

CRITICAL THINKING ABOUT ETËHEM HAXHIADEMI'S TRAGEDIES

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Abstract

For decades, Etëhem Haxhiademi's literary work was left into oblivion for non-literary reasons. The multi-annual shade of underestimating attitudes towards his works has made the dust of oblivion to continue persisting over his creativity even nowadays. This study intends to make the critical thinking about Etëhem Haxhiademi's tragedies known: the pre-war (1920-1944), and post-war (1944-1990) literary critique as well as post-nineties studies, as they were reflected in the contemporary press. The study strives to respond to questions such as: what place does the author take in the system of the literary and national values, as a special voice in the Albanian dramaturgy? Why was his work left into oblivion for a long time? What affirmative or non-affirmative appraisals have been made about this author in the contemporary press until the post-1990 studies? The research methods used to this regard are inquiries, comparisons, analyses and synthesis. This study will further extend the obtained information as a base for deeper investigation at the university level, to be undertaken by the Literature department students. To this regard, the study accomplished by the Literature Department about the re-dimensioning of this author's figure, whose work had been locked up in the stacks of our libraries for 45 yrs in succession, has raised a great interest. The acknowledgment process for this author needs to be extended at the university level, as well, due to the important ideas this author conveys in time.

Key words: critical thinking, tragedy, contemporary press, present-day literary studies, redimensioning.

The affirmative critical thinking reflected in the pre-war contemporary press (1920-1944)

The critical thinking in the coeval press about Haxhiademi's work has been both appreciative and non-appreciative. There have also been cases when the same scholars displayed two-folded opinions both appraising and underestimating ones, at the same time.

The majority of them did not welcome his work with the sympathy and esteem it deserved. Moreover, in that time Haxhiademi's works had incited polemics and had divided scholars in two groups, the so-called haxhiademists and anti-haxhiademists, (as termed by Vangjo Nirvana). Vangjo Nirvana, in the *Perpjekja Shiptare (Albanian Endeavor)* of March 1937 in his article, *The Intellectual Year 1936, (f.202)* explains the lack of sympathy for Haxhiademi's works with the existence of the different literary clans as well as with the fact that there were certain literary opinions which did not appreciate mythology and required the literary works to address the concerns of the time. Moreover, some fanatics termed Greek mythology as anti-national subject. This esthete, namely, *Vangjel Koca*, (pseudonym of Vangjo Nirvana), also added to support the facts: *Haxhiademi is to be recognized as mental ingenuity and a rare moral value: however, the critique to his works have been estimated with extraneous yardsticks and with esthetical motives of an appallingly advanced time*" (Koca, V. 1937).

In the pages of this literary magazine, namely "*Perpjekja Shqiptare*" which undoubtedly was the biggest of the time, the appraisals about the author's work and its positive echo was persistent.

Also, in "*Perpjekja Shqiptare*", *Branko Merxhani* shows to be self-conscious regarding the fact that, as displayed by this Elbasan talent, the dramatic poetry is in its beginnings and that is why the assuring and quality elements for an utterly Albanian critique lack. He thinks that a literary critique, compared to esthetical motives of an appallingly advanced time, estimated with extraneous yardsticks would never contribute to genuine and wise conclusions, moreover it destroys our just-born poetry's dance swing, needing to find free spaces to flow free from any hindrances and to be let free to present, at first place, any Nobel and generous it might provide.

According to *B. Merxhani*: "*E. Haxhiademi clears his own utterly unique way and goes on this way undisturbed by the blatant jingle-jangling of our present-day troubles. He walks towards the ancient Greece by searching to find the foremost sources of its poetry. His sympathy draws him through the poets and philosophers' civilization ruins, in the immortal Greece symbolizing the beautiful human figures, both in body and spirit, and incarnating its divine being into the beauty of human posture*" (Merxhani, B. 1936). Really, the playwright was not indifferent towards contemporary problems and transmitted ideas in paradigmatic forms, as presented in the following section: He notices: "*This silent and modest worker of the Albanian verse walks on a road coming directly from the fatherland of the poetry, straightly leading to the poetical labor and inspiration desk of our present-day students*". (Merxhani, B. 1936)

In other critical articles, as well, E. Haxhiademi was appraised as the only deign writer and representative of the Albanian literature tragedy, showing to have great abilities and incarnating conflicts and characters of a special beauty.

