter according to their aesthetical and ideological objectives<sup>88</sup>.

At "Kështjella", the legend matches the national hero, Scanderbeg, indirectly. The intentional placing of this character out of the surrounding scene and the castle, even though it was based on historical truth, proven by Turkish historians especially by Barleti<sup>89</sup>, is not just a diegetic objective.

He is primed with characteristics of a "moving character"<sup>90</sup>; he lives in the real world whenever he attacks Turkish as Gjergji and travels by night as Scanderbeg, creating Scanderbeg's myth<sup>91</sup>.

Even at "Sytë e Simonidës", narration is carried out through repeating and contrasting discourse in the hovering frame between history and legend:

*"...However, the fantastic is nothing more than history and vice-versa"*<sup>92</sup>.

This claim, which in fact is just a merge of fantasy with history, expresses modernity awareness.

Literature and history cannot be mythicized or else, because in the first the myth is within, and in the latter the fantastic is within.

As a conclusion, we may say that novels of this model represent the best of Albanian historical prose.

### **7.1.5 Biographical form of historical novel** (Influence of Zweig's novelized biography model)

In Albanian literature, "Ali Pashë Tepelena" (1970) and "Skanderbeg" (1975) by Sabri Godo, create a new subtype of historical novel, the novelized biography<sup>93</sup>, whose characteristics match the modern biographies' model of Austrian author

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<sup>88</sup> Hamnnet, B. *The historical novel in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, vep e cituar, p. 288. \* Three are the visible characteristics that help in placing modernism in the cultural context. They consist of its fascination with the primitive, in developing the irrational, which has now appeared in the last decades of the 19th century, and the tendency toward mythical creation

<sup>89</sup> Barleti, M. *Histori e Skënderbeut*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, translated from Stefan I Prifti (Tiranë, Publisher Naim Frashëri, 1983), p. 160 \* "Gjatë rrethimit të kështjellave, Skënderbeu me një grup kalorësish të zgjedhur endej përqark kampit turk duke e sulmuar atë vazhdimisht e duke mbjellë panik tek armiqtë"

<sup>90</sup> Lotman, M., Jurij, B. & Uspenskij, A. *Tipologia della cultura*. (Milano: Bompiani, 1987), p. 161. \* The concept of glorious hero is being used as Lotman determines it as the opportunity he has to move his place from one to another

<sup>91</sup> Mandala, M. Miti i Skënderbeut tek romani Kështjella, artikull në Albanica 30; Giorgio Castriota Skanderbeg e l'identita nazionale Albanese (Palermo: Besa, 2009), pp. 169-172.

<sup>92</sup> Dhimitër S. Shuteriqi, Sytë e Simonidës, (Tiranë, Extra, 1998), p. 165

<sup>93</sup> Robert S. Wistrich, Stefan Zweig and the World of Yesterday, në Mark H. Gelber. Stefan Zweig reconsidered new perspectives on his literary and biographical writings, pp. 80-90. \* Modern biography born as a reaction of the dry representation of the 19th century history, which characterize biographies that has a scientific character, mainly in places like France, England or Germany. Starting from the 20s of the 20th century, a biographer like Lytton Strachey, with Eminent Victorians in 1918, inaugurate this way of writing and scratch a demarcation line between the old and new method. According to him, a modern biograph should know how to find the errors of the past and be able to transcend them, to make known a strategy of his own, not only to attain the subject but by observing it in a critical distance

Stefan Zweig<sup>94</sup>, because of the way they combine historiographical facts with fiction.

Main characters in Godo's novels (especially Scanderbeg) contradict those of the Scottish model where heroes represent "*average people*" who are dominated by practical wisdom, moral dignity to reach self-sacrifice, which cannot change into fascinating passion<sup>95</sup>.

It is of great importance to point out the difference between characters mentioned through documents the author has consulted and the characters of biographies, as protagonists of documented historical events. The first represent some kind of "semantic gap" that the narrator may complete with psychological portraits to make them serve intrigue development; the latter must take into consideration historical data just as their inclusion in fiction should bring reasons as testified sources.

The character's life presentation at "Ali Pashë Tepelena" by Godo follows two procedures that of biographical historical elaboration as well as that of genetically psychological motivation of his personality.

The contradictory figure of Pasha of Janine, who is the protagonist of the novel, takes us to the novelized biographies of Zweig: "Maria Antoniette" and "Maria Stuart"<sup>96</sup> especially concerning the way the Austrian biographer tries to dignify historical characters. Godo feels that the contradictory character of Ali Pasha Tepelena would be prone to biographical literary approach and that the hero's life makes off the plot, which synthesizes historical events, different political, philosophical and cultural inclination of the second half of 18<sup>th</sup> and the first quarter of 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Through critical analyses of documents concerning the Pasha of Janine, the author confronts theses with anti-theses, arguments with anti-arguments. He utilizes foreigners' scriptures to rebuild not only the temper and complex character of the hero but also the epoch he lived and worked. He considered the reasons, which changed the simple warrior into one of the most known Pashas of the time.

The biographer narrator in Godo's novel uses the genetically psychological derivation, in order to create Ali Pasha's portrait and explain his personality.

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<sup>94</sup> Sogos, G. *Le biografie di Stefan Zweig tra Geschichte e Psychologie: Triumph und tragic des Erasmus von Rotterdam, Marie-Antoinette, Maria Stuart*, Firenze, (Firenze University Press, 2013), pp. 49, 85, 170. \* In Zweig biographies the most reliable sources that have served to him are always shown in an exact way, these sources take the author away from the previous generation, since the historical novel, where the history is falsified through fantastic components. He especially criticizes the way how Walter Scott transferred the history to a "joke" and welcomes the fact that the writers of the 20th century are careful with knowing the superiority of the historical truth. Even with the requests for nothing else but the truth, highlighted several times from her own writers, the modern biography cannot be reduced in a document of scientific value. Even more, the one who writes this genre does not pretend to be a specialized historian, but a "Ditcher" (poet), regardless the historical materials. Considering this ambiguity, Lukacs condemns the modern biography, it only shows a confusing blend of the novel and history, creating a "pastiche", while not being one or another. Referring to the type, he talks about historical prose, not for a modern biography and specifies this as **a biographical type of historical novel**

<sup>95</sup> Lukács, G. (1965). *Il romanzo storico*, trad. di E. Arnaud (II ed. 1974), Torino, Einaudi, p. 29

<sup>96</sup> Stefan Zweig, *Maria Antonietta*, trad. di Lavinia Mazzuchetti (Milano: Mondadori, 1991) 8. si dhe Mark H. Gelber and Klaus Zelewitz, *Stefan Zweig reconsidered: New perspectives on his literary and biographical writings* (Tübingen: Niemeyer 2007), pp. 35-45

In his study over relationship between the author and the hero, M. Bachtin points out two basic types of biographical awareness of life: the first is the heroic adventurous type and the second the hero of authoritarian alterity character<sup>97</sup>.

At "Scanderbeg", the relationship between the biographer and the hero bases on the second type (according to Bachtin). Scanderbeg does not represent just a character of realist gallery, but his way of thinking is greatly influenced by the narrator psychology and logic. Godo's national hero is true and reliable, free from hyperbolism and uttermost pathos: *"He was 45, strong and powerful, champion of century chivalry; the army would see in him the hero who defeats enemies"*<sup>98</sup>.

According to another categorization made by Northrop Fry, Scanderbeg is the same as the others of the group. *Besides the fact that concerning time, environment and the society he lives in, the hero is the symbol of some trends, he is still one of us*<sup>99</sup>.

Scanderbeg is not supernatural, but still he is the one of superlatives in realist poetry: *"Nobody could help Stephigrad, even Scanderbeg"*<sup>100</sup>.

The heroism of the national hero continues: *"The cardinals watched Scanderbeg. They hoped to see young Alexander, while having in front of them a sixty-year-old man, who looked at least seventy; he was strong, tall, slouched, thin. He had worn his white fez and sword. He looked extremely poor and ill to be offered last service"*<sup>101</sup>.

The fact that "Scanderbeg" by Godo, belongs to the genre of historical novels, and the fact that Godo does not consider the national hero as a mythical one, does not mean the novel discourse is completely freed from pathos. The latter refers to the people as creators of history: *"People have been enslaved under no dominance and the head of the tribe was their only leader"*.

One of the main changes of novelized biography towards other types of historical genre is the fact that the biographer writer, within the text, fulfills *dual function: that of the omniscient narrator and of the reader*.

The narrator emerges with the character to exactly communicate his thoughts and feelings. At "Ali Pashë Tepelena", we may clearly distinguish the qualities of historical scientific discourse. The author uses the historian's method and means which interfere with the epical narration of the novel.

*"Ali Pasha ruled a country of 150,000 inhabitants just as many as Norway and Sweden had altogether. Together with his sons and nephews, he governed 1/3 of the European Turkey. Permanent consulates of France, England and Russia were settled in Janine, while other countries kept their agencies and semi-formal representatives there"*<sup>102</sup>.

On the other hand, we find some parts of the novel greatly influenced by fictional writing: *"Ali's light blue eyes looked grey under the overcast sky and the lake getting*

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<sup>97</sup> Bachtin, M. *L'autore e l'eroe* (Torino: Einaudi, 1988)

<sup>98</sup> Godo, S. *Skënderbeu* (Tiranë: Publisher "Naim Frashëri" 1975), p. 112

<sup>99</sup> Fraj, N. *Anatomia e Kritikës*, (Prishtinë: Rilindja, 1990), pp. 145-149

<sup>100</sup> Godo, S. *Skënderbeu* (Tiranë: Publisher "Naim Frashëri", 1975), p. 123

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid*, p. 424

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid*, p. 218



*rougher by the wind. Time after time, he drank his syrup. Near lunchtime, he thought he heard some shootings. He got back into his sofa again. Everything has a beginning and an ending, even the falling star. His time was over and he had to die holding his guns, as he had always done"*<sup>103</sup>.

Even at "Scanderbeg" there is a combination of various types of discourses, the most dominating is the historical realist one. The historical discourse appears in many ways. The most obvious ones are accurate dates, names of places and famous historical characters. *"They would be waiting for the enemy positioned as below; Scanderbeg, Ajdini and Gjergj Stresi with 3,700 men in the center; Mojsiu with 2,300 men on the left; Tanush Topia, Angelina's Muzaka with 2,800 men on the right; Hamza Pejko Emanuel, Zaharia Gropa with 3,000 men would be lurking in Skuraj and Lleshi mountains; Vranja Conti, Leke Zaharia and Marin Spani with 2,200 men would be substitutes over the hills"*<sup>104</sup>.

The novels "Pushka top, Bajram Curri!" (1982), "Prijësja e komiteve" and "Oso Kuka" by Sulejman Krasniqi; "Shqipja e kreshtave tona" (1967) by Skender Drini as well as "Atentat në Paris", (1978) by Skifter Kellici, build their narration through well-known historical figures. Unlike Godo's model of novelized biography, their novels are created according to the model of romantic heroes who express the author's subjective vision of past and present.

#### **7.1.6 The reactivation of traditions through ironical and paradox history's point of view in the models of postmodern novels**

*"Due to fundamental changes in the 90s Albanian society; the novel appears more eloquent than before. The polygenetic tableau of social development doubles up in the novel while experiencing with its poetics"*<sup>105</sup>.

The simultaneity of Albanian historical novel and world literature is reflected through modernist and postmodernist tendency<sup>106</sup> out of which we may point out the inclination towards experiencing new linguistic, narrative and figurative structures. This does not mean that the process brought up the deletion of other literary aesthetics. New writers, enriching the literary specter through some novelist subtypes, artistically express the relationship between realism, magic realism, modernism, postmodernism, etc. differently.

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid, p. 374.

<sup>104</sup> Godo, S. Skënderbeu, cited, p. 62

<sup>105</sup> Jakllari, A. Për një tipologji të romanit shqiptar, Aktet e seminarit ndërkombëtar për gjuhën, letërsinë dhe kulturën shqiptare. (Prishtinë: Fakulteti i Filologjisë, 2010), p. 265

<sup>106</sup> Norris, Ch. What is wrong with postmodernism – Critical theory and the ends of philosophy (New York: Herwster Wheatsheaf, 1990), p. 3. \* Scientific thought over the theoretical concept of postmodernism is closely linked with the years 1979 and 1985, the time when both its main researchers, Jean Francois Lyotard, and Jürgen Habermas wrote their books: La Condition postmoderne, Paris, 1979 and Der philosophische Diskurs der Moderne, Frankfurt, 1985

\* According to Terry Eagleton, postmodernism is a way of thinking, which is characterized from doubt, in the classic notions of truth, reason, identity and objectivity, the doubt in the idea of progress and universal emancipation

\* Christopher Norris highlights that postmodernism is a condition, formed from the compound or "the collapse" of reality forms with the forms of mass media, including in it even simulation

Parts of this enrichment is the reactivation of historical novels by authors like Mehmet Kraja, Mira Meksi, Pjetër Arbënor, and Ben Blushi.

Novels of such authors would group into historical model with postmodernist affinity, whose background and evolution the critics matches with "Il nome Della Rosa" (The Name of the Rose) by U. Eco. Its second publishing points out the second phase of genre reappearance, already characterized by quantitative development and typological diversity<sup>107</sup>.

Some of the characteristics of the postmodern historical prototype present in Albanian novels are:

- Considering history (going back in history - revising) as an ironic reading of the reality<sup>108</sup>;
- Breaking of the boundaries of the genre where drama and story, literature and picture, literature and journalism are mixed. Postmodern historical novel is complex; it hides intertextual reference and quotation game manifesting the crossbreeding affinity;
- *Pastiche* texts<sup>109</sup> are created under other texts' rules making way to imitations;
- Intertextually point of view as dialogues and combination of the text with others not just literary ones, dialogue and myth, legend, code and context;
- Metafiction literature talks about itself and writing problems rather than fictive world;

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<sup>107</sup> Menton, S. *Latin America's New Historical Novel* (University of Texas Press, 1996) pp. 22-25. Violations in the poetics of the postmodern historical novel appear in three different plans of the narrating structure: in the level of the source, level of the subject and the level of characters. Researcher Seymour Menton, in his sage over "The new historical novel", where he processes books of historical fiction from Latin-American authors like Carpentier, Mario Vargas Llosa, Abel Posse, Gabriel Garcia Markes, and Carlos Fuentes, he ranks the six main characteristics of the new historical novel, that come from exploring 367 samples, including written novels after the year of 1979: 1). The dependence of the mimetic recreation of a given historical period in the illustration of three historical ideas: a) Inability observing of the real nature of reality and history; b) cyclic nature of history; c) unpredictability of history. 2) Conscious deformation of the history through avoidance, exaggeration and anachronism. 3) Using famous historical characters as protagonists, who change evidently from Scott's formula (fictional protagonists). 4) Metafiction or the reference of the narrator on the creating process of the text. 5) Intertextuality "Every text is written as a citation mosaic; every text is the adoption and the transferring one to another". 6) Bakhtinian concept of dialogue: Carnavalesque of parody and heterology. The dialogue frequently contains the appearing of acting, contradictory characters, and the world visions. Meanwhile, it uses carnivalesque or the exaggerated humor and expresses embodying function and the plurality of discourses or conscious using of different features of the discourse.

