



Research Article

© 2024 Merita Bajraktari Januzi and Mimoza Hasani Pllana.
This is an open access article licensed under the Creative Commons
Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License
(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>)

Received: 7 February 2024 / Accepted: 25 April 2024 / Published: 5 May 2024

Hermetic Poetry: Understanding and Interpreting Albanian Poetry

Merita Bajraktari Januzi¹

Mimoza Hasani Pllana^{2*}

¹Dr.Sc.,

University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina",
Faculty of Philology, Kosovo

²Professor Assistant,

University of Prishtina "Hasan Prishtina",
Faculty of Philology, Kosovo

*Corresponding Author

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36941/jesr-2024-0070>

Abstract

Modern European lyrical poetry of the 20th century (with authors: Rilke and George Trakl in Austria; Apollinaire or Mallarmé, Yves Bonnefoy, Baudelaire in France; Federico García Lorca, Rafael Alberti in Spain; Ungaretti, Montale and Quasimodo in Italy, and even Anglo-Saxons, such as Yeats, Pound and T. S. Eliot.), also took place in Albanian spaces, within our political, social and cultural circumstances. Dressed in symbols and metaphors, dark and full of contrasts, as an inner expression of the poet, it comes as an opposition to ideologized and politicized literature, as well as to dictatorial power. Hermetic poetry, as we see the poetry of Italian and other authors, which was created in the circumstances of the dictatorial time all over Europe, is dark and closed poetry, based on symbolic language with suggestive and semiotic power, with a complexity in poetic articulation, which brings difficulty in interpretation. The hermetic poets, avoiding the regimes of the Nazi-fascist time, withdraw into themselves and avoid open communication to bring the inner world of creators who put art first, through which they come out against the systems and propaganda of the reality that surrounds them. Along these lines, this poem, which in most cases expresses loneliness, pain and despair, as experiences of wars, losses, feelings and human situations, appears reflexive (of internal reflection), but also a poem of contemplation, emotion and of deep thought. The Albanian researcher, Leka Ndoja, considers that hermetic poetry comes to life or is understood from its reading and interpretation, since it does not communicate directly with the signified. The signifiers of the hermetic poetry are revealed by the interpretations of the poetry within the mysticism of the subtlety of the message. Our authors were also inspired by this poem to hide the message as a new poetic strategy (Ndoja 2012, 5). When it comes to our Albanian poetry, the researcher from Kosovo, Basri Çapriqi, mainly considers the poetry of the 70s as such, as he says in his press release "Poetry of the 70s-Non-communication as communication", at the Academy Conference of Sciences and Arts, with the title "Streams of contemporary Albanian literature". That poem comes with a low level of communication, without transparency of messages and as such is not easily understood by readers.

Keywords: Hermetic poetry, interpretation, symbolism, semiotics, figures

1. Introduction

1.1 *Investigating the Socio-Cultural and Political Milieu within which Albanian Hermetic Poetry Evolved*

Socio-cultural and political milieu constitutes a pivotal impetus within the realm of hermetic poetry. The process of transforming life into art is, then, the "hermetic definition" of the artist (Quinn, V., 1977, 60). Albanian poetry that goes towards hermeticism comes as a text with meaning from a different worldview through a system of symbolic figures that require analysis and interpretation. Being of low communication, closed and not open to reception, it can easily have multiple interpretations and polysemantic connotations. Sometimes even the reader or the researcher himself, either implicitly or explicitly, can go outside the frames devised by the author. This poem has an internal reflection of feelings and experiences, it is quite symbolic and articulates a deep thought, it is no coincidence that we see that different researchers call the poetry of some of these authors reflexive, of some symbolist, but also hermetic. So, language serves as the foundational substrate shaping cognitive processes and subsequent behavioral manifestations. It is within the linguistic framework that a culture undergoes cultivation, meticulously crafting and refining its intellectual constructs (Pajević, M., 2023, 104)

Since this poem needs interpretation to understand the poetic language, which is different from the everyday language, of course a "Close reading" (deep reading) is needed, as the new Criticism proclaimed, as a movement of theoretical literary thought. , born in the United States of America in 1910. Because there are codes, signs, symbolic figures, the tendency to understand and interpret text symbols is required. This trend and tendency is found in almost all modern critical schools, but also in the hermeneutics of the Middle Ages. The work "*Matter of criticism*" of Helen Gardner or even "*The language of criticism and the structure of poetry*" of author Roland Crane are initiations into the theorizing of symbolic criticism. Even Roland Barthes later defends the idea that what separates New Criticism from traditional readings of literature is the awareness of a second, deep, wide and symbolic language, therefore he says that at the highest level it is symbolic reading, the principle of which is plurality and polysemy (also relevant to hermetic poetry).

