

## KADARE IN ALBANIAN LITERATURE AND SOME ASPECTS OF THE MYTH

Edlira DHIMA

*University of Vlora "Ismail Qemali" Faculty of Human Sciences, Department of Albanian Language and Literature, Vlora, Albania*

*E-mail: [edadhima@gmail.com](mailto:edadhima@gmail.com)*

### ABSTRACT

The universe and the Kadarean identity are present everywhere, so the approach to their meaning is not easy. In its complexity, the work of Ismail Kadare has today gained global proportions, appreciated in all aspects, especially in terms of affirming the identity of Albanians and individual freedoms, against dictatorships and dictators, becoming a work symbol of the aspirations of democratic things. Ismail Kadare is among the first contemporary Albanian prose writers, who successfully brought a lot of innovation by enriching it with innovative elements on many levels: substantive, ideological, meaningful, technical-formal, etc. The myth of the "supreme ruler" is found in various forms in the Kadarean universe. Already in his first works, many "supreme rulers" will "ride", asserting that their actions were done for the general good. Control over the mind and dreams in "The Palace of Dreams" are clearly given to the human definition and the definition of the gods. The different perception of time, while on the one hand it is given as unlimited in the minds of those who think they are immortal and on the other hand as a limited life category is their world. Many allegories and mythological symbols tend to symbolize the power of the gods over people, take away their faith in their own strength and make them slaves to the idea that only the gods decide on their destiny. The past, the present and the future are suppressed and coexist. The mythic communication of human consciousness through the ages, with all the commonalities and particularities, stand out in all their element.

*Keywords: universe, works, myth, supreme ruler, symbol, mind, power, allegory.*

### INTRODUCTION

The universe and the Kadarean identity are present everywhere, so the approach to their meaning is not easy. In its complexity, the work of Ismail Kadare has today gained global proportions, appreciated in all aspects, especially in terms of affirming the identity of Albanians and individual freedoms, against dictatorships and dictators, becoming a work symbol of the aspirations of democratic things.

Ismail Kadare is among the first contemporary Albanian prose writers, who successfully brought a lot of innovation by enriching it with innovative elements on many levels: substantive, ideological, meaningful, technical-formal, etc. Protagonist of cultural and literary life, his major and unrepeatable work has given new dimensions to Albanian literature, making it a fact and a factor in the world literary process. *"The literary value of his work is not proven by the multitude of studies that have been written about it, but also by the multitude of its translations in many languages of the world."*<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Y. Ciraku, M. Gjinaj, *Albanian Literature-Authors and works*, SHBLU, "For I. Kadare", Tirana, 2001, pg. 206.

Even when "supreme ruler" is not presented as "supreme ruler", but a living system, it still performs the same function. Built over thousands of years, the cosmogony is a reflection of the rise or fall of human social systems. If our focus were to focus on special cases, the individual inclined to rule in his narrow social circle, and then in society would be separated from others, to become a supreme ruler.

### 1. Myth and the gods

In the early stages of human societal development, humans' inability to explain the calamities that befell them, diseases, or anything else that struck unexpectedly, led to the creation of gods with human attributes: "... just like people on earth, they eat, drink, sleep, hate and love, argue and fight with each other, weave plots and intrigues, violate marital relations, and all of these, are carried out with a cynicism and violence, sometimes more brutal than in human society. Most of the powers of Olympus are tyrants and enemies of humanity."<sup>2</sup>

Traces of the myth of the supreme ruler are encountered in various forms in some of the most important works in Kadare's literature, a myth that is shattered and reshaped in various forms starting from the most direct ones, as in the work "*A Gloomy Season in Olympus*," to the most hidden forms of elements whose genesis lies in ancient myths: *The Winter of Great Solitude*, *The Broken Spring*, *The Palace of Dreams*, or *Concert at the End of Winter*.

Referring to the sultans of the Ottoman Empire, the supreme rulers of the East, in the work "*The Palace of Dreams*," Kadare's aim is to speak about the grim Albanian reality, dictator Enver Hoxha, the "supreme ruler" who aimed to conquer the human mind and prove his infallibility.

The dictator's aim to create a new man, who would be a "Frankenstein" of the 20th century, speaks volumes about the failure of the Eastern "supreme rulers." The difference in time perception between those who govern and those governed is significant. The approach to human time is real, while that towards gods is cosmic. Control over the mind and dreams in "*The Palace of Dreams*" clearly delineates human definition and divine definition.