<sup>108</sup> Jeremy De Groot, *The historical Novel* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 268. \* "Il nome della rosa" has achieved an ironic modern operation over a medieval mural. This deep irony, which in his novel derives from the citations, references, and allegations, Eco links it with, what Niche claims at "Seconda inattuale" when he says: "We are loaded with so much history that we would die if we would not read it in an ironical way". It means that we should go back to the past in a no innocent way, but in an ironical one. This critical redrawing, according to Eco, only the modern and postmodern art can do, he practices it in his novel, which in this point of view would be read as an ironic homage of actuality. Only in this way, everyone can create an opinion about the medieval age

<sup>109</sup> Jameson, F. *Postmodernism, or, the cultural logic of late capitalism*. Durham: Duke UP, 1991  
Pastiche is, like parody, the imitation of a peculiar or unique, idiosyncratic style, the wearing of a linguistic mask, speech in a dead language. However, it is a neutral practice of such mimicry, without any of parody's ulterior motives, amputated of the satiric impulse, devoid of laughter

- Decentering: there is no central theme of narration;
- Fragmentary viewpoint where the text is fragmentary; quotation from other texts are used;
- Irony<sup>110</sup>, etc.

What makes the main difference between modern and postmodern is their attitude towards history. The modern holds negative attitudes towards the past while the postmodern believes that the past cannot and should not be made up. *The postmodern answers the modern holding of the strong belief that the past should be ironically but not genuinely revisited*<sup>111</sup>.

Thematically speaking, *the postmodern includes the past and through parody tries to point out its attitude towards it. Making parody of the past means considering it as sacred and contrast it at the same time. That is the postmodern paradox*<sup>112</sup>.

The relationship between literature and history at "Moti i madh", "Netë Bizantine", "Selvitë e Tivarit" by Mehmet Kraja, makes it blurry to distinguish between fictive and historical identity, historical explanation of perceiving any collective events and its explanation by an individual.

History in Kraja's novel is closely related with the style and narrative techniques, which in fact "show" rather than "narrate" the characters' thoughts and feelings. Even at "Moti i madh", history serves the modeling of reality's subjective vision.

Kraja perceives history as the catastrophe, which has troubled humanity and now threatens destruction.

Events at "Moti i madh" represent a non-harmonic form of Serembe's historical literary biography. In the novel there are neither historical or cultural arguments nor illusions of documentary realism as elements to offer the reader reliable data.

The fragmentary point of view at "Moti i madh" represents a canonic form of the postmodern, whose frequent use by Kraja strengthens the belief that the contemporaneous people observes the world through fragmentary ways.

At "Moti i madh", narration is just a scheme to help the reader know Kraja's creative laboratory. It is the postmodern novels' characteristic, the characterization with horror, mystery, science fiction, tale, myth, legend and advertisement sequences. Events here are fragmentary.

The combination of critical comments with literary texts is one of the most specific characteristics of the postmodern. That is the reason why the prose of many well-known writers is considered as metafiction. "Moti i madh" (Great weather), characterized by an obvious "instability", combines elements of journalism, diaries, juridical notes. Bakhtin considers this phenomenon its "dialogical" potential, as fiction here relates with other discourse forms.

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<sup>110</sup> Hutcheon, L. *A poetics of Postmodernism*, translated Demë Topalli, *Poetika e postmodernizmit*, (Prishtinë: Publisher OM, 2013), p. 29. \* Another feature of postmodern literary is irony, associated frequently with black humor or the concept of "game" (Concept which is expressed from Jacques Derrida and Roland Barthes at "The pleasure of the text". Even though irony, black humor or the concept of "game" can be found even in the postmodern literary, they turn into main features in postmodern writings

<sup>111</sup> Eco, U. *Emri i trëndafilut*, cited, p. 474

<sup>112</sup> Hutcheon, L. *A poetics of Postmodernism*, cited, pp. 7-13, pp. 43-45

The main character at "Moti i madh" primarily represents the idealist subjective spirit rather than an individual of ethical or social features. *Postmodernist fiction* points out that *historical novels deal with facts, which could have happened in the "dark zones" of history on which "official record" has nothing to declare.*

Zef Serembe's life has allowed him to embody his subjective attitude towards history, life and art. He invokes the "*Motin e madh*" as great resistance against history.

Kraja's non-authoritative narrative perspective enables its prose to be read on double meaning. This kind of writing differs not only from socialist realism, but also from commercial realism. Such writing urges free and critical reading, cognition and self-cognition which literature aims to realize. Todorov says: "Literature relates to humans' existence, it is the discourse orientated towards truth and morality. *If it happens that we forget these fundamental dimensions of literature, it may be because of the fact that the truth is reduced to verification and morality to sanctimony*"<sup>113</sup>.

Kraja's novels, like all other postmodern ones, have neither fiction nor reality, but hyper-reality is what interferes with both of them: "*To dissimulate means to hide something you already have, to simulate means to act as you have what you do not. The first leads you to presence and the latter at absence*"<sup>114</sup>.

At "Selvitë e Tivarit", the relation between fiction and reality, truth bases on the postmodernist side: the truth is such disgusting and ugly that its reflection encroaches creative ethics.

Postmodernism has as well influenced the theory and practice of the genre referring women. He questions old feminist issues, life experience, and their submission too.

"Frosina e Janinës" and "Mallkimi i priftëreshave të Ilirisë" by Mira Meksi, are of postmodernist model of which Mary Maynard says: "past experiences appear through material structures and relationship researching over female body, emotions and historical awareness as well". The researcher Adem Jakllari believes that in nowadays Albanian literature, we may talk about another typology, that of *hybridized historical novel*. It is clearly illustrated at Ben Blushi's "Të jetosh në ishull", "Otello, arapi i Vlorës" Albania.

Jakllari believes that "Të jetosh në ishull" plays with historical truth as much as to cause strong polemics. Through narrative tendency, events at Blushi's novel, approximately last about 4 centuries mainly focusing on Middle Ages<sup>115</sup>.

He combines historical and fictitious characters just as the model of traditional historical novels do. Many fictitious characters testify reflections of mentality and local cultural traditions. Blushi's novels pretends to talk with the language of truth even when he builds the fictional world; consequently, truth is not always considered as final concept, so enabling the author to build reality over dichotomy; fact or not, possible or not, according to the conflicting structures, which could only coexist in the postmodernist literature.

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<sup>113</sup> Todorov, Tz. *Literature and its Theorists* (Cornell University Press, 1987), p. 34

<sup>114</sup> Hutcheon, L. *A poetics of Postmodernism*, cited, p. 176

<sup>115</sup> Jakllari, A. *Për një tipologji të romani të sotëm shqiptar, në Aktet e Seminarit XXVIII Ndërkombëtar për Gjuhën, Letërsinë dhe Kulturën Shqiptare* (Prishtinë: Universiteti i Prishtinës, 2010), p. 269

In conclusion, we may say that in the poetics of historical novels we distinguish some changes compared to the modern and traditional model of the genre, whose genesis should be claimed at the instable relationship between history, reality, truth and fiction. Generally based on paradoxes, fundamental transformations, parodies, fragmentary sides, they do not concentrate on the basic narration but create similar imagination to logic destruction and lack of clarity as means of conveying the truth in the contemporaneous postmodernist historical novel.

## 7.2 Features of historical novel poetics in Albanian literature

### *Narrator serving the history concept*

#### 7.2.1 Narrator's role in classical historical novels

The analyses of historical novels bases on the study of its poetics specific elements as the most helpful way to understand this literary phenomenon.

Texts' research is conceived in such a way to compare novels of different matrix, all from present history differently.

Studies offer various means to analyze the genre such as fable and action, scene, composition, characters and others, which are considered as most important to the typographical study of the historical prose. Therefore, voice, viewpoint and narrative perspective are elements based on which we may distinguish the narrative pact between the narrator and the reader, as well as the difference between various types of narrators: authoritative, evidential *homodiegetic-heterodiegetic*<sup>116</sup>.

As basic narrator's role is narrative, if his interference in history is not just explicatory but commentary and authoritative, then we may talk about another ideological role, which he can delegate to any character as representative.

Critical theories nowadays concentrate on the discourse side rather than narrative one, making the latter an essential semiotic part of the main discourse issues.

The narrative voice refers to the discourse or other means through which events are represented, but it is the viewpoint or perspective what settles the ideological orientation. Narration, in traditional historical novels, *is the omniscient narrator's task* who, not only combines various ways of narration, but also performs motivation of characters' actions<sup>117</sup>. He should of course care of historical background to prevent narration development with diverting moves and make the reader feel so close to the past by formalizing links between fiction's time and the present.

The presence of such figure is because of the fact that fictional historical narration includes moralizing ending of events.

Critical studies describe the omniscient narrator of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as the voice of "general awareness", while to theorists Scholes and Kellogg, this type of narrator combines the rhapsodist with the historian and Creator<sup>118</sup>.

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<sup>116</sup> Marchese, A. *L'officina del racconto*, [I-edizione 1983] (Milano: Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, 1986), p. 84.

<sup>117</sup> Genette, G. *Figure III: Discorso sul Racconto*, cited: p. 260. \* Known concept, defined from Genette as the voice of objective narrating, linked with the perspective and, linked with narrating instance, as the narrator is present in the narration.

<sup>118</sup> Scholes, R. & Kellogg, R. *La natura della narrativa*, trad. it. Di R. Zelocchi [The Nature of Narrative, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), (Bologna: il Mulino, 1970), p. 346

His task is to serve the materialization of History as "an unremitting process of changes", which "directly influence each individual". For this reason, events expand and precede each other coherently and progressively observing the cause-effect logic just as well, they influence the private life of imaginary characters.

Under Scott's, Manzoni's and realist influence we may mention the following novels: "Shkodra e Rrethueme", "Scanderbeg", "Mic Sokoli", "Rilindasit" cycle, which represent history through some common strategies.

Albanian historical novels base on that type of ideology and romantic historicism, which feels history, applies inherent rationality.

Under Scott's influence, characters do not appear as simple historical curiosity but as important moments of the past. However, *it is obvious that each past operation is ingrained and should reasonably match both, the writer's and reader's time*<sup>119</sup>.

History serves as the protagonist; it is represented as a dynamic process whose events match the cause-effect relationship. This enables the realization of some function literary form in conceiving the world and history ideology, which predict:

- *Firstly*, history should be represented as an important link of political Albanian crisis before the 20<sup>th</sup> century and main conflicts should have the tendency to move towards "solutions" through some special actions undertaken.
- *Secondly*, historical concepts should be represented through characters who create "historical, social types"<sup>120</sup> like Themistokli Germenji and Braho Shkreli.
- *Thirdly*, historical personalities should be positioned as such that their work be extremely important to the material conditions settled by history. For this reason, they are not center positioned in the narrative scene performing representing functions similar to that of other characters (Scanderbeg, Esat Pashe Toptani, Ismail Qemali, etc.).

"Scanderbeg", "Ali Pashe Tepelena" by Godo and "Bajram Curri", "Oso Kuka" by Krasniqi represent the reciprocal case, when historical figures are the subject themselves, through which we experience the events.

These characters become the bearer of a vivid vision of history, which in fact seems prophetic: Their awareness is clearly influenced by the perspective based on which the author and reader look into the past; the effect of their actions is basic to the physiognomy hypothesized by the present. Such a technique shows that the past is fundamental to the present events.

### **7.2.2 The narrator serving the modern concept of history**

Concerning the differences between modern historical novels and classical ones, we refer to Scholes and Kellogg who think that the latter represent "a synthesis of the empirical and imaginary way of combining history, romance (there is always a couple in the foreground) and allegory"<sup>121</sup>.

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<sup>119</sup> Eco, U. *Opera aperta: Forma e indeterminazione nelle poetiche contemporanee*, (Milano: Casa ed. Valentino Bompiani, 1962), p. 160

<sup>120</sup> Lukács, G. *Il romanzo storico*, cited, p. 31

<sup>121</sup> Scholes, R. & Kellogg, R. *La natura della narrativa*, cited, pp. 242-243.

This type of "uncertain synthesis" extremely sensitive to "various cultural pressure" merges into the experiments carried out by the writers of modern narratives in which "*fiction abandons efforts to represent reality and bases on word power to urge imagination*"<sup>122</sup>.

Modern Albanian historical novels express the great literary awareness, thoughts, derivations, techniques, structures and various styles that formed in it.

The main difference is that of thematic level, which even though it was written in the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century, was always politically, socially and nationally committed<sup>123</sup>.

Referring to the genre, some of the elements of narrative instance, through which authors express their modern concept on history, we may identify:

- a. The creation of a simultaneously variable, inclusive and developmental model, which realizes the idea of totality as the novel's structural principle;
- b. The synthesis of narrative and discursive viewpoints;
- c. The dialogue and polyphony of narrative voices, bearer of ideological and axiological messages<sup>124</sup>.

In such novels we find the multiplication of the historical recreation viewpoints, whose objectivity is not guaranteed by the outer voice anymore; narration, if possible, is carried out through the memorial filter of some characters who observe the past through their personal experience. The main reason of the changes in their narrative instance is to highlight subjectivity.

This way, history misses its stability; its physiognomy is submissive to somehow conscious deformations. In these novels, the narrator cannot be the intermediary with the public.

Novels falling into this category, will illustrate various ways, which enable *the dissolution of the monologue discourse and its replacement by scattered narrators in certain dialogism and voice polyphony*.

So, historical experience at "Kështjella", "Krastakraus", "Sheshi i unazës", "Sytë e Simonidës" is carried out through various narrators and viewpoints as well. Generally, if multiple narrators are combined, there we do find narration into first and third person.

This technique helps us to get various viewpoints of the same event. Such authors fall into ontological doubts about historical reality; in fact, instead of testifying historical totality, they destroy it; therefore, transmitting insecurity and doubts over aesthetical cognition.

### **7.2.3 Concerns over the "narrator-author and character" relation**

The narrator's status is complete if we refer to Xhaferri's prose, which in fact is

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<sup>122</sup> Scholes, R. *Fabulation and Metafiction*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1979), p. 90

<sup>123</sup> Kuçuku, B. *Periudha e realizmit dhe e modernitetit bashkëkohor, në "Jeta Shkencore", Seminari XXVII, për Gjuhën, Letërsinë dhe Kulturën Shqiptare, Prishtinë, 2008, p. 207*

<sup>124</sup> Krysinaki, W. *Il romanzo e la modernità*, cited, p. 65. \* With the term axiology, in semiotic, it is highlighted the way paradigmatic values exist, in contrast with ideology, that takes the regular form of syntagmatic and axiomatic values

characterized by variations of narrative models. Even at "Krastakraus", the author himself plays the narrator's role who narrates in the third person<sup>125</sup>.

The authenticity of this novel is achieved through changes in *the relationship between the narrator-author*<sup>126</sup> and the character.

Sometimes narration is carried out neither by the narrator nor the characters.

It becomes quite clear with some interrogative sentences, which in fact sound like impersonal ones; he sees into the way the character thinks; he creates great relationship between them. He as well directs the reader by using specific questions, which carry out the character's concerns.

*"It was late autumn. After the defeat of Stefigrad, Danja, Berati, Vlora, Himara and Gjirokastra, which Venetians handed over to Turkish, only Kruja was holding strong. But how long? Would it be able to resist another siege again?"*<sup>127</sup>

The use of past tenses makes the reader re-feel the past.

*"Would Eli, the maid servant of the inn be considered beautiful?"*<sup>128</sup>

Sometimes narration seems like some retrospective that reminds the character of the past.

*Martin Urbini, Strezi's ordinance was right when claiming that the abbot was great wonder to the world*<sup>129</sup>.

According to G. Prince, presumption helps us to characterize the narrative way through which the information comes out<sup>130</sup>.

The use of such phrases in characterizing the characters (it looked like, he could easily be exchanged for a thinker...) make the reader part of the narrated world<sup>131</sup>.

