The Iliad by Homer and Albanian poet Naim Frashëri

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The Albanian poet Naim Frasheri, showed his admiration and love for the history, culture, Greek literature and mythology even through translating one of the great Homeric epopee, "The Iliad". In 1896 he translates and publishes the first song of The Iliad by Homer, while in 1886 he tried to translate and publish it in Turkish. Translation of "The Iliad" by Homer was accompanied by an introduction and a postscript, in the form of a file printed in the printing house association of Bucharest. This is also confirmed by the Albanian scholar Dhimiter Shuteriqi who says, "Naim was passionate about Homer, whom he will imitate and adapt later into Albanian". A fact that stands also for one of his most important works "History of Skanderbeg" which, for its epic character is similar to the Homeric epopee, Iliad and Odyssey. The writer Naim Frasheri was among those Albanian poets who knew and valued deeply the Greek poet Homer, appreciated the high artistic values of his works, which due to the mythological character and the message they evoke, remain as the cornerstone of European and world literature. They became a source of inspiration and encouragement for the creativity of our poet. The linguistic, cultural and literary knowledge Naim had for the Greek antiquity, encouraged him to try himself in translation. With the translation of "The Iliad" by Homer he wanted to show to Albanians the heroism, bravery and sacrifices of the Greek people through the centuries, with the sole aim to strengthen his people's conscience to fight for their freedom and independence.

Keywords: Iliada, Homer, greek literature, translation, Naim.

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Introduction

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In the history of its development Albanian literature, just like other world literatures, has been open to connections with other literary systems. It borrowed from these systems models, themes, literary figures as well as various types of poetry; by making them part of it, but always maintaining its original identity. This phenomenon is evidenced even nowadays, where the literatures are in a continuous interferential relationship, exchanging various literary experiences. Both the history of world literature and the Albanian literature have given us many examples of such phenomenon. The well-known Israeli scholar, Itamar Zohar, speaks of the interference that, according to him, "literatures are always in an interferential relationship, and that interference will mean a relationship between literatures, through which Literature A (source literature) can become a source of direct or indirect borrowings for another Literature B (target literature). But as its inseparable part, is also the literary translation, which plays an important role in the development of literature in general. It has always served as a bridge of communication between different cultures and civilizations. Many writers, not only in Albanian literature, but also in other more developed literatures, have left traces of translations, enabling them to enrich their respective language and literature. According to the Albanian scholar, Erjona Tartari, "one can rarely understand

¹I.Zohar, Polysystem Studiues, pg. 54.

an author, a literary phenomenon, genre, without understanding the influence, formation, and cultural and intellectual grafting of languages, structures of thought, and civilizations other than the one to which it belongs, the translatorshe says, - performs a social act, since he offers to its society a way of thinking, a culture, a mentality that belongs to another society which is defined as different in function of history, the development of souls, customs and moral norms, of civilizations that are not and don't have to be universal. Even in the literary case he carries out a cultural act trying to recover or translate along with the text "the storytelling legacy" that characterizes the text.² For this reason we see it closely related to the culture of the country. In this way, "translation involves shifting views expressed in a language by a social group into their acquisition by another group, causing the process of decoding, recoding and encoding.³ But, meanwhile, "translation is a communication process, the purpose of which is to provide the foreign reader with knowledge of the original. So every good translation is an exchange of languages, cultures and different worldviews, enrichment for mutual societies. The significance of literary translation is also influenced by various literary theorists. Pol Valery, says that without it, "we would not have literatures that fall in love with each other". While Eliot Weinberger and George Steiner say that, "translation is the one that keeps the literature alive"5 and "only the poet can translate poetry". Or what Bahaan Hasan says, "literary translation assists different nations to get rich in universal culture. For this reason, the role of translation in literature is very important, recalling here also what Zohar says, about his role in the crystallization of national cultures.⁷ Also Zohar mentions the fact that literary contacts also occur through two channels; when the source literature (more developed) is known directly from its own language, and the second case when it is known through translation.⁸ Therefore the role of translation in the history of literary development is irreplaceable.

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Literature Review

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The treatment of offering a powerful theme in the analysis of the historical sources of the Albanian territory of this time, of the Ottoman Empire and of socialist realism, and the study of subsequent punishments. In designing the use of the work I have relied on the unpublished source materials of Albanian Oriental and Ottoman literature, respectively for Bektashi writers and poets, as well as Oriental ones. It can also be used as unpublished sources provided in the Central Archives of the Albanian State, the Archives of the Institute of

²E. Tartari, Qasje epistemologjike mbi përkthimin në letërsinë shqipe, Studime letrare në process: Teza, ide dhe projekte, pg 35, 37, 38.

