

Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to compare two important Albanian novels – “*Sikur të isha djalë*” (“*If I Were a Boy*”) by Haki Stërmilli and “*Pse?!*” (“*Why?!*”) by Sterjo Spasse, focusing on the position of a woman and a man in traditional rural society of the first half of the 20th century. Novel “*Sikur të isha djalë*” tells the story of young Dijsa who uses her diary to describe the everyday life of an Albanian rural family. Her notes reveal the bleak reality of rural life, following the pattern of the old-world patriarchal rules, and the position of women that was fully dependent on the will of their parents and husbands. On the contrary, in novel “*Pse?!*”, the protagonist is a young man Gjon Zaveri who – also by means of diary notes – offers the reader an insight into the concerns of a young person in Albania of the first half of the 20th century, their endless desire to break out of the tight bonds of the strict social rules. Both novels belong to the first examples of longer Albanian prose and represent a certain genre as well as thematic milestone in the history of Albanian literature. The novels, which are strongly inspired by some significant European writers and their works from the 19th century can be observed, can be classified as being on the borderland of Albanian romanticism and realism, although both novels were published as far as the first half of the 20th century. This fact also shows the lateness of the Albanian literary development that the work will also deal with in detail, just like the role of the aforesaid novels in the context of Albanian literary development in the period in question. Attention will be also paid to the lives of both writers, who are practically unknown in the Czech milieu, and the analysis focuses on the depiction of the position of men and women, i.e. the frequent theme of modern Albanian literature.

Key words

The status of woman and man, albanian literature, woman in literature, man in literature, Sterjo Spasse, Haki Stërmilli