Haxhiademi was appraised not only as the first Albanian playwright but even for the artistic level of his work.

In most cases, the critics is necessary and beneficial as it is very harmful and impeding when done by envy, personal malevolence or ignorance.

When Mr. *Nelson Cika* – redactor of the “*Rilindja e Arbënis*”, (Renaissance of Albania” in his own bulletin, on 4 October 1930, criticizes many aspects in the play “*Alexander the Great*”. *Bukoniku* replied: “*Mr. Nebil Cika has made these critiques because of his envy and malevolence*” (*Bukoniku*, 1930).

Mr. *Cika* pretends that the calumniated drama, is not at all good and doesn't deserve to be played on stage. The critique, as such, tries to darken the drama values, and when it is conceived by critics with inappropriate formation, it really becomes unfortunate.

In the Albanian critique of the 30s, right after this work was published, controversial opinions and polemics prevailed. Some criticized the tragedy for its unsatisfactory artistic level because they were requiring historical authenticity regarding the events and the reflection of the heroes' grandness, while the others emphasized its important literary values.

The author's coeval critique affirmed that tragedy *Scanderbeg* has been written conform the level of the ancient Greek tragedy. In the course of each century, the hero were described with strong hues deign to a grand figure and every author was inspired by different features of the hero's character or evolved important episodes of his displayed braveries.

What about *Haxhiademi*, which historical or literary works did he have as a model for his own work? *Haxhiademi* never mentions it, but in the edition preface of this drama he clarifies only that the subject has been taken from our national history, therefore, the author himself does not agree with the allegations about the imitative character of his work.

The author's coeval critique emphasizes that the figure of *Scanderbeg* is not that of a legendary hero presented by the history.

The coeval critique emphasized that the *Scanderbeg's* figure is not that of a legendary hero the history provides. This critique was opposed by the drama author by emphasizing the special features of the literary work treating historical themes, such as the tragedy *Scanderbeg*. While referring to this tragedy the critical thinking highlights that the author has mythicized events and the historical characters. This viewpoint does not seem to be attested by the subject of the literary work, which, in its essence is loyal to the historical events.

Also the well-known sociologist *Branko Merxhani*, in his article “*A literary polemics*” dedicated to the tragedy “*Scanderbeg*” considered this work as the best of the playwright *Haxhiademi's* works. He appraises it too much by saying: “*The strange face of our legendary hero symbolizes the type of a tragic human, which does not lack the demoniac element which inspires the most straightforward tragedy, dedicated not only to his private life but even to the historical misery of all the Albanian people's life. Haxhiademi's work is the first courageous test to create a typology of the spirit featuring the Scanderbeg's epoch*” .(*Merxhani*, B. 1937).

Many of the authors writing about this tragedy are more enthusiastic about the fact that the figure of our national hero was reflected in a literary work rather than judging about the genuine artistic values of *Haxhiademi's* literary work.

In my opinion this expectation is reasonable, as far as the evolvment of the glorious past, under the leadership of *Scanderbeg* made up an endeavor of the literary authors in the forerunning literary period of Renaissance, to respond to the utilitarian goal of that literature, a goal which continuous to be the same even for the authors of the first decades of the XX century regarding the heightening of the national features and the consolidation of the just-formed Albanian state. In the time the tragedy was published, the author was remarked about distorting historical facts, while they are presented as he imagined them. The author thinks that, really there was no need for such polemics, as far as the writer has the right to choose the episodes which are of interest for him, devoid of being too loyal to the historical facts. Many world literature authors have not

stood loyal to these facts, too. Such examples can be brought in great amounts from the history of the world literature. Therefore, in the aforementioned critical article it was affirmed that the great playwrights have treated the same historical subjects in different ways.

“A playwright is not an historian and does not write history – writes Vangjel Koça- he takes from history only those elements which serve the artistic conception, works them out and turns them into poetry. Therefore, s/he does not take the history itself but its aroma” (Koça, V. 1934) Aleksandër Xhuvani, in his article *“A new Albanian Tragedy”* written in Illyria estimates: *“The author is the first among us to make tragedies both in value and technique. He has got used of evolving classical tragedies, has been made experienced to this kind of writing and, according to me, he does this work very well”* (Xhuvani, A. 1936).he distinguishes the work *“Scanderbeg”* for its subject from our national history as well as for the spirit of the classical rules of dramaturgy. The author has acquired the artistry to cook subjects from classical ancientness, and shape it into a tragedy. A Xhuvani estimates the artistic narration of the tragedy *“Scanderbeg”* its fluent and coherent language.

