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Doctoral Dissertation

# Literature in the Greek Ethnic Minority in Albania

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## Explanatory Note

The doctoral dissertation “Literature in the Greek Ethnic Minority in Albania” was defended by decision of the Jury, no. 5, dated 19 February 2009, at the University of Tirana and received the evaluation “very good.” The title page retains the dissertation date of September 2008. The author subsequently deepened the research, with updates extending through 2022. The explanatory note and the present editorial revision are dated 2026.

The study brings together the folk tradition, writing before and after the 1913 border, the interwar years, the Second World War, socialist realism, and the ongoing period after 1990. It also offers close readings of Panos Çukas, Nikos Kacalidas, and Andreas Zarballas. Its contribution lies in the scope of this synthesis and in the construction of a primary archive. Earlier scholarship on particular corpora and periods is acknowledged in the methodological discussion rather than displaced by a claim of absolute priority.

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## Table of Contents

**Explanatory Note** ..... 2

**Editorial Notes** ..... 2

**Text History** ..... 2

**Transliteration and Names** ..... 2

**Positionality and Self-Reference** ..... 2

**Corpus Selection and Limitations** ..... 2

**Editorial Scope** ..... 3

**Table of Contents** ..... 3

**Preface** ..... 6

**Object of Study and Significant Approaches to the Research** ..... 11

**Methodology Employed** ..... 18

**Angle of Observation** ..... 20

**Part One** ..... 22

**Chapter One. General Overview** ..... 23

**1.1 Periodization** ..... 23

**1.2 Naming** ..... 27

**Chapter Two. Literary Heritage from the Beginnings to the Establishment of the Border between the Two States** ..... 31

**2.1 Direct Communication with Folklore: Premises for a New Creative Individuality in Written Literature, Period One** ..... 31

**2.2 Historical Conditions and Main Characteristics of Literature up to the Establishment of the Border, Period Two** ..... 37

**Chapter Three. Literature in the Greek Minority up to the Second World War** ..... 43

**3.1 Characteristics of Literature in the Greek Ethnic Minority after the Establishment of the Border between the Two States** ..... 43

**Part Two** ..... 64

**Chapter Four. Characteristics of Literature in the Greek Ethnic Minority during the Second World War** ..... 65

**4.1 Literature during the Second World War** ..... 65

**Chapter Five. Principles of Socialist Realism and the Literature of the Greek Minority in Albania** ..... 73

**5.1 Historical Conditions in the Post-War Political Reality** ..... 73

**5.2 The "In Extremis" Appropriation of Socialist Realist Principles** ..... 73

**5.3 Reflection of This Reality in the Spiritual Life of the Greek Minority** ..... 75

**5.4 Infrastructure** ..... 78

**5.5 Other Elements of Infrastructure: Criticism** ..... 80

**5.6 Contacts with the Literature of the Mother Nation** ..... 81

**5.7 From a Monolingual Literature to a Bilingual Literature, and Vice Versa** ..... 83

**5.8 Cultivation Exclusively in the Genre of Poetry** ..... 87

**Chapter Six. Main Phases of Post-War Literature, Distinguishing Characteristics, Representatives** ..... 91

**6.1 Classification** ..... 91

**6.2 "Imprisoned" Literature** ..... 92

**6.3 Literature Written within the System** ..... 101

**6.5 The Second Phase** ..... 108

**6.6 Other Representatives of This Phase** ..... 115

**6.7 The Ongoing Period** ..... 119

**Part Three** ..... 126

**Chapter Seven. Theoretical and Literary Approach to the Poetic Work of Panos Çukas, Nikos Kacalidas, and Andreas Zarballas** ..... 127

**7.1 Myth and Ideology** ..... 127

**Chapter Eight. Panos Çukas** ..... 132

**8.1 Biography** ..... 132

**8.2 The Model of Poetic Myth in the Volume, "Γεια σας αδέρφια (μια φωνή απ' το Αργυρόκαστρο)" ["Hello Brothers (A Voice from Gjirokastër)"], Athens, 1993"** ..... 134

**8.3 The Place of Man (the Individual) in the Mythic Model of P. Çukas's Poetry** 135

**8.4 The State of Plenitude** ..... 138

**8.5 The Nature of Poetic Duality in P. Çukas** ..... 141

**8.6 Communication with Folk Tradition** ..... 142

**Chapter Nine. Nikos Kacalidas** ..... 144

**9.1 Biography, Works** ..... 144

**9.2 The Biographical Element and the Poetic Myth** ..... 148

**9.3 The Chronotope of Kacalidas's Poetic Mythology** ..... 151

**9.4 The State of Privation. The Category of Nature** ..... 154

**9.5 The Category: Society-Man** ..... 158

**9.6 The Category: Metaphysical Forces** ..... 160

**9.7 The State of Plenitude** ..... 164

**9.8 The Demythologization of Mythology** ..... 165

**9.9 Relationships with Folk Tradition** ..... 169

**9.10 The Construction of Poems: The Phenomenon of Influence** ..... 175

**9.11 The Poetic Subject, Myth, and Surrealism** ..... 178

**9.12 The Phenomenon of Repetition** ..... 180

**Chapter Ten. Andreas Zarballas** ..... 210

**10.1 Biography and Features of His Poetry** ..... 210

**10.2 The Chronotope of His Poetic Mythology** ..... 213

**10.3 The Topos** ..... 214

**10.4 Chronos** ..... 223

**Conclusion** ..... 231

**References** ..... 236

**Secondary and Theoretical Sources** ..... 236

**Primary Sources: Works by Authors of the Greek Minority** ..... 239

## Preface

The study of the history of literature in the Greek Ethnic Minority in Albania constitutes a multi-year research and scholarly commitment. Alongside the effort to structure the history of this literature, the study aims to provide answers to problems at the theoretical level and to concrete literary phenomena related to it.

Regarding the first part, the study seeks to achieve its goal by penetrating in depth, to the very origin of the literary-cultural phenomena of the broader region to which this minority belongs, or, with the new juridical terminology, the National Minority. The temporal depth in the treatment of these phenomena engages simultaneously with the overcoming of narrow territorial-geographic boundaries, as one of the main dimensions of the general values of this literature, seen as part of culture in the broadest sense. It begins from the natural environment of this space, the relationships that the human being who inhabits and lives in it establishes with it, in order to arrive at the traditional or cultivated cultural-literary product. Consequently, on the theoretical plane, the study undertakes the burden of a test to tread upon a virgin or little-treated terrain.

To achieve the most substantial results, alongside difficulties of an objective theoretical character, it was necessary to overcome traditional mentalities and judgments, conclusions with ideological, political, or nationalist slogans, which had consistently nurtured, even to the point of taboo, broader public opinion.

On the concrete plane, the study undertakes to study and analyse in a thorough and comparative manner the poetic work of the most representative voices of this contemporary literature, such as the poets Panos Çukas, Andreas Zarballas, and Nikos Kacalidas. In parallel, it undertakes to make periodization, to conclude regarding terminology, naming, and exhaustive evaluations, while leaving space for open stances as well.

The territorial or geographic space discussed in this study bears primarily cultural-literary phenomena, the product of an intensive coexistence and communication among different ethnocultural factors in all times and forms. Located in space, they belong to the broader region historically known by the name Epirus. As a peculiarity, these products appear as an equation of efforts for the survival of the identity of this

region. In reality, they constitute determinant contributions to development in many directions for a broader region. From this diachronic perspective, history reserved a

particular role for this region. Through its services, it played a role, indeed a hegemonic one, in the military, economic, and cultural fields, at all moments when history required fundamental change and development (antiquity, the Middle Ages, modern times).

If we attempted to determine the essential elements of this role, we would conclude with the relationships that the human being of this region has established diachronically with nature, since, as is known, the harmony of these relationships determines the basic criterion for the orientation of a culture.

Fernand Braudel, a historian associated with the Annales school, treated geography as a durable condition of historical life rather than as a passive backdrop (Braudel, 1949). Building on that insight, this study approaches environment and culture as reciprocal formations. Within a particular territory, a community fixes its ways of organizing life, while the environment itself acquires an identity through a continuing dialectical relationship with human activity.

The fixing, or leaving of traces, in a certain environment of the basic characteristics of a culture, and the reverse, the appropriation of the natural elements of this environment and their transformation into parts of this culture, leads to the identification of the group, the community, with it and to the formation of its social, ethnic, and cultural identity. This dialectic of relationships corresponds to the historical-social conditions of every period of development. Consequently, it leads to the formation at different levels of this identity, but always inextricably linked to a geographic environment, even of small dimensions.

The product of the harmonious standing and evaluation of human relationships with nature is initially the aesthetic perception of nature by the human being.

It is from this relationship of interaction that the various myths originate. If we observe the relationships of the space we are discussing with mythology, we will note that this space is the cradle of the brilliant universe of ancient Greek mythology, the place of mythic heroes, and the environment where the structure of the activity of their cosmos

was situated. Upon this reality, and with a direct artistic and aesthetic communication or transmission, ancient epic and ancient Greek literature grew.

As if this were not enough, unlike more prominent cultural spaces, the literary products in this space (the reference is to literary products of folk tradition) maintained

a line of double development, but with unbroken ties to the ancient cultural site. In the medieval period and later, parallel to the heroic epic (as a general European characteristic inspired, as Çabej says, by the epic of Digenis Akritas) and ballads (as an actualization of the archetype of human dramas embodied in classical mythology and literature), a garland of myths was kept alive in the form of legends and folk tales, as a fragmented actualization of classical mythology with elements that served the ethical and aesthetic values of the time but above all functioned as diachronic codes determining the collective behaviour of the community under certain conditions.

This complex reality of relationships has an active reflection in the literature of the Greek Ethnic Minority, especially before and after the Second World War.

Secondly, the harmony of human-nature relationships is perceived also as an ethical value, as a determinant of morality and the timeless collective behaviour.

Finally, the human being here considers nature a paradise on earth that provides everything needed to live as well as possible. As such, it is considered something sacred and, as a rule, is deified. To be effective in respecting this sacredness, the human being transforms the most prominent natural elements into symbols of the identity of its culture, which, even if they do not have or have lost a direct practical function, possess in a timeless manner values or metaphysical functions.

An important fact remains that the stronger and more stable this relationship is, the more resistant the cultural identity of the community, the region that bears it, remains to any pressure from other identities of an ethnic-national or state character.

The region we are discussing embodied these values in the Oracle of Dodona, which is nothing other than a tree. However, world cultural consciousness has not forgotten to underline that at the Oracle of Dodona lie the origins of the Olympian gods in ancient Greece and all of its culture that illuminated the world. The tree remained for the region we are discussing the natural element that still today marks the starting point for the

organization of the structure of traditional societies within it. (Initially there is the tree, mainly the plane tree, the oak, or even the valanidhea, then the object of cult. Later in time, in the center of the environmental settlement, artisanal activity objects were placed, and subsequently schools. In the communist period, collective cultural centres were added.)

Another element that marks this space is social in origin but is also a product of relationships with nature: three- and four-voice polyphonic song. It has been suggested that this musical tradition preserves very old features, but its precise origins and any direct continuity with ancient myth remain matters of interpretation rather than facts confirmed by all sources. Its relationship with the environment is nevertheless important to the present argument, because musical form can appropriate and rework elements of a shared natural and social world. Accounts that link its scales or melodic rhythms to ancient Dorian or Phrygian practice are therefore treated here as hypotheses, not as established genealogies.

But, unlike the tree, the Oracle, which, after being created by the human being, served only as a giver of messages (ties with it today are preserved within the relationships of the human being with myth and the function of the ordinary tree in the organization of traditional social structures), polyphonic song functioned and continues to function as a living organism, as a timeless aesthetic value, as a biosynthesis of the human being and the environment, as a dialectical, evolutionary, and diachronic symbiosis of tradition with reality, with borrowings, influences, and anti-borrowings, where in every present of this manner of singing the centuries-old past is encountered.

