
bjoerna.dk [Kultursociolog Bjørn Andersen](mailto:post@bjoerna.dk) post@bjoerna.dk

Dritëro Agolli



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PROLETARIAN PARTISANSHIP AND SOME OF ITS ASPECTS OF THE WAGING OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE

by Dritëro Agolli

Writer, Chairman of the Writers' and Artists League of the PSR of Albania [PSR: People's Socialist Republic]

»In today's conditions of the waging of the class struggle ensuring the leading role of the Party in art is one of the fundamental requirements for the implementation of proletarian partisanship. Nowadays, the principle of party leadership in art, as the essential element of proletarian partisanship, is the main target for attack by the bourgeois and revisionist theories and all the other opportunist trends«.

MARXISM-LENINISM LONG AGO SHOWED THAT THE WAY IN WHICH LIFE IS REFLECTED IN ART DEPENDS ON THE INTERESTS OF DEFINITE CLASSES AND THE CHARACTER OF THEIR IDEOLOGY, WHILE AS THE EXPERIENCE OF OUR PARTY OVER MANY YEARS HAS SHOWN, THIS CLASS NATURE OF THE REFLECTION OF LIFE IN ART IS REVEALED IN THE MOST COMPLETE AND OPEN WAY, IN THE CONDITIONS OF THE UNINTERRUPTED DEVELOPMENT OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE. IN THESE CONDITIONS, OUR IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE IN THE SPHERE OF ART ASSUMES A SPECIAL SHARPNESS, AND PLAYS A DECISIVE ROLE FOR THE FURTHER HEALTHY QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF ARTISTIC CULTURE. THE CORRECT WAGING OF THIS STRUGGLE HAS TO DO WITH THE FUTURE OF LITERATURE AND ART, WITH THE COURSE OF THE WHOLE CONTEMPORARY CREATIVE PROCESS, TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE. AND IT MUST BE SAID THAT THIS STRUGGLE IS NOT WAGED SIMPLY TO ELIMINATE SOME WEAKNESSES WHICH SHOW UP FROM TIME TO TIME IN THE CREATIVE PROCESS AND WHICH ARE UNACCEPTABLE TO US BECAUSE THEY ARE FAR REMOVED FROM OUR ESTABLISHED AESTHETIC TASTES. THIS STRUGGLE IS OF AN IDEOLOGICAL NATURE.

Thus, our struggle against bourgeois and revisionist alien influences displayed in their most complete form in literature and art prior to the 4th Plenum of the CC of the Party, as a consequence of the savage imperialist-revisionist pressure, from both inside and outside the country, cannot be explained simply as an effort to escape from certain distorted artistic tastes that we did not like, but as a principled struggle that was necessary to destroy the roots of these manifestations, behind the modernist nature of which lurked an entire, conscious, elaborated class ideology, a complete reactionary ideology, with well-considered and far-reaching aims. The representatives of, and agitators for, this ideology had tried to use the weapon of art to achieve their sinister desires and aims against socialism.

Summing up, on the one hand, the rich experience of the development of literature and art in the recent period, and on the other, the experience of leadership by the Party in the field of artistic creativeness, the 7th Congress reached the conclusion that the consistent defence and strengthening of proletarian partisanship comprise not only the main condition for all outstanding achievements, but also the fundamental requirement for the further progress of artistic culture. The class essence of our art and its aims are reflected, and the interests and the socialaesthetic ideals of the working class are expressed, in the principle of proletarian partisanship. This principle makes our art capable of militating for the line of the Party, militating as a powerful ideological weapon of the working class for the construction of socialism and the complete triumph of the revolution. The implementation of the principle of proletarian partisanship in literature and art in the conditions of the development of the class struggle in our society, has several main aspects which we consider of particular importance. These aspects may be summed up in three directions: **1) Enhancement of the leading role of the Party in literature and art; 2) Strengthening of proletarian partisanship in literature and artistic creativeness; 3) Raising the level of the worldoutlook of writers and artists.**

1. ENHANCEMENT OF THE LEADING ROLE OF THE PARTY IN LITERATURE AND ART

In the presentday conditions of the development of the ideological struggle in our country, the direction of art with definite aims, with lofty proletarian partisanship, direction which should exert an active influence on artistic creativeness, assumes special importance. In this manner, literature and art become part and parcel of the great cause of the Party, are closely linked with the tasks of our socialist revolution and fully in the service of this revolution. »*The sound leadership of the Party,*« says Comrade [Enver Hoxha](#), »*has given culture and education, literature and art a development, a direction and mobilizing force, and has linked them more closely with the people, the working class and the cooperativist peasantry, with the great tasks of our socialist revolution*« [\[1\]](#).

Our Party has given art very consistent guidance, has orientated and assisted it at many moments when artistic practice and the class struggle in this field have raised complicated ideo-aesthetic problems. It has focussed its attention on, and strongly criticized the partial slips and deviations that have occurred in our creative work, while severely condemning those ideological enemies who have tried to weaken the leadership of the Party in literature and art and to encourage modernist alien influences. While ensuring its leadership in literature and art, not only has the Party fought for their ideological purity, but it has also encouraged their enrichment in content and form, in styles and genres, by constantly opening up fresh creative possibilities for every writer and artist. This has come about because the Party has constantly kept in mind the specific character of creative art, having trust in and respect for the artist, valuing his work, while at the same time, never reconciling itself to any negative alien influence.

The strengthening of proletarian partisanship is not only an ideological problem, but also a political, organizational, and economic problem. It has many other aspects, too. Proletarian partisanship implies all the comprehensive activity to implement the line of the Party and to defend the dictatorship of the proletariat in the field of artistic culture. It is embodied in the various directives and instructions of the Party. This fundamental principle of socialist realism is connected with the fulfilment of many tasks: with the deepening of the Marxist-Leninist ideological orientation of literature and the arts, with the activity of the Writers and Artists' League and the literary press, with the work of the schools of art, with the training of cadres to work in and run the sectors of creative literary-artistic work, with the amateur movement, and with all the aesthetic education in the general educational system. On the

other hand, the strengthening of proletarian partisanship is linked with a more thorough development of aesthetic studies on the current problems of literature and art and the unmasking of modernist and revisionist trends. Finally, it is linked with all the work of the party organizations and state organs, which lead the cultural and artistic institutions. If there is not a united front of struggle for the consistent implementation of directives and instructions of the Party in all these directions, and this is forgotten, distortions which hinder the achievement of the leading role of the Party in individual links and sectors emerge.

Although the leading role of the Party in the implementation of proletarian partisanship has been enhanced and strengthened, sometimes there is still an oversimplified administrative concept of it, for instance, thinking it sufficient to ensure the number of items in the repertoire, publications or performances, and not extending this leadership to the main orientation of the content and the artistic level.

In today's conditions of the development of the class struggle, ensuring the leading role of the Party in art is one of the fundamental requirements for the implementation of proletarian partisanship. Nowadays the principle of the party leadership in art, as the essential element of proletarian partisanship, is the main target for attack by bourgeois and revisionist theories and all the other opportunist trends. The bourgeois and revisionist ideologists and aesthetes and all our ideological enemies consider party leadership in creative work as a petrification of art, a restriction on the expression of individuality. The bourgeois and revisionist ideologists constantly raise their notorious slogan against leadership by the party in art, while trumpeting the idea of the freedom of the artist. All this is concealed under the mask of an ideology that stands above classes. In reality, bourgeois and revisionist art, itself, is guided by their ideologies and their reactionary partisanship which destroys the artist, turns him into a market commodity, and gives him no possibility of entering into the life of the people. The notorious revisionists **G. Lukacs**, **E. Fischer** and **R. Garaudy** come out openly against party leadership in art and against the Leninist principle of proletarian partisanship. In his notorious article, *»Art and the Ideological Superstructure«*, **E. Fischer** long ago theorized about the inevitable *»ancient«* conflict between the state and *»the spiritual elite«*, as he calls the artists. *»If the socialist artist,«* he writes, *»is a supporter of the Central Committee, a qualified worker in the sector of agitation and propaganda, then as a result, not only will he be degraded as an artist, but he will also be a bad agitator and propagandist. If art is forced to adept itself to the requirements of the current tactical situation, life forsakes it«*.

This revisionist ideologist puts the proletarian policy of the Party in open conflict with the artist, whereas it is known that this policy arms creative practice, orientates it and helps it to reflect the life of the people truthfully, to judge and analyse the main directions of social life scientifically.

The Soviet revisionist theoreticians and scholars have resorted to shameless distortion of **Lenin**, presenting him as a leader *»tolerant«* towards liberal and decadent trends in art, claiming that he was allegedly in favour of the flourishing of many trends and that he understood *»tolerance«* in art. Thus, in a recently published book, entitled, *»That's how it happened«*, the revisionist Soviet writer, **O. Litovsky**, writes that **Lenin's** policy in the sphere of art was *»liberal in the finest sense of the term«*.

It is clear that revisionism is not ashamed to become the most cynical falsifier when it comes to attacking the sacred principles of revolutionary ideology.