In his critical writing in *“Democracy”* Vangjel Koça estimates the tragedy *“Pyrrhus”*, in the thematic aspect, as a not worked out topic. He estimates the merits of this tragedy as well as those of the three preceding ones, *“Achilles”, “Ulysses”* and *“Alexander”* as expression of the tragic spirit, besides estimating the techniques based on the rules of the classical tragedy.

“With this new tragedy a breeze of philosophy is blowing Haxhiademi’s literary work (Pyrrhus-my note), which makes us consider the themes he treats as “sub specie aeternitatis” (Koça, V. 1935). And this is where the artistry of the real playwright stands, to sign his literary themes with the stamp of eternity.

In the temporary leaflet *“Rilindja” (Renaissance)*, Sterjo Spasse estimates that the just-flourishing writers sometimes vanish despaired and neglected, and disappear once they were born. He apprises Vangjo Nirvana who noticed Haxhiademi as a playwright. S. Spasse appraises the literary work *Pyrrhus* - just rendered by the author. According to him, Haxhiademi eternizes our legendary valiant heroes about whom only the extraneous world has spoken so far. S. Spasse gives his own affirmative opinion by saying: *“Etëhem Haxhiademi is the prime representative of the Albanian dramaturgy; he is, for the moment, the only one to lead the path through this difficult aspect of our poetry. Dramaturgy is being born, the playwright is progressing forward and he will continue to progress because he is still young. Application of the classic rules, which is so admirable nowadays, will penetrate into the heart of the people, will watch and suffer with them, so that, later on to sing the tragedy of our time for us, and create the Albanian dramaturgy, with utterly Albanian current and spirit.* (Spasse, S. 1935) According to him, no fault should the playwright be charged, in cases when he, for artistic needs create non-factual events. The playwright is not an historian; s/he does not narrate events in a scientific way but in an artistic way. He searches to show us the sublimity rather than the truth. The historian shows what is real whereas the playwright shows details of what could be the truth. The historian’s word is the truth whereas the playwright’s word is creativity. According to Spasse, the tragedy *“Pyrrhus”* is not only the heart and feelings speaking, as randomly occurs in poetry, but the mind and the reason is also speaking. He appraises Haxhiademi as a follower of the Greek classics model as well as the follower of the classical dramaturgy rules and techniques.

Therefore, he estimates Etëhem Haxhiademi as the prime representative of the Albanian dramaturgy, the first to make the way through this difficult aspect of our poetry.

In his polemics, *Karl Gurakuqi*, while responding to the charges by Mr. Nebil Çika, that an historical drama cannot be in opposition to historical facts, thought that Mr. Çika is not sufficiently aware of history, if he reads Plutarch, Cormelius, Nepos, Mommsen, he will understand that the historical facts are just as the author imagines them to be. This drama author has not deviated from the historical facts, although Aristotle permits writers to do it, as it has been applied by great writers such as Schiller, Sophocles, and Rosin. Could we criticize these great poets only that they have not stood loyal to history?

Jup Kastrati, estimates in “*Revista letrare*”, (“Literary Magazine”), 1944, the fact that “the Albanian tragic literature” begins with this poet from Elbasan. Haxhiademi is the one who has created dramaturgy, or “better to say, the tragedy of our language. He has bestowed us seven original tragedies” (Kastrati, J. 1944). This scholar shares the same opinion as Vangjo Nirvana, in appraising Haxhiademi’s first three tragedies.

“With “*Ulysses*”, his first tragedy and the first of this kind in the Albanian language, has intended to bestow an Aeschylean tragedy to us. With “*Achilles*” the author has intended to bestow an Sophoclean tragedy in which rules the simplicity of feelings” “*Ulysses*”, “*Achilles*” and “*Alexander*” are Haxhiademi’s first three tragedies which, have their shortcomings, Nirvana continues, as all the masterpieces have, but they have features that honor the author’s artistry and inspiration, as they are a precious bestowment to the present-day literature for the new generations” (Koça, V. 1934).