³A Monireh, The role of culture in translation, pg 14.

⁴J. Levy, Translation as a decision process "The translation studies reader" pg 148

⁵Th Jaques, Translating theory pg. 154

⁶B. Hassan, Literary Translation; Aspects of Pragmatic Meaning, pg 1.

⁷I. Zohar, Polysystem Studies, pg 192.

⁸I.Zohar Papers in Historical Poetics, pg 47.

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History in Tirana, the Archives of the World Archives in Tirana, the Archives of Kosovo, etc. Great Role in Designing Historical and Literary Sons of Work Written Documentary Services of Albanian Bektashism to Like the Sun newspapers in the US, which may also analyze Bektashism in the United States of America, Library Fund National Fund and Iranian Cultural Foundation, "Saadi Shiraz" etc. Articles containing in-use documents and scientific papers published in the journals of the use of scientists at home and abroad, regular articles on beloved printing from library funds, articles from foreign press, archive material, and a face literature and country.

Methodology

The paper "The Iliad by Homer and Albanian poet Naim Frashëri" aims to address, through scholarly objectivity, the events and processes that have taken place in the relationship between Albanian poetics, viewed from the perspective of the documents and writings of Albanian authors during the years under consideration. The study of Bektashi literature is an area that has aroused the interest and attention of many scholars of the time, as well as of scholars of literature and publicity, or of other social fields of the Renaissance period and beyond. In order to reflect a more accurate reality or to shed light on the development of these relations from other angles, the author saw no need to treat these relations from the point of view of Oriental literature. This is precisely the novelty of this paper, in analyzing the social, cultural and economic processes developed in the relation of oriental poetics to some Albanian poets, viewed from the perspective of the interests and politics of Albania and beyond.

Findings/Results

The main results is about the new research that I have made during my studies. The oriental authors are very clear in their position. They try to find the main source of the conflicto in their heroes. One of them is the Iliad poem. According to the Albanian authors the heroes are very importnat. Because Albania has faced many historical dificultes for the independence. In this article we saw the importance of translation in the establishment of intercommunication bridges with different cultures and literatures, by conveying us at any time messages with universal values. But also he translated the first Song of Iliad to make famous not only to Homer, this great poet of Greek antiquity, but that this work also influenced and strengthened the conscience of his Albanian people at a time when his country was occupied by the Turks.

The Iliad by Homer and the Albanian poet Naim Frashëri

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The Albanian poet Naim Frashëri, showed his admiration and love for history, culture, mythology and Greek literature, among other things, also through the translation of one of the great Homeric epics, "The Iliad". In 1896 he translated and published the first song of Homer's Iliad, while in 1886 he tried to translate and publish it in Turkish. A fact also affirmed by the scholar Dhimiter Shuteriqi in the biography of Naim, "in 1896", Naim published the Albanian translation of the first song of "Iliad", after having published it 10 years ago in Turkish - he was the first one to try translating something in Turkish from Homer. And to make Albanians enjoy the Greek culture -and not only Albanians but also Turks, -he made Albanian and Turkish versions of the first song of Iliad from the antiquity poet. 9 So a century ago, the scholar Aristotel Miçi said that -Naim Frashëri made Homer speak clearly in Albania. 10 Even Engjell Sejdaj says, "Naim's study on Homer and his songs appear to us in two versions: Albanian and Turkish. It was published in Turkish together with the translation of the first song of Iliad 10 years before the Albanian edition". 11 Through him he attempted to bring to the Albanian reader another culture and civilization, that of ancient Greece, as well as to show himself in the translation practice. It was precisely the linguistic, cultural and literary knowledge that Naim had about Greek antiquity, received during his studies at "Zosimaia" high school in Ioannina, which prompted him to translate Iliad. The translation of "Iliad of Omiri", as he calls it is accompanied by a preface and postscript, in the form of a fascicle and printed in the printing press of the Bucharest society. Although written as the preface and the postscript of Iliad's first song - writes Rexhep Qose - these writings show in general lines, Naim Frashëri's curiosity and interest for literature, in general, and especially for the literature of the great historical epochs, and for the literature of the great creators of mankind. Although the majority of writing is devoted to it, Iliad "here, is a reason for him to take a stroll through literature; from ancient Greco-Roman literature to Albanian literature. Qose goes even further when he says, "Even in the preface and the postscript of the translation of Iliad's first song, Naim Frashëri uses them to influence the national conscience with the historical discourse. 12 It is so true that, by showing to Albanians, the heroism, the bravery and sacrifice of the Greek people over centuries, he sought to strengthen their conscience to fight for the freedom and independence of the country. Thus, translation also plays an important role in establishing bridges of intercommunication with different cultures and literatures to convey at any time messages of universal value. This is also confirmed by the Albanian scholar, Dhimitër Shuteriqi, who says, "Naim was passionate about Homer, whom he will imitate and adapt later in Albanian". ¹³ The fact that stands also for one of his important works, "Scanderbeg's Hitory" which by its epic character resembles Homer's epics, Iliad and Oddysey. However, according to