So the basic issue of dealing with this poem is its interpretation (hermeneutic approach), as an analytical practice in terms of semiology, semantics, communication theory, textual analysis and literary discourse. This approach has also been practiced in world poetry, since the aspect of cultural or social function raises the issue of ideology and that cultural functionality, namely a certain focus on relevant social or symbolic practices, from an aesthetic or expressive function is connected to aspects of cultural and social practice (Lethbridge, Stefanie. *James Thomson's*, 2003, 15).

Meanwhile, if we want to look at the time when this type of poetry took off, we cannot ignore the historical and political circumstances in which our nation was. We know that the Albanians were suffering the consequences of the division of the ethnic lands since 1913. Kosovo, including the eastern one, was suffering the black olive from the dictatorship of the Serbian regimes one after another, since 1918 (the Kingdom of the former Yugoslavia), from the long-term policies of the Serbian academic and politician, Vasa Čubrilović, who planned the violent deportation of Albanians to Turkey (the 1930s until the Second World War), then the time of communism, which also discriminated against Albanians, whose basic rights were violated in each field. These circumstances for the Albanians provoked dissatisfaction, a revolt that erupted from time to time until the organizations known for the status of the Republic of Kosovo in 1968, where in 1969 the Albanians won the right to use the Albanian flag. Then after the opening of the University of Pristina (1970), in 1974 Kosovo gained the status of an autonomous province within the Yugoslav Federation, but this status did not satisfy the Albanians' dream of freedom and independence.

In these circumstances, we have creators who, with their literary ideas, express the pain, the longing, the dream for the true freedom of Albanians everywhere. Imprisonment, killing and wounding of Albanians would follow over the years, trying to suppress the legitimate political will of

Albanians (We also take into account the demonstrations of 1981 until the suppression of the autonomy of Kosovo in 1989 and the movements of Albanians to this day).

Even on the other side of the border, in the mother country, Albania, in the circumstances of the state platform that Enver Hoxha had built, art and culture in all fields were covered with an ideological veil, with the spirit of socialist realization, where the new spirit was trumpeted, the young worker, the proletariat, the construction and development of the country, morality, love and equality as the basis of a healthy family and all this within the almost propagandistic framework for the Albanian country and culture. Many writers suffered the consequences of opposition, with anathemas, imprisonment, persecution, exclusion (Kristo Floqi, Etehem Haxhiademi, Sejfulla Malëshova, Mitrush Kuteli, Musine Kokalari, Arshi Pipa, and many others) and in these circumstances many creators who were even killed. There he continued to write in the framework of socialist realism, poetry and prose dedicated to the liberation war, literature with an educational, didactic function, where the political and ideological element was scrutinized. We remember authors such as Dhimitër Shuteriqi, Shefqet Musaraj, Sterio Spase, Fatmir Gjata, Petro Marko, etc. but even further, all those who disrupted the ideological and political order of the communist era will fell prey to harsh recessions, but also to imprisonment over time (Kasem Trebeshina, Bilal Xhaferri, Lazër Radi, Zef Zorba, etc.).

Albanian literature was generally developed separately across borders and communicated almost secretly as there were many obstacles to share the creations of the time. Even banned literature was read and secretly deported here and there across the border.

If we take into account these political circumstances (in Kosovo, Albania and all over the Albanian lands) of the years in which hermetic poetry was developed, we will be able to understand the authors' tendency towards figurative language and towards hiding the message under the veil of true poetic art, but always wanting to avoid having them and their verses be digested in the labyrinths of the dictatorial time.

To notice how this poem appears in Albanian literature, we will analyze two of our authors related to the period of hermetic writing.

2. Beqir Musliu- The Symbolic Lecture

Albanian literary criticism, both in Kosovo and in Albania, considers Beqir Musliu as the leader of the hermetic literature generation in Kosovo. His poetry enters the hermetic circle, to be lyrically articulated with mastery and delicacy and in an essentially national and socio-cultural function. The researcher Leka Ndoja in his view on hermeticism says: "If we are to use the term completely hermetic, Beqir Musliu's texts are actualized in cult forms of intonation of poetry. The tone of his poetry is entirely somber, as is his first hermetic book (it is the compilation "*Rima të shqetësue*" / "*Worried rhymes*"). It is difficult for a ray of light to penetrate Musliu's poetry, this is one of the stylistic elements of hermeticism, especially with the elaborated verse, despite the fact that the meaning, apart from the Byzantine cycle, remains to be interpreted by the implicit reader or the model reader according to Umberto Ekos..." (Ndoja 2012, 43). It has often been said that writers articulate the intricacies of their imaginations through familiar and established forms. The synthesis of their literary output unites imaginative ability. For readers to understand the essence and content of written material, their familiarity with literary figures cooperates harmoniously with their individual powers of imagination. This collaboration results in a subjective interpretation of the author's work, an interpretation that may conform closely to or deviate from the writer's original intent (Peskin, J., Allen, G., & Wells-Jopling, R. 2010, 499).