Bardhi Shtylla, (pseudonym of Behar Shtylla) estimates the drama “*Pyrrhus*” in the “*Shkendija*” (“Spark”) magazine, as a deeply psychological drama. About the author’s tragedy “*Scanderbeg*” a totally psychological tragedy, he writes: “The author’s artistic maturity is obvious in the cornellian scenes as well as in the deep elaboration of the main characters such as *Scanderbeg* and *Zanfina* - incomparable ones in terms of quality”

“*Diomed*’ is Haxhiademi’s most classical tragedy, - says *Bardhi Shtylla*- the action and art are closely linked in this work, the subject is cornellian and incites even the slightest and the deepest dramatization winding through pangs of conscience and roaring with fratricide” (Shtylla, B. 1944)

In some cases two-fold, controversial opinions were displayed, both affirmative and underestimating ones.

Here are some of them: Gjergj Kuka, (Stefan Shundi’s pseudonym), one of the *Arberia* magazine, Tiranë, No. 327, 1 August 1936, page 3, held that in the artistic market of the Albanian life there are things that persist and things that fade away.

He says: “We will try, while getting rid of our personal friendships and enmities within these few studying lines, to make thinking keep flowing as much objectively as possible. Writers with Haxhiademi’s temperament do not need our on-credit eulogies because they have gained their place in the Albanian literature with hard toil” (Shundi, S. 1936)

In his article “A literary polemics” in *Perpjekja Shqiptare*, 1937, focusing on *Etëhem Haxhiademi*’s tragedy “*Scanderbeg*”, he surmised that a new elite class was formed, one that knows to think and judge about one’s work while not being influenced by critics, but this elite class is very minor and the majority do not judge properly.

Mister *Gjergj Kuka* begins his critique about *Scanderbeg* with very bright words, Here is what he writes: “In the noble contingent of Albanians dealing with our new literature, the author of *Ulysses*, *Achilles*, *Alexander*, *Pyrrhus* and *Scanderbeg* is walking tall, with the olive branch of

honor, because he is not striving to get rich, which for our writers is forbidden, but to create an unfortunately retarded past of the wretched life of our being” (Shundi, S. 1936)

Therefore, Mr. Gjergj Kuka appraises the tradition of the evolvement of the Albanian drama, whose foundations were laid by Haxhiademi, although in a time when the theatrical life was casting its very first steps. It was precisely this critic who put a crown of glory on the playwright's head and the same who brought him down.

The coeval non-affirmative critical thinking, (1920-1944)

Other critics or writers criticized the author for evolving topics belonging to a superannuated time, dealing with outdated problems and creating vague characters. This was also Dhimitër Shuteriqi's opinion, expressed in one of his articles about dramaturgy, wherein he emphasizes that Haxhiademi's tragedies are an amalgam of the ancient Greek poets' works.

According to him, his tragedies are not salient in terms of their originality and their characters are not properly evolved. In his article: '*For a new literary direction*' written in the *Perpjekja Shqiptare* magazine, Dh. Shuteriqi looked to an art which is linked with the actual problems, he criticized both the Poradeci's poetry and Haxhiademi's tragedy for being detached from the public: "*What? In Albania?*" *Neither beys nor the aghas, not even the boors would need it, (meaning Haxhiademi's tragedy – the author's note), even if they are poorly educated, because it is not for them...*" "*Why couldn't Haxhiademi put a stiffer stone in the foundations laid by our renaissance for our national theatre?*" (Shuteriqi, Dh. 1937)

It is clear that *Dhimitër Shuteriqi's* opinion, who, at that time was one of the most cultivated representatives of the new generation, suffers from subjectivism and nihilist partiality. From these terms he also criticized himself, Lasgush and all his poetical school as well as Haxhiademi. Even the second part of his judgment that this kind of art would not be helpful both for beys or "boors", is essentially wrong. The fact the art is or is not needed to beys or boors should not be judgment criteria for the art, neither for the artistic level nor for the fact whether it is or it is not art.