A further speculative analogy has connected the collective voices of Epirote polyphony with the choruses of Greek tragedy. The analogy is suggestive for thinking about collective performance, but it does not demonstrate a direct historical descent and is not used as proof in this study.

A broader and deeper scientific analysis permits us also to say that these two elements have a diachronic influence on the cultural, and consequently literary, behaviour of the region we are discussing. Thus, we may say that the timeless contribution of this region is the product of a reality equated over centuries, not simply from an administrative viewpoint, but more as the result of a common cultural substrate, but with essential values in the foundations of the universe of its civilization. It is precisely this reality that allowed, as a unity of opposites, the coexistence and intensive, unprejudiced communication of communities differentiated from the linguistic, ethnic, or religious viewpoint within this space.

This deduction gives us cause to see that these comprehensive relationships created the possibility for this region to gain a protagonist role in the Enlightenment movement of the 18th-19th centuries of the two most important communities in the

region, the Greek and the Albanian peoples, for their respective ethnogenesis determinations and the restructuring of national identity under the conditions of the formation of nation-states and liberation from the Ottoman Empire.

The ancient authors link the Oracle of Dodona and the Mother Goddess of Olympus with the Pelasgians. The Albanian Renaissance figures of the 19th century, with origins precisely from this geographic space, in all of their ideological, intellectual, and literary production sought the ethnogenesis of the Albanian nation precisely in the Pelasgians, to conclude with the role and symbol of Skanderbeg.

Skanderbeg's iconography has also been interpreted through Epirote and Dodonian motifs, including the goat's head on his helmet and vegetal decoration associated with his ceremonial dress. Such readings require visual and documentary corroboration. They are treated here as interpretations of cultural memory, not as settled evidence of an unbroken lineage from Dodona or from ancient Epirote tribes.

Related Pelasgian and Sanskrit narratives have appeared in modern Albanian intellectual and literary debates. Because these theories of ethnogenesis and linguistic descent are contested, they are considered here as ideological representations of origin, not as established historical or linguistic conclusions.

In Greece, the processors of the ideology of the Modern Greek Enlightenment, who belong to the same space, Epirus, insisted strongly on establishing direct links of the Greek people with the glory of the ancient Greeks, to present it as the continuator and inheritor of this civilization.

In any case, the study avoids approaching this multi-planed reality in its diachrony with the same care and commitment. As stated, it emphasizes some aspects of the cultural phenomena resulting from human-nature relationships in this region, in order to demonstrate more broadly and deeply the literary phenomenon related to the Greek Ethnic Minority in Albania, in relation to place and the specific relationships that this literature creates with Albanian literature, but also with Greek literature, with nature and its elements, with folk creativity, etc. The study takes care to avoid stances in the service of political or ideological interests that have distorted or sidelined the real cultural values of this region. In any case, in the concrete instance, the obligation for a historical approach to the literary phenomena in this region has occurred before the pressure of recently created realities. The historical reality knows literature and letters in the Greek language with much broader boundaries than the limited geographic and ethnic reality

imposed mainly after the creation of the Albanian state and especially during the communist period. Objectively, it must be acknowledged that the terrain presents difficulties that create problems and misinterpretations for the present reality. Objectively, it must be said that literature in the Greek language has been written by several categories that remain outside the object of this study. First, there are creative authorities within the movement of Albanianism and those who accepted Greek culture as a cultural expressive reality also for Albanians. Second, there are creators of Greek origin who gradually were assimilated and relinquished this origin. Third, there are creators of ethnic Greek belonging in origin, but also in consciousness, who do not belong to the geographic territory known in an arbitrary manner as the Greek Ethnic Minority. The reference is, for example, to creators from Voskopoja, Korça, Himara, but also from Gjirokastër, Saranda, Delvina, Lunxheria, Zagoria, etc.

We may view this as a deficiency of our work in this study. At the same time, it is a need for a separate treatment that requires much work and broader scholarly commitment

## Object of Study and Significant Approaches to the Research

From what has been communicated, the object of this study is the historical treatment of Literature in the Greek Ethnic Minority in Albania. It consists of three main pillars. First, the approach of the diachronic cultural reality upon which this literature is formed. Second, the effort to organize the structure of a history of this literature in a general historical-literary overview. And third, a theoretical-literary approach to the poetic creativity of P. Çukas, A. Zarballas, and N. Kacalidas.

The elaboration of the object is linked to overcoming a problem of a theoretical nature. The question posed is: Should this literary product be accepted as an independent literature, as the literature of an ethnic minority, or as an integral part of the nation to which it belongs, or of the state in which it lives, or of both simultaneously?

I believe that scholarly arguments and the tradition of its treatment are in favour of the first part of the posed problem. The arguments against also have their weight and logic. Supporters of the second stance start from the fact that the aesthetic values of literature have an ecumenical nature, in the sense not simply of national or ethnic. They have a timeless function, which begins with the moment of creation aiming at the infinite of the historical perspective, regardless of the language used, the identity of the author

and the literary myth or theme. This is true, but it should not be forgotten that literature, as the art of generalization through individualization, has at its core the identity of the creator, which is nothing other than the expression of the ethnocultural identity of the community of which it is a part.

From this perspective, the literary product of the community of the Greek ethnic minority, if it can at least claim equation with Hellenic literature, or as a part of Albanian literature, can achieve this only by evidencing its own individuality as such.

This literature is linked first to a cultural region with its own particularities. Among the factors that determine this status, we may mention: the community of this region ethnically belongs to the Greek nation and politically to the Albanian state.

The 1991 proposal of the European Commission for Democracy through Law, known as the Venice Commission, offers a useful working definition. Article 2 describes a minority in relation to its numerical position within a state and its distinctive ethnic, religious, linguistic, or cultural characteristics (European Commission for Democracy through Law, 1991, Article 2).

From this perspective, the Greek ethnic minority in Albania, on the one hand, is the inheritor and bearer of the determinant elements of the ethnic identity of a people (a common history, homogeneous culture, language, and common spiritual constitution), and on the other hand, is an integral part of another state. As such, its identity may be determined "on the basis of their concrete development in time and space, regardless of language."

The very historical reality permits us to say that the community of the Greek Minority in Albania, in a certain period, after being given the status of a minority and, especially, in the period after the Second World War, developed its own cultural identity with values different from those of the mother nation. This occurred as an objective process of reflecting the new political reality in the Albanian state. These changes occurred having as their base their own tradition, which means that, even though they were reflected even in language, the cultural identity of this minority cannot be confused with that of the Albanian people.

It is understood that its literary product also developed in close dependence on the social, political, and historical factors that acted upon its own cultural identity in the

period of its existence as a minority within the Albanian state. Seen from this plane, it constitutes a peculiarity that merits attention.

On this plane, if we take into account the evaluation of Y. Chevrel (1989) that the notions "national literature," "national culture," and "national language" "were not and are not equivalent," we may say that the literature of this minority cannot be evaluated or classified by using the sole criterion of language. This would lead us to a wrong conclusion. To consider it Greek literature, since it is written in the Greek language, or Albanian literature, since it is written in the Albanian language.

From these considerations we may underline that the differentiated values in the cultural identity of the Greek Minority community, obtained from the influence of the social-political, economic, and cultural conditions of the period after the Second World War, brought differentiations between literary production in Greece and literary production in the community of the Greek Minority in Albania. These differentiations

are due more to the method of socialist realism that Albanian literature followed. Language remained the common element between the literature of this community and Greek literature. Another element, seemingly common but in fact differentiating from Greek literature, is the uninterrupted communication with the folk literary tradition of its own region.

In the case of relations with Albanian literature, language remains the main distinguishing element between this literature and that of the Greek Minority. It is true that the other aspects determining the distinction of the literary identity of this minority from the entirety of Albanian literature took on secondary importance, since they entered convergent currents, but, as we said, they were not equated.

The same reasoning, but with the opposite sense, may also be used for that part of the literature of this minority written in the Albanian language. Indeed, this would be one more argument that makes the study of this literature more interesting.

The peculiarity at this point must be sought in the fact that we do not have: the complete and essential repetition of the phenomenon "same language, different literatures," as noted by supporters of comparative literature for the cases of Anglophone literatures (the USA, England), Francophone literatures (France, Canada, or South Africa), etc.; nor the complete and essential repetition of the phenomenon of equated literatures, even though they were cultivated in different national languages

within the boundaries of one "ethnic" state. "The existence in the case of Switzerland (of literatures, author's note) in four languages (German, French, Italian, Romansh) does not necessarily presuppose the existence of four 'national' literatures," J. Veloudis emphasizes. Finally, nor the complete repetition of the phenomenon that "writers of different cultures expressed themselves in 'the same language,'" as Y. Chevrel (1989) says, taking as an example the fact that "the caprices of history have separated over time Dutch speakers of the Netherlands from those of Belgium, German speakers of German Switzerland from those of Austria."

From this perspective, a writer's relation to a homeland cannot be reduced to language. Authorship may be shaped simultaneously by origin, artistic practice, subject matter, and location. The resulting position can be described as writing on a border, where literature and language do not neatly coincide.

A factor that makes the determination that this literature belongs to a cultural region and not simply a linguistic region even more evident is the folklore of this region and the relationships of the literature of this region with it. Folklore and folk art in general not only served as the starting point of this literature, but also accompanied its march forward in all stages of development. On the other hand, even though it is considered an inseparable part of Greek folklore, the folklore of this region possesses its own distinguishing characteristics and particular and valuable qualities. Also, within these distinguishing characteristics we will find common elements of the folklore of a broader region, which appeared sometimes as elements of a common cultural substrate of this region, and sometimes as wandering myths and motifs.

All these arguments cannot deny, on the contrary, the fact that the literature of the Greek Minority (even the part known and officially permitted by the communist system) has a historical course within which it created artistic values and its own unquestionable literary individualities.

As such, this literature constitutes a contribution and a constituent value for all Albanian literature and culture. (Only in terms of the ideological framework may it be considered equivalent to all engaged Albanian literature with the distinguishing feature being only the language.)

At the same time, it also constitutes a value and a different peculiarity for Greek literature. This means that the confusion and the existence of unargued and unsystematized thoughts and viewpoints regarding its characterization, terminology,

periodization, etc., are unjustified, which makes the undertaking of such a study even more necessary.

Secondly. The above distinctions of the literature of the Greek Minority in relation to analogous literary phenomena may be sought in its characteristics as a literature of contact. In historical currents its contacts are, at times, two-sided and at times, one-sided.

The relationships of the literature of this region with the literature of the mother nation passed from the stage of an equated literature, before the establishment of borders; to a literature with no contact whatsoever, in the period after the Second World War; to pass, in the period after the 1990s of the last century, to the stage of the full re-acquisition of contacts with the literature of the mother nation, up to efforts for equation with it.

In relation to Albanian literature, these contacts passed through the following stages. From natural contacts in the period before the establishment of borders, to the almost complete loss of these contacts in the period up to the Second World War. In the period after the Second World War up to the 1990s we have intensive communication with equating tendencies (regardless of language) with Albanian literature. After the 1990s, the open tendency of the literature of the Greek Minority to lose direct contacts with Albanian literature and to pass again into the opposite extreme, similar to that of the 1912-1939 period, is observed.

This situation produced a phenomenon that can rarely be encountered in the history of the development of cultural and artistic phenomena, especially under the conditions of the integrative and globalizing developments of the last century and beyond. This is because the nature of the development of civilization, culture, and the arts (and within this framework, literature) is determined by the factor of the taking and giving of information regarding respective achievements, of integration (in the sense of respecting the rules of the creative "norm"), and of differentiation (in the sense of deviation from the norm for the creation of individuality, on a personal or national plane). Understandable in this plane is the deformed and utterly abnormal and unnatural development of the literature of the Greek Minority in Albania.