By ensuring the leadership of the Party in literature and the arts we fight, at the same time, for the strengthening of proletarian partisanship in every work, and for its defence against the attacks of enemies and renegades from Marxism-Leninism.

2. THE STRENGTHENING OF PROLETARIAN PARTISANSHIP IN CREATIVE ARTISTIC WORK

By making art an inseparable part of its great cause in the fierce class struggle, our Party created in our country a rich artistic culture closely linked with the life of the people, with their interests and dreams. This advance of our arts on a broad front could not have been made if class tendentiousness in the artistic treatment of the range of themes and problems, which the revolutionary development of our society brought to the fore through fierce class struggle, had not been strengthened by affirming lofty ideals and rejecting old, inhibiting, alien, anti-socialist concepts. At the 7th Congress of the Party Comrade **Enver Hoxha** said about this: **»The 4th Plenum of the Central Committee sternly criticized some harmful manifestations that had to do with imitations of reactionary foreign trends, with the wrong treatment of contradictions in our society, with theories that disparaged folk creativeness, etc. It put forward important tasks over the entire front of culture. Their implementation gave a fresh impulse to the development of literature and art, to all cultural and artistic activity« [2].**

But looking at the process of creative work in the light of the decisions of the 7th Congress of the Party and the requirements of its own mission in the development of the class struggle, for the further strengthening of proletarian partisanship in literary and artistic works, a series of new tasks, which assume particular importance in the presentday conditions, have emerged.



»The Moscow Meeting« by G. Madhi [billedet er tilføjet ift originalartiklen]

First, the class struggle must be a subject reflected, and a permanent and cardinal theme in our literature and arts. This theme broadens the horizons of arts, gives them an indisputable superiority, because the class struggle pervades all the fields and pores of social life. It manifests itself in the economic and political relations between people, in collectives and families, in town and countryside, in intimate actions and moral relationships, at school and in production, in the past, the present and the future. The treatment of the class struggle in literature and the arts is one of the ways to strengthen their tendentiousness, to link them with the fundamental problems of the internal and external developments that engage the attention of the Party and the people. If some

works, such as »*The Great Winter*« by **I. Kadare**, »*The Moscow Meeting*« by G. Madhi, »*Confrontation*« by **T. Laço**, »*The Girl of the Mountains*« by **N. Zoraqi**, »*The Fall of Idols*« by **S. Drini**, »*The Grand-Mother*« by **K. Kosta**, and a number of films produced in recent years, have had a favourable reception from readers and audiences. This is due not only to the mastery of their authors, but also to the class tendentiousness with which they treat the problems of our society, and the political line of the Party. We have many other works, too, which have reflected the reality from the angle of the development of the class struggle. But it is essential to do more in this field. The reflection of the class struggle in literature and art is one of the most important problems of our creative work, because it is linked with many other problems, such as those of the recognition and correct solution of contradictions in our society, those of a thorough understanding of the typical and the individual, those of the relationship of the hero to the mass, those of the aesthetic and social ideal, those of the class stand towards tradition and its relationship with innovation, and many others. A thorough Marxist-Leninist knowledge of the development of the class struggle in our society helps the artist to capture the fundamental trends of development of our revolution in a scientific manner. The writers and artists **»are required to reflect accurately in their works the fundamental processes and trends of development of our revolution, the contradictions of life, and to fight any manifestation of formalism and stereotyped treatment of them, to faithfully and creatively apply the method of socialist realism, which is the foundation of the proletarian art which the future belongs«** [3].

Although improvements have been made since the time of the 4th Plenum of the CC of the PLA, erroneous solutions to these difficult problems of our arts are still seen occasionally. Sometimes the reflection of the class struggle is superficial and there is no thorough analysis of its processes in certain works.

Second, the strengthening of proletarian partisanship is also linked closely with the treatment of the acute current problems which engage the attention of the Party in the stage of the complete construction of socialism. Thus more stress should be put on certain themes such as that of the [hegemonic] role of the working class, the revolutionary transformations in our countryside, and the revolutionizing force of communists, which require more profound treatment in all their breadth and magnificence, because, despite the indisputable achievements, we think there is a disproportion in this direction, which must be overcome. The problem is that these themes should occupy the place they deserve in our literature and art, in conformity with their intrinsic importance in the context of the struggle our Party is waging today to enhance the leading role of the working class, to reduce the essential distinctions between city and countryside, to liquidate the sources of bourgeois-revisionist degeneration and to complete the construction of socialism. On the other hand, greater attention must be focussed on the treatment of all the cardinal problems of social development, as laid down by the 7th Congress of the Party such as the themes of our people's resistance and struggle against the imperialist-revisionist encirclement, patriotism and proletarian internationalism, the implementation of the principle of self-reliance, defence and revolutionary vigilance, etc.

The treatment of this range of themes and problems with class tendentiousness helps to link literature and art better with the great cause of the Party, with the entire presentday and historical reality of Albania. Linking art with the problems of the Party invigorates it with rich social content and lofty communist ideals. Then it is not imprisoned in the shell of petty eroticism and never becomes a means to delve into the murkiest depths of the consciousness of the egoistic isolated individual, such as is seen in the degeneration of the literature and arts of the bourgeois and revisionist countries. One of the functions of Western and Soviet modernism is to destroy man's confidence in himself and his own thinking. According to the US aesthete and writer, **R. Kostellians**, art is **»blinding, deafening, maddening spiritual suffering«**. That is why books are centred on psychopaths,

idiots, the spiritually crippled, sadists and prostitutes. In his book entitled, »*Love, fight back!*«, the Soviet poet, **V. Kotov** extols the figure of **Eva Braun**, **Hitler's** wife, who burnt herself to death together with her husband, demonstrating her conjugal »fidelity« with this gesture. The poet counterposes **Eva Braun** to the wives of great men, who allegedly, were not loyal, but quarrelsome and unfaithful. According to him, such were the wife of **Socrates** of antiquity, the wife of the great poet **Pushkin**, and **Leon Tolstoy's Sophia!**

*What was Hitler...
But Eva Brawn, the screen star,
Remained faithful to him to the end!*

. . .
*What was Pushkin....
But his beloved Natalya
Slyly winks at Dantes!*

. . .
*Leon Tolstoy, great as a god
Flees demented from Sophia....*

(**V. Kotov**, »*Zashchishchaysya, Liubovj!*« Moscow, 1969, pp. 55-56).

In a word, alongside that revisionist Soviet literature which, with overworked cliches, sings to the glory of the chauvinist soldier of Russian expansion, another literature, which boosts criminals, their »faithful« wives, and prostitutes, under the veil of »all-conquering love«, is flourishing.

Our militant and pure art, with all its power and beauty, stands in contrast to this aggressive degenerate bourgeois and revisionist modernism. This contrast becomes more militant when we deal with the whole wide range of problems and themes which was presented and analysed at the 7th Congress of the Party, with an even sharper class tendentiousness. The fullest possible treatment of this range of themes and problems, does not narrow the creative horizon of our literature and art, but, on the contrary broadens and deepens it, because it contains a wealth of aspects which give rise to an endless variety of subjects and forms. Within this broad horizon each writer or artist finds a boundless field for the flowering of his creative individuality, and the utilization of all means of artistic expression.

Third, the strengthening of proletarian partisanship in the conditions of the development of the class struggle requires the ceaseless raising of the artistic level of literature and the arts. Proletarian partisanship cannot be achieved without the all-round development of all means of artistic reflection, without a continuous evolution of artistic form. Only an art with sound content and fine artistic form can become a powerful weapon of the working class in the class struggle. We must struggle to achieve a sound content embodied in a perfect artistic form. On this question, Comrade **Enver Hoxha** has said: »**And such content is bound to be conducive to the search for and discover of new forms**« [4]. The Party teaches us, on the one hand, to regard art as part of the overall cause of the proletariat, i.e., not to divorce it from ideology, politics, [sociology], ethics and other forms of social consciousness, and on the other hand, to regard it, also, as a reflection of the reality with its own specific means, its varied forms, while encouraging the initiative of creative thought and imagination. **Lenin** recommends: »**All these things are indisputable, but this only proves that the literary part of the work of the proletarian party cannot be fitted into the same mould as the other parts of the work of the Party of the proletariat**« [5].

It is true that the artistic level of our creative literary and artistic work has risen, and the efforts of the writers and artists to cultivate all forms of art and to find fresh means of

expression have been intensified.

Nevertheless, sometimes a narrow concept of proletarian partisanship is encountered, giving it the tone of routine agitation. This weakness is more apparent in variety theatre and plays. In these fields, banality and schematic treatment of the material from life are observed. In children's literature and some of the poetry published, there are also instances of the treatment of themes and problems with empty pompous phraseology. In some instances there are obscure and incomprehensible figures in poetry, a phenomenon which has been criticized following the 4th Plenum of the CC of the Party.

When we speak about the strengthening of proletarian partisanship, we do not exclude the demands for a higher artistic level. To raise the artistic level while maintaining proletarian tendentiousness means to achieve a broad understanding of the problem of proletarian partisanship, to put art more effectively in the service of people and to democratize it further.