The real art addresses to the emancipated, art-loving opinion. If it were different, genius writers and works would have been denied, even in cases when, on behalf of the popular character of literature the artistic works are depreciated, as it has randomly happened. Art should not be lowered at the level of the common people, alternatively, the common people should rise to the level of the artistic cognition and tastes. Otherwise the art would lose its emancipative character. (Bardhyl, M. 1991)

Mr. *Nebil Çika*, redactor of the newspaper "*Rilindja e Arbënis*", in his leaflet of date 4 October 1930, criticizes "*Alexander*" very harshly. The critic *Nebil Çika*, in the same leaflet "*Rilindja e Arbënis*", while commenting "*Alexander the Great*" affirms that the historical drama should not distort historical facts. Another polemics had also taken place about "*Alexander*" wherein the drama events artistic authenticity was questioned. Therefore, the accusations made when "*Alexander*" was firstly put on stage in Tirana, referred to the distortion of history in this drama. The critic is astounded with the stage constriction and, while not being aware of Aristotle and the French classics' three units; the unit of time, place and that of the action venue, well-known and applied rules even by great writers such as Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Corneille, Racine, etc. Mr. Gjergj Kuka goes on with his critique '*Things that persist and things that fade away*' in *Arbenia*, with non-panegyric words, expressing his opinion about the features of its characters which he refers to as vague. In Mr. Gjergj Kuka's writing, the tragedy author is criticized for his

imprecise attitude towards history. In his response, in his writing in “*Një polemikë letrare*”, Haxhiademi thinks that being loyal and precise to historical events should not be a necessary condition in dramaturgy.

In the temporary magazine *Rilindja*, 1936, H.H (initials referring to Dhimitër Shuteriqi), wherein he criticized various literary editions, he estimates tragedy *Scanderbeg* as a new, dignified, beautiful memorabilia, established to honor the glory of the national hero. This tragedy also has been criticized by him. He even assays to search whether Haxhiademi abode to the three units rule, (time, place and action), as conditions of the classical tragedy.

According to him, Haxhiademi has shown fine artistry in shaping cornellian scenes, wherein every character tries to protect himself and to accuse based on facts. But there is a great deficiency: characters should have been more elaborated, analyzed, since the elaboration of characters in details is a condition for the classical tragedy. Mr. Haxhiademi’s descriptions do not fulfill this condition. He advances his opinions with another remark, the characters of this tragedy are super idealized and display present-day feelings not those of the XV century.

Regarding the narration language he comments: “*Our versifier has insufficient poetic taste; Mr. Haxhiademi’s language is full of colloquialisms obtained from the people’s jargons: it is a middle-class language, more similar to the spoken language of Elbasan region: it is nice because is well elaborated, clear and intelligible. Over again I can hardly refrain from depicting Mr. Haxhiademi’s inversions. He should use them carefully and as rarely as he can avoid them, wherever they are necessary, or in cases they are irreplaceable. In most cases they sound leadenly since they are invariably artificial*” (Shuteriqi, Dh. 1936) *However, he congratulates Haxhiademi for dealing with the topics from our national history and producing a likable artistic work.*

Critical thinking in the post-war period, (1945-1990)

The first attempts to introduce the principle of historicism in literature were undertaken in the post-war period: this principle creates the possibility for each literary work to be considered in the course of its development, in the frame of the creative development of its author as well as in the frame of the historic-literary developments of the literature in one period or another. The critical thinking oriented by an extreme ideology did not permit the historicism criteria to be applied properly. It artificially created gaps in reflecting certain authors, who were partly or completely negated. Also, historicism is perceived in a vulgar way, becoming the cause for the treatment of literature as a reflection of the historical epoch and ignoring its specific features.

In the fifties, the vulgar sociologism brought a lot of consequences, namely, overestimating the content which led to the detachment from esthetic aspect. (Kodra, K. 1996) The literary critique was never that way in the 50s, which means that it still did not have a pre-defined methodology, was not aware of the structural and semiological experiences and never approached to the text it referred to.

The non-professional critique brought the ousting of the great Albanian writers because of political, and ideological reasons as well as because of ignorance and envy. Consequently, writers suchlike Fishta, Konica, Koliqi, Haxhiademi, Skiroi, Camaj Prenushi and Trebeshina began to be expelled under the pretext of being “reactionaries”, “anti-popular” and “dangerous intellectuals” The critique never forget such kinds of articulations while forgetting that literature is contented with its own beingness.

Being guided by the criteria of biography, Haxhiademi was left out of the literature, too. The labeling of the writers of tradition took place, in our literature, by since the 50s, whereas after

60s it resulted that all writers of the past had restrictions. The circle of the “controversial writers” was extended, including even writers such as Naim, Sami, Mjeda, and Noli.

In the school texts, Fishta, Konica, Koliqi were included *en bloc* in the group of the reactionary writers whereas Haxhiademi was never or rarely mentioned. His work could be easily left in shadow and wrapped up with the mist of oblivion, because Haxhiademi did not have the glory of the three up-mentioned writers even in the time his works were firstly published, (Matraxhiu , B. 1991).