The same argument must be used to understand the tendencies of recent years of the literature of the Greek Minority for intensive communication with Panhellenic literature and its integration into this literature. At the meeting between Greek writers

and writers of the Greek Minority in Albania, April 2004, organized by the Department of Greek Language and Literature at the University of Gjirokastër, this tendency was raised as a necessary demand by the majority of discussants. Indeed, as was emphasized there, concrete ways were sought for achieving this "integration" or "re-integration." On a broader plane, this phenomenon is linked to the reality of the dissolution of

political systems in the countries of Eastern Europe and the re-acquisition of contacts of this minority with the mother nation after the opening of Albania to the world.

Integrative tendencies with analogous national literatures are observed also in the literatures of many Eastern countries, but, even on this plane, an essential distinction must be noted. In the countries of the former Eastern Bloc, "shifts" toward their own national literatures, as for example in former Yugoslavia, the former USSR, or the opposite process in former divided Germany, were linked generally to the change of the political map in the region. Whereas the tendencies of the literature of the Greek Minority for integration or equation into Panhellenic literature do not have such a basis. More so, this tendency stems from the phenomenon of the massive emigration of the community of this minority to the mother nation. Thus, its integration with Hellenic literature in the mother state occurs through natural processes.

On the other hand, Albanian literature seeks and establishes, in other forms and increasingly more, direct contacts with Greek literature.

These tendencies evidence from another angle the fact that in the roughly 50-year period of communist dictatorship, the total isolation of the literature of the Greek Minority from the rest of the national Greek literature caused its atrophy. (Compared with coherent international literary currents, the same consequences, despite achievements, were suffered by Albanian literature as well.) Such a situation reduced the possibilities of the literature of the Greek Minority to gain the role of double transmitter between the two literatures, the Greek and the Albanian. It did not achieve or was not permitted to, on the basis of the universal scheme of factors that cooperate in every communication phenomenon (giver, transmitter, intermediary or receiver), to play the role of intermediary between these two literatures as a process that "includes everything that conditions the phenomena of passage from one cultural system to another, that has to do with material support or with the activity of the individual." Thus, it lost the ability to contribute as a particular value both to the entirety of Albanian literature and to Greek literature itself.

Third. Juridically, this ethno-cultural community is known as the Greek Ethnic Minority in Albania. Consequently, under the conditions of this status, its literary product will be determined as Literature of the Greek Ethnic Minority in Albania.

Fourth, national literary historiographies have not given this body of writing a clearly defined place. The histories produced by the State University of Tirana in 1959 and by the Academy of Sciences of the People's Socialist Republic (PSR) of Albania in 1983, as well as Elsie's history of Albanian literature, do not treat it either as a distinct component of Albanian literature or as a literary phenomenon within the Albanian state (Universiteti Shtetëror i Tiranës, 1959; Akademia e Shkencave e RPS të Shqipërisë, 1983; Elsie, 1995/1997).

Earlier scholarship nevertheless provides important partial coverage. Paschalis (1998) examines post-war minority school readers, while Politis (1978/1993) supplies the broader history of modern Greek literature within which particular authors and works can be situated. These studies clarify individual corpora and contexts, but they do not attempt a continuous history of the minority literature from its folk heritage through the post-1990 period. The claim of originality in the present study therefore rests on its scope and synthesis, not on a dismissal of earlier work.

The study also enters a wider scholarly conversation about minority and border cultures. Deleuze and Guattari's concept of “minor literature” concerns the political and collective force of writing produced by a minority within a major language, rather than offering a general definition of every minority literature (Deleuze & Guattari, 1975). Nitsiakos's anthropological work on the Albanian-Greek frontier similarly demonstrates that borders are lived through mobility, social relations, and cultural exchange (Nitsiakos, 2010). These approaches reinforce the decision to treat the present corpus as a contact literature while retaining “minority literature” as a historical and institutional description, not as a direct application of Deleuze and Guattari's term.

Whereas in the complete edition of the journal “Nëntori” from 1953-1990 and of the newspaper “Drita” of the period 1960-1990, we noted that the treatment of this literature either does not exist at all, or is at cursory and formal levels.

In a confused, fragmentary manner, outside the criteria and aesthetic laws of literature and the arts, but under the umbrella of political and ideological influences, this literature is treated in those mass communication and literary media available to the minority itself in the period after the Second World War.

Silence or methodological confusion, sectarian and denigrating stances toward the literature of this community, written according to the principles of socialist realism, are encountered in the literature on literature at different levels also in Greece.

## Methodology Employed

It is known that for the realization of a scholarly work besides the determination of the object and purpose, two other essential elements must be determined: the methodology employed and the angle of observation. The determination of these two elements stems from the nature of the object. In our case, it can easily be noted that there are two main characteristics of this literature under study. First, this literature appears with a diachronic engagement in function of the historical, socio-political, and economic conditions tied to this region and the broader region. Second, it is the literature of a certain cultural region and in continuous contact with other homogeneous and heterogeneous cultural and literary factors. This means that it

offers realities "that have to do with at least two different series of data," the approach of which permits us to realize the study of our object.

Consequently, one of the methodologies employed is the comparative one, in a more sociological and anthropological plan in the approach to literature. "The object of comparative literature," Van Tieghem (1931) emphasizes, "are binary literary relationships, are the reciprocal relationships between two national literatures." We do not wish to refer here to the numerous theoretical questions regarding the independence and effectiveness of this (comparative) method for the study of literature. We content ourselves with what Yves Chevrel (1989) says, that "now the disputes have quieted down, if they have not been completely overcome," and we refer to the definition of this method made by Cl. Pichois and A. Rousseau in 1967 (Pichois & Rousseau, 1967): "Compared literature is the methodical art that, through the research of analogy, affinity, and influence relationships, approaches literature in relation to other fields of expression or knowledge, approaches data and literary texts, distant or not in time and space, provided that they belong to many languages or many cultures, that they be part of the same tradition, in order to describe them better, to understand and evaluate them."

Comparative methodology is that which gives us the model of how to strive toward the other in order to understand it better and, in parallel with it, ourselves. It gives us the key to understand what happens when a human or collective consciousness, involved

in its own culture, is confronted with a phenomenon that is the expression of another culture. It "includes all sectors of global cultural relationships and of intermediary factors, as well as the relationships of national and international literature, in a broad framework of phenomena and manifestations outside of literature and culture."

It is understood that this method, used in many other scholarly fields, in the study of literature does not content itself simply with the accumulation of facts and their comparison. Comparative methodology in literature occupies an extremely broad gamut of comparative planes and study. Without mentioning them, we may summarize them in two main categories:

First, we distinguish the category of comparative planes of the structure or internal layering of literature. Second, there is the category of general principles of the comparative historiography of literature.

Our object in this study is concentrated mainly on the second category. The purpose is to provide the most complete account possible of the historical development of the literature of the Greek Minority. Within a spatial and temporal frame of reference, or chronotope, the study examines the historical, political, and social conditions in which this literature emerged and developed. Dewey's account of relationships between the experience of the creator and that of the reader also informs the treatment of ethnic belonging, contact with Panhellenic literature, and relations with Albanian literature and the Albanian people (Dewey, 1934). Viewed temporally, many of these factors vary with geopolitical change in the region.

To achieve this purpose, the study also draws on the sociology of literature. Mukarovsky's account of aesthetic function and social value supports treating aesthetic norms as socially mediated without reducing them to political rules (Mukarovsky, 1936/1970). Literary change can therefore be examined through the interaction of internal structures and social norms, rather than through a simple determination of art by external conditions.

On the other hand, the sociology of literature, as a branch of literary study and not of general sociology, helps us to see in the literature of the minority the consequences of

the application of socialist realist principles, which subordinated artistic production to the political will of the class in power. The aim was not only to interpret social reality

but to transform it, an imperative echoing Marx's eleventh thesis on Feuerbach (Marx, 1845/1969).

The sociology of literature also carries methodological risks. An empirical sociology concerned only with social and extra-literary factors can overlook the formal and aesthetic organization of the work. Taine's triad of race, milieu, and moment is useful as a historical example of contextual explanation, but its deterministic application can return literary study to a positivism that neglects symbolic and spiritual values (Taine, 1863).

We have attempted to overcome these and other methodological traps. On the other hand, we consider the diachronic-comparative reference system not simply a liberation from ideological postulates for the study of the literature of this region, but also a possibility for evidencing unique and unrepeatable values on the plane of literary phenomena. It is understood that this issue goes beyond the object of this study, despite the fact that total avoidance of it is difficult and meaningless.

### Angle of Observation

The third factor that aids the realization of a study is the angle of observation. The determinant element for selecting the angle of observation for a study is, I believe, the need to avoid the subjectivity of the researcher, especially in a study with a social character. In this prism there are two main viewpoints: the "intellectual" and the "experiential" (of personal experience).

The first viewpoint declares neutrality over the object of study. However, everyone is aware that it does not secure the declared neutrality, since the researcher, even when declaring it, expresses, even if indirectly, his stance on the object studied.

The second viewpoint acknowledges that a study is shaped by the situated “I” of the researcher at a given moment. Dewey, an American philosopher and educational theorist, provides a more secure basis for this position through his account of art as experience (Dewey, 1934). First-person research does not claim an impossible neutrality; it makes perspective visible so that readers can assess the relationship between experience, evidence, and judgment.

The study of phenomena from this angle of observation also constitutes a test of self-knowledge. And, as Yves Chevrel (1989) says, "Whoever undertakes a study on a literary object, whatever it may be, knows the roots of a culture, of the culture of his

community (sometimes of the cultures of his communities, simultaneous or successive), just as much as he knows the roots of the culture in which he himself was formed."

Relying precisely on these principles, we followed in this work the "experiential" angle of observation, as a more efficacious manner toward our purpose. For this choice there exist also several reasons that we might call objective.

The first reason is linked to the characteristics of the literature of the Greek Minority in Albania, especially after the Second World War, characteristics that, due to the "hermetic" interruption of contacts with the mother nation, are rare for analogous ethnic minority literatures. Consequently, the study of this peculiarity is secured, among other things, by a lived knowledge.

The second reason has to do with the lack of a bibliography corresponding to the characteristics of this literature. And the third reason is linked to the lack of proper studies on this literature or to the existence of studies that prefer confusion and the distortion of its reality, in the service of certain political and ideological goals.

On the other hand, for a good part of this literature, it is still early to make final conclusions. Thus, the experiential manner of studying it provides the advantage of simply expressing an evaluation or judgment from this position.

This experiential position also requires reflexivity. I am a member of the community whose literature is being studied, and some of my own creative and documentary work belongs to the historical record discussed here. Lived experience can provide access to informal networks, languages, and unpublished materials, but it can also encourage identification with particular authors or narratives. I therefore treat personal knowledge as a source of questions and contextual evidence, not as independent proof of aesthetic value. Where my own work is mentioned, the reference is bibliographic rather than evaluative, and it is not used to validate the study's conclusions.

A further limitation concerns the selection of poems. The poets themselves selected the works used in the close readings. This procedure gives access to texts the authors considered durable, but it may favour preferred works and omit early, regretted, marginal, or atypical writing. Çukas's later “katharsis” of his own volumes illustrates this risk. The readings that follow therefore describe the selected corpus, not the entirety of each poet's production, and their conclusions should be tested against a fuller archive in future research.

**Part One**

## Chapter One. General Overview

### 1.1 Periodization

In theoretical discussions of literary periodization, the selection of criteria remains a central problem. One risk is the direct transfer of political history into literary history. Veloudis (1994) identifies George Gottfried Gervinus as a prominent representative of this tendency, in which political narration takes precedence over aesthetic criticism.

Positivism presents a related risk. Formalist and structuralist approaches instead emphasize the internal organization of literary works. The earlier Darwinian account of genre evolution should not be attributed to Wellek: Wellek and Warren criticised biological analogies and argued that literary periods must be described through literary rather than merely political criteria (Wellek & Warren, 1949).