From this perspective of view we understand that the philosophy of his art, with its personal, historical, oral and mystical, metaphorical and symbolic discourse, accompanied by figurative range, pushes us into the magical world of modern art, comparable to the European/Baudlerian one.

Since we find a marked level of hermeticism in the works *Worried rhymes* and *Blood poppies*, let's see them in their entirety, interpreting as much as we can the from verses of the most

representative poems. Even Ibrahim Rugova emphasizes these two works when he talks about lyrical hermeticism in our poetry. He considers that a higher degree of hermeticism can be observed in B. Musliu, mainly in his works: his first books *Worried rhymes* (1965) and *Blood poppies* (1966), in which the researcher estimates that a meditation on the closed, hermetic situation of the poetic subject takes place. Rugova also thinks that this hermeticism is also the essential element in the formation of the poetic subject of our poetry, at a higher and deeper level in the poetic plane, after the brilliant poetry brought to us by Lasgush Poradeci" (Rugova 1980, 179).

2.1 *Worried rhymes* (1965)

In the work *Worried rhymes* from the metaphorical title, it can be seen that the verses express the author's concerns and are articulated with a different spirit and form, bringing an interweaving of personal discourse with oral and mystical discourse. Strong verses, as he clothed them with the oral and mystical veil, gave them the grandeur, the magic of powerful poetic expression.

In terms of structure, the work is composed of four subcycles of poems (*Life's little celebrations, Nightingales, Pyramids of peace* and *Blood's zumar*). The first cycle starts with the poem *The colors of the word*, which show that there are many poetic forms within the work and disturbed rhymes, in addition to showing that the author not only does not pay attention to rhymes, i.e. he mainly leaves the verse free, there is a continuous wave of worry about the things he will put on paper, to give them soul from his blood, from the inside of his poetic subject.

The verses bring intertextual nuances with Baudelaire's and Whitman's poems, which had already become a favorite writing model for our poets, which is why we have a series of similar symbols such as grass, flowers, and the sun that dominate other symbols and figures. Being determined for the poetry that sings to life with its details and to death as a human immensity, he has artistic awareness and sensitivity to its forms, always in search of its value and longevity:

*"We won't call people mad
Because they won't know how to love pigeons?
We no longer look, like in a mirror.
With the shadows of ourselves slouched over
...
We will not be the killers of the time
In the closed towers of blood
We won't sing just for birth
Since we carry death on our backs.
In our fingers we each feel
The gentle touch of the sun-
And what a surprise: our fingers begin to sprout like grass."
(Musliu 1965, 7).*

The author figuratively does not want to fall into conflict with time, but will use it as he wants to sing to life and death, as well as to give greenery, color to his speech, his poetry. From the canonical elements, he derives the new figurative meaning and wants to take the new message further than the verses that for the mission having the true poetic art along the articulation of life situations. Therefore, in this line of thought, the verses are very symbolic in the poem *Whispers*:

*"Whenever the river is flooded by the rain, and it takes the fields
Carrying with it all the flooded things-
I lie, on its shore and wait for it with my song;
...
In that time, at the climax of tiredness of myself and my limbs
The verses are born like rosaries in worried rhymes,
Like fine droplets of water in a pot-after evaporation*

And like flowers they seek to grow in the shade of my blood." (Musliu 1965, 9).

Thus, the entire summary is dedicated to the verse even when it says:

"How long is the road that takes us to that unbloomed flower!" (Musliu 1965, 13) but also when he sings to the bread people who love the summer, sun, July and rains, but also when he weaves verses to the nightingale, which is referring to himself and his song-poetry:

*"While I dream of the water under my feet - in the bay
The song starts the rise, a fiery greeting to the friend;
And when the sun on the tip of my tongue starts melting away,
I then blow the zamare (type of double flute) in my blood vessels!" (Musliu 1965, 18)*

Then the author also has the feeling of illumination that others are joining him in the new journey, in the novelty that his poetry of hermetic lyricism brings:

*"THERE-one of us is inviting the spring and the birds
And he is slowly joining
My song of the rain..." (Musliu 1965, 19)*

The song becomes heavy (The heavy song) when she stumbles in the cradle of the storm, where the leaf breaks mercilessly in the chest or when needed to shed some tears where someone has died and the withered flowers are left in their hand (Musliu 1965, 25) the metaphor Cradle of the storm, what else could it be other than the time of the storm that our people were suffering and our people were mercilessly broken by the Yugoslav system, therefore he bears the great suffering and pain for the people of his country:

*"With the coffins of my loved ones on my back:
To bury the voids around the field, in the roots of the plants -
Who dream of the wonderful sun
...
Because the moment came to drive out our blood, as if it were a foreigner from our skin,
To madly bury the leaf's last prayer.
...
In the deep and quiet underground where it will never been known
For worries and apologies, for pain and consolation." (Musliu 1965, 25)*

With almost the same discourse, Beqir Musliu continues with the next work *Blood poppies*, about which Nysret Krasniqi, says that: "this author in his poetic world integrates internal communication with the world culture, with his readings, mainly by "playing" with the symbolism of Khayyam, which serves our author to outlined in different ways his poetic state...Even this collection starts with the sonnet triptych that has Khayyam as a symbol. But if the poems of the Persian poet are built in quatrains, Musliu writes the sonnet, if Khayyami starts with the soul's request for pleasure, Musliu drinks the glass to walk in the world of thoughts" (Krasniqi 2016, 88). Let's look at this representative work for the topic covered and the level of communication.

2.2 *Blood Poppies (1966)*

The work consists of six cycles of poems: *Consciousness and song, The black angels of Deçan, People, travelers of beauty, Love and reflexes, Elegies of simple things, Three nights in Metohi*. The first cycle has an intertextual relationship with Khayyam's poems, which he also confirms with the poem (*Triptych for Khayyam and Khayyamian legacy*). As we mentioned above, *Triptych about Khayyam*, the verses transmit emotion to the author, he wants to get drunk to walk through his thoughts, to erase all worries and build the path gently until he understands and discovers the life that surrounds him:

"I drank the SOUL in one night in silence with only one glass,
And in those sour cramps I felt as if someone called me:
Me, the wanderer of the world's thoughts, to trap myself in the
Rubaiyat-
And with the toasts of blood, like Khayyami to wipe every worry and
tear!" (Musliu 1966, 11).

His poetry is dedicated to man, his walk, his freedom, coping with life and death, continuous search for the living and the dead, especially now when he seeks his fame from the poet: "Because - they have cursed fame and fate of life of poets/ .../ Even though I know that, nothing is unfinished is left for the descendats!" (Musliu 1966, 14).

Further in the second cycle, he symbolically expresses his inner world, the connection with the beauty of Deçan and his willingness as a poet to play with words to draw out the inhabitants of silence and the devils to put them in hell. like Dante, or to nail them like Prometheus, until I finish the song and die free and majestic like Cicero, or to "bury you all tonight in my verse/ which turned into a memorial of blood and love " (Musliu 1966, 19). It can be seen that the author pours his extensive knowledge of universal figures into verse, giving it individual and universal taste and color. In the third cycle, *People, beauty travelers*, he walks through human preoccupations, the contrasts of life and the cycle of life, where people come and go through the world with its goods and evils (*light and darkness*):

"Everyday people come: Unknown and distant,
They travel through light and darkness. Towards life.
Towards love and affection. To the fingers and limbs.
To the people. We go out and wait for those who are not among us..." (Musliu 1966, 28).

Where the symbolism of the verses reflects the darkness and death that dominates through time. The author wants to deal with the basic issues of man, the individual, and he wants to put art into the function of human feeling, the self and the poetic subject. So in this sense of symbolic writing, the next cycles also come *Love and reflexes*, *Elegies of simple things* and *Three nights in Metohi*, although within them there is some outline of the ideological elements of the time, even though the author claims the artistic function of literature far from the ideological one.

At *Love and reflexes*, the poet plays with the poetic figures of flora and fauna. It is those simple things that he makes symbols in his verse and it is no coincidence that he says:

"And now when I drank like many others in the glasses of Nature-
She gave me incomparable power with the word and the lion,
Undefeated even by the maddened Orpheus-
And the skilled hands of the Gladiators in the arena..." (Musliu 1966, 32).

And also with a string of symbols weave the poems of the cycle *Three nights in Metohija*, with a dedication to the beautiful nature of Dukagjin and with a special chapter we will talk about the circumstances of the time and about the intention that the poetry of this author (Albanian poetry of his generation) will exceed the borders of Kosovo, at least be read by the people others of the Yugoslav community, being protected from the clutches of the system/regime of the time.

2.3 *Black beauty* (1968)

This poetic work already highlights the approach of poetic abstraction, a la Baudelairean and paradoxical symbolism, which expresses authorial, personal experiences through artistic relations with orality, to convey the individual and collective pain for national issues, the fear of forgetting the historical past.

The work is organized in two chapters, the first *Black beauty* and the second *Ballads and legends*, where each part has three cycles of poems and each cycle starts with a poetic statement relevant to the context of the cycle. The entire work begins with the statement: "Every beauty has its darkness" (Musliu 1980) which gives the understanding that the reader will face the antithetical and paradoxical constructs related to life, and experiences through time. Then the first part *Black beauty*, begins with the warning verses *Playing against time in the field of poppies or the lost fiddle*, which seem to warn the author's concern about the fields of Kosovo, its freedom. The author begins the poetic journey by metamorphosing beauty, turning it into ugliness, in the first part and re-articulating the forms of folklore discourse, legends and ballads as a function of remembrance and returning to the old cultural identity, in the second part *Ballads and legends*, which gives the work metatextual form.