⁹Dh.Shuteriqi, Naim Frashëri:Jeta dhe Vepra, pg 98, 165.

¹⁰A. Miçi, Adhruimi i Naim Frashërit për homerin, 2011.

¹¹E.Sejdaj, Homeri në letërsinë dhe kulturën shqiptare, pg 283.

¹²R.Qosja, Porosia e madhe, pg 113-114.

¹³Historia e letërsisë shqiptare për shkollat e mesme, KSAK, pg 1938.

another scholar of Naim's work, Engjell Sejdaj says that "although it is not 1 about imitation or about any adaption of such Homeric songs, from Dh. 2 3 Shutheriqi's assertion, we will understand a close relation that Naimi had with Homer or even with the Roman poet Virgil. There are also cases when the 4 scholars of this Albanian poet refer to the great affiliation that he had with 5 6 Homer, especially in the great work "Skanderbeg's History. 14 But another fact to be mentioned is that Naim with Iliada opened the way of translations from 7 Artistic literature, despite the fact that Albanian literature had many before 8 him, but mostly of religious character. There is also interest in this translation 9 as Naim was one of the only Renaissance writers who tried to translate one of 10 the great poets of the times as it was Homer. This idea is reinforced even more 11 when we consider the scholar Shuteriqi who says, "He had deep admiration for 12 the old culture of our neighbors, which had brought incomparable services to 13 the European culture. 15 In this point of view we see an effort of this writer to 14 get closer to this literature and to make it well-known to his comrades. As we 15 said above, the translation has a preface and postscript, in which the poet gives 16 us extensive information about Homer as well as about the content of Homeric 17 songs. Scholar Rexhep Oose writes "as in all other writings even in these ones, 18 19 Naim starts off from a simple purpose: to bring the reader, who according to his beliefs has limited historical-literary knowledge, some basic data on one 20 hand, for Homer's epopees, and, on the other hand, about poetry and the 21 world's greatest poets. 16 Or his tendency to give estimates of a historical, 22 literary and aesthetic character to Homeric songs, by comparing them with the 23 world's most famous poets. ¹⁷ If we carefully pay attention in Iliad's preface 24 apart from some of the thesis he speaks about the Homeric issue, he also gives 25 estimates about poetry. In this case Naim's thought takes another turn, in which 26 one can see his tendency to make a critical assessment of it. Naim sees the 27 value of poetry precisely in the wealth of thought and in the way it is 28 29 artistically constructed (aesthetic value). For him there is no value in its applicability (practicability) rather than the wealth of thought and the universal 30 message that follows it. He writes, "Asia's poem has great beauty, a great 31 taste, good tone, nice measure, chosen words and different ornaments. The 32 Europe's poem has the highest sentiment, so all have value on their own. 18 33 Accordingly, Qose says, "the preface and postscript of the translation of the 34 First Song of Iliad became the first historical-literary critical writings, and 35 their author, Naim Frashëri, one of the founders of critics, namely of the 36 literary trials, in Albanian literature. 19 Since the beginning of the preface, we 37 see Naim's appraisal to Homer, by calling him the Father of Poetry who stands 38 above all the other poets, and does not even hesitate to put him above Hesiod 39 even though he was older than Homer. Naim says, "Omir is called te Father of 40

¹⁴E.Sejdaj, Homeri në letërsinë dhe culture shqiptare, pg 268.

¹⁵Dh.Shuteriqi, Naim Frashëri:Jeta dhe vepra, pg 164.