Mukarovsky offers a more adequate principle for this study because literary history can be understood through the interaction of developing internal structures and changing social norms (Mukarovsky, 1936/1970).

"On a national scale, the bearing of political periodization onto the plane of literary life is a great temptation, which is seen in the majority of historians of English or French literature," Yves Chevrel (1989) tells us. This same author tells us that in Germany, for a literary or cultural periodization orientation, an event is preferred, such as may be the death of Goethe. Whereas in Greece, Spain, and the Netherlands, Chevrel informs us, the term "generations" is also used.

In our work, we preferred the principle of bearing historical-political periodization onto the periodization of this literature, intertwined with the principle of Mukarovsky. At the

same time, we also preferred the term "generations," for those periods where the distinguishing characteristics of its literature were created by authors of a certain age or generation.

The pursuit of this path is linked to the fact that, as we emphasized above, the Literature of the Greek Minority in Albania developed as a literature influenced by historical developments. On the other hand, the historiographies of Albanian and Greek literatures followed more or less the same principles.

As may be understood, this manner hides the risk of interpreting the history of literature with the eye of the historian or rooted in the positions of positivism or even empiricism, but in our case, we believe that this approach is more productive.

Nevertheless, what is most important for the historiography of literature in relation to the Greek Minority in Albania is the fact that it is difficult to find a unified opinion, both regarding periodization and regarding its naming. What must be said is that these opinions may be grouped into two relatively opposing stances.

The first stance belongs to the period of communist dictatorship and is more or less imposed. For politically known reasons, it was "concluded," by almost all researchers of that time, that this literature was born during the Second World War, was named "Minority Literature," and was considered a constituent part of Albanian socialist realist literature in the Greek language.

"The literature of the Greek Minority in Albania is new," wrote Spiros Kufos as early as 1953, "or, the conditions for its birth were created when the Communist Party of Albania invited all the people, without distinction of religion, province, or idea, to unite in the National Liberation Front to fight against the foreign fascist occupiers and their tools in our country."

Spiro Çomora, the first and among the few who treated the problem of the literature of the Greek Minority in Albanian letters, says in the journal “Nëntori”: "...in the past, a minority literature had shown no signs of life... this was born precisely after the liberation of Albania."

"Then (in the war years, author's note), without denying the existence of any tradition, the true minority literature put down its roots and was born," says Minellas Dalianis, one of the exponents of the minority from the time of the war until the second decade of the 21st century.

"The literature of the Greek Minority in Albania began to develop after the triumph of the National Liberation War and the establishment of the people's power," says, as early as 1955, another important personality of the war and of letters in the Greek Minority, Spiros Xhas. He expressed the same idea many years later: "Literature in the Greek language, with some small exception, began to be written after liberation.... It is a shoot that found suitable soil and favourable climate only in the years of the people's power."

Without any particular artistic value and without any influence on public opinion and the more recent literary tradition, Stavros Dajos also characterizes the literature related to the Greek Minority of the period before the Second World War. "The National Liberation War," he emphasizes, "did not bring (the minority, author's note, P.B.) only freedom, but also the liberation of creative energies..." and adds: "...these creations (of the war, author's note) mark the birth of a new literature, that of socialist realism."

The second stance belongs to the period after the 1990s. According to these stances, the literature of the Greek Ethnic Minority is divided into two great periods with the demarcation line of the Second World War.

The beginnings of this literature, according to these opinions, go very deep in time. Its roots lie in folklore and traditional folk song. The idea is underlined that this literature did not constitute any literary school of its own, but constitutes "an inseparable part and natural development of Panhellenic literature."

Whereas in the post-war period, which lasted until the 1990s, when the Greek Minority re-established contacts with the mother nation, the literature of the Greek Minority, according to these same opinions, comparatively with Panhellenic literature, reflects "backwardness" regarding artistic values and is "influenced" by Albanian literature.

During this period, literature in the Greek minority followed the same aesthetic platform as Albanian literature, namely socialist realism. It can therefore be discussed as Albanian literature written partly in Greek, without assuming that language alone determines its literary affiliation.

Based on rigorously historical-political criteria, the Literature of the Greek Ethnic Minority in Albania, as such, begins at the moment of the establishment of borders and the transformation into an ethnic Greek minority of that part of the population of Greek nationality included within the Albanian state.

Certainly, we would be mistaken if we were to study literary-cultural phenomena starting from a politically motivated historical date. All the more so since the literature cultivated by this Greek community within the Albanian state cannot be conceptualized as such (in function of the evidence and development of the ethno-cultural identity of this community) without seeing it as a development upon its own literary heritage of the period before the transformation into a minority. The very reality of the development of

this literature, whether of the 1912-1939 period or of the 1940-1990 period, proved the necessity of relying upon this tradition, according to the principle that the literature of every moment of the present is the product of the achievements of tradition upon which the values of the time are added.

In this aspect, the study of literature related to the cultural region inherited by today's Greek ethnic minority in Albania takes into account the fact that the literature of this minority constitutes a continuity raised upon this heritage. On the other hand, starting from the fact that this literary heritage is a constituent part of the national Greek literary heritage, the study of literary production in the community of the Greek Minority gains importance for viewing it as a deviation from the common tradition due to historical-political conditions and, secondly, for seeing the values that it brings as such to Greek national literature, but also to Albanian literature.

Based on the above criteria and taking as reference points contacts with the communicating literatures with it (Greek or Albanian), the literature in the Greek ethnic minority in Albania may be periodized in this manner:

In a first period may be included the stage of direct contact with the literary creativity of folk tradition.

The second period coincides with the long Ottoman occupation up to the birth of the independent Albanian state and the establishment of the border between Albania and Greece. A distinguishing characteristic is that it develops as an inseparable part of the general Greek literary movement. The subsequent period is that up to the Second World War.

A characteristic of this period is the development of literature with the status of being an ethnic minority within the Albanian state, together with the consequences that accompanied the process toward this status in all directions. This literature continued to maintain contacts with the literature of the mother nation. Indeed, it developed, for the most part, outside the geographic boundaries of the Albanian state. Whereas contacts with Albanian literature were so weak that they cannot be taken into account.

The period that follows is that of socialist realism. Communications with Greek national literature are inexistent, with the exception of rare and intermediary cases. Influences from Albanian literature are numerous. These influences are more the consequence of the creative method thoroughly permeated by communist ideology. This

literature develops mainly as poetry. From a literature written in the mother language at its beginnings, it turns into a bilingual literature where the Albanian element, especially at the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, becomes dominant.

As a period in development may be considered that after the 1990s of the last century. It is characterized by a rapid development and by the cultivation, almost, of all literary genres and types. Contacts with Panhellenic literature are free, whereas contacts with Albanian literature become increasingly rare. Likewise, the number of minority creators of this period who write in both languages, Albanian and Greek, becomes increasingly smaller.

### 1.2 Naming

We believe it is necessary to bring into discussion the thoughts expressed regarding the determination of the naming term of this literature.

Also, regarding naming, there is no unified stance. Rather, a confusion is observed, which has its source, we believe, in the emotional and political burdens caused by the very history of the region in which this literature was cultivated. The same thing must

be sought also in the lack of desire on the part of the responsible authorities (more than in difficulties) to clarify the historical-political and ethno-cultural status of the Greek Minority in Albania.

This observation is linked mostly to the purpose of the communist system, which in the name of the ideology of the new socialist man, wanted to transform the ethno-cultural identity of the Greek Minority into a hybrid identity.

There also exist stances that come from the Greek side, which seek, by loading geographic notions with emotional and ideological doses, to keep alive situations that have been overcome and are unreal for the present.

Also, in the breadth of the confusion regarding the terms used and the lack of a single term with a clear scientific explanatory and definitional character for this literature, we believe that a series of other factors must be taken into consideration. Such may be the different viewpoints regarding its periodization, the relationships created by this literature and its bearers with analogous literatures of the state in which it lives and of the mother nation, the cultivation mainly of one literary genre, etc.

As a consequence, to define this literature, terms such as are used: "Minority Literature," "The Literature of the Greek Minority in Albania," "The Literature of the Greeks of Albania," "Vorioepirote Literature," "Imprisoned Literature," "The Post-War Literature of the Greek Minority in Albania," etc.

We would propose the term "Literature in the Greek Ethnic Minority in Albania." The arguments regarding this naming would be: We all accept that the literature of the Greek Minority constitutes a continuity of literary heritage that goes beyond the temporal boundary of the creation of the Albanian state. As such, before this moment it was equated with Panhellenic literature. After the transformation into an ethnic minority within the Albanian state, the literary tradition, or literary heritage, underwent a deviation or followed a different path from that of Greek national literature. This literary product, which bears the seal of the heritage of its own region (however denied) and of the new social-political reality within the Albanian state, we recognize as the literary product of this community. These characteristics lead us to the need to examine the literary processes that occur in this minority as a consequence of the interaction of the tradition factor under the new social-political conditions. As such, the

term in question provides us with the best reflection of this reality as continuity, or as literary phenomena in this Greek Minority that bear the seal of the heritage factor and interaction with other factors. This very literary reality distinguishes itself both from Panhellenic literature and from Albanian literature.

Regarding other naming, we would have these thoughts: First, the term "Minority Literature," widely used in Albanian literature, mainly by researchers or referents of Albanian nationality, cannot define our object. This is because the word "minority" has a general meaning and may refer to the literature of minority groups in general in the country, regardless of the fact that in Albania with the name "minority" was meant and continues to be meant only the Greek Ethnic Minority. Second, as we mentioned above, the use of the term "minority" had gained a political function with the purpose of narrowing and weakening the semantic scope of the ethnic and cultural identity of the Greek Minority. All the more so when the specifier "Greek" was eliminated on the one hand, while on the other hand it had gained negative semantic burdens that went from insult to synonym of the word "enemy," and the very members of the Greek Minority community in Albania, to avoid these negative burdens, called themselves "minoritarians," instead of calling themselves "Greek minoritarians," or "Greeks."

Likewise, it is known that the literary tradition of this community goes back in time much further than the historical moment that transformed it into a minority within the Albanian state. This makes the term "Minority Literature" unable to respond to the historical reality linked to the literary tradition of this minority.

The argument of literary tradition that goes back further in time than the moment of the establishment of borders also refutes the definition "Literature of the Greek Minority."

This means that this term is usable in the sense of the present status of this minority, at a time when it is recognized as having the right and authority as the inheritor of the literature of this region in the diachronic aspect. Or, to determine a historical period of this literature, when this community is known as a minority. It may also be used for a particular theme, when we wish to put into relief, for example, the characteristics or distinguishing peculiarities of this literature compared with Albanian literature or with Greek literature in a certain period of time.

The term "The Literature of the Greeks of Albania" was used in the relevant literature of the Greek Minority in the period after the 1990s. The objection to this term, from various literary and non-literary circles, is linked to the negative reactions caused from time to time by the use of the phrase "the Greeks of Albania," to define the Greek Ethnic Minority in Albania. The argumentation is linked to the fact that such a term is used for the Greeks of Germany, the USA, Australia, etc., who went there at a relatively recent time, as a diaspora, and constitute a generally dispersed and non-functional community. As a result, it is said that the same formulation cannot be used for the Greek Minority in Albania, which extends in territorial continuity with the mother nation and did not come to its settlements from any other place.

Very widespread, especially in Greek spaces, is the term "Vorioepirote Literature." The term "Vorioepirote" (Northern Epirote) is mostly a geographic notion. It is linked to the fact of the division into two states, at the beginning of the 20th century, of the territory of the region historically known by the name "Epirus." Subsequently, we have the ideologization and politicization of this geographic notion in order to equate within it the idea of "Greek lands torn from the mother trunk." It constitutes even today a term with wide usage in Greece and in the Greek Minority. To its initial usage has now been added usage with the meaning of determining origin (thus replacing the term "ethnic Greek minority"), but also usage with the new ideological meaning of "evidencing" individual or

collective patriotism. The same semantic course has been followed by the term "Vorioepirote Literature."