With the strong metaphors and symbols built in an original, contextual way within his poetic philosophy, he paves the way for hermetic poetry in Kosovo. See for the new poetic approach, our well-known researcher Ibrahim Rugova says that until the appearance of this poet's poetry, the element of lyrical hypotrophy and direct figurativeness dominated us, and Musliu is the one who revealed abstraction within poetic discourse (Rugova 1980, 95). Thus, this poetic discourse comes with lots of figures, words (as he calls them *word colors*), with paradoxical metaphors of the type: Black Beauty, Ugly Beauty, Black Angels and poetic abstractions of the type: "Empty work", "Ash and lighting", "Content of ash", "Meaning of ash", etc., the author pushes us to other conceptual and theoretical waves, to think if the aesthetic theories were overturned, because it changes the concept of classical, traditional, beauty. When we are talking about beauty, we already see it as black, ugly (as the antipode), which is completely paradoxical in its metaphorical, aesthetic articulation. So this is the conceptual metaphor that our author, a master of the poetic figure, skillfully gives shape to. This figure and this abstraction strengthens the idea of his magnificent verses.

The author continuously expresses the demand for the preservation of collective memory for history, for the place of sacrifices. The field is Kosovo itself, poppies carry the symbolism of spilled blood and in this case ash is the sign of time which the author does not want to leave in oblivion:

*"In this field, apart from the warmth that roasts the kernels
With calmness kept in a bottle like the flower -
There is also a sword and a stabbed foot
That guards the remaining heads left like guards at the border of thought,
There is also a silence and a flower
That makes repeat to ourselves and to time
That's why we have to go all the way to that red poppy
Outside of blood to love the face of ash
To always turn the blood into poppies, like so- (Musliu 1980, 12).*

So here, ash shows the trace, the sign left from the burnt field, which it wants to keep as a memory, a testimony, to which it adds the effort and the desire to return the blossoming of the bloody land. Ash as a symbol appears to us in several senses, as a testimony and also as a veil of oblivion:

*"Every journey towards that Beauty does not bring you back-
To a time before it was covered in ash!" (Musliu 1980, 13).*

Then *The song of the Flute* articulates singing about events through time, meaning about *Ash, Genesis of Love, Black Spring*, where beauty undergoes metamorphosis:

*"A prince sits on the Sun Castle, only from love
And - magically turns into words and ugliness!
Beauty is more beautiful when it is in mourning-
Then it leads all things to blood and warmth!" (Musliu 1980, 32).*

Perhaps this metamorphosis, or the paradox within the concept of beauty, leads us to understand its value when it is affected by blackness. And in all this poetic perception, he uses world myths and fairy tales (Sisyphus, Phoenix, Orpheus) to tell the song about his country. As we see further on, he brings back the themes of our ancient ballads and legends *The tombs of the Crusaders*, *Gjergj Elez Alia*, *Sister with nine brothers*, and *The gray Fairy tale or Ballad for Seven Days and Seven Nights*, re-actualizing them and putting them at the service of the actuality of the new poetic subject.

3. Zef Zorba and the Hermetic Spirit

3.1 *Lips frozen in laughter* (1994)

Analysts argue that metaphor is pervasive in thought and communication and that it is a cognitive phenomenon—a way of thinking that pre-exists in the cognitive structure and by which an abstract concept is made more easily understood by mapping some relevant characteristic (Fludernik, M. 201,41-142). Zef Zorba being in the camp of hermetic poetry, Mr. Zorba masterfully expresses the fact of being in dictatorial circumstances with imagination and fiction, and this happens naturally in the context of the relationships that literature has with the truth, the imaginary and the fictional. They are linked together neatly to convey the literary message, what the author feels and experiences in real life. Poetry with personal and temporal reference, full of imagination, sometimes with a tendency towards the fantastic, beautifully connects fact with fiction and gives it its artistic brilliance, universality, giving it its deserved place in the cultural treasure - literary art.

Zef Zorba, rediscovered late (as Sabri Hamiti and others say), has a collection of poems entitled "*Lips frozen in laughter*", which with its very personal and modern discourse, with its dense poetic imagery as well as pretty closed, in terms of reception, pushes us into his imaginary world to search for the fact from where his ideas and motives originate. Consequently, we need to break down and interpret as much as we can his language and figure, thus feeling the miracle of the logical connection of the real with the imaginary, to extract the essence that they carry. His work is structured in five cycles of poems (*Elements*, *Other Greenery and Tiles*, *Tired Mirrors*, *Last fugato and Reminiscences of roads*) where as Kadare says in the preface of the book, Zorba had chosen the path of art, that of hermeticism as an internal poetic action that suited his destiny (Zorba 2010, 12).