Alien manifestations, old and new, conservative and liberal, schematic and modernist, are expressions of the class struggle in the field of artistic form.

The alien influences, manifested in the most complete way prior to the 4th Plenum of the CC of the Party, were camouflaged at first under the idea of »the quest for forms«. In fact they were intended to distort the proletarian partisanship and change the proletarian tendentiousness of our art. All those metamorphoses which the lyrical hero of poetry went through, for example, »I am a prickly pear«, a »shell«, a »fossil«, and what not, alienated art and cut it off from the major problems of the time by extinguishing the class spirit of action. Therefore the task remains to defend the form against the modernist distortions, which are in fashion today in bourgeois and revisionist literature and art. Form is always more vulnerable to formalist pressure, to alien creative trends and practices.

In present-day revisionist Soviet criticism, this quest in the field of form has become the fashion. In his article »*The Class Spirit in Literature*« (»*Znamya*«, 1968, N° 2, p. 217), the well known revisionist Soviet critic, **G. Kunitsyn**, writes: **»Our enemy in art is, of course, neither *Kafka* nor any other close to his artistic trend, but in the first place the various forms of pseudo-realism and naturalism, which unlike *Kafka*, try to preserve the truth in details while affirming the overall lie.**«

It is clear that the revisionist critic is disturbed neither by **Kafka** nor by modernism. All these things are acceptable to him. What worries him is realist art, which he calls »naturalism«. **F. Paçrami**, too, was worried only by conservatism, naturalism and schematism, as he understood them, whereas to him liberalism was not a problem.

Therefore, in order to face up to the great bourgeoisrevisionist ideological pressure and to keep our art in attacking positions, it is necessary to step up the struggle for the formation of the revolutionary worldoutlook in the ranks of our writers, artists, scholars and critics.

3. RAISING THE LEVEL OF THE MARXIST-LENINIST WORLD OUTLOOK OF WRITERS AND ARTISTS

The strengthening of the proletarian partisanship is closely connected with the ability of each writer and artist to interpret and analyse all the material from life in the spirit of our Marxist-Leninist ideology. Therefore, in the realization of proletarian partisanship, the world outlook of the artist himself plays a decisive role. We say this because his world-outlook determines the direction and the character of the creative work of each artist. For this

reason every writer and artist should feel that the effort to raise his ideological level is an objective necessity, because only in this way can the complicated character of the class struggle be reflected correctly, can the pressure of the alien ideology be coped with and works of a sound militant spirit of attack be created. At the 7th Congress of the Party, Comrade **Enver Hoxha** said, **»Those artists who work ceaselessly to raise their Marxist-Leninist ideological level, who master the teachings of the Party, who lead an active political life, who are thoroughly immersed in the life of the masses and have a profound knowledge of the road of the revolutionary historical development of our people and culture, succeed best in these tasks. Revolutionary art is created by revolutionary artists whose hearts beat in time with the heartbeat of the people«** [6].

These words of Comrade **Enver Hoxha** clearly express the idea that the Marxist-Leninist world outlook not only has theoretical importance, but also has great practical activating force. All our literary and artistic practice, guided by the Party has confirmed the validity of this idea. Those artists who have thoroughly mastered the Marxist-Leninist world outlook have always stood in sound positions and have created a militant and partisan art of a high artistic level. Without mastering the Marxist-Leninist world outlook one cannot find one's bearings in the complicated phenomena of life, cannot disclose the fundamental trends of the development of our society, from the revolutionary class standpoint. However, the Marxist-Leninist ideology should not be studied for curiosity's sake, or simply to add to one's general culture, to be able to answer a question or to display one's ability as an orator in certain auditoriums. Its study, too, should be tendentious, should pursue an aim. In his report to the 7th Congress of the Party Comrade **Enver Hoxha** said: **»We do not study Marxism-Leninism for the sake of erudition. We study it to apply it in life, so that we are guided by its principles in every action and judge everything in its spirit. Such a study of theory, closely linked with life and revolutionary practice, serves true communist moulding, the creation not only of a scientific outlook but also of a revolutionary character, so that our people will always be resolute fighters for the cause of socialism, irreconcilable with the enemies and their ideology«** [7].

In the documents of our Party, in the Works of Comrade **Enver Hoxha**, the experience of the creative application of the general laws and principles of Marxism-Leninism in the conditions of our country has been reflected and summed up, a synthesis has been made of the rich experience of the revolution and the practice of socialist construction, and the struggle against imperialism and revisionism. While gaining a thorough knowledge of Marxist philosophy, political economy, scientific socialism, of our ethics and aesthetics and theoretical thinking, our writers and artists must also make themselves better acquainted with the rich experience of our literature and arts which have developed on a correct course, according to the principles of socialist realism. This should be done not only by the writers and artists, but also by all the editors, critics, scholars and cadres who direct the sectors of art. All books devoid of ideas which are published have first gone through the hands of the reviewers who have recommended them to the publishers. The second concession is made by the editors, and the third by the directors of publishing houses themselves. In all these practices either personal friendship is placed above principles, or one's world-outlook is insufficiently formed, or ideological vigilance is lax. Two years ago was published the book *»Poets of the Thirties«* in which the editor had collected even writings of authors compromised with the foreign invaders and the antipopular regimes, writings that were published in the fascist press even in the beginning of the Forties. This comes also from insufficient study of the documents of the Party over that period, as well as from a sentimental stand towards the literary and artistic past.

But the revolutionary education and tempering of the artists and writers are not achieved through ideological work alone. It is essential that the party organizations concern themselves, also, with all the other aspects of the activity for the revolutionization of writers

and artists, with integrating them into the life of the country and activating them in the solution of social problems, so that their lives are intensively involved with the political situations. They must be militant people, people who live with the policy of the Party. At every moment our artist is a political person in the first place. The policy of the Party gives the artist the powerful passion and class standpoint so that he can consistently defend its principles. Nowadays the bourgeois and revisionist theoreticians try either to make the writers stand aside from revolutionary politics, or to turn them, in general, into people indifferent towards the problems of society. The aging revisionist Soviet writer, **Marietta Shaginian**, in her book *»Four Lessons from Lenin«*, published in the Soviet Union recently, counterposes politics to art, as the bourgeois theoreticians have always done. Leafing through **Lenin's** correspondence with **Gorky** [Gorkij], this revisionist author and publicist writes: **»Reading every word of this correspondence, one begins to be aware of how necessary the shy, withdrawn, stubborn, sensitive, fiery Gorky was to Lenin, who sharpened up his thoughts on this friendship, on the questions asked by this rough, different, strange man. The artist was as necessary to the politician as air, food, as the left foot is necessary to the right foot.«** And further: **»...I think that had Gorky been another person, had he not made mistakes in 1908, in 1917, and perhaps more than once, before and after those dates, Ilych would not have loved him as he did, getting angry with him, persisting with him, sharpening his thought on the polemic with him«.** (**Marietta Shaginian**, *»Chetyre Uroka u Lenina«*, Moscow, 1970, p. 281). These few lines bring out clearly the monstrous distortion, not only of two great figures of the proletariat **Lenin** and **Gorky**, but also of the Leninist policy of partisanship in art. On the one hand, the revisionist writer counterposes the artist to the politician, and on the other, puts **Gorky** in the role of the entertainer of the leader of the proletariat. Everybody knows that **Lenin** did not keep close to **Gorky** in order to *»sharpen his thought«* on polemics with him, but to make him a cofighter and a soldier of the revolution. Moreover, **Lenin** never considered **Gorky** *»alien«* to the cause of the revolution. What **Shaginian** says is shameless fabrication.

The Soviet revisionist theoreticians, guided by their bourgeois world-outlook, are now coming out openly for the revision of the principle of partisanship, not only in creative practice but also in theory. In reality they are for partisanship, provided it is revisionist partisanship. Indeed they have come out with the *»theory«* that, in the countries with a bourgeois system, only those writers who are *»organized in the communist parties«* (read: revisionist parties) can master this partisanship. We all know that proletarian partisanship is not only for those artists who are organized in parties. But according to the revisionist theoreticians this principle should allegedly be reviewed. The revisionist critic, **G. Starets**, [writes]: **»Thus, in the framework of the bourgeois system, communist partisanship, as a rule, can be achieved only by those writers who are organizationally linked with the party«.** Hence, according to this theoretician, it emerges that, **Gorky** and **Mayakovsky** [Majakovskij], who, were not party members, allegedly did not achieve partisanship in their works. True, they did not achieve that revisionist partisanship this theoretician is after!...