And it would have gone like that until Professor *Alfred Uçi* - the official esthete and the most consequent representative of the “social-classism school”, treated the ‘reactionary’ groupings of writers ‘en bloc’, reserved some specific pages for Haxhiademi (p. 317-324).

The up-mentioned ‘reactionary’ group was accused to have used mythology to disguise the political reality during the reign of King Zog in Albania. They were also accused that their literature lacked the real national spirit, distorted and falsified mythology, history, and even the folklore as well as did not assume a critical attitude towards religion

Professor Uçi tried to find the “proofs” to certify those accusations and others, “easily” in Haxhiademi’s works, in most cases by citing the titles of his tragedies, although sometimes being even controversial with himself. In his writing, *B. Matraxhiu* thinks that the mythology analyses with thesis and pre-fabricated frames leads utterly to distortions, incorrectness, and contradictions. This is what happened to professor Uçi who became an example of incorrectness and controversies. In the post-war studies, until 1990, Haxhiademi was rarely mentioned as playwright. However, in some texts he was evaluated as the representative of the Albanian dramaturgy, as follower of the classicist current and as weaver of the contemporary tragedy.

Critical thinking after the ‘90s.

The post 90’s criticism has been trying to study the dramaturge’s values and rank him alongside the others creators of the Albanian literature, after the long secrecy that covered Haxhiademi’s works and life during the reign of the dictatorship in Albania. Laws exist in the world of art just as they do in the wildlife, too. The literature critics and historians have to discover and evaluate the literary works basing on these laws. Objectivity is the target to be achieved by the critics. Compared to the forerunning critical thinking in the press of the time, the antagonistic evaluations sourced from two controversial esthetic concepts on the role of the art and poetry which have always been encountered in different moments of historical developments or in different nations.

The first viewpoint is termed the utilitarian viewpoint: . It requires an intentional art to help resolve the most concerning problems of that specific time, an art in which the respective society finds itself. In the relatively new Albanian literature, (from the national Renaissance and on), because the need for the solution of the national problem and the patriotic engagements to this end, this viewpoint has been prevailing. In 1930s, with the worsening of the social wounds, a new group of writers and poets came on the scene. (Matraxhiu, B. 1991). In that time, the viewpoint of the social literature played a democratizing role into art. In general in the XIX and XX centuries, this esthetical platform has survived and has been productive, although with a lot of deficiencies. This kind of art has often been linked with the momentum political passions which create the illusion of a success, but which was not a long-lived one. With the change of the political situations a part of those artistic works –being affected by the utilitarian idea, lose.

Only those literary works which consciously or unconsciously have reflected what features a whole epoch and have had an admirable artistic level.

Scholar *Bardhyl Matraxhiu* gives his own opinion regarding the viewpoint about the rapports of art and social developments, in his account “The critique to tragedy or the tragedy of criticism” in “*Nentori*” magazine, 1991, by asserting: “the worst evil is that this viewpoint has been fetishized and made official, trying to identify and merge art with politics” These extreme developments in the post-war Albanian literature went so far that, on behalf of the “partisanship” and “political engagement to resolve the cardinal problems of the time”, writers were termed as assistants of the party, just like the instructors of the party committees or were openly asked to resolve problems related to collectivization, industrialization, collective livestock herds, etc”.

The second viewpoint, denies the first, namely, it is against the rapport of the literature and art with the actual and concrete concerns of the life, with political engagements, etc. It should avoid what for the moment looks tentative and useful. What these writers acknowledge as useful and as creativity criteria are solely the laws of splendor. Objects of art have been considered solely that phenomenon of nature that have a perpetual esthetical character. To them, every tentative avoidance from the high mission of art leads to the degradation of the artistic quality. In the first sight this kind of art looks like a disengaged art but it is not as such. (Matraxhiu, B. 1991)

If *the first viewpoint* of the “engaged art” intends to fight the evil by attacking it openly and directly *the second viewpoint*, according to scholar Klara Kodra, of “*the art for art*”, *is not pure art, lacks ideas, offers no means to address the protest against the reality of the time, does not assert the beauty of human beings and that of nature, moreover, it is not simply figuration, otherwise it wouldn't live longer than a multi-colored rainbow*”. (Kodra, K. 1996)

This viewpoint entails that art can eradicate predispositions of the society to generate the evil in human spirits. This is the “engagement” of these poets. Their works are not a direct but an indirect reflection of the “present”.