His poetry, has hermetic verse, conveys the philosophy of existentialism and has new trends from the knowledge of modern European poets: Eliot, Montane, Ungaretti, etc., generally his poetic discourse is filled with symbolic, sarcastic, ironic elements, etc. . In his poems, misery and disappointment, dreams and haze, the real and the unreal coexist, in the chaos of the world full of contradictions and paradoxes, where the mind flies to be free. His poetry is quite synthesized, as the author himself says in the afterword, as he follows modernity that manifests itself not only in verse, but also in painting, music and other arts, which is why there are attempts to reproduce musical forms (fugues, fugatos, sonatas with tempos, cadences, etc.) that together with the figurative discourse, the color of the words, with the rhymes and arrhythmias, with the purposeful sonances and dissonances, with the verses mainly enriched by irony, claim the form of magnificent poetic communication (Zorba 2010, 171- 174). From the beginning of the book, with the lines of *Instead of the preface* the author shows that his verses are dark:

*"This path is dark. I can not
find my way without your light" (Zorba 2010, 171-174).*

So we will see in perpetuity that Zorba combines fact and fiction well as two elements that feed each other. We see how he offers the real situation, that of the prison (as a fact) with brilliant poetic articulation with fictional sparks, giving symbolism and a myriad of figurative language to each verse:

*"The moon is encompassed by lugetër
Its blood stains the darkness"*

Then we need to understand who are *the lugetër (boogeymen)* that made the moon bleed, and how did the blood (of the moon) stain the darkness. How powerfully this poet builds the symbolic verse with mystical elements, and pushes it deep into the mythology where the scenes of Boogeymen appear when the moon is full and as it is said in most of the stories, immediately after that they turn into bloodthirsty beings. Then what curse or magic does the lyrical subject (the author himself) suffer, who sits painfully in the corner with the sky and the sea that he does not see?

*"The mountainscape monstrously runs
Into the perspective
to sew itself in a corner
with the sky and the sea." (Zorba 2010, 25)*

Now we only consider the time and sufferings that the author went through, otherwise his message would hardly be understood, therefore his verse is considered low communicative.

The same if we analyze the poem *One nail*, knowing the dictatorial way of functioning of the communist state in Albania, the exclusion, persecution and elimination of people who opposed the system, we understand the logic and meaning of the poetic literary idea that is transmitted with the figure "One nail" which symbolically indicates someone's removal from the ranks of prominent figures of the time. Then with the sound figures (repetition and anaphora) and those of syntax (inversion, gradation, ellipsis) with the repetition of sounds, words add drama to the verses, increase the emphasis on the fact that there is something missing (In this case the picture on the wall) and that the expressions *dry on the wall*, *deep in the wall* and *knife in the wall* to associate with something violent, something painful that leaves deep traces in the memory through time:

*"A nail stuck straight in the wall, a nail
stuck straight in the wall, a nail stuck...
A nail driven deep into the wall, a nail
driven deep into the wall, a nail driven.
A nail left dry on the wall, a nail
left dry on the wall, a nail left.
Stuck straight...
deeply embedded...
left dry..." (Zorba 2010, 130)*

As the poem "A nail" puts you in the frames of pain, the other verses wander through the dark, heavy spaces, full of pain, rejection, sadness, but also pure art, with the personal discourse that is strongly articulated with the many conceptual and contextual figures, within the themes for the reality that he experiences. Then, there is no doubt that remembering Shakespeare tries to remind us of the tragedy that he feels and we can see it as a meeting point of reference or a sign of intertextuality. Thus he says to Shakespeare:

*"You are my cross;
paralyzed with anger,
at the edge of the wall
up- a black scribble
dashed by the well.
Ah, scram, scram;no, wait!"*

If we continue the commentary further, the first thing that comes to mind is the equation or identification of the figure of Shakespeare with the figure of the cross - both precious figures for him. The first is the great writer who deserves to be bowed down to and blessed by all readers and artists

around the world, while the second figure - the cross as a symbol of sacrifice, self-denial, a sign of religion, faith and hope, but in the context of the verse of Zorba, Shakespeare and the cross together associate the lyrical subject's need for the author's help to avoid the tragic, perhaps in that "black scribble" that hangs above him, for which he feels anger and sadness.

