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ARTISTIC DESCRIPTIONS AND IMAGES IN THE NOVEL *THE PIRATES' CAVE* WRITTEN
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ABSTRACT

Petro Marko is an outstanding personality of modern Albanian literature, a writer of European and global scale. He is a remarkable poetry and prose writer, publicist and translator as well as a warrior in the International Brigades of the Spanish Civil War. One of his most popular works is the children's novel "The Pirates' Cave". The work recounts imaginary events, which the author connects with some aspects of reality and with his hometown events. In the center of the plot, there are five brave children who are wishful and curios to discover unknown things and act as their predecessors. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the values of artistic descriptions and images of this work through the rich linguistic tool, versatile, direct, clear and understandable confession of this writer. The author's language is analyzed through stylistic figures used to serve the nature images and descriptions as well as the real and fictional characters' portrait.

Keywords: Petro Marko, Pirates' Cave, images, descriptions, stylistic figure.

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INTRODUCTION

The remarkable Albanian writer Petro Marko (1913-1991) laid the foundations of the Albanian realistic novel and paved the way for modern contemporary novel. In all of his works we can feel the reverberations of the Spanish Civil War, the detention and deportation, anti-fascist war, human love between people and the fight against tyranny and evil. "In Spain, Petro Marko became acquainted with prominent poets and writers of world literature, such as: Pablo Neruda, André Malruax, Nicolás Guillen, Nekse, Ludwig Renn, Ilya Ehrenborg, Ernest Hemingway, Alexei Tolstoy etc., who gave him soul and art's human spaces" (Gaçe, 2009). He has been a friend of the distinguished American writer Ernest Hemingway. What they had in common was their participation as volunteers in the International Brigades in the Spanish Civil War in 1936 and their journalistic profession, their reflection of people's human aspirations for peace, freedom, and understanding, the coverage of the people's war for survival, subsistence as well as the simple and natural

presentation of events. "Petro Marko is one of the first dissidents among active writers in Albania" (Xhafka, 2000).

Through his literary work, he talks to the reader and gives messages writing about people as he was an idealist who challenged all of the periods. Coming from the past, his work goes to the future and it has got the signature of the author and seal of his Fatherland, homeland. This work makes him a creator with a great soul.

One of the most popular works, which has got cognitive and artistic values, is the children's novel "The Pirates' Cave" published in 1964. The subject of this novel represents and symbolizes the glorious history of the Albanian people. Through Albanian history, wars, acts and ancestors' braveries, the author evokes the past and its glory so that to inspire children and their time (Gaçe, 2006). The work is full of interesting and shocking events. The description of the trip to the cave along with its beauties, mysteries and difficulties, and with its findings from antiquity, are the most beautiful and the most attractive pages of the novel (Bishqemi, 2008).

An important role in the novel consists of the coast beauties descriptions as well as the characters' portrait. The description of nature is done with fantasy and realism giving us enriched and detailed information about the landscape of that place: "*Deep shadows were playing under olives, while in the deforested would had begun to collapse the light of dawn. I had never seen such a sunrise. In the sky the stars were losing and melting like sugar crystals in the blue water. The calm sea was sleeping beneath with its majesty. What a unique peace and beauty! Up above there were the Lightning Mountains rising stately like an ancient castle; whereas the beach beneath, as a white calico cloth opened further and further from the holiday camp of workers up to the Cape of Pirates' Cave, was slightly lulled by the whispers of tired sleepy waves...*" (p. 12).

The stylistic figures of simile, metaphor and personification create impressive images and give the speech a high expressivity. Words and group of words or sentences such as, *the light of dawn, the stars were losing and melting like sugar crystals in the blue water, The calm sea was sleeping beneath with its majesty; the Lightning Mountains rising stately like an ancient castle; the beach, as a white calico cloth opened further and further, was slightly lulled by the whispers of tired sleepy waves* enrich the artistic image with colorful pictures. Images are embedded in a concrete linguistic-stylistic form. Objects that have tampered the imagination of the writer are *the stars, sea, castle, beach, waves* etc.

Artistic details, scenes and landscapes create strong emotions and experiences in the children's imagination: "*We started stepping on rather strong ground. We were climbing up a somehow laddered place. We reached a small cave, at the entrance of which there were many pillars. We went inside. The floor was cobbled. The cave seemed like a room, because it had got a niche, stone couches and a bed.*" (p. 73). This verse consists of details expressed with common and ancient objects and items. Through the enumeration and escalation, it enhances the effect and attracts reader's attention not only about the environment, but also about the cave's ancienty.

A special feature of Petro Marko's discourse is the natural expression. It is also seen at the details that he uses while describing the environment: "*The meeting was on the top of the high mountain of Çipini, where the crystal water flows out and where the partridges sing over the silver mornings.*" (p. 87-88).