The essence of all the modernist and reactionary trends, schools and methods, whether camouflaged as art *»that stands above classes«*, or manifested openly, is bourgeois and revisionist partisanship, which deviously and hypocritically, but also aggressively, tries to counterpose itself to proletarian partisanship and socialist realism. Hence, to adhere to proletarian partisanship today, means to combat the bourgeois and revisionist ideology, to combat its reactionary world outlook within the country and in the international arena, and to propagate the line and ideology of the Party tirelessly. Today the revisionist and bourgeois aesthetes have made decadence, irrationality, the preaching of absurdity, etc., fashionable throughout the world. **Allen Ginzburg**, who is well known in the Soviet Union, writes: **»Now all revolutionary ideas and the usual methods of acting on the human consciousness have become obsolete«.**

Faced with all this ideological chaos and all these reactionary trends that exert fierce pressure on our life, the struggle to raise the level of the Marxist-Leninist world-outlook of every writer and artist in all fields of our art is more necessary than ever. As Comrade **Enver Hoxha** teaches us: **»We must cope with the united front of the enemies by strengthening our internal front in all directions, in the fields of defence and the economy, politics and ideology, always consistently waging the class struggle«** [8]. The formation of the artist's world-outlook plays a major role, not only in strengthening the content of his creative work, but also in his treatment of many theoretical problems that face our arts in the party spirit. The confusion which sometimes arises over the question of the national character, tradition, innovation, etc., also stems from inadequate Marxist-Leninist formation.

The problems of the national character of art at the present time cannot be dealt with simply as academic analyses, because they are important political and ideological problems which are subject to class tendentiousness and proletarian partisanship. The reflection of special national features, and the national character in general, in art cannot be divorced from the class struggle and history. One of the most distinctive and active elements which expresses the national character is the patriotism of the artist himself, the originality of this patriotism which he finds among his own people. With their impudence devoid of all principles, the Soviet revisionists do everything they can to hit out directly or indirectly at the patriotism of our people in their publications and translations from bourgeois artistic and political literature. Recently in Moscow was published **L. Mosley**'s book *»Time lost«*, where among other things, the English author says: *»On April 7th, the Duce dispatched his naval ships to the port of Durrës and occupied the whole of Albania without meeting resistance«* (**L. Mosley**, *»Time Lost«*, Russ. edition, 1972; p. 219). This is an ill-intentioned distortion of the history which cynically hurts the patriotic feelings of our people. Everybody knows that on April 7th, 1939, our people, although betrayed by **Zog** and the feudal-bourgeois regime, fought heroically to defend their land and honour against the fascist invaders.

Our literature and arts have found their patriotism in the very life of our people. This reality has given our arts their national tone and colour. Therefore, the national character of art assists directly to increase its educative power, with its love of country, its feeling of civic responsibility and its militant character. Hence, we come to the conclusion that the question of the national character is closely linked with the ideological leanings and the world-outlook of the artist, is closely linked with his partisanship. The ideology and world-outlook of the artists also determine his concept of patriotism and his reflection of the national character in art. **Gjergj Fishta** wrote in the Albanian language, was a master of the octosyllabic verse, portrayed the originality of life in our Highlands, drew on folk songs, but his ideology and world-outlook were reactionary because they were an expression of the interests of the anti-democratic and obscurantist exploiting classes. Even a reactionary writer may use national elements such as folk customs, traditional dress and headwear and popular phraseology, but he cannot be a patriot and a man of the people because he lacks the progressive ideological trend which is determined by his world-outlook. For this reason we say that the national character of an artist is linked with the popular spirit of his work, which stems from his treatment of the major problems of the life of the people. And the highest form of expression of the popular spirit is proletarian partisanship, the quintessence of class tendentiousness. Proletarian partisanship places art completely in the service of socialism, in the service of the communist education of man, while protecting it against cosmopolitanism and other antinational trends.

The insistence on the strengthening of the national character and the popular spirit in our literature and arts is linked directly with the requirements of the development of the class struggle in literary and artistic work. The socialist realism of our art is in open struggle

against the ideology of the two superpowers the United States of America and the Soviet Union, which, proceeding from their expansionist intentions, are doing their utmost to divest the cultures of peoples of their national character and to make them cosmopolitan. For this reason the defence and the strengthening of the national character is not simply a question of aesthetics, but a question of political principle and of world-outlook in the arena where class struggle is waged. That is why, at the 7th Congress of the Party, Comrade **Enver Hoxha** takes both the national character and the popular spirit as inseparable from the positions of the Marxist-Leninist ideology, the class standpoint, proletarian partisanship. Dealing with the three cardinal problems of our arts: proletarian partisanship, the national character, and the popular spirit, all inter-connected with one another dialectically, he comes to **the conclusion: »The national character and the popular spirit are expressed through the truthful reflection of reality, from the standpoint of Marxist-Leninist ideology...« [9].**

It is from this angle that the revolutionary artist or writer of the new type should see his task as a creator and a citizen. Only through a sound ideological moulding can works with a high proletarian partisanship, with a clear national character and a thoroughly popular spirit, be created.

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LITERATURE AND ARTS TOWARDS A NEW QUALITATIVE LEAP

by Dritëro Agolli

Chairman of the League of Writers and Artists of Albania

Socialism and its reflection in art enliven and refresh the cells of literary artistic creation

OUR LITERATURE AND ARTS HAVE BECOME AN IMPORTANT FACTOR OF SOCIAL INFLUENCE BECAUSE THEY HAVE FOCUSED ON THE ACTIVITY OF THE PEOPLE, THEIR HISTORY, THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION, THE DAY-TO-DAY WORK AND PROBLEMS AND THE BATTLE FOR THE TRIUMPH OF THE IDEALS OF COMMUNISM. THEY PLAY NOW A GREAT ROLE IN THE FORMATION OF THE WORLD OUTLOOK OF PEOPLE, THE ENRICHMENT OF THEIR SPIRITUAL WORLD AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL OPINION. PROCEEDING FROM THEIR ROLE IN SOCIETY, AS THEY TREAT CARDINAL PROBLEMS OF SOCIALISM, WE ALSO SPEAK OF CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE AND ART, THE GREAT VALUES WHICH SOCIALISM, ON ITS ROAD OF CONSTRUCTION, HAS CREATED. THEREFORE, AT ITS 8TH CONGRESS THE PARTY OF LABOUR OF ALBANIA MADE A HIGH ASSESSMENT OF LITERATURE AND ART, OPENED UP BROAD HORIZONS AND SET IMPORTANT TASKS TO ALL THE CREATIVE FORCES OF THE COUNTRY.

This assessment is based on the reality of the artistic and literary creations of recent years and their process of development. They have some features which distinguish them from those of the previous periods. Among them we can mention:

The enrichment of art in content and form, which results from the strengthening of the socialist spirit, is a process which must be further deepened. The socialist spirit is felt in the broader reflection of presentday life, as a consequence of the ever growing interest of the creative forces in the great variety of themes and problems presented by the socialist reality. This spirit is also seen in the works of art treating problems from the historical past and the National Liberation War.

Another feature is that a more correct ratio has been established between themes from life in socialist society and the historical past, although some problems still remain in this field. However, it must be said that life, its acute problems, the uplift of the cultural level of people, the all-round development of their personality and the extension of the frontiers of their knowledge exercise a powerful pressure on artistic creativeness which must turn its attention more towards life and establish a more correct ratio between themes from the present and from earlier history.

An important feature is that the literary and artistic activity has assumed extensive development in all its kinds and genres: literature, cinematography, theatre, figurative arts, music and choreography. Let us take an example from literature. From the year 1976 to the end of 1980 we have seen 996 titles, published, of which 128 novels. The League of Writers and Artists has swelled its ranks to include 1,500 members and candidate members, apart from hundreds of new talent and thousands of amateurs. An activity of such unprecedented proportions is bound to yield valuable works that enrich the treasury of literature and art.

In the field of more recent creativeness worth mentioning is the ever growing preoccupation of the writers and artists about their own ideological, aesthetic and cultural formation. This the creativeness of each of them. In their creative process they have thrashed out problems of art content and form, discussed principles and methods of the developing socialist revolution. Some questions of the deepening of the socialist spirit and national originality are treated far more extensively than several years before and the cultural and professional level of writers and artists is in constant rise. From a rapid excursion into the literature and art of the recent period we notice undeniable achievements which make us optimistic about the perspective of artistic production. However, considering literature and the arts from the heights of the 8th Congress of the Party, we find ourselves faced with many problems, the correct solution of which will quicken the transition to a new qualitative leap in literary and artistic activity.

* * *

The demands of our society for higher quality in literature and art are not unattainable, abstract ones. Quality is not the result of a simple addition of expression means used in the process of creation, but the result of a whole development connected with the world outlook of the writer or artist, his truthful, though artistic, reflection of the essence of the life of the people in socialist society and in the historical past. When we lay the stress on a more complete reflection of life, this means that we have to go deeper into it, because it is precisely in the great socialist reality that phenomena and problems are more acute and their reflection calls for a high artistic level in literature and the arts. We live in the socialist

reality and when we see it reflected in art, we immediately feel both the beauty of the artistic work and its faults. Conversely, in a book reflecting the past, the reader does not notice its faults so easily, since he is attracted by the plot, by what is romantic and exotic in it. On the other hand, in reflecting the past we have gained an experience from both national and international sources. Here come into play our great teachers, the classics, with their works. The reflection of the past lacks the acute problems of the present reality in which we live and with which we are confronted every day. In the works treating problems of the present-day reality there is the invariable difficulty of coping with a complex reality, with complex phenomena which demand an all-round ideological, cultural and aesthetic formation.