The poem *The black stone* brings the symbolism of great pain. The black stone is a symbol of the witness to the mourning that had seized the country from the dictatorship, violence and terror, which could not be talked about and shouted openly. The stone that usually in Albanian writings had the meaning of endurance, now appears as a witness of evil, to which the father and son had confessed their sufferings. The lyrical subject is identified with the author, who experiences the anxiety of silence and the thirst to vent the fire of lamentation, just like the father:

*"I was young;
my father, gloomy and broken-hearted,
his white, tearful eyes rested on you
And conversed with you for a long time.*

...
*Just like my father
I will come back one night
to be quiet with you
Because the fates bring us closer.
(Zorba 2010, 81)*

Thus, the author symbolically shows the fact/concern that his subject cried and consoled himself with the black stone, with the stone that is silent, the stone weighed down by mourning over the years that returned in *the deserted house forgotten among the ruins*. And he was complaining to himself "Leave me alone. I complain to myself" it falls to him that he calls out not to persecute him, not to take him because he is not doing anything, he is just complaining to himself. In such a situation, it gave him a glimmer of hope: "The silence between the alcoves echoed, child..." because he believes that the horror of this persecution, violence, will end someday and the newborn child will enjoy the fruits of liberation from the darkness of the dictatorial system.

Sometimes it goes to the world of fantasy, to break away from the dark reality:

*"A thin beam
Parts the smoke
We cling to it
And climb on the clouds"
(Zorba 2010, 71)*

Because only imagination and fantasy itself takes it where it wants. Where no one can reach him, where no one can stop him. Otherwise, as it figuratively conveys the picture of horrible situations, with spying, rapes:

*"Man seems to create nothing but evil:
Fire retardant steel;
artificial birds,
born in offices-incubators,
like the moon they spy on the earth,
they process it
insidious lust
trophies and rapes"*

We see that the author enters the dark world of what he feels and also expresses it with his lyrics, his poetic discourse.

Within the poems that convey concern and suffering, in the frames of constant persecution

about the injustices that surround him, the poet's companion becomes his dearest person, Teresa, the girl he loves, who also becomes his lifelong friend. Poetry *Other greenery* brings lines of dedication to Teresa, with whom he shared youthful memories that refresh his soul:

*"Do you remember? That summer
the silence disturbed our sources.
I sang the lines of fate
in your fiery hand.
They wandered strange streets,
without speaking. (Zorba 2010, 48)*

Even here there is silence and it seems paradoxical because it disturbed their sources. The silence is the preoccupation with the dangers that threatened them when they were in the flight of the sources from which the love for each other, man and free life flows. At the time when the pain and sadness are stacked, the author shows the need to avoid the reality he experiences, to leave somewhere where the noise is lost, that's why to poetry *Won't you build me a house?* he wants to have a house in the middle of the forest, so that maybe the pines in the forest could stop the noise and the powerful storm and its cold winds:

*"Won't you build me a house there,
there, right there, beyond, in the middle of the forest
Where the pines crash against the oak
they are so dense, and when the storm and the cold winds
- when they attack loudly and powerfully -
the sensations are dizzied and confused
they remain like that, jumbled and slanted
like the moon beam that refracts through the leaves." (Zorba 2010,148)*

The storm and the cold wind symbolically represent the destructive force that the dictatorial currents of the time had, figuratively the forest gives the protective power which is the parallel between the cold wind and storm and the pine trees that they attack with a powerful roar.

Further when we analyze the brilliant lines of the ballad *Raki and lyrics* where he figuratively highlights his feelings, from the beginning of the verses he lets us understand that he wrote them from prison:

*"Oh, maybe the anxiety, oh but the need
for a space larger than the rooms
...
where the rays of the west land
roof to roof acrobatically;
those rays, the only ones we catch
without the harsh ringing - our frequencies
on art, aesthetics, difficult
speech (Zorba 2010, 138)*

And as such, *difficult*, really conveys strong emotions about the rays of the west, the only ones they could catch and view from above because they were down in the dark. He makes those rays equivalent to their frequencies on art, aesthetics, and the difficult speech (here the hermetic spirit is clearly seen). These verses refer to the first person in plural "We" and first start from inside the darkness to come out with the memories of the time when they were sitting together on the terrace of a bar to drink raki, where they had many motives for lyrics: " maybe the lyrics are inside the raki..." and the drunkenness brings them out.

Thus, Zef Zorba, with this poetic language arouses the interest of each reader to know and further explore his verse, and his time with the heavy and dark life.

4. Conclusion

Beqir Musliu, as seen in the work *Worried rhymes* proved his poetic mastery, his essentially national theme comes with verse that brings the currents of time, filled with mythic and orality elements, to express the concerns of his lyrical subject. With the assortment of figurative and poetic forms, and with intertextual nuances (with the poems of Baudelaire and Whitman, but also Shkreli), we see that he and his generation had already embraced modern hermetic poetry.