We believe that, as far as literature is concerned, this term also cannot represent it worthily. This is not because in various circles in Albania this term presupposes claims "for the unification of Northern Epirus with the South," but, first, this term does not enjoy a known juridical and official status that would permit it to represent or express the identity of the Greek community in Albania. Consequently, in the official aspect it cannot be used for the literature of this community. All the more so, it could perform this function in the diachronic aspect, that is, to express the literature of the period before the establishment of borders. Second, within the geographic boundaries of "Northern Epirus," however far south in Albania they are placed, a part of the Albanian population would also be included.

Having in mind the reasoning thus far, we believe that the terms "The Post-War Literature of the Greek Minority," "Imprisoned Literature," etc., may easily be interpreted as not corresponding to the reality of this literature. The first, which is encountered just as often as the term minority literature, may be used only for the literature of a certain period, that after the Second World War. The second term, which finds place in some anthologies of the poetry of the Greek Minority, may be used (with analogous emotional burden), to characterize that part of the forbidden or censored creativity of Greek minority creators during communist rule. In Greece, the same term is used also with the meaning of all the literature of the Greek Minority, which in the post-war period up to the 1990s developed completely isolated from the rest of Greek literature.

For all these reasons, we believe that the term "Literature in relation to the Greek ethnic minority in Albania" or "Literature in the Greek Ethnic Minority in Albania" is closer to reality both in the diachronic aspect (even when this community was not a minority) and in the coherent aspect of this literature. Indeed, it also includes literature written by others about this minority.

## Chapter Two. Literary Heritage from the Beginnings to the Establishment of the Border between the Two States

### 2.1 Direct Communication with Folklore: Premises for a New Creative Individuality in Written Literature, Period One

Among the main characteristics of the first period, we would distinguish first that of the direct communication of the literature of this period with the literary creativity of folk tradition. By this we mean that in this phase we do not yet have a clear differentiation between written literature and folk literature. We say this because the epic songs, for example, inherited especially by the region of today's Greek minority and which have been considered songs of the cycle of the "Akritai" (legendary historical epic), are not linked to events with the dimensions of legendary epic. They more reflect dramas of everyday life, such as: marital betrayal, impossible love, the drama of the separation of spouses due to war or emigration, etc. Only the expressive means used in them are those of the legendary epic and of dramatic and heroic ballads.

This permits us to say that the boundaries of written literature in this period are not differentiated from folklore and that "the beginnings of the literature that today's Greek Minority inherits are linked to the moments when folk literature gains the forms of a written literature."

The second characteristic is linked to the fact that both these factors together, both literature and folklore, maintained an intensive communication with mythological epic. This means that the culture and civilization of the classical period will have a comprehensive reflection in the culture and literary creativity of every nature of this region. In the aspect of folklore, this will be reflected in two main lines: First, in the creation of a new universe of myths, legends, and oral traditions, of a strongly marked and distinguishable local character, as well as the bearing of mythological reality into the known cycles of folk songs, but with a double nature. Second, in songs similar to the Panhellenic folkloric universe and in folk songs with local identity.

Another characteristic is linked to the fact that the folklore of this region not only served as the starting point of written literature, but also accompanied its march forward in all stages. Indeed, at critical moments and historical crossroads it served as a guide, for

the collective behaviour of the community, as well as for written literature and the culture of this Minority in general.

Lino Politi, one of the most distinguished personalities in the field of the historiography of the literature of Greece, states that, compared with written literature, "folk song constitutes a parallel diachronic presence." However, he himself chooses, for the beginnings of modern Greek literature, an "interruption" of these parallels. He places these beginnings at the folk epic of the "Akritai," Digenis Akritas, which dates to the first half of the 11th century and which is claimed simultaneously by Folklore, Byzantine Literature, and Modern Greek Literature. This choice is accepted in a manner approaching unanimity by all historians of Greek literature. This occurs perhaps because the epic in question constitutes the first monument of folklore in written form. Second, it is included in the same epic climate that pervades at that period the West and the East and testifies to the first sparks of a new national consciousness.

We made this parenthesis in order to underline the idea of the necessity of the systematic study of the beginnings of cultural tradition by every people that truly aims to research, perceive, and promote the distinguishing characteristics of its own identity. In the structures that enable the study of the cultural system of a country or community, literature constitutes the privileged factor. The main characteristics of this system must be sought in the pertinence of the phenomena under study, which orients us toward diachronic structures that compose the basic coordinates of the system of national culture. The second criterion is vitality, which is linked to the possibilities of the values of the phenomena under study to respond to and satisfactorily resolve the basic aesthetic and spiritual demands of their bearers, the ability to participate in the creation of new values on their part and to contribute within the framework of a dialectic of aesthetic values of a broader region.

The third argument is linked to the typological criteria of study, which enable the orientation of the study toward strategic sectors of culture and civilization.

What is observed in the Literature in the Greek Ethnic Minority is the peculiarity that its creators, creative structures, and aesthetic value codes in their poetic myths originate in nature, song, and folk cultural tradition.

If, for example, at the basis of the Oracle of Dodona lies, according to mythology, the tree and the bird (according to one mythological variant the Oracle was founded by two black doves), these two elements also constitute the basis of the poetic myth of the

folk song of the surrounding region. The tree is the place where the folk hero hangs his weapons and the symbol of rootedness and resistance, of the link with the mother soil and with nature.

The bird is the protagonist, metaphorized or personified, that unfolds the consciousness and subconsciousness of the desires and aspirations of the human being here. Whereas the tree has a static vertical function toward the earth and the sky, the bird, with more marked personification characteristics, possesses a horizontal and vertical dynamism toward the sky, to control or communicate with those places, events, or aspirations that the human being cannot reach.

Written literature has established the same relationship with these elements. "The Uprooted Generation" is the title of the novel by J. Lilis, written in the 1930s of the last century, and dedicated to the forced flight of his generation (lost) from their particular homeland.

In the poet Nikos Kacalidas, the tree, sometimes in metaphoric meaning and sometimes in direct meaning, sometimes in word-formation function and sometimes in simple form, appears 68 times in the poetry collection “The Baptism of Birds”, while "bird," in the same poetry collection, appears 167 times.

In Andreas Zarballas, the tree has been turned into a symbol of resistance and rooting of the human being in his particular homeland, in his soil, in his place, in his topos.

This overview enables us to determine the typological criteria of folk tradition borne in written literature. The most essential may be found in the relationships individual-society, nature-culture, freedom-slavery, and life-death. The above system is adapted from Claude Lévi-Strauss's structural analysis of myth and social relations (Lévi-Strauss, 1958). According to him, the pairing in relationship of these elements corresponds to those basic categories through which the human being may observe and study his experience and organize analogous cultural systems.

In the above typological pairings, the first and third correspond to the historical-social field and address us to the isotopy of reason. At the same time, they give us the criteria for the classification of social values (that is, of ideology). The second and fourth belong to the essence of social life and constitute the cosmological isotopy, that is, they provide us with criteria that enable the codification of the relationships that support a

worldview. These two isotopies, or fields, coexist in the cultural and literary tradition of the people, linked by a dependency or obligatory unity, where the relationship individual-society is equivalent to the relationship nature-culture and the relationship freedom-slavery is equivalent to the relationship life-death. It is precisely this link that determines the essential diachronic aesthetic values and the updated message of folk creativity, always within a stable and transformable structure.

To concretize the idea, let us take into consideration one of the variants of the legend of water in this region.

The sea, the legend says, brought forth from its bosom a serpent-dragon. A gust of storm lifted it into the sky and dropped it upon the western face of Mount Sopot above Delvina. The event, the emergence of the serpent-dragon, broke the harmony between nature and the inhabitants there (the relationship nature-culture), since the life of the serpent-dragon was linked to the death of the inhabitants and of their livestock.

(Also, in the concrete case the destructive factor is society personified in the malice of the sea. In the folk tradition here, from the sea come only evils, especially foreign armies that destroy and ruin everything, even life (war = culture). The reference is to a geopolitical and anthropological relationship of the human being here with the sea. The sea was not a factor of development for Epirus, it was not its ally, therefore in traditional creativity it is transformed into a source of evil. This relationship, as we shall see below, is preserved also in today's written literature, and also in the typology of a part of Albanian legendary epic.)

This relationship also constitutes the conflict of the myth that must be resolved. The resolution is determined as a test with two parts: the undertaking of action on the one hand (to destroy evil) and victory-defeat on the other. The second part consists of two elements that oppose each other.

The destruction of evil (the undertaking of action) begins with the wisdom of an old man. (The reference is to the hero identified with the individual and nature, who comes from the primitive individual action of the folk hero. Thus, we are dealing with an individual-hero, or the reverse, who acts alone in the name of natural-life right. He will oppose an organized force (in the concrete case embodied in the exaggerated destructive force), which expresses the power of a society: culture.

The old man loaded a beast (donkey, the characteristic animal of the region) with oak wood and within the load had placed embers. He took the load to the serpent's lair. The serpent, left without its preferred food, swallowed the beast with all its load. But shortly after, the embers ignited and the serpent caught fire, leading to its destruction. (Folk tradition does not end the narrative here, which from an artistic viewpoint would be reasonable, but continues by dealing with "details" essential to the counteraction of the factor "society," which is eliminated by the surprise caused by popular wisdom. (This remains a characteristic of the creativity of N. Kacalidas.) The continuation of the narrative is also linked to the effort to give convincing characteristics that the event occurred precisely in this region-space, regardless of the narrated time that must remain undetermined.

After catching fire, the serpent invited the Bistrica and the sea to help it. It called the Bistrica "mother" and the sea "sister." The sea was angered that it was called "sister." The Bistrica could not rise any higher. Thus, help was not given. After this, the serpent, hoping it would be saved, came out of its lair and took the plateau of the mountain above Delvina. It began to vomit everything it had swallowed in order to save itself, but it did not survive. Its effort, the legend says, is shown also by the two rows of oak trees that do not grow or multiply on the plateau of the mountain above Delvina. They say these are from the oak wood that the serpent vomited then.

Communication with classical mythology is easily observed. Indeed, we are dealing with the very “Iliad”. Regardless of the narrated time, which in our case is much more recent; the dramatic quality of the epic with minimized density and heroes with deeply human features, who cannot use swords and spears or perform mythic deeds; the communicative elements with ancient mythology (the “Iliad”) are significant. (Hyperbole and the concretization of space, together with the continuous sharpness of the problem, the difficulties of life that require a solution, keep the myth and the

narrative alive in our case.) This communication is linked to the manner and similar means of resolving the conflict. In the “Iliad”, to conquer Troy, ultimately weapons were not needed, but the wisdom of the individual-hero. The invention of the Wooden Horse by Odysseus. In our case we have the use of a similar beast, but a living one. In both cases the movement is the same. The penetration of the destructive force into the interior, into the heart of the opponent. In the case of Troy, this force consists of armed soldiers in the belly of the wooden horse. In our case, it is fire placed in the load of the

beast. (This element leads us to another similarity, to the means of fire used by Hercules to destroy the hydra with 12 heads.)

In the “Iliad”, Troy is a city (not animate) which is given life by its inhabitants (a social system); in our case, the opponent is a serpent-dragon (animate) "sent" by the sea as the personification of this system. Thus, we have two lines of action within the same typological system, with the only difference that the acting elements have opposite natures. (When one element is animate in one line of action, in the other it is inanimate.)