True art is tendentious, since without being tendentious the artist cannot defend his views and fight for his lofty aims. Engels is quite outspoken about the problem of tendentiousness. Speaking in favour of this feature of progressive art, he says: *»I think that tendentiousness should emanate from the milieu and from action, that we must not overstress it, and that the writer is not compelled to provide the reader with readymade historical solutions to the social conflicts which he depicts.«* [10]

Cut and dried treatments of problems have overdoses of tendentiousness, expressed through pompous-sounding phrases. The use of pompous phrases necessarily demands the squeezing of all ideas and principles of a manifesto in to one work, however small it may be. A manifestation of schematic phraseologism is the polishing and embellishment of the reality, the idealization of the hero and the milieu. Schematism is sometimes responsible for the harm caused to generally positive works of writers of talent and literary experience, preventing them from going to the end of the conflict or leading them to shifting the main stress from the principal to the trivial.

Our literature and arts, in the first place, point out the new phenomena in life, but they also stigmatize everything which inhibits their development; they exalt the bold builders of socialism, the working people, the peasants and the intellectuals: the main place in them is occupied by the positive hero while enemies, traitors, scribblers, creepers and individualists are made the target of stern criticism. Our society is strong, and with the struggle it wages against every difficulty and inhibiting phenomena it becomes even more so. The atmosphere in our society is so healthy that even the extreme individualist finds it hard to act freely. One of the missions of socialist arts is to educate moral fortitude, therefore it finds such heroes as try to live up to their own ideals. Such heroes may even look unsensational, unglamorous. We have works which reflect such heroes. The main tendency in such works is: the ordinary man harbors in himself lofty moral virtues, which, when revealed in dramatic moments, shine in all their human splendour.

Today even the greatest artist must develop and enrich his means of expression, otherwise time, discards him. This development of structures and forms we see from the vantage point of Marxist-Leninist aesthetics, without separating it from its content. Marx says: *»Form is devoid of all value if it is not the form of the content.«* [11] The new does not lie in the form, but in the personality of the artist, in his world outlook. This personality and outlook can make form advance and break off with routine.

These, in turn, have to do with artistic skill, without which literarism and schematism cannot be combat through to the end. *»To take up the theme of the day, to write about the positive hero, the socialist reality, etc is not enough. This alone, without artistic skill, cannot arouse emotion, cannot educate or inspire you for the present and the future.«* [12]

I want to stress that we must make more efforts in this direction, aware that any superficial reflection of life in socialist society is a hangover of the past and as such is alien to the

method of socialist realism.

A more thorough reflection of the socialist society requires from writers and artists a more comprehensive understanding of the themes of present times. The theme of the day in our literature and arts has two broad aspects: that which reflects the National Liberation War and that which reflects the period of the socialist construction of the country. These two aspects constitute one single theme, completing each other, and being treated with growing maturity in our literature and arts. Sometimes by actual themes peoples understand themes of the day or the moment, day-to-day events and momentary achievements of individuals of collectives. Actual themes are something else. They are major events in the life of society, events which form the background of major moments. Art is the generalization of events and the destiny of man in dramatic and important moments of history. It portrays our time, our hard struggle and work, the great transformations of our society, our socialist advance in town and countryside. First and foremost, it exalts man. Our literature and arts have now gained a rich experience in the reflection of the man of our time, the man of the socialist ideals. Even though our literature and arts have made a great contribution to the reflection of the man of our time, of his work in the construction of the new society, even though they have reflected the great epoch of socialism, [there] are still many shortcomings in the observation of the processes of development of socialism and the new phenomena of life. In many cases they treat only the simpler processes of development, the day-to-day manifestations of life, without going deeper into them, therefore there must be an extension of the gamut of themes in literature and the arts so that they comprehend with greater depth and variety all our socialist life. Compared with the rates of transformation of society and the psychology of people, artistic creativeness, as an ideological and aesthetic phenomenon, lags behind, if it fails to take account of life which changes rapidly. Our literature and arts will make a qualitative leap only if they find their nourishment in real life. This will ensure them a broader range of themes. Here lies the special importance of contemporary themes for literature and the arts in the present stage of the development of our society.

Psychological insights is imperative especially for the works of prose and drama, which reflect the emergence and growth of the new man. In poetry, a more profound content will relieve it more and more of rhetorical and declamatory elements, while reaffirming its lyrical and epic elements in the artistic analysis and expression of the spiritual world of man. The many-sided reflection of life in socialist society gives new features to the national character of literature and the arts. Since socialism is built in a given country and in special historical conditions, literature and art which reflect this process must have their own original features. Our literature, its content and form, are closely connected with the national way of life, with the economic, political and cultural peculiarities of the country, with the spiritual formation of people and the entire history of the nation. The national originality of the writer is clearly reflected in his work, in its content and its means of expression, in its general spirit and its [style].

One of the most distinguishing and most active features, which express the national character of our artistic creativeness, is the patriotic spirit of the writer and the originality of this patriotism. A genuine writer [is] a patriot who fights for the advance of his country. His patriotism is conspicuous in all his work, down to the tiniest detail, even in the manner in which the home landscape is depicted. But the reflection of national peculiarities and the national character, in general, cannot be achieved in isolation from the class struggles and from history. The question of the national character in the creative activity of the writer is closely linked with his ideological tendentiousness. The ideological position of the writer determines the degree of his patriotism and the national character of his production. The reactionary writer, the collaborator with the fascists, **Father Gjergj Fishta**, wrote in Albanian was a past master of the octametre, expressed the originality of the Albanian

milieu, made skilful use of popular songs, but his ideological tendency was antipopular, because it represented the interests of the exploiting, anti-democratic and obscurantist classes. The national character and originality of Fishta set him apart from the reactionary writers of other countries, but his reactionary ideological tendency united him with them. With the English writer and poet **Kipling** the national character is expressed in his descriptions of the presentday adventurous colonizer who enslaves the peoples. In the present-day Albanian writer the national character is revealed in his patriotism, in his love of country, in his struggle for the construction of socialism and in his internationalist spirit. The assesment of the national element in the creativeness of a writer is connected with the popular spirit of his production. A work of popular spirit is one which expressed, to a high degree, the progressive interests and aims of the people, which is accessible to the people, both in content and form. The popular spirit is expressed when the writer takes up problem from life which have great importance for the entire people. Without a popular spirit the national character cannot be expressed. The highest form of expression of the popular spirit in art is proletarian partisanship, the very essence of class tendentiousness, the ideology of the working class. Proletarian partisanship places art in the service of socialism, in the service of the communist education of the man. Socialism fully expresses the interests of the peoples. Therefore, socialist art is profoundly popular. The national character is not [an] unchangeable category. It develops with the advance of society and assumes ever new features. The more complete reflection of life will further enrich it and the arts will gain ever new originality.

Socialism and its reflection in art enliven and refresh the cells of literary-artistic creation. The problem today is not that we have few works of art which treat the socialist reality in all its diverse aspects. We have many productions of literature, cinematography and the figurative arts which deal with its problems. But many of them do not treat the fundamental aspects of this reality.

The writer feels that he is one of the builders of socialism, that he is responsible for his social mission, therefore, in the work he produces he exalts the epoch in which he lives. Great aesthetic pleasure is derived from great artistic inventions. Trivial [inventions] are bound to arouse small aesthetic pleasure.

For a more complete reflection of life in socialist society it is absolutely necessary to protect literature and art against liberalism. Without a ceaseless struggle against liberalism in art there can be no pure content and vanguard form. With the development and consolidation of the method of socialist realism, the struggle against bookish prejudices and abstract treatment of problems, against a lifeless, phrase-mongering and schematic reflection of the reality, grows fiercer, and together with it, the offensive against liberalism in art grows more extensive. The method of socialist realism is against any scheme, conservative or liberal. This method is in continuous development, and it is against its nature to accept petrified forms which inhibit its progress and suffocate its innovatory research. However, negation of schematism does toy no means imply that we must forget the struggle against liberal stands which are reflected in the form of the alien influences. We do not wage the struggle against schematism in order to tone down, even in the slightest, our struggle against liberalism. On the contrary rejection of schematism creates a smothering atmosphere for liberalism as well. Nevertheless, liberal stands and alien influences always constitute a threat to literature and the arts, therefore, opposition to them and irreconcilable struggle with them are on the order of the day for every writer and artist.

In works treating contemporary themes liberalism ignores the typical and the realistic reflection of our life, disregards its main stream and takes up some blemish of our society, exaggerating it out of all proportion and generalizing it. It is quite a different thing from literature treating the shortcomings of a society and submitting them [to] a stern trial

proceeding from the positions of the interests of the people. In the literature of socialist realism characters polemize, affirm and negate, and those who make mistakes and crimes are criticized and condemned for the sake of the triumph of lofty ideals.

Our literary and artistic experience shows that time and again we have had to cope with distortions in different genres. They have been more outrageous in poetry, in which they manifested themselves especially in strange figures, in incoherent, illogical and foggy verses, etc. Liberalism in poetry sometimes manifests itself in the irregularity of versification, in the obliteration of the frontiers between the prose and the poetry, etc. It also manifests itself in mannerisms as a pretended originality of expression.