¹⁶Qose speaks of the preface and the postscript of Iliad's translation.

¹⁷E.Sejdaj, Homeri në letërsinë dhe kulturën shqipe, pg 277.

¹⁸Iliadhë e Omirit, Kënga e parë,, Bukurest 1896, pg 11.

¹⁹R. Qose, Porosia e madhe, pg 114).

poetry, because he is indeed the first of all the known poets. They say that before Omir, in the old Greeks, was Hesiod. But Hesiod could not win the title (name) that Omir won.²⁰ Our poet's interest in Homer is very obvious, given the importance he has in Greek literature and culture. The Homeric world for centuries has been a source of inspiration for all European writers and not only. Therefore Naim puts Homer even before Oriental, Chinese, and Indian poets, though he writes that, "in Indian and Chinese languages there are older poems than those of Omir. But after him, says Naim, have been many other important poets like Pindar, Euripides, Sophocles and others, where among the Roman poets he values Virgil, whom he calls the second Homer. After mentioning all of these, Naim says that "these came after the traces of Omir (Homer) and Virgil." This is also stated by Shuteriq when he says, "Naim is interested in Homer, first of all from the aspect of his position and the importance he has in Greek and world literature and then he is interested in the Homeric world, which to this day are not removed from the agenda of many scholars of Albanology.²¹ Also in the preface he speaks of Homer's two most important epopees such as *Iliad* and *Odysseus*, which he calls poems, and shows that the first work, Iliad is about the war of Troy and the cause of this war. He speaks of the figure of Achilles or Aqilehti as he calls him, whom he values very much, as the bravest and the most capable of the other fighters. Not only him, but Hector as well, who fought to the end to put in place the honor of Trojans. Among other things, Naim also mentions the Greek gods, which played an important role during the Troy war. They were the ones that determined the fate of its heroes. He also indicates their gender, they were divided into male and female, each of them had their favorite hero, and were divided into camps. The gods mentioned here are; the goddess of beauty Aphrodite, that of wisdom Athena and other gods, Poseidon and Apollo. Ancient Greeks believed in the gods of Olympus, they even built Sanctuaries them, they even made stone pillars and worshiped them. As we are told in this preface, Sanctuaries were bare and people sacrificed animals, and the aroma of their meat went to the gods. Naim tells us that there were also half-gods and half-people like Achilles, Heracles, Odyssey and others. He says in the preface that " by singing (reading) Omir (Homer) that humans believed in it. At that time people believed in many gods, the greatest was Divine, created peace and justice. Apollo was the sun, Poseidon was the sea. For the gods they had the sanctuaries to serve and worship them, made statues of stone etc. 22 What draws our attention in this preface is the fact that Naim interrupts his recital of the war of Troy and oversteps to the other Homer's work, Odyssey although he does not give details about it, but suffices to say that "Omir's second poem is the Odyssey who confesses to Odysseus' sorrow, after his return from Troy to his homeland.²³ Naim will talk in more detail about Odyssey in the postscript of the first song of Iliad. Another fact noted in Iliad's preface is that it appears

²⁰Iliadhë e Omirit, Kënga e parë e Iliadës, pg.1

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²¹Dh.Shuteriqi, Naim Frashëri: Jeta dhe Vepra, pg 279.

²²Iliadhë e Omirit, Kënga e parë, pg 7-8.

²³Ibidem, pg 9.