The distance between the narrator and the narrated events, the characters' representation and the reader, points out the relation between the narrator-author and the character. The distance between the author-narrator and the above-mentioned elements in "Krastakraus" is emotional rather than physical, moral or intellectual. Some comments point out the narrative importance of the inner interest of the author-narrator over specific meanings some events generate regarding war, human virtues and life. We reach to the conclusion that *the narration's real aim at "Krastakraus" is the same way of representing certain events and that the hero is the narrator himself*<sup>132</sup>.

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<sup>125</sup> This type of procedure is noticed in the novels: "Kështjella", I. Kadare; "Sytë e Simonidës" Dh. Shuteriqi; "Sheshi unazës", Z. Rrahmani

<sup>126</sup> Auto-narrator is not a writer who is biographically individualized, but a kind of narrator, a fiction, of course, closer to a type of ideal author alter-ego according to some code regulations reflected in a poetry which is historically defined. Idea-author is a specific role taken by the author, as a subject of language-literary creation acts of the text, depositor of building rules of the act as a writing (graphic). Well, known auto-narrator is a narrator that appears as an author

<sup>127</sup> Xhaferi, B. Krastakraus, (Tiranë: Publisher "Bilal Xhaferri", 1993), p. 140

<sup>128</sup> Ibid, p. 14

<sup>129</sup> Xhaferi, B. Krastakraus, cited, p. 31

<sup>130</sup> The narrating way, which is also known as "the regulator of the narrating information" is the one that creates the distance and the proximity with the narrative world. According to G. Genett, all the narrating is necessarily diegesis (narrating process), meaning that it can reach not more than one mimesis illusion (appearing), making the event real and alive

<sup>131</sup> Geralde Prince, Narratologia, cited, p. 66

<sup>132</sup> Booth, W.C. The Rhetoric of fiction, cit në Angelo Marchese, L'oficina del racconto, cited, p. 166



Xhaferri penetrates into the character's psychology testifying that his historical prose is in search of historical truth. This way the author-narrator can relate to the readers and transmit symbolical and allegorical messages to them.

#### 7.2.4 The unspecified narrator of metahistorical novels

"Moti i madh" is characterized by features of modern narration and discourse like: deviation from the topic, interruption, irony and fragmentary viewpoint. Its structure, which combines various textual models, shows the tendency of historical novels to transform into meta historical ones<sup>133</sup>.

Narration is not linear; therefore, it is continuously interrupted by commentary voices such as "swallowed" or "eaten" by the essay, utopia and irony.

Semantic and ideological quantity creates such polyphony that *under textual condition realizes the author's ideas towards history*. Quite often, we do find the combination of the third and first person narrator who allegorically represent such characters (De Rada, Gavril Dara, and Bajroni), etc. Some characters, through narration act as aesthetical symbols and heroic as mythical models; they are mythological as biblical figures (Dom Mikelanxhelo, Shën Pjetri, and Shen Meria), historical figures (Skënderbeu, Ali pashë Tepelena), and literary figures (Kostandini, the aged Bala, De Rada, Dara, and Bajroni).

The supremacy based on which epochs consider the tradition's carriers means its evaluation, universality and fullness.

Narration at "Moti i madh" is characterized by other features as well: reduced fables, techniques and montages, according to Ejzenstejn, who transmits differentiated cognitive skills through polyphony and dialogism<sup>134</sup>. The lore transmitted is built through plenty of narrative, discursive, factual and interpretative "spotlight" that confront each other.

The use of such a technique is a sign of post-modernist aesthetics, which mixes reality with mas' media including even simulation<sup>135</sup>.

According to the discourse theories the writer who practices it deserves to be called a military "script man" who, creatively, combines cultural codes of specific situation, community or tradition.

Kraja's novels transmit such lore, which vary from information about the "known" (in various fields of life) up to "cultural unconscious" or the entirety of symbols, codes, desires and typical conflicts of Albanian history.

According to the typological classifying of Krysinki, "Moti i madh" is part of

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<sup>133</sup> Genette, G. *Introduzione all'architetto*, (Parma: Pratiche, 1981), p. 70. \* For Gerard Genett, *architext* is "the relationship that unites each one of the texts with different types of discourse, to whom it belongs, and the combination of expressing ways and literary genres, of which is realized every text"

<sup>134</sup> Ejzenstejn, C.S.M. *Il montaggio delle attrazioni, nē: Il montaggio*, [a cura di P. Montani; con un saggio di J. Aumont], (Venezia: Marsilio, 1986), pp. 219-225. \* According to Ejzenstein, "editing force is every aggressive moment of the theater, that gives to the spectator a sensory and psychological effect, in a way that produces an emotional shock. These effects, from their side, define conditions to receipt the ideal side of the ideological final conclusion of the spectacle"

<sup>135</sup> Christopher Norris, *What is wrong with postmodernism: Critical theory and the ends of philosophy*, (New York: Herwster Wheatsheaf, 1990), p. 3.

novels of modernity third epoch<sup>136</sup>; becoming a representative of poly historical novels with elements such as voice and irony structure combination, history and meta history playing, narrator's transformation into a compiler of dialectical controversy between documents and fiction, formal history and the recreation of historical reality which cannot be reproduced except for through fiction<sup>137</sup>.

### **7.2.5 Narrator's variability in historical novels with postmodern affinity**

The difference between the refracted and static truth is a very important element out of which we can realize the way postmodern literature divides from the modern one. It is fact that postmodern literature bases on a new interpretation of lore concepts relativizing the concept of reality, truth, reason, value, etc. Historical novels of such category do not tend to spread historical acknowledge and use the past as a metaphor of the present, but in fact their aim is to see into the possibility of recreating history through the poetics of writing.

History and the historical in it express the inability to proof scientific data and overall knowing of the world.

In contrary to formal modernist closure, postmodern fiction is open towards history, or the so-called by many people "world". Literary work is characterized by inter texts of history and fiction.

Postmodernist authors are aware that reality itself is not the same as it is represented. According to J. Kristeva, this "world" is directly related to the world of empirical mentality but it is not the real world of empirical reality.

Patrishia Waugh, considering some certain novels, concludes history making is not just fictional act but even history itself, just like fiction, is bound to combinations among them<sup>138</sup>.

Historical novels of postmodernist category do not focus on the recreation of a certain period or the understanding of the past based on the logic of priority, but in fact, they focus on issues overflowing a time-restricted horizon to be settled then under a historical and meta historical conditions.

Questions of epistemological nature highlight the relationship between historical documents and narration based on it; they clarify the unreliable nature of source and doubt their impartiality just as well they discover the arbitration of each historiographical narration and condemn the inevitable deal of the power and discourse of the past.

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<sup>136</sup> Kryszinski, W. *Il romanzo e la Modernità*, cited, p. 32. \* According to Braudel: Historical time has a multifunctional addition and is not identically functional. He defines two types of the time extension as "short extension and long extension". The third modernity era, separated according to this time, includes the writings of the 80s, for which, the term postmodernism, is not capable to determine the complexity and the specifics that characterize them. Along with the new French novel, from Butor, in this era, it is included the extraordinary development of the Latin-American novel, Cortázar, Karpentieri, Marquez and Roa Basto with "Yo El Supremo"

<sup>137</sup> For Broch, polyhistorical novels mean the integrity of the science and the poetry in the textual base of the novel. It is a synthesis of all the rational and irrational elements, of the myth and the logos. Polyhistorical novels try in the substance to reach the core of an era and create a form

<sup>138</sup> Waugh, P. *Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction*, cited, p. 173

Such occurrence like inter textually, reference, ideology is the foundation of the troubled relationship between history and fiction, innovating the conception of narrative instance of the contemporary Albanian historical novels.

Features of their narrative schemes are characterized by strong domination of writer's subjectivity regarding historical data, the breaking of narration's linearity; the lack of characters owning "an inner story", not realistic-psychological any more (characters do not perform function and certain roles anymore; they are just a symbolic representation of self-pressure, obsession and sublimation).

History gains metaphorical values, this deforms its factual character and this change of historical documentary definition and concretization is absorbed by the author's viewpoint and his representation (leaving and approaching).

Due to the fact that narration in these novels develops through the narrator's viewpoint who configures a disappeared culture strange to nowadays' cultural horizon (like that of Illyria of 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. at "Mallkimi i priftëreshave të Ilirisë" by Mira Meksi or of the culture that represents cognitive models distant from the active ones nowadays just like the process of Albanian Islamism after the Turkish invasion and the coexistence of the 2 religions in 18<sup>th</sup> century, Albania or the civilization of Voskopoja and its destruction at "Të jetosh në ishull" by Ben Blushi), there we do find the creation of such conditions helping the violation of the commonly accepted possible.

From this viewpoint, even the narrator's "task" to claim verity complicates because of the conscious and unconscious "sides" of such situations.

Since, it is impossible to find some neutral viewpoint to move towards truth, then the great objective truth (modernist) falls into partition of hundreds of small subjective truths.

Linda Hutcheon, among ways of favorite narration over historiographical metafiction, distinguishes as the two most basic: "multiple viewpoints" and "the open control of the narrator", but we find nothing reliable to proof its ability to know the past in any of them<sup>139</sup>.

Such novels like "Selvitë e Tivarit", by M. Kraja, "Mallkimi i priftëreshave të Ilirisë" by M. Meksi, "Të jetosh në ishull" and "Otello, arapi i Vlorës" by B. Blushi appear as an artistic transcription of factual, spiritual and psychic reality of the individual and Albanian society, which after nearly 20 years of transition, begins to develop.

Metafiction is like a "tendency" of these novels that performs through technique and anti-technique, construction and deconstruction of illusion. It is characterized by such features as: the power of creative imagination, extreme awareness of the language, literary form and the art of fictional writing, the uncertainty between fiction and historical reality; the like some parody style, lively, sudden or "deceitful" of writing<sup>140</sup>.

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<sup>139</sup> Hutcheon, L. *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction* (London: Routledge, 1988), p. 118

<sup>140</sup> Waugh, P. *Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 14

The moral "universal" authority of the omniscient narrator is replaced by more specific and relativizing ways; it appears to be basing less on traditional conventions accepted by the reader-public and more on postmodern culture experience.

Generally, the narrator of contemporary historical novels is a typical for example the uncertain or doubtful narrator of Kraja ("Selvitë e Tivarit") and the unreliable narrator of Blushi ("Otello, arapi i Vlorës"). This technical choice serves the conveying of some specific semantic meaning: the diegetic doubt (or the incredulity over the narration process).

This kind of narrator may appear as a public intellectual: a thinker who, due to his special abilities) is able to talk to the massive reader over a variety of public affairs.

The changes of narrator's instance over contemporary historical novels relate to the fact that *his narrative authority bases on historically displaced literary cultural conditions, which determine the novel's status and function in the public sphere*. These conditions throughout the last decade include the following: commercial orientation of multinational publishing houses; the rise in nonfictional literature sale, like the memories and folk stories; cinema's competitive requests; television and new media; opinions' spread in public debates through blogs, polls etc.

#### 7.2.6 The narrator organizing narrative games

Literary researcher J. Phelan claims that the way the author treats the narrator talks about his ethical aims towards narration, narrating and the audience<sup>141</sup>.

Just as in other proses, even at "Selvitë e Tivarit", M. Kraja appears to be the master of "illusory" objectivity, false narration, who draws attention to the interpretation relativity more than a rereading of existing historiographical narration, urging meta communicating dialogues with the reader over history as a way of explaining it and not definitely judging it.

To this author, reversion at historical past objects the "naïve" perspective of representing reality and openly combines with the rhetorical function and game.

M. Kraja, in the discourse viewpoint and the character's inner world and the way historical reality shows off, creates historiographical metafiction, which the reader accepts in disbelief, because the narration's significance does not base on the factual documentation of the imaginary data, but in the liaison of these data to the narration's discourse<sup>142</sup>.

What appears to be real (historical) at "Selvitë e Tivarit" is the time, space, the city, parties surrounding it; in the end they undo the city: The Tivarians Montenegrins, Russians, English, Turks.

The characters' inner world approaching the readers, *missing the help of any*

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<sup>141</sup> Phelan, J. *Living to tell about it: A Rhetoric and Ethics of Character Narration*, (Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press, 2006), p. 19.

<sup>142</sup> Në veprën "Metafiction. The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction", Patricia Waugh explains that the concept of metafiction refers to a type of fictional writing, that "conscience and systematically" attracts attention for its status as a reflection, in such a way to represent questions linked with the relationships between the fiction and the reality.

*moralizing, evaluative, judging, didactic and authoritarian aimed narrator*, allows them multiple meanings and narrative elasticity, just as well help them to doubtfully consider any discourse over absolute lore. The absence of such authority helps them understand others' viewpoints and simultaneously become aware of self-way of thinking and viewpoints.

Narration at "Selvitë e Tivarit" realizes through some unusual narrative voice of first person plural (collective voice "We"), which transmits the reader the intentional feeling of disbelief or the doubts over the narration's verity.

Kraja uses this technique to show that the narrator (who sometimes appears in the first person singular "I") being a child, is psychologically unstable and misses the lore about the case. At the same time, he may make the reader think he is a naive narrator who, being that indicted and inexperienced, exposes his mistakes and deficiency and does not try to intentionally "deceive".

This way, it is unclear whether the narrative game bases on the illusions of the narrator-child, careful about the unimportant details or on the adult who shows off as a child? Is this the narrative voice of the child, who is aware of old stories of Tivarians through chronicles and narration, or the voice of an adult, who after having experienced the event returns to the past to deal with the narrative start (and expands "We" to dimension and vision)?

Data within the text is closer to the first hypotheses. First events are narrated in the past simple that is the reason why narration seems simultaneous to the actions performed. Narration at "First chapter, on Monday when we saw Zuke Kalimashi return to Tivari..." despite being realized through some retrospective viewpoint is full of details which in fact mark time closeness to the initial events of the novel.

Doubts are present since the beginning while narration starts with a "WE" as a narrator who talks about the day when "*the immoral Zuke Kalimani came back to Tivari, the day it snowed, 2 weeks before San George, after 23 years and 40 days*".

Even though narration is in first person plural, there is only one narrator who identifies himself with the group. However, what are the members of the group? The plural "WE" tries to include Preka and Samiu by introducing them:

*"We forgot about Ilham Shaqir Suma, because a day later he asked us to follow him in order to see something we had never seen before..."*

*"But why should Preka be part of the narration? The day I met him he confessed me something I had never wondered about..."<sup>143</sup>*

The use of "We" and "You" at "Selvite e Tivarit" proofs the presence of an impossible unusual voice, which challenges the traditional narrative theory<sup>144</sup>.

The narrative voice of a child is a well-known practice in the world modern fiction and Albanian too (M. Yoursenar, "Kujtimet e Adrianos" (Memoirs of Hadrian); Kadare, "Kronikë në gur" (Chronic in stone); we are never sure about the verity of the information or the recorded events.

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<sup>143</sup> Kraja, *M. Selvitë e Tivarit*, cited, p. 39

<sup>144</sup> While mimetic sayings are objective and accepted from the reader without any reserves as the fictional truth, the non-mimetic sayings are subjective, inaccessible and receive from the reader the type of conditional faith that complies with the attitude of the individual that talks

It is possible that the narrative three will have never seen or heard what they hold as true. The reader thinks that such a voice narrator convolves tales and legends as well.

The following examples show the way that limits between truth and lies, functions among observers and listeners and the fantasy game created from the narrative person exchange, fluctuate during narration.