In the world today there is a confusion of all sorts of trends and tendencies in literature, art and philosophy, which have debased all intellectual values, both in the West and in the East. This is connected with the cultural expansion undertaken by the United States of America and the Soviet Union together with their satellite countries. This expansion through literature and art, which is the official policy of the two superpowers, is a source of decay, degeneration, crime, scandal and bestiality. There is an entire industry of words, colours and sounds, which, although ramified in literary and artistic trends, schools and [styles], boils down to one and the same thing: literature and art are used as a drug against human consciousness, a drug against what is truly human. Revived and popularized in a new garb, Freud's subjectivist and idealist theories, especially his theories on sex and its role as a stimulus in literature and the arts, have become widespread today. Not less widespread are Freud's theories of dreams and their interpretation, on the line dividing dreams from the reality, implying that this line should be almost imperceptible in literary works, which will only gain from this approach. In his book »*Dream Interpretation*« [Freud] writes: »*The dream represents the (hidden) reality of the (suppressed) desire*«. According to him, the treatment of dreams in art is very important, because through them the artist expresses his hidden and suppressed desires. Therefore, both in the West and in the East there are thousands of novels in which it is hard to distinguish between the world of dreams and the world of reality. This only confuses the art consumer.

Gangsters and egotists, sadists and narcissists are the protagonists of Western and Eastern literature. Western literary criticism says that the narcissist of modern times is a man without ideals, indifferent to all problems and preoccupations. All the important questions are confined within the cell of his own self.

Bent on cultural and artistic expansion, capitalism and revisionism spread degenerate forms and structures. The degree of degeneration of the forms of art, especially poetry, which according to the bourgeois aesthetes is the form of modern times, is well known. We have closed our doors to this sort of poetry and this sort of forms, and will keep them closed for ever.

Our literature and arts, by raising their qualitative level, and by strengthening and perfecting their form, are in a position to defend themselves better from any negative influence, while on the other hand, heightening their authority with the reader. With this we make our modest contribution to world literature. Our literature and arts have achieved important successes also in their affirmation before the international public. They have more and more attracted its attention and have been positively assessed by progressive people, who find in them not only progressive ideas, a sound realistic spirit, but also democratic and human spirit unlike the decadent and reactionary spirit of modern bourgeois and revisionist art.

Our culture, with its present qualitative level, is a culture rich in vital elements which is in a position to convey its own values and takes from world literature and art whatever is

progressive, human and revolutionary. The struggle against liberalism and alien influences does not shut us away or isolate us from world culture, on the contrary, it makes us better able to appropriate it in a dialectical manner. We continuously translate works of the progressive literature created by mankind in the centuries. We have translations of most classics, from **Homer** to modern authors. And we shall continue to translate more works of the world literary treasure, works with valuable content and form.

The literature created in **Kosova** is widely read in our country. Almost all the Kosova writers have been published by the »Naim Frashëri« Publishing House in Albania and they are popular with our readers, writers and artists. It is a literature in development, a literature with patriotic feelings and progressive ideas, which discloses genuine aesthetic values to the reader. Genuine literature and art of the same trunk cannot be isolated, no matter how hard the **Titoite** illwishers and chauvinists may try. They will spread constantly and will have thousands and thousands of readers and wellwishers. They, too, play their role in our culture, in its enrichment and qualitative development. Whenever we speak of Albanian literature and art we cannot be silent about the important part of it which is created in Kosova in the same language and with an indubitable national originality.

* * *

One of the demands on literature and arts about quality is connected with the general issue of the ratio of themes from the present and the past. Certainly, this ratio cannot be gauged simply by arithmetical methods or percentages. Nevertheless, the general, the average can be easily traced out if literary and artistic processes are attentively analysed. The ratio of themes in general, is correct.

Certainly, we shall continue to write about our historical past and the period of antiquity, because works taking up such themes carry an actual note and educate patriotic and aesthetic feelings, educate people to be proud of their nation, and enrich literature and art. In his report to the 8th Congress of the Party, speaking about the importance of the themes drawn from history, Comrade **Enver Hoxha** stresses: »*But the development of literature and art is inconceivable without the broadest reflection of the great surge of life and presentday reality in the novels, poems, films and musical and figurative arts. By basing themselves firmly on the reality in which we live, by reflecting it extensively, literature and the arts will also be able to reflect the past better, more correctly and at a higher ideological level.*« [13]

The writer is a vital social element, is the contemporary of his own epoch. Should he grope about in history and record its stages and periods as a pedantic historian? No! History, of course, aids him to see better and more clearly into the present which lives, fights and seethes around him. The present reality also gives historical themes some of its actual note. This has great importance. History provides facts and themes. But facts and themes remain lifeless without problems and the actual note. It is in this dialectical relation that themes from history find their vitality.

The ever growing interest in the themes of the earlier life of our people and their history is favoured by some factors existing in our socialist society today. With the development of socialism in Albania with the raising of the general level of culture, with the advance of education, science, literature and the arts and with the ever better assimilation of knowledge and the Marxist-Leninist theory, the demands of people to know more about their past, their ethnic development, their spiritual values, the treasury of their folklore and legends, their wars and struggles for freedom and the independence of the country, have increased and imposed themselves as an absolute necessity. A consolidated and mature

society want to know everything possible. This is true of man, too. When he grows up and matures his curiosity increases, and he wants to know about his origin, is interested about his forefathers, about their life and struggles. On the other hand, the pressure of [alien] bourgeois and revisionist ideologies on our country has become fiercer. The enemies, in fighting socialism which is built under the leadership of our Party, in fighting Marxism-Leninism in general, have gone over to the offensive also against our historical past and the spiritual values of our people. And this induces us to given them their answer in our own language and reveal the truth to the world. But there is another factor, too. Our sociological and historical sciences have now reached a certain stage of development and facts have come to light in greater numbers than a few years before. Consequently, literature and the arts have a richer material to handle and reflect in their creativeness. Certainly there are shortcomings, there are also cases of a superficial [approach] to the reflection of the past and history, but the main trend is positive, has yielded fruit and will continue to do so. What is required now is that themes drawn from history should be reflected according to the requirements of the conscious writer and not by way of imitating the successful work of other authors. Besides we must bear in mind the ratio between the themes and guard against disproportions. We will continue to reflect history and handle themes from history. There are moments in life in which this is important, like this year when we celebrated the 70th anniversary of the Proclamation of Independence. On this occasion, historical themes occupy an important place and carry a strong actual note which is necessary in every historical work.

Almost all our arts have treated life in the past society in all its contradictions, with its progressive movements and social revolts. This is especially true about the recent years when history has been seen in its different aspects.

It is only natural to stress that one of the main places in our literature and art is occupied by themes from the National Liberation War, which also are treated at the highest artistic level. However, in themes of the National Liberation War, too, the time has come to go over to a new qualitative leap and do away with a certain monotony in the handling of characters, heroes and milieus.

Today and in the future the National Liberation War is and will be a major theme for our writers. Interest in and reflection of this period will always be growing. However, along with the growing interest in its reflection, there should be more profound study of written and live documents so that the works treating these themes should always be truthful to history.

* * *

A special feature of our society is that cultivated art develops together with popular art, with folklore and the creativeness of the amateur movement. This phenomenon has its originality and gives the arts their freshness and impels them to further development. Our folklore does not remain shut up in museums and cultural institutions. It is there, out in the streets and on the stages. It is assimilated and kept alive by ordinary people, who create it, and by the artists. It is given a powerful impulse at the local and regional folkore festivals, an especially at the National Festival of Folklore in **Gjirokastra**, in which the great talent of the people manifests itself without restraint. From this inexhaustible source inspire themselves our composers and poets, our critics and scholars, our journalists and writers, our singers and dancers. So the impact of this art is powerful and makes its contribution to the advancement of artistic and cultural creativeness.

Viewing the problem from a general point of view, the ratio between cultivated art and popular art is correct. However, we must bear in mind that this ratio should be constantly

maintained and no disproportions allowed.

And here three questions emerge: first, detachment of cultivated art from popular art is harmful; second, putting the equalizer between them is unacceptable; third, mechanical imitation of popular art should be avoided.

There have been harmful tendencies of bitter consequences, especially at the end of the 60's and in the beginning of the 70's, before the 4th Plenum of the CC of the Party in 1973, when people of liberal tendencies tried to detach our music from popular art, because, according to them, this connection only prevented the development of new forms. We felt the dangerous consequences of this trend in our songs, until it reached its culmination in the 11th Radio and Television Song Festival in 1972. The dialectical relationship, between cultivated art and folklore must necessarily be maintained in music because it gives it that unrivalled national originality which cannot be found in other forms.

Trying to equalize cultivated art with popular art, making this equalization paramount in the creativeness of the writer or the artist, only dampens down their creative and demanding spirit, petrifies artistic and cultural creativeness, in the first place, in music, turning it into a mere derivative of folklore and preventing the development of all the forms of music - the opera, ballet, symphony and song, thereby creating an anachronic monotony and uniformity which is alien to socialism. Tendencies towards this equalization have manifested themselves time and again in recent years, especially in songs and dances.

