Chapter 11

Communist Ideology and Its Impact on Albanian Literature

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ABSTRACT

After the World War II, Albania fell under the totalitarian regime of Enver Hoxha. The impact of the communist dictatorship in Albania was not only political, but social and artistic as well. The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the negative impact of communist ideology in Albanian literature. This study is compiled using descriptive-interpretative qualitative method. After analyzing and interpreting specific phenomena related to the development of Albanian literature, it is important to emphasize that the impact of the communist ideology should be considered as a strong shock, with evident consequences not only for the period 1945-1990, but also responsible for the state of literature today. Socialist realism method applied to literature almost killed the creativity and professionalism. The most important dimension of the literature conducted under the terror of the communist system, was the literature written in prison, which provides Albanian literature with the extraordinary dimension of human strength that exceeds the ferocity of every ideology and totalitarian system.

INTRODUCTION

Due to specific historical conditions (political and social ones) the Albanian literature was not only developed relatively late, but it also has been (was) for a long time under the influence of ideology. Since the very beginning it suffered the strong influence of religious Christian ideology (Philo-Biblical writers), later on it was under the influence of oriental cultural ideology (Aljamiado writers), then it was
under the national ideology (during National Renaissance) and finally fell under the communist ideology during the totalitarian regime of Enver Hoxha.

Albanian literature was disentangled from ideology only after the proclamation of Independence in 1912. Literature of Independence was characterized by a tendency towards trying new literary forms, which were prevalent in Western literature. Unfortunately, this spirit did not last long, due to the participation of Albania in World War II, through the Italian invasion and later German one. After the war, Albania fell under the communist regime, which lasted from 1944 to 1991. The impact of the communist dictatorship was not only political, but social and artistic at the same time. Consequently the Albanian literature was compelled to develop in accordance with Marxist-Leninist ideological norms, which became obligatory in the art of all Eastern countries.

Eastern influences in art started in 1950, when communism plagued aggressively every “cell” of the country. Relations between Albania and Soviet Union grew very strong. From 1948 to 1960 Soviet advisers strongly influenced Albanian education, art and literature. 4500 students graduated in Soviet Union, became pioneers in the implementation of Albania’s communist reality. Long-term isolation and communist dictatorship expanded the cultural gap between Albania and other European countries, causing enormous difficulties in the development of literature and arts. Furthermore the ideological basis of official art became Socialist Realism, which was asseverated in the First Congress of Soviet Writers in 1934.

DEFORMATIONS OF THE ALBANIAN LITERATURE AS A RESULT OF COMMUNIST IDEDIOLOGY

The Albanian literature after World War II may be considered sui generis when analyzing specific features it manifested. It can be defined of a stumbling relation with literary tradition, a complete isolation from the developing world-wide literature, etc. The imposing of communist ideology during the dictatorship regime violated its natural development, marking an unusual case of interruption of the tradition. The main features of the Albanian literature during communist regime are:

First, as a result of total isolation of the country, the literature that was written within the borders of the Albanian state was held separate from literature written by Albanians in Kosovo, Macedonia and elsewhere in the Diaspora. Consequently, the Albanian literature was unable to develop simultaneously, being violently divided into several entities. Thus the Albanian literature that was developed in Kosovo and Macedonia had no contact with literature written in Albania during the decades of
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