**Table 7.2.1**

**Examples of how narrative game is realized  
through narrative person exchange at "Selvitë e Tivarit"**

Narrative voice of first person plural (collective)	Chapter 1, on Monday... ... <b>We saw</b> Zuke Kalimani return to Tivari... Her face was plump, full cheeks and almond shaped eyes... <sup>145</sup>
Narrative voice of first person singular (I) combined with the first person plural (we)	Chapter 3, Bindi's stream I <b>felt</b> that Great war seemed to be breaking up those days in <b>our city</b> . I <b>think</b> that now it is time that <b>we mention</b> Sani Kaduri of whom <b>needs to be said</b> that he announced the cheap sale of his endless dreams.
Combination of narrative voices within the discursive units, which disorient the narrative instance and "confuse" the reader above truth-fantasy relationship	Chapter 3, Bindi's stream Several years later, when <b>I came across</b> and old photo of the time, I <b>could not believe</b> that the image was real... It <b>could not be explained</b> the absence of sea waves... <b>Let us suppose</b> that <b>it had not been written</b> about the fact that <b>we stayed</b> several days over the castle walls, <b>looking</b> at the sea and the sky. The two army awaited us, that of Dovlet in the east, that is how <b>we called</b> Turkey and the leader of Cetina on the other side <sup>146</sup> .
The distance between narration and first person singular narrative voice	Chapter 13, the oil torch <b>Now, it is not easy to recall full details of those events. I remember</b> that during autumn someone used to light candles at the grave of Sheh Idrizi every night... <sup>147</sup>
Direct communication with the reader	Chapter 31, black carriage <b>The reader should be reminded of</b> the days when the English army with 12 soldiers and Stuart's carriage walked there often... <sup>148</sup>

Source: developed by author

The use of "We" (instead of I, He) expands narration into size and vision and makes it complete.

It happens that the narrator simultaneously directs to the reader and himself:

*"When I told Sami, the following day that I was in love with Xhemile, he got deeply curious and wanted to know what I had really seen." "I told you, Xhemile's face". What else? "Nothing else", I said. "Just her face". "That is not enough", he said and left taking no notice of me... Even now, I do not know what happened exactly.*

Such examples, according to Prince, must be considered as a sign of transformation that the narrator suffers because of what he narrates<sup>149</sup>.

In his discourse, there are distinctive signs of grammatical category of "I", "we" and "you, singular" which directly or indirectly refer to the characters:

Those who were waiting in queue in front of Tahir effendi's house could not talk

<sup>145</sup> Ibid, p. 112

<sup>146</sup> Ibid, p. 25

<sup>147</sup> Ibid, p. 65

<sup>148</sup> Kraja, M. *Selvitë e Tivarit*, cited p. 152

<sup>149</sup> Princ, G. *Narratologia: La forma e il funzionamento della narrative* (Parma: Pratiche Editrice, 1984), p. 36

about anything because terrible things would happen then. *Nate, do you know what Hetem hoxha's Bosnian was called?*

This way, narration to be the product of narrator-character fantasy rather than a simple narration of events over human experience. "Selvitë e Tivarit" is characterized by the so-called "problematic novel", which appears as a branch of postmodern narration exploiting the techniques of magic realism and non-fictional novels<sup>150</sup>.

Critical thinking defines it as *the game-novel, the novel that guides the reader towards illusions and cheating, deforming mirror and trapping doors, transmitting him nothing but just a paradox about art and life relation*<sup>151</sup>.

It also represents the "self-reflective" fiction or "fabulation dimension" which lately is classified as "self-inclusive narration".

Narration starts with the immoral woman Zuke Kalimani and then we find Tivari, Dovlet's army, that of Cetina's leader and the English navy of lame Stuart. They make up an unforgettable tableau of diverse characters who not only help to enrich one another; but also do highlight profiles within the novel: Sami and Sani Kanduri, Ilham Shaqir Suma, Cuf Idrizi, Beqir Demi, Shuab Damoni, Jehud Doraci, Xhemile of Habib Katana, Ymer effendi, Dede Zarishti, Pader Shtjefni, Nike Pjeter Jungu, Lami of Kasem Demiri, Johan von Bergman, Nel Gjeshku and his mule, Hetem hoxha's Bosnian, Lami i Kase Demirit, Selim Cerkezi, Sebernaze of Beqir Demi, the six men of Tivari, Kabili and Rahili, Sabiti and Hamiti, Aliu and Veliu who negotiate with the foreign armies. Despite the fact that narration ends with these six men, chapters 34-36 change into drama, universal grotesques and poetry.

According to the changes that the "character" notion of contemporary prose has suffered (under the effect of existential philosophy, character display towards reality is replaced by his display towards disappearance) even Kraja contrasts realistic techniques of characterization, focusing on his position as a holder of confronting attitude. At "Selvitë e Tivarit", we do find a variety of positions, emotional attitude; therefore it is not possible to determine one's priority over the other or his real identity<sup>152</sup>.

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<sup>150</sup> Sim, S. *The Icon Critical Dictionary of Postmodern Thought* (Cambridge: Icon Books Ltd., 1998), p. 310 and Bradbury, M. *The Modern British Novel: 1878-2001* (London: Penguin Books, 2001), p. 43. \* The term, which is now popular, "magical realism" is used from Franz Roh in 1925, to describe a form of art, which portrays scenes of fantasy and imagination through the obvious use, "of the documentary techniques of the picture". Today it is exclusively connected with literary, with a special type of fiction where the elements of history and magic merge, the dream and the magic infiltrate the realistic narration. Earlier events of use are found in the Latin-American writing (Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Carlos Fuentes, Octavio Paz)

<sup>151</sup> Scholes, R. *Fabulation and Metafiction* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1979), pp. 218-225

<sup>152</sup> Herman, D. *Story Logic: Problems and Possibilities of Narrative*, (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2004). \* Today, in the times of informatics revolution, the creation of communicative networks in the whole world where simultaneity between the sender and the receiver has passed the concept of the geographical distance and has shortened the time of the message transmitting. In this context, there are created cultural fields, which are much bigger than those created from country-nations, with a clear difference of the processes with which Ego requires an identity through a territory that produces its mechanisms and cultural attitudes. The movement of the populations from one place to another have "obligated" the novel to describe new multi-ethnic places. It should create a model that immunizes it to the risks of instability of the identity structure through narration, which is less related with the national literary traditions, existential scenarios more flexible, the subject in which does not act any absolute ruling "character" of 19th century. The memory and its individual desires, but all teams of characters, connected between them

The narrator-character stays in front of the defaced character with unusual metamorphosis: *Lami, the lame started to cry, curse and speak nonsense. He then crawled near the gravestones until he fell on the ground. "...Gjel Neshku had the habit of talking loudly while thinking just as well he could not think of two issues at the same time. Tahir effendi had been crying for ages... Dede Zarishti walked out of the church and entered the seawater with his clothes on..."*

Kraja historiographical metafiction, drawing special attention to historical discourse of previous groups, personal versions of the past, peripheral non-central abnormal figures (prostitutes, epileptics, idiots, homosexuals, slaves, immigrants) represents history as "damaged, full of gaps and enigmas".

In the mainstream of history deconstruction, he disjoints and articulates the individual's world who neither urges nor takes part in it, but he is its invaluable anonymous object.

The rethinking of historical past as non-continuity produces comprehensive instability, which destroys the psychological and physical unity of the narrator making him insecure and self-doubtful<sup>153</sup>.

Such narrator serves the author's aim to "transform" historical and political realities. Through such representation, readers become aware of relativity, continuous change and absolute insecurity of each epistemological knowledge.

What help us understand the meaning of human existence in history, are the narrative mirages that the three-voiced narrator of Kraja creates.

*The significance of literature to understand our world and History relates to the fact that the inner world realizes itself only in the human language*<sup>154</sup>.

At "Selvitë e Tivarit", the author seems to be analogically acting in accordance with the famous saying of Borhesi: "all the days of humanity snuggle under one single day". Meanwhile Kraja's analogy seems to be illustrated with such saying: "all the humanity snuggle under one single person".

The evocation, anxiety of not realizing characters in history, even though it is narrated in the first person, appears to be depersonalized, with the implied impersonal "we".

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<sup>153</sup> Hutcheon, L. *A poetics of Postmodernism*, [first edition 1988)] translated by Demë Topalli, *Poetika e postmodernizmit*, (Prishtinë: Publisher OM, 2013), p. 98, pp. 239-243. \* According to David Carroll: "when history is not accepted in its own way familiar, rational and metaphysical, as a solution of contradictions: even if it is history of rhetoric, then the process of the upgrading of the individual subject appears as problematic". An important aspect of the challenge that historiographical metafiction does to the concept of continuity is decentering and the distribution of subjectivism. In a way that he questions the idea of a coherence, the topic (subject), historiographical metafiction, at the same time creates and drowns realistic facts composited from an individual subject, which is not problematic and is a main moving force of the events from which derives the essential meaning. Absorbing the structural and post structural theories, where the subjectivism is treated as a "basic property of the language" and for "not a certain meaning but an open process", of the clear challenge from the postmodern novels of the human notion of the individual "free, unified and coherent". Hutcheon suggests from her investigation "that in all discourses, the subject of the history is the subject of history and for its narration".

<sup>154</sup> Bergson, A. *Evolucioni krijues*, cited: Agron Tufa, *Delja e njëqindtë e Anton Pashkut, në "Fjala", Tetor, 2012*, p. 7



## 7.3 Time in the historical novel

### 7.3.1 Time function in structuring historical events

Time, in literary act, more than just a simple *chronotropic* referral, is determinant for some of the most important figures of narration that build the inner structures of the text, the hierarchy of the parts and influence over his plans.

Based on Bashkim Kuçuku saying that: Time refraction or its metaphor ways make up the greatest embranchment of poetry styles<sup>155</sup>. They are the main source of its derivations; its axiological level is of great importance even to the poetics of historical novels. In the historical novel of classical model, time is linear, from the past to the present, towards the future, marking the rhythm, linearity of events, causes and characters' motivation.

Due to the fact that the interval between the time of narration and that of the event is big, often centurial, the narrator acts in both levels of history, using time of "narrated world" and "commented world"; exchanging interference with the examples of directing functions and typical treatment of "narrative's rhetoric"<sup>156</sup>.

The "sovereign" narrator who weaves narration not only does it smith the mixture of "positive truth" and "false illusion" but also reveals continuity detached from the linear and progressive chain of events. Authors of classical model in Albanian literature generally have perceived and narrated the world according to some determined time restrictions; these elements only help to slow down the process of event flowing, conditioned by the fact that the writer cannot describe them all in full details<sup>157</sup>.

Chronological narration is a characteristic of historical novels of Ndoc Nikaj, Zef Arapi, Haki Stermilli, Sterio Spasse, and Skender Drini.

An example of this paradigm is the novelized biography of "Skënderbeu" (Scanderbeg) by Sabri Godo, in which time plays the basic structural role as all episodes of narration base on it.

Chronological edges, in which events take place, include first part. Gjoni at the end of 14<sup>th</sup> century and the ending, ten years later after Scanderbeg's death (1468) with the surrender of the castle and town of Kruja.

These boundaries are conditioned by the historical episode, when the hero lived and worked, which in fact is basic to narration.

Events and characters' actions follow the order of documentary historical pretext, in which a 63-year period, which includes the time from birth to death of the hero, gives the novelized biography the form of an epopee. That is because it concentrates widely on history, which does not only include Scanderbeg's life and war against Turkish for 25 years but nearly a centurial historical period.

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<sup>155</sup> Kuçuku, B. *Kadare në gjuhët e botës*, (Tiranë: Onufri, 2000), p. 19

<sup>156</sup> Booth, W.C. *La retorica della narrativa*, (Firenze: La Nuova Italia, 1996), p. 79

<sup>157</sup> The scene, according to Genett "conventionally realizes the equality of time through the narration and the history. It is composed of dialog and narrating sequences, which have the time of the chronicles. Meanwhile, at the summary, the time of the history is faster than the narrating time; the narrator accelerates the pace of the story, synthesizing the certain events which are not necessary to stay, but the recognition of which is beneficial for the reader with the intention of fully understanding the discourse"

Among artistic narration and historical events, we find the highlight of realistic nature of situations in the novel, great events and small details, psychological penetration, inner research and outer look; they always undergo objective cause as an effect relation and the logical conclusion as a result of realistic reasoning. This conditions the author's continuous persistence to highlight the documentary side through time markers (exact dates, days, months, years) making use of names of places, events and famous historical events.

*"Gjergji returned in 1437", or "Murati came to Kruja in the afternoon of May 14<sup>th</sup> 1450"<sup>158</sup>; "On March 1<sup>st</sup> 1462..."*

An important way of getting to know the historical code of this novel is the language used in narration, which sometimes resembles that of a genuine historiographical discourse with monographic writing.

*"Then pope Kalisti realized that Mehmet's assault was not just a simple campaign of punishment, but fundamental movement in Turkish strategy. To attack Hungary and Europe, Mehmet had to first annihilate Scanderbeg, who could as well attack him and stop supplying him"<sup>159</sup>.*

However, we have to accept that the level of referring in relations between discourses of history and literature does not directly affect time structures. According to Genette, *in no narrative genre does the discourse order adhere to chronological sequence of history's abstract line. In addition, rhythm is not of isochronic order*<sup>160</sup>.

Viewpoint or focus (as a unit of narrative instance) shows that historical discourse cannot represent past events through any historical figure on stage only the narrator-historian, who observed the past, can realize it. Therefore, we may say that his modal system (and of all non-fictional discourses) is "imperfect", if compared to modal chances of fiction.

At "Scanderbeg", the author's aim is not just to narrate the great drama of Albanians, but especially to point out the recapture, through various semantic meanings in order to express himself freely when the novel was written. To serve this purpose Godo uses religious, mythical and political discourse, to help the well-informed reader of the political situation in Albania, the beginning of 1970s when the novel was written, think of Albanian reality of communist epoch.

Scanderbeg is saying *"The Vatican plunders Europe and enriches in the name of the crusade"* is more typical for the time when the novel was written (a sign of atheist attitude) than Scanderbeg's epoch. There is another similar saying to it: *"I would like to put to an end the war against Turkish and start another war against the Holy See"*, which seems to make Albania be opposing not just Asians but the whole world. It is of great interest to the narrator's positioning towards Europe: *"A full cycle of war came to an end, during which Albania hoped and believed in Europe. This country, now, will turn the page"*<sup>161</sup>.

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<sup>158</sup> Ibid, p. 318

<sup>159</sup> Godo, S. Skënderbeu, cited, p. 318

<sup>160</sup> Genette, G. Figure III: Discorso sul Racconto, vep e cituar, p. 78 \* With isochrony Genette refers to the narrative time, in which, the context and the discourse have the same duration approximately

<sup>161</sup> Godo, S. Skënderbeu, cited, p. 461

The reader finds it impossible to bypass the parallelisms with the Albanian political reality of the writing's time, so the complete of (self) isolation of Albania.

This shows how any novel depicts its own time even when it refers to a more ancient historical period. We should highlight that these discourses do not oppose literature order, because regardless of what the reader think of any issue, historical novels talk about how an issue could have happened and not how it really happened. That is the reason why the flowing of events and actions in the novels are represented through limited vocabulary by the author-narrator, communicating through facts, moving the reader towards meditation, generalization, conclusions. Besides, the use of historical facts and chronicles, the novels' real values stand in the meaning it suggests and its autonomous poetics.

The author intentionally has entitled the last chapter of the third part and even the whole novel "Humans' time".

