

TOMISLAV OSMANLI

THE TWENTY-FIRST

Novel



Tomislav Osmanli (1956) a play and screenplay writer, a media theoretic, prose writer, film and theatre critic and essayist. Lives and works in Skopje, Macedonia. Author of twenty-one diverse themed books.

Osmanli has written the first books in his country, dedicated both, to the theory of the Seventh (*The Film and the Politics*, 1981) and of the Ninth Arts (*Comics - a Scripture of Human Image*, 1987). His other books include: *The Stars over Skopje* (two theatre plays, 2000 – included with 14 other Balkan countries' books, in the Literal Yearbook of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*), *Violet Lights and Shadows* (short melancholic stories, 2001), *Trip to Paramaribo* (play published both in Macedonian and English, 2003), *Playing through the Genres* (chosen plays, 2004), *Stories out of Skopje* (short stories, 2005), *Apocalyptic Comedy* (theatre play, 2005), *Characters of the Meantime* (three feature screenplays), *Lantern for the Festival of Light* (Jewish holocaust stories and novellas, 2009), *Capriccios* (book of short stories and selected modernist illustrations, 2009), *The Twenty First* (novel, 2009), *Civic Space* (a study, 2011), *Around the Corner* (novel, 2012).

Osmanli's book of holocaust stories and historic novellas *A Lantern for the Festival of Light* won the Macedonian national literary prize *Prose masters*.

His first novel *The Twenty-first* (2009), won the Best Macedonian Novel prize in 2010, and was, the same year, separately selected a national representative for the Balkanica Prize contest.

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The Twenty-first - exciting and authentic, superior novel in every way

Where on earth can we find a quiet and descent place to live? The novel *The Twenty-first* is based upon that initial and universally posed question, through a complex and intriguing story. It's basic sketch is the following:

Gordan and Maya is a young couple, two still jobless intellectuals, living the 2001 on the Balkans, in Skopje bearing all the traces of the hardly over passed communism. It is the capital city of the small and unstable Macedonia, a country with an extended transition. Furthermore, it is at the brink of an inter-ethnic war between the ethnic Albanians and the majority of the ethnic Macedonians living side by side in that country - while the whole world is on the very gateway of the new, 21st century, and furthers more toward a new millennium...

The action of the novel takes place worldwide, starting from the underdeveloped Macedonia up to the USA, than getting back to the war-tormented Bosnia-Herzegovina, then Central Asia...from the old small churches of the ancient town of Ohrid, to the well known metropolitan locations of Washington DC and New York, from the totally aggressive virtual space of a war-game, to the Internet travel through the Austro-Hungarian ambience of the Hotel Sacher in contemporary Vienna, the illusory space of the old brothel "Ocean" - in a parallel time - of the city of Skopje, to the mysterious subterranean passages under Paris, in the old dervish tekkes (shrines) in Macedonia, to the western ambiances, and then to the unhappy poppy fields of Afghanistan...in the reality and in the fiction, in the present time and in the past, both containing the same melancholy and human suffering.

"Perfectly structured, faultlessly written, original in its subject and fable, on top of all, exciting and authentic, and in every way superior novel" - Jelena Lužina, PhD