In recent years there have been manifestations of mechanical imitation of popular art, especially in the field of music. The art of the people is as magnificent as nature itself. Folklore will continue to be cultivated and the amateur movement developed. The development of folklore should not be contained, in order to maintain a correct ratio between it and cultivated art. On the contrary, cultivated art should rise towards its heights, and never say to folklore: Wait, I cannot keep in step with you! Wait, otherwise the ratio is upset!

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SOME FEATURES OF THE ALBANIAN NOVEL

by Dritëro Agolli

Chairman of the Writers and Artists' League of Albania

Albanian writers have always asked themselves: does the content of their works respond to the tasks the country is solving, the economic, social, ideological and political tasks our socialist state has to cope with? That is why they have not allowed themselves to be attracted by petty ordinary themes, but by the great theme of the revolution and the building of the new society

THE NOVEL EMERGED RATHER LATE ON THE HORIZON OF THE ALBANIAN LITERATURE. WHEN THE ALBANIAN WRITERS BEGAN TO WRITE NOVELS IN THEIR

MOTHER TONGUE, THIS GENRE OF LITERATURE HAD EMERGED AND REACHED ITS COMPLETE MATURITY CENTURIES AGO IN EUROPE. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUROPEAN NOVEL, WITH ITS PEAKS IN FRANCE, BRITAIN, RUSSIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES, COULD NOT GO UNNOTICED BY THE ALBANIAN WRITERS OF OUR NATIONAL RENAISSANCE, BECAUSE THEY WERE CULTURED PEOPLE WITH BROAD INTERESTS. BUT AT THAT TIME, IN THE 19th CENTURY, THE NOVEL COULD NOT BE WRITTEN IN ALBANIA, BECAUSE THE ALBANIAN LANGUAGE STILL HAD NOT ITS OWN ALPHABET; THE ILLITERATE PEOPLE WERE LANGUISHING UNDER THE YOKE OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE, THE MEN OF LETTERS HAD TO SOLVE MORE IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS CONCERNING THE AWAKENING OF THE NATIONAL AWARENESS BY MEANS OF POLITICAL AND TEACHING PAMPHLETS, POEMS AND ARTICLES, ASSEMBLIES AND OPEN AGITATION, ORGANIZATION AND DIRECTION OF THE PATRIOTIC MOVEMENT, WITH PLEASANT READERS FOR THE PUPILS, AND SO ON.

It is true that, at that time, the gap left by the lack of the novel was filled to some extent by the poems and poetry which were composed in the form of a long narrative with a fable and characters. The poet **De Rada**, for example, published the long poem, »*The Songs of Milosao*« in 1863, which may be called the first novel in verse of the Albanian literature. Nevertheless, we still cannot speak of the novel in the true sense of the word. At that time in place of the novel we had narratives about the popular fighters, legends about extraordinary events and supernatural heroes, rhapsodies about the valiant knights and the songs to heroes. Just as we today have the radio novel, at that time they had the long stories of their grandfathers and grandmothers, which were transmitted by word of mouth. Our grandmother and grandfathers were **George Sand** and **Dumas**. This was the cradle in which the future Albanian novel was rocked, though not on paper, a novel which, even when it was born, would always retain a tinge of the strange narrative of our grandmothers and grandfathers.

The history of the Albanian novel has some specific phenomena which it would be of interest to mark out. The theme of our history was treated by European novelists even before Albanian writers took it up. In the 16th century the Italian **Antonio Posenti** was attracted by the figure of Skanderbeg and wrote his novel »*Terror of the Turks*« in 1548. Later, in 1644, the French writers **Y. Chevreau** wrote »*Scanderbeg*«, just as his contemporary **I. Chevier** did in 1732 writing the novel »*Scanderbeg or the Adventures of the Albanian Prince*«. The figure of Skanderbeg and later that of Ali Pasha of Tepelena attracted the attention of many European writers of the 19th century, of whom we may mention the Englishman **G. Lodlow** who wrote »*The Captain of the Jenissaries*«, the Italian **A. Gioconda** (»*Scanderbeg*«), the Pole **T. Jeszi** »*About Life*« and many others. Our men of culture, who had been formed in schools abroad, or who lived in emigration, were glad that the European writers found an inspiration in the Albanian history and life and used the Albanian material to write novels and stories, but, at the same time, they could not but be sorry that they could not do themselves what the foreigners were doing. At this point, another important phenomenon in the history of our novel occurred. At the time when the Albanian theme was cultivated by foreign writers, the Albanian writers began to write their novels in foreign languages, on the local material of their own country. Without doubt, these no veils are the fruit of the labour of beginners, but they are important for our culture. The first novel of this kind was that written by **Sami Frashëri**, »*Telat's Love for Fitnet*«, published in Turkish in 1872, for which he based himself on the works of Göte [**Goethe**], **Hugo** and **Lamartine**, who, as he admits: »*sang to true love, truth, freedom and humanity instead of religious fanaticism*«. However, the most valuable work written by the Albanian writers in a foreign language is **Pashko Vasa's** »*Bardha of Temal*«, written in French and published in Paris in 1890 under the penname of **Albanus Albano**. The novel reflects

aspects of the Albanian life in the past century through the vicissitudes of two young lovers at the time of the Ottoman rule. The writer emphasizes the pride and valiance of the Albanians, their customs and noble virtues, without overlooking the serious social ulcers such as the blood feud, fanaticism, religious strife and the deplorable state of the Albanian women.

It is true that the novels written in a foreign tongue by our writers could have no great response among the readers abroad and were read at a relatively late time in Albania. Nevertheless, they prepared the ground for the emergence of the true Albanian novel. At the beginning of the 20th century, when shortstory writers began to appear and some books by foreign writers were translated, the first novels in the Albanian language were published. The year 1913 saw the publication of the novel of **Ndoc Nikaj**, **Betrothed from the Cradle or Ulqin Captured**" and »*Shkodra Besieged*«. Before he turned to the novel, the writer had published some historical studies written in a narrative vein. Since 1902 he had published the books »*The History of Albania*« and »*The History of Turkey*«. In 1914 **Zef Harapi** published the historical novel, »*The Traitor's Rifle*«, and in the period 1909-1919 **Foqion Postoli** published »*For the Defence of the Homeland*« and »*The Flower of Souvenir*«.

The first novels in Albanian were, thus, written in the second decade of our century, in the period 1913-1920, which is the time of our national independence. It was a period charged with dramatic tension and full of heroic events, in which the destiny of Albania was decided. Albania, which had just won its independence and was liberated from the five hundred-year old yoke of the Ottoman Empire, became the token of barter for the big imperialist powers and was in danger of being partitioned by its neighbours, Serbia, Greece and Italy. The reactionary governments of the neighbouring countries, aided and abetted by the imperialist states, and incited by a savage traditional chauvinism swooped on the Albanian territories, committing unexampled atrocities. In these turbulent times which stench of blood, which were full of threats to and dangers for the national existence, the true popular patriotism and heroic spirit stood out in full splendour. Precisely in this period the first Albanian novelists emerged in the arena of the Albanian literature. Therefore, they placed in the centre of their novels the spirit of patriotism and the Albanian drama of the time, the theme of the defence of the land and honour, the theme of the enhancement of the national awareness. The first steps of our novel were taken right in the ashes and ambers of the burned down houses, in the devastated fields and ruined villages. The first novels may lack some of the perfection and lustre which come from mastery and style, they lack psychological insight, spiritual struggle and meditation, but they are full of the pathos and total involvement in the patriotic movement, which is the main characteristic of these novel. We pointed out this because the patriotic movement set the tone to the political struggle, the life of the country, culture, literature and the whole superstructure. In Europe the novel is the creation, of the bourgeoisie, of that new class which wanted transformations in the social life, which wanted new forms in art. The novel of that time in Europe reflected the social life, analysed the society and centered on the personality of the man. In various manners and forms it reflected the class struggle of that time. Whereas our novel, which developed in its own specific conditions, could not make the analysis of society, but reflected only the patriotic movement of the time and the clash of the democratic and progressive sections of the population with the foreign occupiers. Our novel would tackle social problems and study the personality of the man at a much later period, in the 30's of this century, with the generation of new novelists such as **Haki Stërmilli** with his novel »*If I Were a Boy*«, and **Sterjo Spasse** with »*Why?*«. They tried to reflect the difficulties of the man against the background of the obscurantist regime of **Ahmet Zog**, the suppression and curb on the personality of the man and, especially, of the Albanian woman. Poetry and the short story were working on same lines at that time.

Despite the efforts of our progressive writers, our novel remained almost at the initial phase.