*The city is made of people surely not objects, even though the last ones prevailed. New inhabitants walk shyly on the cobblestones. The city of course had great influence over them. Slowly they learnt how to worship it. In vain, Turkish tried to stop their subservience and adoration towards the city as it had become a myth which lived centuries as such*<sup>162</sup>.

As a conclusion, we may say that in classical historical novels the change between order of history and narration is almost inconsiderable. The second followed the firsts chronological continuity. Time of events serves the historical facts and its accurate and chronological flowing fulfills what is called "lack of history".

In this diachronic scheme with determinative and dictated selection of events, time is irreversible. As such, it appears to be an embodiment of the absolute, which is obvious when confronted with modern and contemporary historical novels.

### **7.3.2 Time breaking in modern, contemporary historical novels**

Time in modern, contemporary historical novels undergoes intentional refraction, which make up some inner poetics of texts and special narrative styles.

In authors of such category, it enables complex derivation that create paradigms not so close to classical historical novels. In addition, the change of actual time into some obvious functional presence sometimes pushes us to the limits of the unbelievable as a condition of inner narration. This means that time is no longer external but internal in fact; there is no evolution but stillness.

What is of great importance to authors is not the mechanical time but the subjective individually experienced one. Consequently, it is not defined regarding its objective flow but "duration' of individual' conscience where dreams are reality and vice-versa"<sup>163</sup>.

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<sup>162</sup> Godo, S. Skënderbeu (Tiranë: Publisher "Naim Frashëri", 1975), p. 508

<sup>163</sup> The consequence of the time lived subjectively is simultaneity, another typical aspect of the modern novel, that means the simultaneous registration of all the content of awareness, which substitutes the chronological rank of the events that characterize the traditional novel. This new concept of time, among its main founders, the philosopher Bergson. He does not see the reality according to the mechanical laws and the time coordination of physics but means that the truth as a designing of the subject and its awareness. These new ideas are reflected in the literature of the 20<sup>th</sup> century beginning, in the Proust work, Mann Joyce, where time is not a necessary condition to finish an action, but the topics of their novels, where they possess very subjective concepts for the time; it is proposed a subjective perception of the duration of time, the time which is longer or shorter depending on the awareness of the human that experiences and narrates the experiences

The studier Luciano Boci claims that *in modern and contemporary narration, it is not difficult to notice how the literary side of the novel changes into "language indirect" in the discourse system*<sup>164</sup>.

The absence of mechanical time is clearly reflected in the syntactic structure of the sentences.

The idea of relative meaning of time or the concept of subjective time is central to the narrative and semantic structure of modern and contemporary historical novels related with modernist philosophical traditions of Bergson, Diltei and later Osvald Shpengler.

Time breaking in the novels of modern and postmodern poetics should be regarded of as an expression of history's new concepts. Even though in the novels of 19<sup>th</sup> century it seemed like some organic and positive development, unfortunately history of 20<sup>th</sup> century, according to Elsa Morante is considered as "*scandal lasting over one thousand years*" or "*a series of events that suppress people and things leaving behind traces of blood and violence without changing anything*"<sup>165</sup>.

### 7.3.3 Artistic and conceptual function of analepsis

One of the most common types of modular narration is the one where hierarchic relation between past and future is destroyed. Anachronous means some distance from the first narrative temporality; it is carried out through analepsis and prolepsis whose frequent presence is the main feature that distinguishes modern historical novels from traditional ones<sup>166</sup>.

More frequent are outer analepsis, which relates to historical episodes, the story of any town, object, place or the ethical or psychological characterization of the character. They displace the chronological flow from the present to the past and back to the present, which makes the author's intervention useful in connecting various time and narrative lines.

A distinctive feature of historical novels is the analepsis of historiographical character, which helps the readers, get a better understanding of the narrated facts. Of course, we are talking about homo diegetic one based on the very same narration line, even though it stands beyond chronological restrictions<sup>167</sup>.

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<sup>164</sup> Boçi, L. *Koha në poetikën e romanit*, cited, p. 77

<sup>165</sup> Morante, E. *La Storia e il romanzo neostorico*, cit në: Margherita Ganeri, *Il romanzo storico in Italia: Il dibattito critic dale origini al post-moderno* (Lecce: Piero Manni, 1999), pp. 103-107.

<sup>166</sup> Genette, G. *Figure III: Discorso sul Racconto*, vep e cituar, pp. 96-115 \* *The function of analepsis is retaking the events outside the sequence, while the function of prolepsis is the creation of suspense, the development of character or the structuring of narration. Generally, moving to the past is classified into two groups; internal analepsis is a return in an earlier phase of the narrating time; external analepsis is going back to the before the narrating time that is covered by the event. Gennet refers to antique modules, to show the way how the author can create fractures between the narrating time of the history, speeding or delaying the show of the facts, against the real chronological order or showing events that stand outside the time spectrum, within which the novel is placed. The main characteristics of anachronism are: a) extension and b) duration. Time distance that extends from the past to the future is named as an anachronic extension. It also can cover a long or short time segment, is named duration*

<sup>167</sup> *Internal analepsis are based in the same acting line of the first story and have the function of "direction" in the text*

Table 7.3.1

### Examples of outer analepsis and their functions in some historical novels

Krastakraus - Bilal Xhaferri  Function: It helps to characterize the character of Stresi through childhood memories. By contrasting, the present anachronous emotionally highlights the war fatality	Stresi sat by the side of the road waiting for Martin to come. He recalled his childhood memories and all the various games they played together. However, where were they now? Stresi Bardholi had died in the battle of Torvioli, Ndre Piroli in the walls of Danja <sup>168</sup>
Muret e Krujës (Kruja's walls) - Gjergj Zheji  Function: It helps to complete historical narration through analytical description of rebellion	Marken Barbuka had seen their Pelt. He recalled Pelt's history each time he looked at his cabin. He was the poorest farmer of Timur Bey... <sup>169</sup>
Koka e prerë (The cut head) - Kico Blushi  Function: It intends to psychologically characterize Thanas Vaja, who becoming the main character then, helps the author to portray Ali Pasha Tepelena	Thanas Baja had always self-controlled. Women had never had been part of his life. The only woman face he could visualize was his grandmother. He used to cater the livestock with her... <sup>170</sup>
Frosina e Janinës (Frosina of Janina) - Mira Meksi  Function: It helps to get Frosina interested in Muktar Pasha, who will later play a very important role in her life. Here, ANALEPSA serves as an informing sign or cataliza	I remember it very well said Letizia. He was lying on a black sofa with tens of black cushions. He played with his silver spike. He was broad-shouldered, handsome, and swarthy with long hair and a bushy chestnut beard <sup>171</sup>

Source: developed by author

It acts when the narrator transmits the arguments of discussion to the characters of complete knowledge over history and ethical as well as national values. This type of ANALEPSA characterizes historical and fictional characters.

At "Krastakraus", this derivation is combined with *prolepsis* in the inner monologue of Scanderbeg; it serves to glorify the historical figure as a great defender of freedom and his nation.

*"What would happen if he walked away? Then Turkish would come war would come to an end; life would go on, people would work, have children; maybe they would live in peace and slavery."*

When historiographical *analepsis* characterizes fictional characters, narration is longer. One of the most distinctive example of the type is the oral narration of Mollos Baderi.

*"Nobody is said to always win", he said. "We should believe in ourselves; we lost the castle of Berati but we should hold tight the castle of faith. You should listen to Mollos Baderi, the one-hundred-year old man. Faith, faith; I can pretty well recall the days when we did not eat anything for 3 days" said the old man standing in front of the girl<sup>172</sup>.*

<sup>168</sup> Xhaferi, B. *Krastakraus* (Tiranë: Publisher "Bilal Xhaferri", 1993), pp. 118-119

<sup>169</sup> Zheji, G. *Muret e Krujës* (Tiranë, Publisher "55"), pp. 70-71

<sup>170</sup> Blushi, K. *Koka e prerë* (Tiranë: Naim Frashëri, 1990), p. 29

<sup>171</sup> Meksi, M. *Frosina e Janinës* (Tiranë: Onufri, 2001), p. 56

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid*, p. 60.

According to Genette, this type of *analepsis* could be regarded as complimentary because it fulfills all temporary gaps in their time continuity.

Its function in Xhaferri's novel relates to the "verity" of narration or the narrative role the 100-year-old man plays as a spokesman of history; as the voice articulating oral collective memory as the most non-manipulated by historiography, which the narrator-author considers as "nation's bell".

*"Mollos Baderi lived on his one-hundred-year-old memories. He often recalled Arta and Barnati, Gjini Bue Shpata and Gjergj Balsha the first; he recalled those glorious days, which were the prologue of the present."*

At "Moti i madh" where the playing with time is basic to fragmentized narration of history, another type of *analepsis* defined as general by Genett, is activated<sup>173</sup>.

*"It has been a long time since then; maybe over a century. I do not keep track of time neither with years, nor with centuries. Time is absolute"*<sup>174</sup>.

The most important part of narration at "Moti i madh" is the looking back in time including history, the biblical and mythical, while the "first" event serves a predicted epilogue. We should keep in mind that in this novel, time, extensions, pauses, are first motivated by specific discourse. Which appears as some kind of enigma or vicious circle with symbols hiding mythological images over time. Voices' contemplations to make up an entity are interrupted by some interference and artistic derivation of parabolic nature like the image of Scanderbeg, his open grave, sword etc. Narration takes us to the mysteries of our History or better to the "escarpment" of history, where its territory has collapsed. What serves allegory, as the derivation, which enables the evocation of old times and the imaginative vision of the future, is narration full of implications. Regarding text structuration, chapters do not have structural autonomy; in reality, they seem like a continuity of each other.

***The time of narration is undefined***, it starts with the prologue of Austin, the guide, who tries to write a glorious chronicle over Europe and closes with the epilogue of the Venetian king who wants to reincarnate it centuries later, ***while time of thinking is mythical***.

It owns the narrative system of the novel but it is more complicated. It includes:

- a. Memories of the narrator-character during his imaginary travelling to Hadi;
- b. Reflections over history symbolically represent time and political military power of Balkans and European countries as well as empires since ancient times.

The last ones create a secondary narrative level based on *analepsis*. When the narrator-character meets historical characters as well as those of literature or mythology, the linear flowing of narration is interrupted for the meta diegetic narration to start. Therefore, we find narration about Gjiovani's and Golgota's suffering, Andrea and the registers lost in Garibaldi's wars, poet's walks in the countryside and the exhumation of Albanians of Italy.

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<sup>173</sup> Genette, G. *Figure III: Discorso sul Racconto, vep e cituar*, pp. 110-111 \* Starting from the width criterion, Genett separates the *analepsis* in partial, when they pass a step in advance (ellipsis) and full when they reach "the first narration". The first type is just an isolated information, while the second has an intention to cover the entirety of the previous narration, as in the case of narration in "media res"

<sup>174</sup> Kraja, M. *Moti i madh*, cited, p. 21

"Moti i madh" compared to other novels of the genre, is very original, it is an idea-novel or image-novel, which instead of classical characters owns voices representing symbols or better theatrical shadows offering allegory through symbolic stratification and parables; its language, through allegoric use, makes up some discourse full of mythical symbols. Such combination of modernist and postmodernist experience like the poetical language of the sub text make it seem like the poetry genre. Characters of history act like mythical, heroic models, urging distance from life prosaism and the preservation of moral and spiritual integrity. The retrospective at "Moti i madh" changes into an Albanian revolt against Europe's infidelity.

*"I come from the east coast of this place", said the foreigner. "When Europe needs us, they say we are Europeans, on the contrary they say we are Asians. Some kind of geographical trick"<sup>175</sup>.*

Such attitude towards history and understanding it as mythology leads to parallelisms of meaning and symbolic character, that realize time shift and make the novel sound actual.

### **7.3.4 Functions of Prolepses in narration and subjective revocation of the past**

Further analyses will concentrate on other forms of time refractions in the limits of narration and its use serving intrigues and universal message of the authors for a new re-dimensioning of the past.

The complicated time structure that characterizes narration of modern historical novels hold as a basic marker the disinterest over fable, which highlights the priorities of the style and especially of the subject.

Therefore, the fable at "Sytë e Simonidës" is simple: Simonida, the 14-year-old daughter of Bezan's emperor, Androniku the second, leaves Bezan to reach Rasha followed by 3,000 soldiers for 33 days. They reach to Gracanica where she marries the king, Karl Uroshi.

Based on poststructuralist theoretic thinking of Barthes<sup>176</sup> (according to whom, in order to reveal various levels of narration, text analyses should base on segmentation) the time referents in this novel are:

#### **First narrative unit:**

*"Fourteen year old Simonida of Bezan" history claims legend said she was eight, "after she got engaged in May 1315, used to visit Bosporus always dressed in black"<sup>177</sup>.*

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<sup>175</sup> Kraja, M. *Moti i madh*, cited, p. 14

<sup>176</sup> Barthes, R. *Introduzione all'analisi strutturale dei racconti*, nē: A.A.VV., *L'analisi del racconto*, (Milano: Bompiani, 1969), pp. 5-46. \* While the formalist critical thought tracks the pair fable/subject only in the level of content (where the subject is seen as the continuity of motives that are found in the literature writing, while the fable as a rebuilding of the chronological order of them and as an evaluation tool of the writing in the technique of the motives editing) for the structuralist Barthes the subject is not a rebuilding of the fable. According to him in a narration "everything, means different levels", even in the smallest detail. The textual analysis that he does to the story "Sarrasine" from Balzac is a diffraction game launched from an arbitrary segmentation in a reading unit named "lexies". This does not correspond to any model in the text but express that what the reader judges as an identification unit (one phrase, sentence...)

<sup>177</sup> Dhimitër S. Shuteriqi, *Sytë e Simonidës* (Tiranë: Extra, 1998), p. 9

***Last narrative unit:***

*"All these poor poet's stories dating on May 20<sup>th</sup> 1920" adds the head consul Mirkic, "are not at all reliable..."<sup>178</sup>.*

The relation between the time of narrated events and time of narration serves the interpretation of Shuteriqi's novel. Its third part entitled *Modern Time*, which takes us six centuries earlier, symbolically relates to the events narrated through the return of Bora Dimkovic and the encounter of modern time characters with Simonida's icon. It is exactly this icon that realizes the time entity in the novel. It allows the author to accomplish his main purpose: the re-dimensioning of historical time.

Such diachronic overcoming from 14<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century is realized from the use of *prolapse*, which in fact builds a second narration alongside the first one<sup>179</sup>.

*The prolapse* is realized through the figure of the poet Bora Dimkovic who, using his "oracular" voice shows Simonida and her retinue all the following events: her marriage and the warning about her icon's blindness in the church of Gracanica.

The introduction of such a character is some technical discovery, which confuses the reader's logic at a time when Zllatko Ratkovic's chronicle enthusiastically describes the shooting star, which, according to Rashas, was a sign of good luck, while according to Bezant's astrologers it warned the end of the world:

The poet Bora Dimkovic: *"I see that you cannot understand me your majesty, but that does not make me feel disappointed because in the end you will. This world will end neither in 1414 nor in 1915; only if you take into consideration The Great World War, then things change, but I still think and hope that we will win..."<sup>180</sup>.*

This character who "returns from the future", emerges into 14<sup>th</sup> century events warning that humanity will not die or grow old, but would suffer terrible things like the blindness of Prince Stephan by his father Carl Uroshi, Simonida's infertility, the battle of Field-Kosovo (1389) and First World War.