Basing on this esthetic platform, great world writers have created masterpieces at first hand. In this case the success can have been tacit, delayed, and even after the author's death, but it has been indisputable. This gradual success has in most cases been named immortality. This esthetical review of the two viewpoints, art-life, is not simply done for theoretical purposes. “*What we intend to attest, - says Bardhyl Matraxhiu- is that the criticism to Haxhiademi's work has been done by partiality of the first viewpoint by means of which a poet who has not followed that way but another one, cannot be judged*”. (Matraxhiu, B.1991)

A further achievement of the “new criticism” is the way an artistic work is perceived, as a living thing, which cannot be divided in two, (the content divided from the artistic form).

In his writing “The critique to tragedy or the tragedy of criticism” , in *Nentori* magazine 1991, scholar *Bardhyl Matraxhiu* genuinely asks the question: What about the present-day critics?. According to him it is unfortunate, devoid of any constructive method, moreover, with a set of dogmatized, faulty principles imposed by reports and theses of the political conferences and congresses, which were the ones that shaped it. Even though Haxhiademi had not been condemned politically, this kind of critique would have silently girded it, as it did with Poradeci, Kuteli, etc. The same as Poradeci and Kuteli, Haxhiademi “would not have suited to the time”. Alongside the theses that a literary work should serve to its time or should not, the Stalinist Russia and a series of other decrees came into existence, as for example the criterion for the appraisal of the artists conform classist principles and political engagements.

Since the appraisal criteria for the tradition literature were imported, this criticism or the literature history, in most cases had no rights to analyze but simply to classify conform those

criteria. The labels were ready-made in Russia and what remained for the literary historians to do was only to decide with what label to tag a certain writer or literary work, while applying these non-artistic factors.

Scholar *Matraxhiu* affirms that, according to the applied schemes in the Soviet Union, the writers are classified in three big groups: revolutionaries, undecided and counter-revolutionaries. In earlier periods there was more labeling, progressive democrats, reactionaries, etc. According to this scheme Fishta, Koliqi, Haxhiademi, Skiroi, V. Prenushi were proclaimed, for the same political and literary reasons, “reactionaries”, “fascists” “zogists” etc, whereas Kuteli, Poradeci etc, were grouped with the “undecided”, or “controversial” writers.

In his writing B. Matraxhiu conceives that the analysis of mythology by means of pre-fabricated theses and frames for sure brings distortions, incorrectness, and contradictions. He thinks that the and contradictions in the appraisal of Haxhiademi’s works source from the author’s pre-determined destiny. Since he was condemned as a reactionary, his works, as well would necessarily be reactionary.

However B. Matraxhiu holds in his opinion that polemics develops the literary work, it even evolves the readers, too.

In his writing, *Portrait of the tragedian Etëhem Haxhiademi*, in *Drita* newspaper 1991, Aurel Plasari provided his opinion about tragedies “*Ulysses*” and “*Achilles*”. These heroes have been depicted under a more coarse light but they are more genuine. The Albanian typical mentality shows to be very strong in these dramas. According to Plasari: “*In a certain meaning, both these tragedies bear reminiscences of the tragic feelings featuring the Albanian vengeance*” (Plasari, A.1991). In the tragedies *Diomed* and *Abel*, the scholar reveals the new dimension introduced into these tragedies: *the political fratricide*. Why does this author end his whole cycle of tragedies with two fratricidal ones?

The critique is prone to reveal the author’s goal regarding the historical reality in 1936, the time *Diomed* was published. At that time, a hearth of fire had been lit in Europe: the Spanish War. In that war, brothers were fighting with each other. After the publication of *Abel*, Albania would also become arena of a new war: the National Liberation War. A. Plasari supports a dissentient attitude towards the literary criticism made in the contemporary press, which effected by the intolerance and the ignorance in the domain of literary criticism, labeled Haxhiademi with such terms as “a fascist”, “isolated from the reality”, “haunted classicist” and so on.