For the creative individuality of this region, the fact speaks that in the period of the spread of Christianity, in the very same folk legend the hero (the wise old man) is replaced by a representative, or an earthly envoy, of the divinity. Indeed, he even has a concrete name, Akaqios. His power to destroy the serpent-dragon lies in the cross. (!) In an intermediate case, at the beginnings of Christianity in this region, the merit of destroying the serpent-dragon belongs to the bishop Dhonatos (a historical person), who uses neither the cross nor fire, but releases into the serpent's lair an enormous ball of beeswax. The serpent, deceived by the scent of honey, attempts to swallow it, but its most powerful weapons, its teeth, get stuck in the wax, with the consequence that the hero easily strikes it with an axe and destroys it. In the aspect of religious mythology this value was identified generally with Saint George, who is considered the distinguishing saint for the broader region of Epirus.

At this point it remains for us to clarify where lies the ethical, and consequently aesthetic, value of the hero's action as such, since from what we said it seemed that in this effort the real or ethical triumph of the hero appears as the triumph of the individual over society and, simultaneously, of nature over culture.

In this type of triumph, natural values take the form of social values, which could be interpreted as a challenge to the antinomy, that is, as a kind of reconciliation of the individual with society and the re-establishment of equilibrium between culture and nature. Nature expresses itself through the individuality of the hero as the bearer of the aesthetic values of nature. In this model, the human being in harmony with nature is placed at the center.

This we might call the determining scheme of the "ideological cosmos" of a traditional peripheral society, which lives in organic relationship with nature and in a relationship of opposition to the organized state and central power. It is precisely this

fact that Epirus was considered by the central power of Byzantium "in the worst case rebellious, and in the best-case peripheral-provincial."

"Peripheral in relation to the official centres of culture, abandoned or suppressed by the class in power, these communities developed their culture in opposition to the former, supported by motives and initial vital demands of the soft Mediterranean nature, but balanced," E. Kapsomenos (2002), professor of Literary Theory and researcher of the relationships of written literature with Greek folklore, tells us.

In this region, the same motif, the conflict with hostile foreign factors against the harmony of the human being here with nature, as well as the victory of the hero with means that above courage, bravery, and the spirit of sacrifice have wisdom, is encountered from the myths about the destruction of Phoenice to modern times. This is also the ethical message for the collective behaviour transmitted by this universe of folk literary tradition. That victory in a permanent conflict requires sacrifices, but above all wisdom.

On the other hand, this reality constitutes the cosmogony of the diachronic collective behaviour of this community and is determinant also in the cultivated literary creativity of our days, especially in poetry, where nature and its personification, or that of its particular elements, constitute the space and means of aesthetic action.

As we expressed ourselves also at the beginning, the same typological structure is found also in folk songs. (An approach, but on another plane, to life-death, will be made when we speak of Literature in the Minority during the Second World War.)

### 2.2 Historical Conditions and Main Characteristics of Literature up to the Establishment of the Border, Period Two

The second period within the framework of this literary and cultural heritage coincides with the long Ottoman occupation up to the birth of the independent Albanian state and the establishment of the border between Albania and Greece. We clarify that in this case we speak of the period when the region of today's Greek Ethnic Minority in Albania was equated with the broader region of Epirus. This means that a distinguishing characteristic of the literature of this period is that it develops as an inseparable part of the general Greek literary movement. The main characteristics of the literature of this period, we believe, are two. The first has to do with the links of this literature with

mythological epic, and the second is linked to the specific conditions under which it developed.

The bi-ethnic, multicultural, and multilingual phenomenon constituted also during this period the factor that secured for Epirus the advantage of anticipating developments that would follow in the broader region in all fields. And this is linked to the fact that "everywhere in the world, where peoples meet, we see that those shine who derive from two different tribes (nations)."

The political developments that accompanied the period of the Despotate of Epirus, with the continuous changes of its rulers, Greek, Italian, Serbian, and Albanian, caused upon the common cultural substrate a multi-lingual and multi-ethnic population structure to be equated. The same structure was inherited also in the period of the Ottoman Empire. In the region that we treat, N. Vernikos and S. Daskalopoulou (1999) observe that there lived and moved "a five-language world," the coexistence and interaction of which would necessarily bring development and progress.

Within this framework, the men of letters of this period would seek new models of political, economic, social, and cultural organization that would correspond to Western ones. This means, first, that they understood the need to know themselves and their history and, second, that they understood that the imperial systems of social and political organization were declining. Their place was being taken by nation-states. This Enlightenment cultural period reached its peak with the printing press of Voskopoja (1720-1769). During this period many historical studies, chronicles,

monographs, etc., were published, written with Enlightenment reasoning and Romantic purpose. They aimed, by enlightening the mind, to aid in the diachronic knowledge of the self, with the purpose of forging national identity.

To this spectrum belong distinguished names such as Methodios Anthrakitis, Evgenios Voulgaris, Athanasios Psalidas, Dhanail Moskopolitis, Nektarios Terpos, Theodoros Kavaliotis, Panayotis Aravantinos, Patriarch Seraphim II from Delvina, Kosmas of Aetolia, etc.

These thinkers and creators were supported by the economic elite of the country and were later known as national benefactors of Greece. We mention some of the names that had distinguished contributions for Greece as well as for Europe: Glikis, Gioumas, Sinas, Kazantzis, Kiopekas, Kapllanis, Zosimas, Marucis, Zapas, Pangas,

Zografos, etc. Their contribution is irreplaceable in the field of letters and knowledge. The system of schools in Epirus, starting from the 13th century and especially during and after the 17th century, bears their seal and contribution. A school of such European dimensions had opened also in Gjirokastër as early as 1631.

To this movement of wealthy and learned men from Epirus are added the numerous printing presses, especially in Europe.

The first printing press in Venice was founded by the Janiot merchant N. Glikis in 1670. It lived for 184 years and managed to publish 1007 books. The second Hellenic printing press in Venice was founded by N. Saros in 1685. To the same period belongs also the printing press of Dhimitri and Panos Theodhosiou. The fourth who founded a printing press in Venice in the second half of the 17th century was the Janiot philologist Andreas Julianos.

In this tradition, the printing press of Voskopoja constitutes an event of importance. It was founded by the cleric Gavriil Konstandinidhi in 1731. It was the second printing press in the geography of the Ottoman Empire and the first in its European part. The printing press in Voskopoja is linked mostly to the need to create the bibliographic base for education in the mother tongues of the inhabitants of different cultural and ethnic belonging of Voskopoja.

In this pleiad, the region that today is linked with the Greek Minority in Albania has a worthy contribution.

We mention:

Kosmas Thesprotos, from Jergucat. He is the author of “Geography of Epirus and Albania”. He also wrote a poem in fifteen-syllable verse dedicated to the end of Ali Pasha Tepelena.

Vasilios Zotos Mollossos (1837-1912), from Dhroviani of Delvina. He wrote many volumes of studies, 21 in total, with the general title “Epirote Studies”, which served as a base and reference point for all subsequent researchers who dealt with Epirus. Among his unpublished works we mention “History of Epirus”. Among them is included also a linguistic approach to the four dialects, according to him, of the Albanian language: Cham, Tosk, Lab, and Geg. Mollossos also devised an alphabet for Albanian using Greek letters. He also wrote a dictionary of a religious character. He traveled through almost all the countries of the Balkans and wrote travel notes for all the visited countries.

He also wrote synaxaria of saints and church music. The poetry written by Mollossos is in the spirit of Rigas Feraios and calls upon the peoples of the Balkans to rise together against Ottoman occupation.

His fellow villager Athanasios Petridhis (1830-1914). He wrote “Detailed Studies on Dodona”. He published his own variant of the Chronicle of Dropull, the “Chronicle of Dhriopidhos”. Among the numerous publications of this chronicle, that of Petridhis is the most interesting, since he, besides comments and supplementary additions of missing parts, makes simultaneously comparisons with five other variants.

Petridhis also served as secretary to Gjoleka. To him belongs the dense correspondence of Gjoleka with Western chancelleries, as well as Gjoleka's correspondence with the prime minister and the Greek king of the time. Petridhis is the author of the book “Short Description of the Geography of Epirus”. In the journals “Pandhora”, “Apollon”, etc., he published many scholarly articles of an archaeological, historical, and cultural character with Epirus as their object.

Also, from Dhroviani was Nikolaos J. Mystaqidhis (1863-1930), to whom belong 45 different studies with archaeology, history, culture, and religion in Epirus as their object.

When he served as secretary in the Holy Metropolis of Gjirokastër, he wrote a multi-page book for all the villages dependent on this Metropolis and their cult objects. The book is considered lost. Petridhis also had a brother, Konstantinos, who wrote poetry that he published in the periodical press of the time.

Minos Llapas, also born in Dhrovjan of Delvina, around 1834. He studied in Berlin, England, and Geneva. Professor at the Universities of Corfu and Athens and journalist. Publisher of the newspaper “Anatolikos Astir” ("Star of the East"). He wrote numerous scholarly articles and poetry.

Themistoklis Bamihas (1875-1930), jurist from Delvina. He studied in Germany and is considered one of the most distinguished figures of European Byzantinology. Advisor of Byzantine studies at German universities and director of Byzantine manuscripts in Athens. Politician, researcher, and intellectual of broad culture. Deputy in the parliament of Constantinople as representative of the Greek community of the prefecture of Gjirokastër. He continued the writing of the Codex of Delvina inherited from Konstandinos Hr. Manaris in 1635 and Vasilios Zotos Mollossos. (The writing of the Codices of Delvina had begun as early as 1372, after the first Turkish attack on Delvina.)

Spiros Stratis, Nikolaos Stavros, and Spiros Rizos are known as founders and financiers of the "Academy of Delvina" (1737 and continuation).

The true literary beginnings in the region of today's Greek Minority are found at the start of the 17th century. The reference is to Stavrinos Dhelviniotis-Vistiaris (1570-1632), from Malçani of Saranda, with his 1312 verses dedicated to the deeds of Mihail Voivoda (1594-1601) in Vlachia. The title of the poem is: "A Beautiful Narrative of Mihail Voivoda, How He Ruled in Vlachia, How He Slew the Turks Found There, How He Performed Many Heroisms, and Then How He Was Killed Without Fighting."

Stavrinos tells us himself that he was from Malçani of Delvina. He himself states that he did not know much "grammar." (This declaration was made perhaps due to the modesty of the time.) It is not known with precision how long he stayed in his birthplace, but as the researcher of his work Kostas Naços states, he must have learned reading and writing at the school of the monastery of Theologos, in present-day Cerkovica, in the district of Saranda.

Also, from the manner of describing the events and "heroisms" of Mihail Voivoda, the statement of Stavrinos that he was the assistant of the Voivoda proves to be true. It is known historically that Mihail Voivoda ruled in Vlachia from 1594-1601. His aim was "the liberation of Constantinople and the realization of the union of the two churches."

The poem must have been written shortly after the death of the Voivoda, February 1602. Stavrinos himself says that he wrote it within two nights in the fortress of Bistrisa where he had been imprisoned. The impetus for writing the poem or "novel," as Naços characterizes it, has to do with the characteristic care of the Byzantine and post-Byzantine period that "important events must be written so that they are not lost."

It is written in the popular language, but he also uses words from ancient Greek. The verse used is the fifteen-syllable one with rhyme.

The poem, even though it does not contain distinguished literary values, has its importance as the first true literary work in the present literary heritage of the Greek Minority. Likewise, it contains its own historical values regarding the information it brings. The poem, starting from 1668, was reprinted four times.

On the other hand, the important fact is that the virtue and death of a foreign hero, as in our case that of M. Voivoda, became a source of inspiration for a poet who belongs to another people.

But, as is observed, philological historiography cannot speak of literary claims for the creations of this period, and what is most important is that "they cannot be included in a tradition with spiritual radiation for the broader region." Among the values that are observed, for example for chronicles, are the educative character, the information they bear, as well as the language used, which often has the form of spoken popular language.

To this period belongs also another literary work. It has been considered a "novel," and its author was from present-day Selcka of Pogon. The title and author of the work are not known with precision.