The "parabolic journey" of "the jester", as the narrator Zllatko, from the future to the past, considers Bora Dimkovic aims the warning of the foreteller about bad things awaiting the king. He wants to convince his "neighbor" to avoid such things, to protect his people from history's great wounds and try to find the culpable. However, he fails because even his people do not trust him:

*"Do not touch me! I am the poet of the majesty, Peter I! What are these bad-mannered ways of treating someone nowadays?"<sup>181</sup>*

"The centennial crazy" cannot fulfill his prophecy and save his accused people of the blindness of Simonida's icons done by the Serbian monks not Albanian ones. The fact they call him crazy marks the failure of his "historic mission".

Shuteriqi modernizes history to make readers reflect over the fact why "Balkans did not use such stunts centuries ago"<sup>182</sup>.

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<sup>178</sup> *Ibid*, p. 180

<sup>179</sup> Genette, G. *Figure III: Discorso sul Racconto*, vep e cituar, p. 98 \* *Prolepse*, the narration of something that will appear later, anticipation or flashforward

<sup>180</sup> Dhimitër S. Shuteriqi, *Sytë e Simonidës*, cited, p. 85

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid*, 101

<sup>182</sup> Sinani, Sh. *Studime për letërsinë shqipe të shekullit 20-të*, vep e cituar, p. 199. Bora Dimkovic is a real history character



Why does Bora Dimkovic is treated as crazy? Maybe due to the fact that the coexistence among Balkans is getting more and more difficult.

Unlike classical historical novel where time undergoes the importance of events and characters, at "Kështjella" it is in fact artistically used (Differently from the classical historical novel at the book "Kështjella" from Kadare it is used with a clear artistical intention. Just like in daily life or in important event we have a subjective evaluation even for the characters like Turgut Pasha, the circumstances in where they appear place a huge ditch in front<sup>183</sup>).

Keeping track of time as military deadline helps to derive prolapse.

Turgut Pasha: *"He thought it was high time to rest at his house. He would be happy to live in his peaceful Anatoly. He knew he could not back up before collapse. Lately him friends saw him melancholically, especially after Sultan's last present. Now collapse was on the way..."*.

It seems that the end of each sovereign was predefined:

*"We had been waiting this attack for ages. We did not expect good things to come so we were ready. This is our place. There are no other places where we can go (...). We will live or die here."*

We should say that time limits in this novel are universal, all-out inclusive. When narration is in the first person, events are not disconnected, while when in the third person, special attention focuses on events artistically reproduced; so the narrator is the one who sees and interprets events from the present's viewpoint, judgment of the past and defining of the future. This is the reason why narration in the third person, regarding events in the Turkish camp occupies the most important part of the narrative scheme. It flows smoothly through a detailed description of everything happening there. In both cases, time distance is small. Events are shown just immediately after the happen making the reader think there only one narrator, who, when in the castle narrates in the first person, while when in the Turkish camp he uses third person narration.

### 7.3.5 Relation between the time of reading and writing

The time of writing is always present in a novel through signs left by time.

Jaussi clams: *"the best way to define a novel's role in the literary process is to scrutinize related documents"*<sup>184</sup>.

So even historical novels signify two realities closely combined. The author recreates the novel from the observer's viewpoint. Barthes claims: *"The Romanesque technique is undivided from the time of writing, because the writer is the spokesman of the ways and proceeds of his epoch"*<sup>185</sup>.

At "Kështjella", the time of writing coincides with the historical event of celebrating the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our national hero' death Scanderbeg in 1968, but Kadare's real temptation most relates to the political contexts of years 67-69.

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<sup>183</sup> Boçi, L. *Koha në poetikën e romanit*, cited, p. 178

<sup>184</sup> Jauss, H.R. *Esperienza estetica ed ermenautica letteraria. Vol I: Teoria e storia dell'esperienza estetica* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1987), p. 192

<sup>185</sup> Barthes, R. *Le Degré zéro de l'écriture: S/Z*, (Torino: Einaudi, 1973), p. 76

*"For a long time I thought I gave up literature. This was until I heard a tale about the suicide of a Turkish pasha after his collapse against a castle. His coffin, covered in black left for Asia. Isha i lodhur, bosh, megjithatë diçka më tërhoqi në ato pak fraza të shkruar dikur. Si mekanizmi i ndryshkur, ngaqë s'ka punuar një kohë të gjatë, truri im u vu në lëvizje dhe unë e gjeta veten duke shkruar diçka të ashpër, me ushtri, rregulla, topa, ndëshkime..."<sup>186</sup>.*

After its publishing in 1970, the critics would consider it "a historical novel, an allegory of Albanian resistance against superpowers".

*"So, the castle turns into a symbol for the reader. We cannot say it is just a simple conventional symbol, but a stylistic figure, which makes the historical analogy of the novel start with it"<sup>187</sup>.*

Kadare managed to realize the novels' main purpose by introducing events related to Medieval Times, which in fact guide the reader the 20<sup>th</sup> century of Albania.

Unlike the classical model of the genre, time loses its objectivity but gains some obvious artistic objectives. Time of narrated events is not what the author aimed to submit; the last hides behind the scenes and might be slowly revealed during the novel. The diegetic structure of the novel is not just a war chronicle; it overcomes such chronology to reach new dimensions dislodging in the 60-70s of Albania. The narrating of the historian squire, who precedes every event narrated from the author, along with the time the events happen, it portrays the war between albanians and turks, transmits another time too. The described situation from the squire-narrator, that precedes in the first chapter of the novel, is the same with the time when albanians are in a conflicts with the soviets, it even shows the time when albanians are almost in a fight with the Chinese people.

The context, which is somehow preserved in the beginning of the second chapter, starts to fade out; it then closely relates to the other part of narration. However, this time overcoming cannot become central to the story narrated. Its values are closely related to the time of reading (the reader of the 70s).

### **7.3.6 Relation between novel readjustment and time, ways of (re)reading it**

Perception over novels has changed from historical novels to novels over history. So far, "Kështjella" (The castle) has been republished four times: "Kështjella" (Publishing House "N. Frasheri", 1969), "Daullet e shiut", "Kasnecët e shiut" and lately "Rrethimi" (Onufri, 2003). Some authors look back on their novels in order to modify them, but critics relate it to the risk than roman novels convey.

On the other side, the tittle changing and the history rewriting, from the author, should not be seen as his desire to change the use instructions of the interpretative machine, that is the text (as Eco argues the trend of writers to republish their books), but as a poetic rewriting of them, where the history and the narrative text are placed in a new report of opening and freedom with the democratic world, through a language, which now is not hermetic anymore, as the isolation of the country dictated in the first published edition.

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<sup>186</sup> Kadare, I. *Ftesë në studio* (Tiranë: Publisher "Naim Frashëri", 1990), p. 191

<sup>187</sup> Melo, V. *Revista, "Nëntori", Nr. 4, Tiranë, 1971, pp. 25-27*

Two basic changes in the processed versions of "Kështjella" relate to what were held as taboos in historical novels of socialist realism: religion and sex.

The theme of sex is part of the novel's rewriting, not of the story it refers to. Most radical changes at "Kështjella" are linked with the religious belief among "*Arbërve*"<sup>188</sup> which was almost absent in the earlier version.

Kadare's mediation in the text is interpreted by the critics as motivated by such ideology which considers Albanian identity realigned through the selective cleaning of national mythology from foreign elements. Kadare lines his own interpretation regarding Arbër of 15<sup>th</sup> century since their millennial Catholicism up to Gjergji who somehow beats enemies with his defeat.

The studier Adem Jakllari claims: *"It is an interpretation of righteous coexistence, but as such it is undoubted Lyan attempt to rewrite history but not just the one narrated in the earlier Keshtjella"*<sup>189</sup>.

According to this viewpoint, mediation in the novel should be seen as a metaphor of any plastic surgery, which highlights Albanians' importance in the Balkans and the way we, Albanians, should understand ourselves.

*Albanians are not of half-witted identity hidden behind deception. Their identity is obvious, regardless of the fact that others may not accept it. Albanians are among the oldest nations of the European continent, just as their language is accepted, among 10 or 12 others, as a basic language of the continent. Geography as well testifies the European side of Albania. The diligence of those who want to ignore such facts, gives us the impression that Albania is on the edge of Europe followed by Turkey or Asia.*

*If one has a look over the map, then he will realize that at least three other countries lie off the border: Macedonia, Greece and Bulgaria. Let us not talk about what is called "European Turkey"*<sup>190</sup>.

Even the studier Ardjan Vehbiu interprets Kadare's work over "Rrethimi's" 2003 readjustment as an expression of his ideological attitude:

*The author uses Christianity to seep into the heart of Albanians but does not identify it with them. In general, linguistic purism bases on the hypothetic principle that the foreign elements has not been integrated in the language structures; therefore it can be removed easily*<sup>191</sup>.

Based on such arguments we may say that Kadare's attitude towards language show his attitude towards history in general.

Theories of modern critics tend to track the literary side of the text including reception during its processing.

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<sup>188</sup> Most historians of the Balkans believe the Albanian people are in large part descendants of the ancient Illyrians, who, like other Balkan peoples, were subdivided into tribes and clans. The name Albania is derived from the name of an Illyrian tribe called the Arber, or Arbereshë, and later Albanoi that lived near Durrës

<sup>189</sup> Jakllari, A. (2015). *Religjoni si referencë metafizike dhe simbolike në romanin tonë të sotëm, në aktet e Seminarit. XXXIV-të Ndërkombëtar Për Gjuhën, Letërsinë dhe Kulturën Shqiptare, Prishtinë*, p. 17

<sup>190</sup> Kadare, I. *Identiteti evropian i shqiptarëve*, (Tiranë: Onufri, 2006), pp. 20-23

<sup>191</sup> Vehbiu, A. *Kundër purizmit: Prashitjet në leksikun e romanit "Kështjella"* (Tiranë: Botimet Dudaj, 2012), pp. 131-148

*"Historical and cultural reality is always present here because text is just one of the many elements of a relationship" claims Lotman<sup>192</sup>.*

Kadare is of such authors' category who often suggest readers' ways to read novels for instance at "Dialogue with Alain Bosque" he claims that "Kështjella" imposes three types of reading. The first reading is that of a novel describing medieval events in Albania: the surrounding of a castle. *"So, this is the reading of the novel, as a piece of work that reminds us of the Albanian resistance in the 15<sup>th</sup> century<sup>193</sup>".*

Before the collapse of communism in Albania, the author claimed a second reading of the novel, this time more complicated where history can be seen as a means to avoid the topics that the propaganda of the time imposed, so the reader can better understand the contemporary reality through allegory rather than history.

Kadare also claims that the request of the Albanian critic Ardian Vehbiu for a third reading of the novel, after the collapse of communism, is purely logical.

According to him, before the Ottoman invasion and socialist camp over Albania, there is another invasion: *"The communist Albania wants to keep control of its more liberal part. So, it is the self-invasive and invading one".*

The text of "Kështjella", through its complete and close form meets the criteria of an open novel<sup>194</sup>. The symbol of the castle that in the literary tradition has historically conveyed both semantic accretions: that of the resistance and surrender seems to be part of Kadare's poetics since when he was writing "Poemë e blinduar" and "Vitet gjashtëdhjetë". Some kind of a castle is also the wooden horse of Gent Ruvina and his surrendered friends of "Përbindëshi". The surrendering tower of Gjorg Brezftoftit at "Prilli i thyer" along with many others are as well castles ruling Albanian highlands.

Also, the Gjirokastra buildings at "Kronikë në gur", the ethnographical house of the Prince of Mirdita (Gjomark) at "Prilli i thyer", the scary villa of the ex-minister awaiting his trial at "Koncert në fund të dimrit", the severe camp of the deported at "Përçmimi", the military base of Vlora (Pasha-Liman) at "Dimri i madh", Martin Shkreli's house in Pristina at "Krushqit janë të ngrirë" are some invariants of the symbol of the castle at Kadare's novels.

Treated as an ethno cultural junction, the castle conveys the features of a symbol, which Kadare loads with a variety of meanings so that the reader may interpret in accordance with his expectations<sup>195</sup>. Being a basic feature of the symbol, the non-

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<sup>192</sup> Lotman, Ju. *Analiz poeticeskogo teksta: strukturasticha* (Leningrad: 1972), p. 180

<sup>193</sup> Kadare, I. *Dialog me Alan Bosque, vep e cituar*, p. 85 \* *The castle-as an object has won the right of a symbol and is created as one in the Albanian literature, both with the heroic epic starting from the ancient middle age. With the original house content, protecting fort and the city surrounded from walls, the castle appears as a symbol of the spirit in its own challenging importance, as a vigilant and armed power and in the same time expression of a sedentary population connected strongly with the lands of their ancestors.*

<sup>194</sup> Eco, U. *Opera aperta*, cited, p. 279

<sup>195</sup> Sinani, Sh. *Një dosje për Kadarenë [II, Studime, intervista, dokumente, Botim i plotësuar]* (Tetovë: Albas, 2005), pp. 7-31. \* *It talks about a complicated symbol that has an origin from the house, the protecting fort and the city surrounded by walls, which because of the indentity status deserves the human offering. The castle is simultaneously an expression for the sedentary population who is connected with their land ancestors. With this content, it appears as a symbol of the spirit on its challenging importance, as a spiritual, vigilant and armed power*

defining side, which comes out of the "semantic blur is declared to be its most important value" and therefore it multiplies the interpretative play.

Nevertheless, it holds something strange within which even the multidisciplinary interpretation cannot figure out. There will always be something mysterious, which makes the readers read it repeatedly, this process changes into some creative acts during which both the reader and symbol affect each other.

### 7.3.7 Time as part of narrative play

In the contemporary historical novel, time undergoes intentional deformation from not only the characters' viewpoint and their subjective perception but especially from the narrator, who becomes present. So, this way the time of narration, ironically relates to the time of events experienced by the characters<sup>196</sup>.

In general, not all narrators follow its rules, by giving information or knowing what has happened before. However, they usually do this considering the limit between neutrality and the third person. While at "Selvitë e Tivarit" events are narrated by only one narrator, who appears to be neutral but who in fact is the protagonist of many events over half and a century ago (around 1878):

*"Even **now**, when I **visualize** that place, it **seems to me** I am **recalling** an old etching... It has always been like that. In **those old days** we would often **climb** the walls of the castle and **did nothing**; we **climbed** the tower of the Prince and **stood** silent half day, we **went** to the Cypress Hill and still did nothing, we **looked** at people who **seemed** depressed, looked over the sea which **seemed** to be dying<sup>197</sup>".*

In this paragraph, grammatically loaded with personal pronouns I/We that expect for epochs there is also a combination of verb tenses. In accordance with the pronouns (I – narrator/character and We – group of friends, in the name of which he narrates) we see that the tense of the verbs changes as well; the first person plural relates to the past, while the first person singular coincides with the simultaneity regarding reference January to November 2007 (p. 191).

The combination of grammatical tenses often helps the narrator be close to the events he narrates:

*"Years later, as I **came across** an old photo, I **could not believe** that such an image **could be** real, because it **lacked** the sea roughness and the apocalyptic gathering of clouds. Let us suppose no one **knew** that we **stayed** for many days over*

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<sup>196</sup> Consoni, S. Deviazioni spaccio temporali in Laurence Sterne e Prosper Mérimée, në, "Paragrafo IV", 2008, Bergamo: Università degli studi di Bergamo, pp. 140-156 \* The novel prototype from the critic point of view qualifies "Jeta dhe vepra e Tristiam Shand". L. Stem writes a novel in its own words, hiding the character of Tristiam: this allows him to have a continuous fluctuation between the time of the narration and the time when the events have happened, and told in the terms of the researcher Benveniste, between the history and the discourse, with an effect of ironic disconnection, but also as a participant, thing that is highlighted from it continuous contact with the readers. The second aspect is the unique style of Stermi, compounded from continuous digestions, the included extras, the model of the interrupted stripes that make the reading faster or slower. The author intention is not physiological, to demonstrate the time reality, but more human and desperate, to stop a little bit "the time that crushes", before which its dredging irony is converted in a melancholy resignation.