It marked only little progress and its forms were naive. It was perfected as a genre after the National Liberation War in the conditions of the new socialist society. It was raised to higher levels by such novelists as **Sterjo Spasse**, **Jakov Xoxa**, **Fatmir Gjata**, **Ali Abdihoxa**, and later by writers of the younger generation such as **Ismail Kadare**, **Dhimiter Xhuvani**, **Sabri Godo**, **Teodor Laço**, **Skënder Drini** and others. The novels of these writers who are well-known in our country, treat the themes of the socialist revolution and the past of our people, the new social life and its problems, the man and his personality. The new novels reveal the national life through the clash of views, the world out-look and ideas of the characters, in conformity with the aims of the author and his social and aesthetic ideal. The success of the novel of **Ismail Kadare**, »*The Great Winter*«, lies precisely in the strength of ideas and views, the new psychology and morality of the characters and in the manner in which the problem is raised and solved: Will the communist ideals and progress win in a complicated situation? The answer is in the affirmative, but the road is long. The dialectic of the morality and psychology of the central character, Besnik, speaks of the difficulty and complexity of the situation, the turbid situations and clarity, the dilemma and the resolve which lead him to conquer his own weaknesses for the sake of the great cause. This dialectical clash of the ideas in complex situations is not realized through a simple narrative. The narrator is something different from the true novelist. The former narrates the feats of his heroes, the foolish acts of the stupid, the stratagems of the cunning. Whereas the novelist uses the narrative in order to reveal something else, to reveal the history of man in the given conditions of society.

Characteristic of our novel are high-tensioned events full of contrasts and ups and downs like the barbarian hordes which swept the country and were routed, which temporarily won and then lost; events like the patriots' bands or the partisan detachments in the gorges and valleys of the country; events like the craggy mountains and the narrow plains of Albania. The plot of our novel is frequently interrupted and its characters wait impatiently for time to end. It is like the Albanian landscape with little space for endless voyages. It is no landscape for the characters travelling for months on end across steppes and deserts. In our landscape all travel comes up against a mountain. And there are inns and innkeepers, there are inviting café-keepers and malissors. So the measure of time itself is changeable. Days are short. Nights are long, with conversations and talks. Days invite to shorter journeys. Nights, with their stories and narrations, make journeys longer. Take our novels and draw a diagram of time and space in them and you will see how characters describe distances and how long days and nights last. This is due to such national peculiarities as hospitality, loyalty and respect for guests. And guests need conversation not during the day, but during the night. Take the novels »*The Awakening*« by **S. Spasse** and »*The General of the Dead Army*« by **I. Kadare** and you will find there what I am saying in these few lines. And this stems not only from the peculiarity of space in our country, but also from the culture of its people. In the night, the heroes of our legends fall into profound thoughts about their tomorrow's travels. As a foreign critic says, the reins, the stirrup, the harness and the horse itself are made ready during the night. In the night the hero also falls into meditations. Perhaps more than in the literature of other countries, this aspect is better preserved in our literature, especially in the prose, but also in poetry. Why? Because industrialization has not spoiled tradition, because respect for tradition continues to be great in our country. Socialism itself has taught us to honour tradition. Socialism considers tradition as the basis on which innovations strike root. We are nearer to legends than many other peoples. We preserve them, for otherwise great dangers, which are known to all, would be threatening us. And this has had an influence on all our literature, especially, the novel.

In our novel live all the forms of the narrative: the narrative manner, the narrative-meditative manner and the manner of the interrupted narrative. And here lies the originality of our novel. I say this that, while expressing itself in all these forms, it is a rich, not monotonous,

novel. Our novel has revived the classical forms of the novel with the new ideas and thoughts of the time. Its forms sound new because of their great social thoughts. At times they are fresher than vain format experiments. Our novel has set out on the road of its revival and perfecting, of finding new forms for expressing new ideas. Apparently today it is drawing ever more closer to musical works, with sounds and echoes, with distances and contiguities. It is like a polyphony. In our presentday novel man never descends to the level of things. Man is the master of things and objects, so the novelist does not number things and objects as the symphony does. If he did so he would make the hero the slave of things. The modern novel is the concentrated history of one or several heroes. Being a history, every character is a type and an individual at the same time. The hero of the traditional novel goes through many external adventures. The hero of the modern novel sees these adventures take place more in the consciousness or thoughts of the character. The more time goes by the more autobiographical the novel becomes, because the writer lives himself intensely with the life of society, lives among the people. The more the time goes by the more the author and the hero resemble each other. Why? Because the author does feel no great difference of social position from the character he represents. The author does not speak »*ex-cathedra*«.

Being the characters the masters of things and not their slaves or their contemplative observers has had an influence not only on the plot, but also on the time it develops, the time of narration. Time in the traditional novel is measured by hours, by the calendar, while the modern novel introduces this time, these calendar hours into the consciousness from which it takes them out again. So, the modern novel does not leave time out of the consciousness, does not leave it only in things. That is why in our modern novel time is not reflected always on one line. We say so because every character has his own time, his own biography, and biography does not develop outside time.

As I dwelt on the problems of space, time and narration as well as on some aspects of the changes of structure the novel has undergone, I want to add also something about some other elements of the enrichment of the expressive means of the novel.

A peculiarity of our novelist is that he is more and more accentuating his irony towards negative phenomena. This makes the novel more lively and more intelligent while at the same time strengthening its dialectics. Such a peculiarity is a sign of intelligent people, of intelligent characters who do not feel themselves satisfied with everything a milieu or time gives them, because, along the major social advance, there are still inhibitive phenomena. We see this ironical stand in the prose of **I. Kadare**, **T. Laço**, **F. Gjata**, **Jakov Xoxa**, **K. Kosta** and others.

On the other hand, the language of the novel has become livelier and subtler, with strange surprises, at times in the form of oddities. The surprise interventions like those of the old woman Nica in »*The General of the Dead Army*« or of some characters of F. Gjata's novels not only make the language of the novel more dynamic, but also step up the evolution of events and break the monotony.

Now let us deal with the dynamization of events. The novel cannot live a full and true life without, what I might call, the spring which pushes action ahead and, together with it, thought, too. If the spring of the novel slackens, the reader is bored and reading time seems to him longer. But, speaking in figurative term, this spring does not consist in the subject which lies at the foundation of the novel. This spring is the dialectics of the author's thoughts, it makes itself felt in their clash and opposition, in original assertions and negations. The boring and unreadable novels resemble the watches which lag behind because their springs have slackened.

I tried to express some opinions about the Albanian novel. Of course, our novel is faced with many problems which have to do with its content and form, its structure and language. In its process of development it affects ever broader spheres of society and people's destinies, revealing ever new or less treated aspects of the life of our people. The construction of socialism in Albania has enriched the spiritual life of people and produced a new man, a man of advanced and lofty social ideals. This man is being reflected ever more fully in our novel. And this is due to the method of socialist realism.

Our writer never forgets that the conditions of living created by a society exercise a powerful influence on people's ideas, morality, and passions, just as economic and cultural achievements or the rights a social order secures the individual. This influence is expressed in the novel itself, which if followed step by step, enables you to recreate the history of society, to single out the main lines of its development, to imagine the ethics, tastes and behaviour of people, to discover their psychology and world outlook.

Albanian writers have always asked themselves: does the content of their works respond to the tasks the country is solving, the economic, social, ideological and political tasks our socialist state has to cope with? That is why they have not allowed themselves to be attracted by petty ordinary themes, but by the great theme of the revolution and the building of the new society. Proceeding from these Lofty aims they have continued to make broad summings-up of the National Liberation War, of the past and present history of our country and treated monumental tableaus worthy of the epoch of socialism. At the same time they have introduced new themes, uncultivated so far, into the horizon of art, such as those of work and the joy of work in which the possibilities, abilities and high moral qualities of man are revealed. So, there are many broad tableaus of the struggle and work of our people which have remained artistic documents of the years when they were written and enjoy great popularity among all the Albanian readers.

Noter:

1979-2

- [1] Enver Hoxha, Report to the 7th Congress og the PLA, p. 76 (Eng.ed.)
- [2] Enver Hoxha, Report to the 7th Congress og the PLA, p. 150 (Eng.ed.)
- [3] Enver Hoxha, Report to the 7th Congress og the PLA, p. 153 (Eng.ed.)
- [4] Enver Hoxha, Report to the 6th Congress og the PLA, p. 160 (Alb.ed.)
- [5] Lenin on Culture and Art, 1960, p. 51 (Alb.ed.)
- [6] Enver Hoxha, Report to the 7th Congress og the PLA, p. 153 (Eng.ed.)
- [7] Enver Hoxha, Report to the 7th Congress og the PLA, p. 142 (Eng.ed.)
- [8] Enver Hoxha, Report to the 7th Congress og the PLA, p. 113 (Eng.ed.)
- [9] Enver Hoxha, Report to the 7th Congress og the PLA, p. 152 (Eng.ed.)

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[10] K. Marx - F. Engels »*On Literature and Art*«, vol. 1, p. 10, Tirana 1976, Alb. ed.

[11] K. Marx, F. Engels, »*Works*«, vol. 1, p. 258, Russ. ed.

[12] Enver Hoxha, »*Report to the 8th Congress of the PLA*«, pp. 150-151, Eng. ed.

[13] Enver Hoxha, »*Report to the 8th Congress of the PLA*«, p. 149, Eng. ed.

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