## Chapter Three. Literature in the Greek Minority up to the Second World War

### 3.1 Characteristics of Literature in the Greek Ethnic Minority after the Establishment of the Border between the Two States

The establishment of the border and the creation of the Albanian state at the beginning of the last century created a new historical experience for the community of Greek ethnicity that was included within it with the status of an ethnic minority. The experience of this minority of the new historical reality followed the difficult path of its efforts not to accept the division from the rest of its nation; the vicissitudes of the Balkan Wars and the First World War; the ambitions of the powerful states to maintain their supremacy in this strategic region between East and West; but also, the vicissitudes of the efforts to achieve the internal political stability of the new and fragile Albanian state.

In these situations, the life of this community entered into general amorphousness and stagnation. Its economic development, and even more its cultural development, entered into a dead end. Bi-ethnic coexistence as a distinguishing characteristic and stimulating factor of comprehensive progress in history was put into serious risk. The created conditions provoked a massive emigration of the Greek element. This emigration affected mainly the educated and intellectual element (and simultaneously the main bearer and creator of cultural values), which is always more sensitive to turmoil, insecurity, instability, and the lack of a clear perspective.

The literary creators, now representatives of the Greek Ethnic Minority in Albania, were finding refuge in the great cultural centres of Greece, such as Athens, Patras, Thessaloniki, etc.

It is a fact that in the history of the letters of the Greek Minority in Albania, we can hardly mention any name of weight that created within Albania. But we can mention many others who exercised their creative activity with much success in Greece, or even in other countries outside it.

Here again the question arises: Why should their literary creativity be included within the frameworks of the literature of the Greek Minority? An answer for this is given by the well-known Greek prose writer Sotiris Dhimitriu from the village of Povëll, on the border with Albania. "It is true that our literature in Epirus did not create any literary

school of its own in general Greek literature, but it always had its own Epirote seal..." Viewing from this angle the literary creativity of authors from the Greek Minority who

created far from their birthplace, we will note that they bore in these creations the spoken language of their region, the toponymy, its flora and fauna. The thematic of their works is directly linked to the problematic of the homeland. The characters and heroes of their works have the mentality, clothing, and temperament of the people of the homeland.

It must also be emphasized that the creativity of many of them, indeed of the most productive part, is registered after the Second World War. Sometimes it even reaches the literature of the subsequent period, that of the transition years in Albania, after the 1990s. Thus, in the historiographic aspect, this literature belongs to almost three periods, especially to that after the War. We have treated their creativity as literature of the period between the two wars. This is because the authors of this literature began their literary careers in this period, continued to write outside their birthplace or country of origin, and did not write, it is understood, socialist realist literature, nor "imprisoned" literature. We mention some of these representatives.

Katina Papa (1903-1957). She occupies a place of honor and particular esteem in Greece and in the world.

Rightly, to her belongs the place of honor in the letters of the Greek Ethnic Minority in Albania.

As rarely anyone, but as the daughter of a great and historically honored family in the cultural life of Greece and not only, she distinguishes herself for the level of her studies, their avant-garde character, and her ability to put into practice in Greece what she studied at the most well-known European universities of the time, the period between the two world wars.

The only one in the space of the Greek Ethnic Minority with such high claims in the field of letters and with so many academic and literary evaluations. She moves so naturally and with dignity in the salons of the distinguished personalities of Greek and world letters. Her art does not claim grand things in order to shine. She simply knows how to make simple and everyday human histories shine.

She belongs to that circle of people who lived very little to produce so many values.

She writes literature: Prose (short story), poetry, and drama with equal success. She writes studies, publishes research and criticism on the works of the most distinguished personalities of the time in the field of letters.

She drafts lectures and texts for the best possible implementation in life of her university achievements.

She collaborates with newspapers, journals, and the most well-known publishing houses of the time, which consider collaboration with her an honour.

Katina Papa, with her literary, scholarly, and scientific work, has long occupied an honoured place in the pantheon of Greek letters, as a particularly interesting figure.

Biography. She was born in 1903 in the village of Janicat of Delvina, where she spent her childhood.

In 1912 she left with her family due to persecutions and the war situation, to settle in Corfu.

Here she completed her general studies and won the gold medal "Ward Douglas," a medal awarded to outstanding students at the Ionian Academy.

After completing her philosophical studies at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Athens, she was appointed to the selected Arsakeion School of Corfu. In 1924-25 she completed the Pedagogical Academy of Athens. In 1930, with a scholarship from the Greek Ministry of Education, she went to study at the Universities of Austria and Germany, where she studied Psychology and Curative Pedagogy.

In Vienna for two years, she was the selected student of the founder of atomic psychology, Alfred Adler.

In Monaco she studied with the famous psychologist Seif, and in Berlin with professors Künklel and Gohring.

Also in Berlin, she collaborated with professor Köhler at the Institute of Psychology in experiments on memory. Here she won the Alex von Humboldt scholarship.

In Greece she was appointed in 1933 as a teacher at a girls' high school in Athens, where she also founded a Pedagogical Counselling Center, which functioned until 1954. In 1955 she resigned to dedicate herself to literature. Institutional biographical sources give her life dates as 1903 to 1957 and her age at death as 54 (Atsave, 2018; Biblionet, n.d.). These sourced dates replace the conflicting statement that she died in 1959 at the age of 56. She wrote and published, or left unpublished:

“Under the Mulberry Tree and Other Stories” (Papa, 1935).

“If Everything Changed” (Papa, 1948).

“In a Girls' High School” (Papa, 1960).

“Poems” (Papa, 1963).

“The Stranger”, Drama (Papa, 1967).

“The Morality of the Ancient Greeks”, Study.

“Duties Toward Oneself”, Study.

“Critical and Aesthetic Studies on the Work of Konstantinos Theotokis, Grigorios Xenopoulos, Antonis Travlantonis, and Alexandros Delmouzos”.

“Grigoris Xenopoulos as Pedagogue”, Monograph.

“Her Correspondence with Grigoris Xenopoulos and Dhimitrios Kaburogllu”.

“Study on the Wedding Customs of Northern Epirus”.

“Ethics and Theater”, Study.

“The Philosophy of Art in Greece”.

Katina Papa also constitutes one of the figures of particular importance regarding the bibliographic studies of her work, as below:

Tellos Agras, Review of “Under the Mulberry Tree”, “Neoellinika Grammata”, 28/7/1935.

Alex. Argyriou, Review of “If Everything Changed”, “Eleuthera Grammata”, 15/3/1948, p. 267.

Spyros Melas, “Women Writers”, “Kathimerini”, 18/7/1944.

T.K. Papatsonis, Review of “Under the Mulberry Tree”, “Ellinika Fylla”, 3/1935.

Tatiana Stavrou, “The Action of Greek Women in Art and Letters: The Good Book”, “Neos Kosmos”, 17/3/1936.

Angelos Fouriotis, Review of “In a Girls' High School”, “Apogevmatini”, 17/2/1960.

Petros Haris, “Katina G. Papa: Under the Mulberry Tree and Other Stories”, “Nea Estia”, Vol. 17, Year 9, 1/5/1935, no. 201, pp. 452-453.

Petros Haris, Review of “If Everything Changed”, “Eleutheria”, 13/3/1948.

Petros Haris, “Katina Papa”, “Nea Estia”, Year 33, 15/11/1959, no. 777, pp. 1520-1521.

Giannis Chatzinis, “Katina G. Papa: If Everything Changed”, “Nea Estia”, Vol. 43, Year 22, 1/5/1948, no. 500, pp. 598-599.

Journal Dedications: “Kerkyraika Chronika” 18.

Katina Papa distinguished herself for her broad and select circle of friends, collaborators, men of letters, and art. She maintained with them regular correspondence, contacts, and published criticism and studies on them.

Friends of Katina Papa: the writer and translator Konstantinos Theotokis; the novelist and dramaturge Grigoris Xenopoulos, the friendship and collaboration with whom continued until his death; the poet Angelos Sikelianos; the poet, prose writer, and translator Nikos Kavadhias; the historian and writer Dhimitris Haxhis; Nikos Kazantzakis; Dhimitrios Kaburogllu, etc.

What was said about Katina Papa:

Kostis Palamas would be moved to tears when Katina Papa would present to him with her talent the folkloric wealth of her homeland.

Nikos Kazantzakis, in one of the numerous correspondences between them, wrote to her on the occasion of the publication of her second book “If Everything Changed”: “I was very glad about your book. Truly, I envy you. What vitality! What sensitivity and how brilliant! What harmony of purpose and realization! With what simplicity you shape the complexity of the spirit! I thank you for the joy you gave me”.

To complete this, Dhimitris Haxhis: “She belongs to the pleiad of Greek writers of the interwar period who gave a different sensitivity to Greek literature, dominated by men, contributing to the emancipation of Greek society”.

Regarding her professors in the West: Adler in Austria and Seif, Künklel, Gohring, and Köhler in Germany, she remained the perfect student and worthy collaborator.

Literacy and Life Profile of Katina Papa

Her high qualification and broad cultivation helped her to observe people in depth and to understand their problems better.

When she did not allow lapses in herself for momentary gains and successes.

Strict but not unmoved by the praises that were often made of her literary and scientific work. Her eyes shone with pleasure and spiritual joy when she noted that her work had resonance.

Among other things, she distinguished herself for her oratory. Her steady and commanding voice. She spoke and looked with a calm and penetrating gaze. She knew not only how to speak but also how to listen.

As a writer, Katina Papa belongs to the very rare cases of writers who, from their own everyday experiences and from those that develop around them, manage to compose a distinguished message-bearing image of human life in general.

In her texts, nothing asthmatic and violent is ever observed. And in the moments when she satirizes miserable aspects, her clear and calm thought is distinguished, which with dedication approaches the human spirit.

Simultaneously, the dramatic culminations in her works have as their axis the personal history of her heroes. Katina Papa always has something to say without getting lost in worthless details. She knows very well how to generalize through the particular that she finds in the literary detail.

Another important determinant element of the quality of her literature is language, which constitutes one of the most important factors of her spiritual arsenal. The plastic force of her language is guided by the rich fantasy of the writer, concentrated on the human being. From the combination of her innate narrative ability with scientific knowledge results a popular, fluent, fresh language without scantiness.

She always takes care that the narrative be an organic part of the action that allows it, as narrator, to distance itself from what happens in the literary work.

Katina Papa and Her Contribution to the Generation of the 1930s in Greece.

Katina Papa belongs to the literary generation of the 1930s in Greece. And this not only because she lived in this period, but because she has the merit of conveying light into the tunnel of literary research to save literature from the moralistic creative practices and methods of the end of the 19th century, linked mainly to life in the village. The originality of her art and the continuous maturity of her creative productivity were transformed into unquestionable values for this generation, leaving for herself a place of honour in Modern Greek Literature.

This has value also for the fate of the new literary attempts of the time in the great Greek cities, which in the effort to adopt the new currents in reflecting the new socio-economic developments, on the one hand denounced the old, on the other hand undermined the future.

Katina Papa brought the experience of literary narrative centred on the human being and his drama, with the narrator distanced from the event and from moralistic and educative obligations, and with the sole mission of selecting the detail that creates aesthetic emotion and artistic value.

Katina Papa, even though professionally dedicated to contemporary psychoanalytic developments, saves her literary art from artistic influences that have as their object the complications of the human subconscious reflected in complicated and deeper artistic ways. Without falling victim to psychoanalytic narrative, she addresses with simplicity, in a direct, deporting, and critical manner, the real problems of her heroes and their internal spiritual and social reactions.

She did not engage in the psychoanalytic description of the paradoxes of the all-powerful psychic individual, but as a creative artist she dedicated herself to the creation of human characters.

It would be appropriate to emphasize that Katina Papa undoubtedly possesses that advantage that basically constitutes the seal of the true writer, that even when she uses scholastic details, she does not forget for a single moment that she produces art.