<sup>197</sup> Kraja, M. Selvitë e Tivarit, cited, pp. 112-119

*the tower's walls watching the sea and sky as well as small boats that **moved** along the harbor and the two armies; the Turkish in the east and that of the king of Cetina on the other side<sup>198</sup>".*

The use of imperfect tenses helps the narrator-character look back on what has happened in the past in order to undo it.

The special type of narration plays a vital role in the making up of the time ratio. What distinguishes the immediate activation of narration's time of events and reading is the voice of the inner narrator. In most cases, it is made possible using Past Simple Tense (shows a completed action at a definite time in the past).

Grammatical tenses may be conceived as a means of narration's poetics, which naturally emerges with other stylistic means.

The chronotropic element is emphasized since the beginning of narration, even so in the title of the first chapter:

**Chapter one, on Monday:** *"On Monday, the olive groves and hillocks around, and then the valley near the sea... (p. 17)"*

Some of the 37 compositional units of the text called chapters show the non-defining of time and space: Chapter three, Bindi's stream; Chapter four, The tower of the carillon; Chapter five, Miserable place; Chapter six, The house; Chapter eight, *meanwhile*; Chapter twelve, The Prince's tower; Chapter fourteen, *meanwhile*; Chapter seventeen, *the ending of a season*; Chapter twenty-one, *time tracking*; Chapter twenty-two, *the same day*; Chapter twenty-five, *at the end of the season...*; Chapter twenty-six, *tree gardens*; Chapter twenty-seven, *on the other hand...*; Chapter thirty-three, *the same day*; Chapter thirty-four, *then it happened...*; Chapter thirty-five, the carillon; Chapter thirty-seven, in the end.

As we may notice, time is very important to the chapters but the way it is not defined is especially stressed through its mentioning in each narrative unit:

Examples: Chapter 2, bushing – ***Now** Zuke Kalimani returned to Tivari, twenty-three years and forty days later... (p. 17).*

Chapter 3, Bindi's stream – *According to what I recall now, it seems that exactly those days a great war was about to begin... (p. 21)*

Chapter eleven, temporal pain – ***Earlier** we were talking about Ymer effendi of Ulqini, who had reached Tivari in autumn, after crossing the Bridge of Merkoti through Dovleti's army.*

Based on such illustrative examples we may confirm that *the narrator's aim is to define time within narration*. Chronological order of events is "impossible" as shown in the beginning of chapter seven:

***"The following days, things got complicated, so that when I recall them now, it seems almost impossible to describe them in their chronological order (p. 42)".***

Among basic features of narration, we may notice the changing of situations from real to unusual. Their exaggeration may as well be accepted as fantasy<sup>199</sup>.

These narrative situations, which include the intermediate state of characters, are the motivations out of which **analepse** derives:

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<sup>198</sup> *Ibid*, p. 25

<sup>199</sup> Aliu, A. *Romani Atlantidës shqiptare*, introduction at *"Selvitë e Tivarit"*, Mehmet Kraja (Tiranë: Onufri, 2013), p. 7

*Samii, of whom we said he was 2 or 3 years older than us, used to do things we could not understand. He did not talk, he just stared at something until he turned pale and his eyes got red...*

Such situations are associated with uncertainty, because this way, it is easier to obscure the obvious and logical flowing of reality.

*"According to what I recall now, it seems that exactly those days a great war was about to begin... It was obscure, autumnal. It could not help us feel better of the weariness caused by the sea emptiness or downpours. People did not understand of type of war it was<sup>200</sup>".*

Blurriness is used as a means to confuse logic; these are moments of great importance concerning the creating of the literary, as the world of fictions where time gains new configuration<sup>201</sup>.

Specific reflections make narration feel close to the extraordinary through comics, irony, grotesque, paradox, which, from simple stylistic-linguistic features change into narrative situations<sup>202</sup>.

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<sup>200</sup> Kraja, M. Selvitë e Tivarit, cited, p. 43

<sup>201</sup> Teodorov, Tz. *The Fantastic - A structural approach to a literary genre*, trans. in eng. Richard Howard, (Ithaca, New-York: Cornell University Press, 1975), p. 25 \* "Ambiguity is protected until the end of the adventure: reality or dream? The truth or an illusion? In a world, which is really the world that we know as the one, an event takes life, which cannot be explained with the laws of the same world. The fictional is exactly the doubt that is experienced from a person, who only knows the laws of nature, which unexpectedly confronts with a supernatural event"

At the book "*Selvitë e Tivarit*", we can discuss the comic style, which opens a road to new strategies: semantically overturn, irony, paradox, satire, the ridiculous, that discover the value and its opposite, the time of which the occurrences are evaluated and not. The paradox is the main feature in the novels of modern and postmodern literature. Researchers insist that the poetic language is disruptive, differently from the science one (which intention is the stabilization of the dictionary), that is why the "state" paradox use in natural. The irony, at the same time, is the esthetical dictionary of C. Brooks is "twin" to the paradox when it comes to their function [Cleanth Brooks, (1947). *The Well Wrought Urn*. New York: Harcourt Brace]. Irony is a feature of the novel, with a high level of order, not just like a regular verbal irony (rhetorical figure that is risen above ambiguity), but a situational irony, with the intention to point out "the inconsistency identification", that dominates in literature.

At "*Selvitë e Tivarit*", the city is being surrounded from several armies: the army of the Kralj of Cetina (Serbia), the army of Dovlet (ottoman army) and the army of Inglaterra (England) who keeps its ships on the sea. From time to time, the armies can attack the city and create a catastrophe. Meanwhile, the stories that have been told are not related to the war and the fear from it. We can tell for example the history of one of the most interesting characters, Nel Gjeshku. He travels with his donkey, who wherever they go is wanted from the other horses and donkeys. For this reason, for protecting his donkey, Nel Gjeshku chops the head of one of the horse's owner, the horse who was actually molesting her. His head, during the road, was the third, because he had chopped two other owner heads before while fighting them. Nel Gjaku has a habit of talking to himself and talking about all of his troubles with the donkey. Further, in his road, he has sexual relations with the gypsies he meets. After doing this, he castrates himself, maybe because he cannot tolerate this fact. Sani Kaduri is another character of the novel, who sings love songs on the roads and that has done an ominous prediction about the city. Johan von Bergman is an Austrian citizen, who has come to the city and insists that Sani Kaduri sings to him a bravery song (epic heroes' songs, but Sani Kaduri as we said sings only love songs. In addition, deaths, in this incredible city are paradoxical. We can remember of the death of Cuf Idiriz, who after playing with the worlds and its events, is found hanged in the restaurant, and with the legs on the ceiling and the head tucked in a tank full of rubbish. At the end of the story, the city is invaded without any obvious reason from the Turkish and Serbian armies. They rape whomever they have in front; they kill the girls of the brothel of Zuke Kaliman and do a series of other massacres

The logic guiding the characters to show their "awareness of the existence's truth" after many adventures is the same what is considered as the postmodern parody. It is created through some revising of past forms who's being critically different ironically marks the difference in their own similarity.

Umberto Eco claims: "the postmodern wants the past to be revisited as it cannot be destroyed because its destruction would lead to complete stillness"<sup>203</sup>.

One of many constructive units of the text, focus on time concept, while the most frequent character, Ilham Shaqir Suma is always being in search of self-questioning over space and time.

*Chapter 21 – time keeping; Ilham Shaqir Suma came to the conclusion that in fact it was pointless trying to keep the time because it was stationary*<sup>204</sup>.

The perception of spatial as timing "disorientation" is related to the stillness of the present. In Kraja's novel, we find some static present situation of various troubled characters.

Tivari, being surrounded by armies is living out of reality, while its inner space is as real and symbolic as to play an important role over narration.

Time is fragmentary and decentralized guiding the reader to such polyphony where narration of the characters and the limit between reality and imagination is impenetrable, are intertwined.

The more the reader feels the narrated world of Tivari, the more the events are multiplied; the starting point of which is the return of Zuke Kalimani and the opening of "paradise doors" in a time when the town faces the war threat.

The sarcastic tone of the narrator unveils the mechanism of belonging to the "old world" represented by the causeway, house inside the castle, Zuke's house, abandoned donjons, temples, the Bosnian's shop etc.

Tivari "lives" the tragedy of paralysis or "death of the time".

*The town got wet by the autumn rain in complete saddening solitude.*

The fact that its horologe was out of order, means that there is no time there (mechanically speaking).

Nothing new happens here, just "accidents" or repeated "adventures", the same things every day, people fulfill their sexual desires, have dreams, sing, die.

Therefore, that embodies the time concept of the town:

*Ilham Shaqir Suma had started to look at the sky through spyglasses finding sunrays melting with clouds; it was then exactly when the horologe had knocked 12 times. He wanted to look at the world through spyglasses to see what happened when the horologe worked differently.*

Tivari, even according to the space concept, represents nothing about its identity. The only thing the reader can get to know are the ordinary stories of its inhabitants. Foucaet defines the following elements of the town as heterotopic:

*The Castle of Tivari, the Prince Tower, the Cemetery, the Tavern of Caf Cadia, the Church of Saint Nolan, the Mosque, Bindi's stream, olive groves, the houses etc.*

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<sup>203</sup> Eco, U. *Emri i trëndafilit* (Tiranë: "Dituria", 2012), p. 473

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid*, p. 100



Here, time and space not only represent what happens with characters but also are a reflection over the situation and especially the author's simultaneity.

We cannot say that art has drastically changed, throughout history. Perhaps it is the way it is read that has undergone changes.

It is when Roland Barthes announced "the birth of the contemporary reader" that the act of contemporary novel reading became essential<sup>205</sup>.

The reader of historical meta fiction cannot be passive anymore, but "an active player of some collective perception"<sup>206</sup>.

Now, the novelist relies on the reader regarding not only "identity and sympathy" as Waugh suggests, but also for his success and achievement.

According to U. Eco, the concern of two types of readers (semantic and semiotic ones) over postmodern texts is a result of double coding: *Such texts represent two levels of reading. These levels mean two types of readers: the model and "naive" ones. Postmodernist writers prefer the first, but entertain the second*<sup>207</sup>.

Therefore, the writer double codes the novel. At "Selvitë e Tivarit", the reader finds himself part of a trapped place whose inhabitants seem aggressive, immoral and unbalanced. Therefore, this way he tries to find the cause of their behavior.

Meanwhile he asks himself "Has life always been enviable, evocative, fragile, absurd, heavy, surreal and meaningless at the same time?"

The setting of narrated events of some crucial period of Albanian history like the invasion of Tivari after the decisions of the Berlin Congress, is something well thought by the author.

Firstly, it aims to make the reader feel doubtful over truth facing them to that time, in which are beaten humans and nations fate.

On the other side, their fictionalization at "Selvitë e Tivarit", cannot be perceived as an emerge between history and imagination. Therefore, the reader could be set free of illusions over reality and can start be doubtful over any complete and accurate communication.

Wilhem Dilteit claims: people get to know themselves through history and not through self-analysis and what it means to be human, only history can give an answer.

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<sup>205</sup> At the essay "Vdekja e autorit" Barthes reminds us that the tradition has seen the author at the human person, giving him the most important role. This way the literature image is concentrated more in the personal life of the author than in the text of even the story and novel. Barthes in this way has a conclusion that the author is not more than an written sentence: modern "writer" is born at the same time with the text. For Barthes the text is a mix of citations issued from the infinite center of culture. This way, we deal with the stolen attention of the reader more than to the author. Simultaneously, through this relation is stolen the attention at "Vdekja e Autorit", a concept, that in an extensive way, is attributable to this critic. So, there is only one place for the writing plurality and this is the reader, so the attention is pulled to the destination not to the origin

<sup>206</sup> Waugh, P. *Metafiction. The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 43

<sup>207</sup> Eco, U. *Si shkruaj*, (Prishtinë: AIKD, 2003), p. 86 \* Double encryption is related with the concepts of the author and the model reader, which, make two textual strategies, where one comes as the code of the issuer and the other of the receptor

## Conclusions

As a conclusion, we may say that it is nice but difficult task to talk about Albanian historical novels. The choice of such a genre of interesting events after the 90s makes the research astounding similar to modern and postmodern deviation and of the term in the European model.

The Albanian Historical Novel, as a subject to study in synchronic scheme includes secular time extension.

In the diachronic plan, the study of typology encounters difficulties because of the fact that such terms as modernism and postmodernism generate questions.

In the comparative plan, the study is based on European models of European genres, which have developed and been accompanied by many theoretic and historiographical study.

In the first part of this work, we tried to analyze the typology of the Albanian Historical Novel based on representative forms of European Novels, especially on basic intertextual elements:

- History (fable) and changes of its relationship with fiction;
- Narrator and his changes through narrative hybrid poetics;
- Time and space relationship and the many transformations in their artistic way.

During the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century authors like S. Godo, B. Xhaferri, I. Kadare, S. Drini, Z. Rrahmani, M. Kraja etc. have tried to preserve the historical consciousness highlights realistic features serving actuality.

We have tried to analyze the modern characteristics of historical novels through some structural changes philosophical reevaluation of history, its critical reception by recreating universal historical figures.

The most influential type over the Albanian Historical Novel is the Scottish and Manzoni's type, their common feature relates to the role that history plays in it. On the one side, we find love intrigues, while on the other side to national liberation.

Modern forms in which history serves as complimentary fiction are concretized in novels by: B. Xhaferri, I. Kadare, J. Buxhovi, N. Rrahmani, and Gj. Zheji resembling modern narrative techniques of Flaubert's or Stendal's model. From this point of view, Kadare allegorically and symbolically describes Albania of 60-70s:

- B. Xhaferri characters make the modern reader shift aside in the past;
- K. Blushi and Gj. Zheji recreate the past through some "historical realism";
- Z. Rrahmani combines techniques of subjects with aesthetical elements of classical model.

"Syte e Simonides" resembles to such combinations.

The combination in the Albanian Historical Novel between fantasy and history expresses the consciousness of modernism of the Albanian Historical Novel under the influence of post-modern characteristics of Eco; the looking book in history, meta fiction, fragmentation, irony, characterizes Albanian novels.

In the second part of this work, we tried to analyze the way the narrator changes, depending on how authors consider History among classical modern and postmodern matrices of historical novels. Regarding novels based on romantic historicism ("Shkodra e Rrethume", "Skënderbeu", "Mic Sokoli", "Rilindasit", "Vraje tradhëtime",

etc.) we argued that narration's subject to an authoritarian and omniscient narrator. Regarding novels of modern matrices, ("Kështjella", "Krastakraus", "Sheshi i unazës", "Sytë e Simonidës"), we illustrated the various ways and derivations being able to disintegrate monologue discourse.

Analyzing modernism through narrative instance, we could identify:

- The creation of changeable form as structural principle of the novel;
- The synthesis of narrative and discursive;
- The dialectics of voices conveying ideological and axiological messages.

The moral authority of the omniscient narrator has been substituted by some specific ways basing less on traditional Romanesque conventions and more on other extra literary act.

In postmodern novels, poetic saying is not based on the description of historical events, but on the recreation of such world being directed by aesthetical colloquialism.