In addition to the detailed and inspirational description of the environment, the author describes also the characters using details as well as stylistic devices. The main character in this literary work is the sailor called Niko Dabo. All of the linguistic devices of the novel are in function of this figure. Niko is a symbol of the *coastal people* (people who live in 'Bregu i Vlorës') whose life is tightly related to the sea (Bishqemi, 2008). He was the best fisherman of the village, the most powerful in the village and a fearless swimmer, who had lost one hand fighting with sharks. The brave fisherman's movements are described in detail through the stylistic figures of *repetition, enumeration, escalation and simile*: "*We saw him starting to catch shrimps; we saw him cast a fishhook; we saw that he put the wrasse fish in a large hook and tied it well with a thin wire; we saw him strip, took the large hook in one hand and tied the end of the rope to a rock; we saw him jump into the sea, with a knife hanging on his left-hand's forearm. He was swimming slowly like a tired dolphin. He is eighty years*

old. He swam further until the rope was stretched. It appears that there he let the large hook off. Then he hit the sea water with his feet." (p. 16).

This famous fisherman was walking as smoothly as he appeared as he did not step on the ground at all. The physical appearance of Niko Dabo is given carefully through selected details: *"Niko Dabo's body looked like the body of an old dolphin. He was eighty years old, but his chest was full of muscles. His hands were strong. And his legs were slim. On his right hand he was hanging a thin silver knife. In his waistline he was keeping a leather belt with small white hooks. It appears that he used them for hanging small bags with things that he needed when being under water."*(p. 19). Niko Dabo's life is related to the sea and waves, the same as the fish's life. Therefore his portrait's description is done through the similes from this lexical field: *"Niko Dabo had two fishlike eyes, with no eyeballs. Their colour was as the sea during a storm. He laughed like a fish and had small thick teeth. Even the fingers of his right hand were bent like hooks."*

Epic dimensions of Niko Dabo's figure grow significantly, especially when describing the fight of this sailor, accustomed to difficulties, with a terrible shark in water depths of the Ionian Sea (Çadri, 2001). This episode is described as a legendary fight giving this old man the size of a somewhat enigmatic character. This strong fight with the shark resembles a real adventure. It is described in details through carefully selected hyperboles and escalations: *"I ran and captured his head with both of my arms. I drove my two thumbs inside his eyes. I felt as if I had gripped an olive trunk. He grabbed and twisted me a few times around. He raised his grinder neck sword and slashed me right here, - and showed the wound of the chest! - I grabbed him, more strongly. And I drove the two thumbs deeper inside its eyes. Again he did some fast spins. As soon as I saw that he began sinking with me, I took out the knife and, as far as my strength was, I plunged it deep into his brain."* (p. 26). This manner of narration enhances the children's imagination, increases their anxiety and emotions and creates artistic images that stimulate the desire to perform brave acts.

The fight of this seaman with the shark reminds us the magnificent figure of the old man Santiago, in the novel "The Old Man and the Sea" written by the eminent American writer, Ernest Hemingway. It is not easy to discern the boundary between real life and legend at Petro Marko's Niko Dabo and Ernest Hemingway's Santiago.

Even the images of the duel between Gjonbaba and the head pirate Rusman El Namsuri create an elevated emotional state. Gjonbaba is a legendary figure. His portrait is described through hyperbole: *He was two meters tall, as heavy as an ox, ate a roasted ox on a spit, drank wine like water and never became drunk. On the day of the duel with El Namsuri he tried to pick up a horse and removed an ancient oak.* The author says: *"When he was coughing, it was like a thunderstorm. When he was laughing, it seemed as the rooftops were going to be ripped out"*. Moreover, the head pirate who was a sea wolf is described through hyperboles: *"It is said that he fed himself with fish's brain and could catch alive even the shark...; when the sea grumbled by the storm, he was in good mood and used to play with the storm as he was playing with birds of the nest.* (p. 81). Details used in his description, are full of negative emotional charge: *"He had the body of a snake, because he was grown up with snakes. It is said that he fed himself with fish's brain..."* (p. 81). *The head pirate was a fox.* (p. 82). Saracen pirates are also described screaming as rabid jackals encouraging their captain who looked like a rabid beast.

Petro Marko is a master in the selection and usage of details increasing the emotional content of speech. Stylistic details and figures, such as similes, epithets and metaphors create also powerful images in the description of the portrait of the beautiful saracen: *"... as soon as Merjeme el Emerjem Al Qatar, appeared in front of me I thought I saw the moon painted in the colours of all Arab's and Qatar Island's flowers... her large and black eyes, were like dreaming night's pearls... Her wavy dark hair, passed from her breast, covered in Damascus's silk, and went down up to her small feet ... And when Wilhelm de Altavilla left, he stated these words: "Only the sea breeze has caressed her! Only the moon has kissed her! Only the sea water of the spring sunrises has washed her ..."* (p. 96).

Other characters are Lolo, Jani, Foto, Ilir and his little sister, Lule. These five brave children discover the secret of the "pirates' cave" in the Himara's beautiful coast, helped by the tips of the courageous

fisherman, Niko Dabo. All five of these characters are as a collective hero; they are brave, persistent and curious children. Lolo, their captain, known by the children as Gjonbaba is described in stylistic details and devices which create impressive experiences: *"I was staring Lolo and he seemed to me as a steamboat captain. With that tall and straight body, that dark curly hair, with that sunburnt face and those thick lips, he looked just like a pirate captain."* (p. 8).