The different perception of time, while on one hand it is presented as inexhaustible in the minds of those who think they are immortal, and on the other as a limited life category, is their world. Enclosed in their own "cocoon," fear of mismanagement of life is a natural part, even becoming a force that pushes man to surrender and abandon his individuality. While human time flies without living, the time of the supreme rulers neither flies nor walks. Mark Alemi does not worry about what happens to others; his sole aim is to escape possible traps that lurk in the Saray Palace.

Similar to the temporal perception of Greek cosmogony, the man we encounter in the Palace of Dreams, frightened of death, does not live the life he has and that of the palace's rulers, whom we do not know and who are never identified, extending their network of activities limitlessly, treat their lives as boundless.

Just as in Islamic faith, the Lord cannot be described, the sovereign who rules the palace is a mystery, nothing is known about him. His non-description by the man who does not even imagine him again emphasizes the idea that he is unequal to him.

This fetish of the "supreme ruler," created by all religions where communism prevailed, is presented to us in all forms of art. While in Sartre's hell there are others, in Kadare's world, "the others" are those who are unseen but make people's lives hell.

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<sup>2</sup>MyzaferXhaxhiu, *Ancient Greek literature*, Tirana, 2004, pg. 23.

## 2. Some mythological elements in *A Gloomy Season in Olympus*.

Many allegories and mythological symbols tend to symbolize the power of the gods over people, take away their faith in their own strength and make them slaves to the idea that only the gods decide on their destiny.

The influence of Greek myths is strongly felt even today. With its powerful influence on world literature and art, Albanian literature has also borrowed many themes from it. As well-known researchers Woren and Wellek claim: "... in today's literary creations, raised from a mythical basis, all human problems are affected. Myth presents them on a wide scale as joy, pain, hatred, love in all its shades, heroism and cowardice, love of freedom and the desire for revenge."<sup>3</sup>

Portrayed according to the model of the ancient Greek basileuses, Zeus and other gods, "... abstract personification of good and evil, became living, real beings, similar to humans",<sup>4</sup> Ismail Kadare in the drama *A Gloomy Season in Olympus*, presents the gods according to the failed model of humans, with all the virtues and vices that characterize them.

As humans are judged, he desires to overthrow those icons which for centuries have been defining each epoch and human civilization. Kadare's mastery, overturning cosmogony, not only humans depend on the premises of the gods, but the fate of the gods also depends on humans. The Zeus-Prometheus conflict best proves this. The past, the present, and the future intermingle and coexist. The mythical communication of human consciousness throughout the centuries, with all its commonalities and peculiarities, stands out with all its elements.

The merging of times into a single theatrical one, from the dawn of representation to the initiative of destroying the human race, serves the author's purpose to bring the truth about the world and humanity. The notion of the "Center," where all gods depend on man, their sufferings from him, emphasizes the idea of the consequences that even invincible or immortal gods may experience. Exactly here lies the doubt from other dramas of world literature, which have borrowed motives from the cosmos of ancient Greek. Zeus, "*this follower of the clouds who with his thunderbolts destroys everyone who opposes him, who demands absolute obedience, so that he who rises against him, or who wants to change the order he has established, is severely punished*"<sup>5</sup>, and while on the other side, stands Prometheus, each in defense of his own principles. The Center's non-definition of what it is specifically reminds us of Godo and Becket, who don't come, we have to go towards them.

## CONCLUSION

Located between the traditionalism of Albanian letters, the sterile schematism of socialist realism, and on the other hand, between modernity, which was not simply an influence of Western literary currents, but also an experience of a local tradition, thanks to Konica, Migjeni, Lasgushi and Kuteli, the intellectual action of Kadare took the size of a school.

Meanwhile, a new generation had already been created in the literary life that looked beyond the mountains and dreamed of new horizons, that would break the routine, destroy the parasitic clichés.

Kadarean poetry and prose became leaders of the battle for the modernization of Albanian literature and its emancipation.

Kadare enriched Albanian literature by reactivating local and foreign mythology. The national tradition has been reactivated with the mediation between the past and the present.

What we must emphasize is the opinion that Kadare and Albanian literature are an inseparable binomial, part of a whole, which cannot be understood without each other.

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<sup>3</sup>Rene Wellek, Austin Worren, *Theory of literature*, Renaissance, Pristine, 1982, pg. 283.

<sup>4</sup>Myzafer Xhaxhiu, *Ancient Greek literature*, Tirana, 2004, pg. 23.

<sup>5</sup>Sabina Osvalld, *Greek and Roman mythology*, Vuk Karaxhic-Larousse, 1965, pg. 143.

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