We analyzed the "doubtful" narrator (Selvitë e Tivarit) represented by some unusual voice (we – 1<sup>st</sup> person plural) whose viewpoint of history is "damaged" full of "gaps, absences and enigmas".

In the second chapter of the second part, we analyzed time in the historical novel, which in fact creates various styles and artistic derivations.

In classical historical Albanian novels ("Zgjimi", "Ja vdekje ja liri", "Pishtarët dhe Skënderbeu", we admitted that time is the objective, the past, present and future. Authors of classical historical novels aim to communicate coded messages (S. Godo, S. Spase).

Of great interest to authors of modern and postmodern novels is not the mechanical time but the subjective one individually experienced.

Complex time structure, a characteristic of modern historical novels shows off disinterest over its plot, which highlights advantages of the form, style and especially the plot.

We argued that time refraction is widely used by authors of historical modern matrices.

Finally, we conclude that this literary genre appears as an invariant of the European genre as well a product of the Albanian cultural environment.

Similarities and differences between this creative aesthetics mark the literary development within European one, where Albanian authors try to impress in order to be subject of further studies.

## SUPPLEMENT

Interview with the writer Mehmet Kraja (December 2015):

**1) History is one of your favorite themes. Which is your artistic purpose in the representation of the past time, relating it with the present?**

*For the writers, going back to history is not a meaningless journey. In my opinion, history in our literary work is a search for a similar reality, which at a certain point resembles to what is happening now. It seems a little utilitarian, but in fact, this is exactly the meaning the history acquires in a literary work. History, in truth, may be a projection of the dream, another time it may be an escape from a*

*meaningless reality, poor from ideas and meaningful events. Many narrations of everyday life need to be distant in time so they are clarified and acquire meaning. Other times, history in a literary work may be a metaphor, an indirect way of speaking for the actual reality. What is history itself? Another collective noun, opting to identifying events in the past time. However, this past time begins today and goes up to the darkest distances of the past events. That labyrinth of events, sometimes witnessed and other times unwitnessed is an adequate space for writers' imagination. On the other side, in the gnosiological sense, so the sense of knowing and grasping the absolute time (if we can say so), which does not pass nor does it flow, what we do is something very insane. In understanding absolute time, there is no past nor future, there is only present, boring and eternal. What I also want to say is that the sum of past times in our language is a desperate but genial way of scattering after what we lose forever all the times, and that is eternally enough for us to be unfortunate and to feel pain and nostalgia that cannot be consoled. Maybe this is the reason why we have so many past tenses and sometimes only, the conjugation of a verb (the description of an action) in so many tenses are poetry in itself. Nevertheless, this is another matter. I only want to say that in our language there is the opportunity of a very specific division of the past time in the literary narration: there are the tenses of the historical narration (simple past and present perfect) and the tenses of the legendary narration (past perfect). The combination of these tenses of narration creates the historical background or the legendary narration, but our critics and researches do not even know how to identify such things in a literary work.*

*Now I will try to explain why it is told that there is history in my works. Because, in some novels I have made a historical or legendary projection of the past events. It does not have to do with proper history. There are two basic reasons after this: First, I have been formed as an author in a political environment, where it has been almost impossible to write for the current events, because we, in Kosovo, had the restrictions of censorship and self-censorship. Just like the Albanian writers, with the only difference being that we had politico-national restrictions while in Albania the restrictions were politico-ideological. At that time, history has been a choice: an escape to avoid censorship and self-censorship. Nevertheless, I tried to go a step further to use the historical events as metaphors. Therefore, it is an indirect speech for reality. In essence, literature in its own is nothing else but a speech containing meanings.*

**2) The historical novel, traditionally, can also be called as the novel of nations and people's identity. How does history help in your literary work to the topic of Albanian identity?**

*I do not know nor do I pay any attention to genres and their definitions. To be clear on what I said before, I will explain a occurrence: three novels of my first phase, that are often called novel with historical theme, "The Great Weather", "Instructions for Overcoming the Sea" and "Byzantine Nights", are either metaphors or they speak allegorically on the circumstances of Kosovo in that time. "The Great Weather" was written in a time of national euphoria in Kosovo, in the end of 70s;*

*"Instructions for Overcoming the Sea" was written in the long gloomy nights of 1981-1982, and "Byzantine Nights" in the scary years of mental and intellectual violence in Kosovo that started in the end of the 80s. I remember pretty well, let us say, when I wrote "Instructions for Overcoming the Sea". I had an apartment on the fifth floor in a neighbourhood of Prishtina known as "Kodra e Diellit". It was the first anniversary of the demonstrations of 1981, it was curfew and the image I had in front of me, was a squad of policemen guarding at a crossroad not far from my apartment. They were dark, silent, scary nights of Mars. These situations, in their whole essence cannot be captured by journalism or history. They can only be captured by art, literature. I had an answer for that desperate situation: I found a reflection of such a reality that was a dark medieval time, with scary events, treasons, murder on infidelity, but also with an effort to create and authenticate the identity. The medieval darkness had fallen on the Kosovo of those years. I thought of that time, while I was looking at the crossroad under my apartment. There was only a difference: the helmets and their reflections under the streetlights where not medieval knights' helmets that were guarding near the castles under the moonlight, but they were helmets of Serbian police officers that were guarding the curfew. Therefore, there was a very visible connection between historic times and current times. Such a thing can also be said for the novel "Byzantine Nights": medieval opted to expand in all historic times, conquering the minds, the memory, everything, even the syntax of the language.*

**3) How do you set the boundaries between fiction and reality in some of your historical novels, e.g. "The Great Weather", "Instructions for Overcoming the Sea", "Bar's Cypresses"? What did you have to do as a writer before starting working in each of these novels?**

*We discussed earlier how and why I have treated history in the novels of the first phase of career (including here "The Great Weather" and "Instructions for Overcoming the Sea"). The novels "Bar's Cypresses", "My Father Loved Adolph" and the last one "Black and Red" belong to the second phase of my writing career. In a way, there are two additional novels that do not have a historical theme, but they consider the historical time, "Even the Crazy Ones Fly" and "Hotel Arberia". Therefore, in this phase we do not have to do with censorship, self-censorship, metaphors or hidden messages. It has to do with the treating the historical events in a totally free and unbiased way. Then, why historical events? If there is a need for explanation that is very simple: there are events in which the fates of the people break, there are big dramas that are experienced collectively and individually. In these five novels, I have treated five neuralgic moments of our history from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to now. In the "Bar's Cypresses", the background is the Congress of Berlin and its consequences for a castle town that happens after the craziness of the departure of one conqueror and the arrival of another one. In the "My Father Loved Adolph", there is the background of WWII, together with the "big ideas", respectively, Fascism, Nazism, and Communism, which they create endless tragedies when experienced in a small place. In the novel "Hotel Arberia", I have treated the war of Kosovo in 1999, experienced as madness of those who do not know to*

*understand freedom. In addition, the last one, the novel "Black and Red" deals with an A-Hundred-Year-Old Albania and A-Hundred-Year-Old boundaries that made the Albanians live in two different "Albanians", one that was called inner Albania and another that called outer Albania... What did I have to do? Essentially nothing. (I had) to do a work that I believe that I can do better than anyone else can.*

**4) Irony and grotesque are two of the most protruding derivate, through which the history in "Bar's Cypresses" is perceived. Which is the point of view that you, as an author would like to incite to today's reader?**

*Literature is not done to give explanations, as, let us say, a history handbook, or such stuff do. Literature speaks, rebuilds, observes, overall the narrative literature, where the novel is included, it narrates, narrates and only narrates. The elegance of the narration is the most important component of a good novel, but this elegance is very complex: first, it is language, it is an idea, it is a drama, it is a character, it is an action, it is an emotion, and it is a thought. Let us say, I very much appreciate the text and its language. However, in a novel, not everything can be edited in the language, because the novel, as I said, is the art of narration and an important component of the narration is what is happening, the drama, the situation, the atmosphere, the characters' actions etc. In the novels of the second phase, so not only in the "Bar's Cypresses", I have opted a language that would match with reality. Meaning: if reality is grotesque, even the language has to be so. If there is irony in the language, the reality has an ironic background. Therefore, being an author of that entire universe that is called novel, whichever it is, I try not to limit the irony and the grotesque in stylistic and linguistic figures, but to elevate it to another higher level, to turn it in a narrative situation. This grotesque situation has been highlighted in the novels "My Father Loved Adolph" and "Black and Red". In the first novel the main character becomes a fascist and anti-communist, even against the "the popular power", because he likes to have his moustache as Hitler's. In the other novel, the representatives of three generations die in the boundaries: the grandfather and the father because they do not want the boundaries to be put where there are, while the third dies paradoxically the night Albania celebrates its 100 years anniversary. Therefore, I want to say that the elevation of the grotesque in dramatic situations is another quality of the narration that does not stay only to the linguistic level.*

**5) When it comes to characteristics of narration, experimentation of form, originality, your novels are elevated to a very high level. Which is your relationship that they create with the aesthetics such as romanticism, modernism, postmodernism? Which is your favorite literature that you think it is close to the literature you create?**

*All literature, no matter if is historical, non-historical, actual, non-actual; experimental, non-experimental; modern, postmodern, no matter if is a novel, a novelette, a short story, poetry, a poem, it is divided in two big genres: in good written literature and bad written literature. If a writer achieves to make good literature, he has achieved everything.*

Interview with the author Mira Meksi (December 2015):

**1) One of your favorite topics is the historical one. Which is your artistic purpose in representing the past, putting it in a relation with the present?**

*Everything related with the theme, the literary precedent, the autonomous time of the character within the universal time, my hard relation with time, the confrontation of times with one another, or better say, their interlacement, the erasure of the boundaries between them, the notion of eternity, or the fragility of a moment, so, everything in function for the artistic narration. Even what you are saying, the representation of a past time, putting a relation between it and the present, is in function for the artistic narration. I have explained that the idea or the first ideas, or even the beginnings that are not ideas but feelings, images, smells which later on are related with a certain theme of my literary constructions, have come from childhood. The later has defined my preference for the historical themes. My narrations are accomplished through memory as the main essence of man's identity, memory as a sense, as soul... In addition, because memory contains a time that has passed, it has become an obsession, almost unchangeable, which you can describe or narrate. You can even try to narrate the present or the future only by using the past. If I had to answer your question with a sentence, I would say that my artistic purpose has been to bring the distant Iliria of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, very little known even to the historians, to the reader's present. I have wanted the life of Iliria and its characters, its main character, queen Teuta, its customs, loves, hatreds, wars, battles, ambitions, treasons, mystics, gods, death and Ilirians' suicide to be part of the reader's life today, as natural as possible. I have not taken the reader by the hand to bring him/her to Iliria; I have brought Iliria of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC to the reader of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

**2) The historical novel in its tradition, can also be called a monument of nation's and people's identity/ But, on the other side, it is also the novel that intimates the great historical figures by transforming them into characters of human dimensions. Which has been your intuition or aesthetics that have guided you in this transformation to portray the figure of the Illyrian queen, Teuta?**

*The novel gives another very different view that what history and science give for the events, and mainly for the characters. Even the epical, even what you are saying, the attribution of the nation's identity sign, even more than history, it is the literature the one that gives attributes to the great historical figures of the nations and the people. In the novel, the queen of Iliria, Teuta, has been created based on a heartfelt duality, which produces energy through its perfect fullness or deadly contradiction that she shows. She is at the same time a person and a reincarnation of god, she is the woman that loves and at the same time the epic missionary of the Ilirian soul. She is as intimate and touchable for the reader, as he/she manages to see her physical and spiritual portrait, and as distant and unreachable as half gods or the mysticism of an ancient people not lighted yet by history. The element that has been used in the novel to make Teuta a character close to the reader, as human as he/she is, is overall her womanly love. I would even say that love is the starting point to give the historical universe, and at the same point the mythical and the human of*

*Iliria of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. As I have declared since the very beginning, the novel speaks on the time of Homer's heroes, when people and gods live side by side and are very close. The historical dimension of queen Teuta in literature could not be given to its truly value without the myths, the legends and overall without transforming her into the intimate and human character of the novel "The curse of the Ilirian priests".*

**3) What do the female characters represent compared to the total, in your historical novels, in the "Frosina of Janina" and "The curse of the Illyrian priests"? Which is their role in the perception of subjectivity of History?**

*I believe that those characters, Frosina of Janina of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and Teuta of Iliria of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, are part of objective perception of history, so they are part of the facts, the data, and the historical dates. Frosina of Janina, niece of the bishop of Janina in the time of Ali Pasha Tepelena rule's is part of Janina's history not only as the lover of the oldest son of Janinas' Pasha, Muktar Pasha, but also by her tragic death, an outcome of the political decisions of the Janinas' vizier. Meanwhile, as part of history, Teuta is the queen that made Iliria one of the greatest powers of her time, which even stood against Rome. However, history is not only that. History is not just events coming to life, cataloguing them according to dates and places, space and time, but also the experiences before and after these historical events. These experiences consist the core of historical memory, expressed even in the living memory of the peoples, in the songs inherited generation to generation, in the traditions, myths, legends... This part, together with the writer's imagination or by adding the novelistic whim, can be called an interlacement of objective-subjective perception of history. My novel Frosina of Janina is not only a martyr of the hindered love, but also the soul of the Greek revolution. The same way as Teuta of Iliria is not only the queen, the warrior, the strategist, the diplomat, but also the soul of Ilirians; their mystic and religion, the woman of flesh and blood that falls in love, and the half-goddess that sacrifices love to let her inner god to lead Iliria. She a collective symbol, a symbol of identity for our nation.*

**4) How is the boundary between fiction and history set? (What did you have to do as an author, before starting your work on each of them?)**

*It cannot be divided. Everything is history, harvest by the ancient and modern authors, but also what I said before and is related with the experience of history, it has been subjected to the alchemy of the writing imagination and the novelistic whim.*

**5) In the novel "The curse of the Illyrian priests" to clarify this relation (history-fiction) is achieved through dressing Memory in the role of the narrator. This helps the reader understand that history is not the main goal of the literary work. Which is the main goal, starting from the interlacements that are built in the novel between myth and history?**

*The truth is that "The curse of the Ilirian priests" is a historical novel unique in its kind. Even though the main historical elements are portrayed in details, they are not a goal on their own, as mean of showing the past with objective truthfulness, on the contrary, they are subjected to the needs and the goals of the narration and they*



serve to give more truthfulness, life and importance to the historical figures.

**6) What is life? What is love? What is death? What is misunderstanding?  
How are these notions codified in your novels?**

*Life, for me, is the metaphor of the Heracles River: "No one is washed twice in the same river". It is time, that flows and never stops, but at the same time tries not to accept time. In my work, it may be a moment, a mite moment, or eternity itself. It is in a complex relation with time. When it comes to love, it is an incredible force, capable making every dream and desire come true, no matter how crazy, unreachable or absurd it may seem. I believe in this force. My work is like the sponge, overfilled with love in all its pores. It has as much love as I have been called a writer of love. I have also been told the writer of death and the writer of misunderstanding. Death is another great force that attracts me and intrigues me with everything it has: its mystery, its strict authority, power, cruelty, absolute inevitability and its inextricable connection with the soul. Death has an important place in my literature as love does. A redhead who has an aroma of chrysanthemums personifies it, who once is young and very beautiful, and the other time is an old actor or an old prostitute. I have said it and I am repeating it that I have the belief deep inside of me that all the evils and the absurdity of this world derives from evil. In all my four novels, the colours of misunderstanding paint the absurd horror.*

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