This scholar shares the thought that these dramatic works bear the weight of “anachronism” which looks quite natural by passing of the time, like many of the other literary works of the time in general. According to him, generations would be ungrateful if they forgot that Haxhiademi is the utterly creator of the Albanian Tragedy, the one who left a consolidated work behind and raised the Albanian dramaturgy to the levels of the European drama. In addition to the valuable contribution made to the foundations of the Albanian dramaturgy by authors suchlike Z. Harapi, F. Postoli, H. Stërmilli, none of them has left such a consolidated work behind as Haxhiademi did.

Plasari estimates the author of these tragedies for reviving artistic life in Elbasan by staging his tragedies. The staging of tragedy *Alexander* gave Elbasan the possibility to join the national phylo-dramatic festival alongside the other cities like: Tiranë, Shkodër, Durrës, and Kavajë and Bilisht. So Haxhiademi results to be one of the founders of the Albanian staging. Scholar *Sabri Hamiti* also maintains an affirmative attitude by estimating Haxhiademi who, with his literary works and ideas, is returning to the Albanian literature, as writers always do. He appraises the universal values transmitted in tragedy “*Abel*”.

While writing in the contemporary “*Liria*”, 1995, *Makesen Bungo* sketches Haxhiademi’s portrait as a nationalist, by estimating his contribution as a writer leaving good literary work behind. As a patriot he contributed for an ethnic and democratic Albania, both qualities shaping the portrait of a pure Albanian nationalist.

Scholar *Josif Papagjoni*, in “*Encyclopedia of Theater and Cinematography*” estimates Haxhiademi who, undoubtedly is one of the most voiced playwrights in the history of the Albanian dramaturgy, especially for the 30s. Suffering total avoidance for 50 years during the years of the communist dictatorship, allegedly being a traditionalist, religious, mythological, unrealistic and reactionary writer, etc, he remained unknown for the common readers for a long time. The poetics of Haxhiademi’s dramas, resembles to those of classicism wherein an elliptic rapport is sought to be maintained between the moral obligation and the state and national one, from one side and the frantic passions burdening human personality and even bring him to a blind alley, treason, spiritual deformation, on the other side.

According to scholar Papagjoni: “*The goodness, grace, splendor and grandiosity, transmitted by the protagonist right at the start, are faced, confronted with the evil, humiliation, ugliness, monstrosity as well as other negations exemplified in the responding antagonist*” (Papagjoni, J.) Her estimates that the author brought the model of the verse tragedy, frequently used by the romantic authors, intertwining both emotions and psychical disarrays going to the utmost, with illuminist-type reasoning. However, on the other hand his dramas, as Haxhiademi himself admitted “commoved” social wounds.

In Conclusion:

Haxhiademi’s work was contravened by using different ways to literally eliminate his creativity. His work was forbidden and silently isolated. Both the ways could give their impact but they failed, because the Kosovar and foreign critique never kept silent. Moreover, Haxhiademi’s work itself, radiated with its spotted simplicity and individuality. Therefore, his writer couldn’t be eliminated in silence, so the only way to eliminate this writer was to attach him and his creativity. Therefore his work was attached with literary means. In most cases, attacks on one side and the appraisals on the other, are a testimony of his literary work vitality. This reality gives the readers to play, to some extent, the role of the critical judge who raises a literary creator to the pedestal of honor or brings him down.

Our viewpoint in approaching Haxhiademi’s tragedies led us to newfangled conclusions:

1. Haxhiademi’s endeavored to restore classic tragedy, in the time when the tragedy itself had surpassed its flourishing period. This tendency might be explained with his endeavors to give another push to one of the less-developed genres of the Albanian literature: the dramaturgy
2. Haxhiademi’s tragedies, as classical form, emerge for the first time in the modern Albanian language, but their model has emerged earlier in other literatures. This contributes to creating the impression that they are relevantly outdated with the time they are staged, both in terms of the narration pathos and in their main topics.
3. The staging of his tragedies with clearly classicist inclinations and deep education content, promoted the spread of the emancipation spirit.
4. Haxhiademi’s tragedy, as a literary form preserves the shape of the classicist tragedy with five acts, cultivated especially by French classicism. While intending to achieve the classicist harmony and symmetry, the author preserves not only the acts but even the number of scenes.

Despite its peculiar inadequacies regarding drama and post-romanticism, Haxhiademi's tragedy marks an important creativity which, in addition to complementing the gap for this literature genre, made contribution into involving the antique and biblical myths in an artistically and semantically elaborated form. It is a forerunner of the modern, new-mystification drama.

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