Blood poppies, the author dedicates it to the man and his freedom, to continue with the poetic abstraction where he is gripped by the concern for the fields of Kosovo, its freedom. The metaphor *Black beauty* shows us the level of his figure, metaphorizes beauty and dances to our ancient ballads and legends (*The tombs of the Crusaders*, *Gjergj Elez Alia*, *Sister with nine brothers*, and *The gray Fairy tale or Ballad for Seven Days and Seven Nights*) for his country, likewise further to *Sezamet* continues with the great national theme, returns to history and mythology, full of fantasy (*Cycles with titles: The travels of Zef Serembe*, *Albanopoli*, *From the poem that the people should sing*, *Rozafa*, *The flute or something on the anatomy of words and the locked roses*), in the search for our antiquity and historical truth.

With his artistic rhythm, he shows the preoccupation with the fate of his country, the loss, pain, death, mourning, betrayal, deceptions and sufferings he had over time, but also keeps alive the hopes for the strength of recovery and revival.

We saw Zef Zorba reflecting the relationship between the Albanian being and the world, and the circumstances that surround him. His poetry brings the Albanian individual/being into the circumstances full of contradictions where freedom and slavery, love and grudge, suffering and joy and generally the contradiction between the individual and power, where the thirst for human freedom was great and exhausted in the difficulties of survival. There are researchers who consider Zorba's poetry as poetry that proves the individual's relationship with the dictatorial state through aesthetic rejection (Rugova 2005), in each motif, even when the poem has a theme of love, family or patriotism. In the first cycle "Elements", we saw in order the poems with prison motifs with the struggles of the tired and exhausted soul, but also of resistance through the aesthetic rejection that his hermetic poetry conveys against the ideology and politics of the dictatorial state (we bring up the poems: *Kakariq's ladder*, *A moment*, *a poem*, *a life or Memories*, *Wistful (Malle)*, *Serfs*, *Tonight in celebration*, *Vine*, *Cornhole*, etc.).

5. Contemporary Relevance in Conclusion

These authors and their generation, some less hermetic, modern in the articulation of verse-message, avant-garde in synthesizing artistic forms, excellent in image building, authors with responsibility towards the written word are comparable to contemporary European authors. Through the analysis of the poems by the aforementioned authors, we discern their overarching writing perspective. Firstly, their utilization of strained poetic language and hermetic approach serves as a means of liberation from dictatorship and political constraints. Secondly, Albanian poets demonstrate comparability with European hermetic poets, showcasing intertextual elements that transcend cultural boundaries, with Albanian imagery seamlessly integrating into the contextual dimension. Lastly, the polysemantic nature of hermetic poetry grants readers the freedom to interpret it individually, while also inviting critical engagement with these interpretive opportunities. This discussion highlights the enduring relevance of exploring the poetic strategies employed by these authors, emphasizing their defiance against oppressive regimes and the universality of their artistic expression across cultural contexts.

References

- Fludernik, M. (Ed.). (2011). *Beyond cognitive metaphor theory: Perspectives on literary metaphor*. Taylor & Francis Group.
- Krasniqi, Nysret. (2016). *Letërsia e Kosovës (Literature of Kosovo)*. 1953-2000. Prishtinë: 99-AIKD.
- Lethbridge, Stefanie. James Thomson's Defence of Poetry: Intertextual Allusion in »the Seasons«, Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2003. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sheffield/detail.action?docID=3041674>.
- Ndoja, Leka. (2012). *Hermetizmi në letërsinë shqipe (Hermetism in Albanian literature)*. Tiranë: Pakti.
- Musliu, Beqir (1965). *Rima të shqetësuese (Worried rhymes)*. Prishtinë: Jeta e Re.
- Musliu, Beqir (1966). *Lulëkuqet e gjakut (Blood poppies)*. Prishtinë: Rilindja.
- Musliu, Beqir (1980). *Bukuria e zezë (Black Beauty)*. Prishtinë: Rilindja.
- Peskin, J., Allen, G., & Wells-Jopling, R. (2010). "The educated imagination": Applying instructional research to the teaching of symbolic interpretation of poetry. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 53(6), 498-507. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1598/JAAL.53.6.6>
- Pajević, M. (2023) "The Semantics of the Absurd: On German 'Hermetic' Poetry and Political Commitment after 1945", *Interlitteraria*, 28(1), pp. 103–119. doi: 10.12697/IL.2023.28.1.9.
- Quinn, V. (1977). H. D.'s "Hermetic Definition": The Poet as Archetypal Mother. *Contemporary Literature*, 18(1), 51–61. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1207850>
- Rugova, Ibrahim. (1980). *Strategjia e kuptimit (The Strategy of Meaning)*. Prishtinë: Rilindja.
- Rugova, Ibrahim. (2002). *Refuzimi Estetik (Aesthetic Rejection)*. Prishtinë: Faik Konica.
- Zorba, Yef. (2010). *Buzë të ngrira në gaz (Lips frozen in laughter)*. Tiranë: Botimet princi.