Enumerations and similes as well as homogeneous parts of speech fulfill the linguistic-stylistic epitome of his portrait. The comprehensive and expressive charge of the phrases makes the story more diverse and more emotional. These phrases make the language far more figurative and expressive. In addition to escalations and hyperboles, Petro Marko often uses similes which give the story a rather emotional charge and create a lot of images related to the environment: *"Further, at the end of horizon, a boat was glaring like a piece of silver on the water.* (p. 17). *The sea is like a generous mother!* (p. 22). *The wind was blowing like crazy. The waves rose up like a mountain.* (p. 22). *Work and work, the log's bay opened and opened as a big bowl, as a long trough.* (p. 55). *The voice like a thunder and the sudden headlights' power failure shocked us.* (p. 66). *The sea brought forth foams which were as black as a pitch."* (p. 67).

In some cases the simile is combined with the inversion creating an impressive artistic imagination: *"Next to us, on the left, there was the submarine slipping like a long eel.* (p. 133). Furthermore, the rhetorical questions keep alive the curiosity and anxiety and create artistic images which thrill us: *Why had our tongue gone to the throat? Why were we as being drunk? Why we were not looking at each other anymore but we were always keeping our eyes towards the exit from which was entering our sky's boundless light?* (p. 130). While describing the nature, the author uses not only one stylistic figure, but two or even more, which together reach their artistic aim. The statements, created with metaphor and personification, enhance the emotional effect of the descriptions and images which create the tops of Lightning Mountains:

"He gave a look beneath, where dormant waves were playing inside craggy caves. (p. 13); *There grows up the daffodil flower and the partridges sing over the silver mornings! The sky cannot become satisfied with those magical places, that's why it intensively strikes them with unceasing lightning* (p. 103); *look at the Lightning Mountains! Oh, what fantastic colours had the sunset inlaid to them!"* (p. 133).

The lexical and stylistic synonyms make the expressions far more powerful; they also make the description more dynamic and reinforce the message: *"Again the strident and punching scream made us stay quiet. Unintentionally, we were gathered together into one body with five heads!* (p. 69). *The cave's sea that just a few minutes ago, was seething by a crazy racket, now was sleeping as a dead man, without breath, without anything.* (p. 68). *When you give a look at our mountains, remember that they are our ancient shelter and castle.* (p. 94). *And his fearless men advised me not to waste my time with mourning and grief ...* (p. 94). *Now I felt more at ease, happier, more alive.* (p. 111). *We found them! They are alive. Declare that the five are alive and kicking!* (129). *Captain's motorboat of the cruiser came closer and became one with our ship."* (f.131).

Petro Marko also uses antonyms, from which are derived antitheses. Antonyms with coordination, especially those built with verbs are dominant: *He came closer. He was surprised. He shook his head. He became angry, and then he laughed.* (p. 18). *Headlights that we were holding were going up and down, the same as our curiosity about what we were seeing.* (p. 74). *The face of our captain sometimes bloomed and sometimes gloomed* (p.86). *Our headlights were waving, whereas the beacon of our ship was standing still* (p. 108). *Sometimes his face bloomed and sometimes gloomed.* (p. 99). *And oars were going up and down."* (p. 112). Such statements give the speech dexterity and variation and serve to create impressive poetic images.

The words or expressions' repetition is very present in this work and reinforces the stylistic effect: *His voice reverberated! His voice gave us heart and soul! His voice was so kind! Our captain is a remarkable courageous man. We cannot do anything without our captain! Good captains are always victorious ... what about Gjonipi, was he a wise and courageous captain?* (p. 111). *He saw the sky; He saw the sea; He saw the village; He saw Lightning Mountains.* (p. 46). Such repetitions bring a greater focus on the semantic level by drawing attention due to the images that they create and the messages they convey. The artistic repetition is done not only in distance, but also in the vicinity. Often the same word, usually a verb, is repeated through

coordinators (linking words) to extend and make the artistic expression more powerful, to provide continuity of the action and to emphasize its message or image: *I anxiously waited and waited the whistle.* (p. 15). *Dragging and dragging in a rugged narrow cave, we went down, by the sea.* (p. 16). *Waiting and waiting for him to go out of the water, he was never seen anywhere ...* (p. 16). *He played and played with him, and then he plunged a knife right into the skull.* (p. 17). *Walking and walking all day.* (p. 21). *Again we talked and talked until in the end it was decided to be the flag of our Navy.* (p. 56). *Often it came closer and closer.* (p. 62). *The long and long submarine with all the sailors on deck was sailing near the coast.* (p. 132).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we can say that Petro Marko in the novel "The Pirates' Cave" is noted for the environments and characters' description. The description of the coast's beauties is done with fantasy and realism by giving us rich detailed information. Objects that have tampered the imagination of the writer are the *stars, sea, castle, beach* and *waves*. As an attentive observer, the author describes in detail the environment as well as real and fictional characters using selected details and stylistic figures. All these create impressive images, which remain vivid in our memory, as they are written in a rich, clear and direct language, using all expressive resources.

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