fragmented, in which we see a poet's tendency to go from telling the events of 1 Iliad and Odysseus in the submission of some Homeric-related issues, or even 2 3 with other issues. He speaks of the faith of the old Greeks who believed that 4 there was an afterlife that the soul did not die, but first went to hell where they took responsibility for the sins done in the hereafter, then went to Paradise, 5 6 which he describes a thriving flourished land. Then he also speaks of their belief in the immortality of the soul, which has to do with the concept of 7 metempsychosis, a belief we will see present in other works of Naim, 8 especially those of a philosophical character. "When the soul wants to return in 9 this life, it drinks the water of a river forgetting all of its past, and starts a new 10 life. 24 Another thesis presented here is that of Homer's origin from Smyrna. As 11 seen from the preface, Naim repeats what others have said about him and that 12 his positioning regarding this thesis in the narrow sense of the word is not very 13 clear. He writes that, "Even the homeland of Omir (Homer) is not known for sure, but they say that he is from Smyrna.²⁵ It is obvious that Naim asserts 14 15 what others have said before about Homer. We also see this in other things 16 related to the Homeric issue. As are the facts related to the authorship of two 17 works of Iliad and Odyssey which were not written by him, "Homer was not 18 19 real, because all these songs were in the mouths of people (told by people), afterwards they were gathered and formed by a poet named Omir (and they 20 called him Homer). But according to Naim there are also those who believe in 21 22 Homer existence, and that the works carry his authorship. Therefore, the Homeric case and the related theses, are presented from Naim in an 23 informative, summarized way, which according to Shuteriq we have that, 24 25 "Naim appears to us as a good connoisseur of world literature and not Homerology. 26 However, in the preface Naim speaks of the structure of two 26 works, which are divided into 24 chapters (or pieces as he calls them) which 27 have only proses and not lines. According to him, there was no lines at all, and 28 29 many poets of Europe wrote in proses rather than lines. He asserts, among other things, that the Arabs were the ones who invented the line, "they say that 30 the line was invented by Arabs" has been (invented) Arabs. 27 Therefore the 31 poet in the translation made to the first song of Iliad in Albanian has respected 32 its structure, asserted by himself when he said that "even in this piece (chapter) 33 that we turned into Albanian we made it in prose and no lies to not migrate 34 (leave) its roots (origin). At the end of the preface Naim praises the great poet 35 of Roman literature Virgil who wrote the great work "Aeneid". After him - he 36 says - come Horace, Petrarch, Dante who wrote" Inferno and Paradise ", 37 Tarkuato Tasi, who wrote about the wars of Jerusalem. He also lists other 38 writers who have given a lot to the world literature such as the poet of "Lost 39 Paradise" Milton, or Lamartine, not to mention even the famous Arab and 40 Persian poets to whom Naim is fond of and has been influenced in some way. 41 He writes that "the Arabs have taken many wars (things) known by the Greeks, 42

²⁴Ibidem pg 9.

²⁵Ibidem, pf 10.

²⁶Dh.Shuteriqi, Naim Frashëri:Jeta dhe vepra, pg 277.

²⁷Iliadhë e Omirit Kënga e parë e Iliadës, pg 11.

but in the poems they kept their own special way. There are many Arab poets but the best of them are the poets of Persia, and the best and greatest of them is Ferdowsi who made Shahnameh. Ferdows is a friend of Omir and Virgil. "He mentions other Persian poets whom appreciates very much; Enveriu, Saadi, Nizami, Attar, Hafiz etc. But a more special assessment he has for Firdeus, Enveri and Sadi (Saadin), who he says writers of all times, Europeans or Eastern, he will estimate more Homer and Virgil, who stand in the pedestal of world literature. I found it reasonable in this article to focus more on Iliad's have descended from Heaven. Although at the end of the preface are mentioned the greatest preface than the postscript, which in a nutshell and concisely and summarized manner gives the content of two Homer's works. It refers more to Odyssey and his return from the Troy war after 7 years. He recounts his many efforts or sufferings before returning to his homeland and meet after so many years his loyal wife and grown son, whom he left very young when departing to Troy. Among other things he gives an estimate of the two works, of which Naim likes the Iliad, because "Odysseus has no taste and value as Iliad". The purpose of this paper is not to analyze the method Naim used to translate Iliad. We only know that he was faithful to the original when he translated it, and so we immediately realize that he used literal translation (word by word). He translated the first Song of Iliad to make famous not only to Homer, this great poet of Greek antiquity, but that this work also influenced and strengthened the conscience of his Albanian people at a time when his country was occupied by the Turks.

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Discussion

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The main points that need to be discussed are: The origin of the oriental literature in Albania and the evaluation of the political influence in that process.

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Conclusion

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The writer Naim Frasheri was among those Albanian poets who knew and valued deeply the Greek poet Homer, appreciated the high artistic values of his works, which due to the mythological character and the message they evoke, remain as the cornerstone of European and world literature. They became a source of inspiration and encouragement for the creativity of our poet. The linguistic, cultural and literary knowledge Naim had for the Greek antiquity, encouraged him to try himself in translation. With the translation of "The Iliad" by Homer he wanted to show to Albanians the heroism, bravery and sacrifices of the Greek people through the centuries, with the sole aim to strengthen his people's conscience to fight for their freedom and independence. In this article we saw the importance of translation in the establishment of intercommunication bridges with different cultures and literatures, by

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