Another element that determines the innovative literature of Katina Papa is the fact that, despite her productivity as part of the psychoanalytic circles of Vienna, despite the superior influence that psychoanalysis had on literature, as well as on other directions of art, orienting them in complicated manners that reflect on the other hand the equally complicated subconscious of the human being and the life processes in the deep labyrinths of the spirit of the characters of this literature, in the case of Katina Papa this psychoanalysis did not influence her literature.

Without falling into the common error of literature mixed with psychoanalysis, Katina Papa orients herself toward a critical and penetrating manner, toward the problems of her heroes and their reactions, achieving in a direct manner their victory.

Her first volume of short stories in 1935, “Under the Mulberry Tree”, was laureled by the Academy of Athens and promoted Katina as one of the best short story writers of Greece of that period.

The book was hailed as an event of particular importance, as a hopeful memory that there exists an escape route from the contemptuous shadow of the past that had possessed the world of literary research of the time.

“This collection of short stories by Mrs. Katina Papa... is entirely of a higher spirit, predisposition, and poetic grace, in a perfect popular language...” it was said on the day of decoration at the assembly of the Academy of Athens.

She herself would recall: “...They are childhood memories from my particular homeland. When I was 8 years old, my parents, who had settled in Corfu, sent me to spend the summer holidays in Epirus. I spent the summer and winter came, but I did not want to leave the little village with its wild nature, with its high mountains, its rivers, gorges as deep as the souls of the people, and especially the sweet and very learned grandmother... What I saw and experienced that unforgettable year of my life, one winter and two summers, you will hear in this narrative, seen through the eyes of little Marina, which are my very own eyes...”

The narrative, like all of Katina Papa's literature, is a marvel. Situations, characters, sharp social problematic, people who bear it, young girls who love but do not enjoy love, or who mature before their time, young men who are lost on the roads of emigration, learned old women, customs and traditions, an entire world in just a few pages. Everything is simple and wondrous. The title “Under the Mulberry Tree” and the lyrical descriptions, the typification of the characters and their actions with a sincerity that suits the beautiful and wild nature, create the idea that we are dealing with a lyrical village story, but one that does not remind one of the ethical tales of late 19th-century Greek literature. Through her narrative, through the rise of lyrical intensity in the short story, the reader is urged to learn what will happen under the shadow of the mulberry tree. To achieve this, she uses asymmetry in the space of the narrative. The narrative time after the moment of the protagonist's friend's marriage in relation to the time up to this moment is short. It is measured in a few pages. The narrative takes the form of a chronicle. Descriptive words are reduced even more. In this way

she leaves the reader to touch the "tendons" of the deepest spiritual drama that extends further between the two little protagonists. Or she achieves this by letting

contrasts act upon the reader with the first part and the confrontation of people with the expected death caused by the contagious disease after the marriage. All these create reliefs of unforgettable feelings, characters, tangible only with the force of the spirit.

Marina's friend will die. She will die under the mulberry tree, not in the shadow of the mulberry tree, but under the torrential rain of autumn, dressed in a white garment. Marina, the only one who was not afraid of her disease, tried in vain to throw the stone to the other side of the bank of a pit, which, according to tradition, if realized, would fulfil a wish. Marina's hands were bleeding from the effort... that her friend might live.

The same path will be followed by Katina Papa also in her subsequent literary creations, in prose, poetry, and drama, and with this dimension will be the resonance for them, within and outside Greece.

Her ability regarding original findings distinguishes Katina Papa also in her literature with themes from life in school, in the city. This is clearly observed also in the collections of short stories such as “Under the Mulberry Tree” and those that follow it, “If Everything Changed” and “In a Girls' High School”. Generally, in short stories with this theme one encounters the writer's opposition to social convention, to the deformity of destroyed nature, to clichés. One encounters her benevolent sarcasm and above all her fanatic dedication, especially, to the manifestation of beauty that is art. And within this framework the main theme for the writer remains the human being. There she casts the light of her psycho-descriptive ability with such density, that the social or existential problems of the human being remain somewhat in the shadow.

## Poetry

The literary figure of Katina Papa is completed especially with the ultimate spiritual function, that of the oasis of poetry. It must not be forgotten here that Katina's prose constitutes the best foreword to her poetic art. The small volume of her poetry, published after Katina's death by her painter sister, contains 26 poems and two adaptations into modern Greek of the poetry of Sappho and Alcaeus. In them a pure

and source-like energy and poetic feeling are revealed. A formed literary consciousness is confirmed that can hardly breathe from the vassalage of the times.

International Resonance of the Work of Katina Papa

The first volume of short stories by Katina Papa, “Under the Mulberry Tree”, but also those that followed, had a great appreciative resonance.

Published by publishing houses in England, Switzerland, Germany, and the Netherlands. On this occasion enthusiastic reviews were written.

The newspaper “Volksrecht” (5.5.1959) of Zurich wrote: "...Katina Papa has the ability to present to us living characters, in a warm human manner, bright and with indescribable poetic feeling. The novella stands worthily beside the works of the great English short story writers."

The newspaper “Arbeiterzeitung” (16.5.1959): “...Katina Papa with her strict description and her simple style, avoids every superfluous word. With few words she describes the most shocking psychic events, or leaves them to be understood. In her narrative she reaches such depths that it would be futile to seek them in works of such short prose”.

The newspaper “Volksrecht” in 1959 wrote that “in these short stories Katina Papa shows that she has a masterful knowledge of the art of the short story”.

In 1965, the special literary commission of the Dutch publishing house “Ferelnd-bibliotek Feraindyoung” chose as a Christmas gift for its 20 thousand subscribers the novella “Under the Mulberry Tree”.

“Tasos Vidhuris” (1888-1967). He was born in Dhrovjan of Delvina and died in Patra, where he worked as a teacher at the Arsakeio Lyceum of Patras.

He studied and knew French literature and became a worthy translator of it. For a long time, he served as a teacher of Greek culture in various schools of Asia Minor. Here he collaborated with many newspapers and journals in the mother tongue of Constantinople. Simultaneously he wrote his first short stories, which constitute a vivid

reflection of the drama of violent displacement and the genocide exercised there, upon the Hellenic population, in the first decade of the 20th century.

After settling with his family in Patra, he continued to have collaboration with Panhellenic journals and newspapers. He published in Patra his philological journal and continued to write literature and literary criticism. Simultaneously, he translated French literature into the Greek language.

His literary work is written in poetry, prose, and drama. His poems were collected under the general title “Ilisia” and his prose under the title “Short Stories”. Starting from their thematics, his short stories have as their object the fates of the Hellenic population in Asia Minor and in Northern Epirus.

From the viewpoint of creative method, he belongs to the generation of moralistic short story writers and is rightly considered a second Papadiamantis. He constitutes almost the only case where his poetry was supported by folk tradition. To him belongs also a one-act drama titled “The Janissary”.

“Mihalis Papadhopollos (Botis)”, from Bularat of Dropull, 1860-1937.

He completed the Zografeia Pedagogical Academy of Qestorat and from 1881-1929 served as a teacher in schools of Dropull, such as in Bularat, Bodrishtë, Sotirë, Klishari, Jergucat, Koshovicë, in that of Gjirokastër, of Kakodhiq, of Qiparos, Dhrovjan, Muzinë, etc.

In parallel he wrote literature. He may be considered a wandering dramaturge, since wherever he served as a teacher, the theatre was for him part of his educative and didactic activity. He wrote dramatic works according to occasion, which he staged with students and villagers.

His poems were published in two volumes with the same title “Meropi”, published in Constantinople. His poems echoed the actuality of the time. He published them in the periodical press of the time and they had great resonance. Among his theatrical works are mentioned several lost comedies such as “The Miser's Purse”, “The Fake Doctor”, “The Brigand”.

He is among the few writers of this period who lived, worked, and created until he died in his homeland.

“Athanasios Ikonomidhis” (1843-1903).

He is considered one of the most distinguished among the Greek personalities of the period in which he lived and worked. Scion of the distinguished family of the Ikonomidhes from Sopik of Pogon, raised and grown in Poliçan. An intellectual of formed judgment, sound concepts, and extraordinary memory.

Intellect and love for letters manifested themselves from youth. He studied at the Great School of the Nation in Constantinople. He directed the Zografeia Pedagogical

Academy in Qestorat of Gjirokastër and later the Zapeion Academy in Labovë. He served as kaymakam in Himara and later as a member of the court of Gjirokastër. Afterward he withdrew to Poliçan to dedicate himself to literature, but also to studies and philosophical essays, as well as studies and collections on folk tradition.

He wrote in verse the drama “The Two Friends” and the tragicomedy “Arkefthides”, the events of which he places in Epirus; the verse drama in five acts titled “Michael Angelos Komninos”. The first volume in prose with ten short stories he titled “Epirote Images” (or “Memories of Youthful Age”). Other known short stories of his are: “The Bride's Chestnut Tree”, “The Vampire”, etc.

He wrote a historical monograph dedicated to Pogoniani of the years 1780-1840, as well as other folkloric studies, a dictionary of the dialect of Epirus, etc. To him belong also two proper philosophical studies. One is dedicated to the inheritance from Christianity of the culture of ancient Greece, and the other to the education of the girls of the time for their integration into society from emancipated positions. All his works remained unpublished while he was alive.

Likewise, when he served in Labovë he wrote regularly correspondence and articles in the Constantinople newspapers “Metarrythmisis” (Reform) and “Nea Eptallofon”.

His son, Miltiadhis Ikonomidhis (1883-1964). Whereas his father distinguished himself as an article writer, the son, in 1911, prepared in Poliçan of Gjirokastër and published in Constantinople the illustrated journal “Epirote Illustrated Calendar” with 254 pages,

and in 1914 in Athens the second number with 354 pages. In 1938 he published a new journal titled “Epirote” with 385 pages. In this new journal he included literary creativity, studies on cultural tradition, criticism, etc. M. Ikonomidhis would continue the scholarly work of his father, but would also leave a rich literary heritage. In 1945 he published in Thessaloniki the volume of short stories “People from Northern Epirus”, with 13 short stories, and shortly afterward he himself announced that he had ready for publication two volumes of short stories with the titles: “Stories from My Epirus” and “What I Confess to You Happened in Epirus”.

The most important part of his work was collected and published in four volumes by the publishing house and foundation Elikranon, Athens 2010. The journals, which were

republished separately, were not included here. Elikranon also published the diary of the year 1911.

“Janis Lilis” (1916-1965). He was born in Derviçan of Gjirokastër and died in Melbourne, Australia.

Jani Lili and his work are of the nature of letters, indicative of the model of coexistence and contribution to it, of compromise and with darkness in order to serve light. They derive from his peculiarity of being of Greek origin. He lived only 47 years, little for the work he left behind.

Fate equipped him with unrepeatable artistic and literary gifts. To talent it gave as a precious gift a broad culture, which he turned into a system of reference for his behaviour and civil activity in order to overcome provincialism, nationalist scepticism, and the boundless hatred of the war time. He put it in the service of letters to write a literature that places him in the literary avant-garde of the time. So much so that we may say without fear that his literature not only resisted time, but the time of letters seems unable to surpass it. Lili's work shows us that the more time passes, the better we understand the importance and literary values of his work. He wrote in the time span before, during, and after the Second World War.

Jani Lili never saw himself for a single moment as the saviour of the world or of the human being. His only ambition, simple but sincere, was the expression of his deep concern for the condition of humankind. And he did this in many ways. With concrete actions of the human being who does not accept this reality, with travels that secured

temporary salvation and the deepening of pain and protest simultaneously, by dedicating himself to literature.

His work, for 65 years, remained in the darkness of the mud that the time and his contemporaries threw upon it. The true reason was the unshortened distance that literature, art, and his artistic claims maintained compared with the artistic production of his deniers. The declared reason is linked to Lili's compromise "to accept" the mechanism in the service of that ideology which, in essence, he condemned and hated to annihilation.

Janis Lilis remains a worthy representative of Greek literature of the generation of the 1930s, a period that, according to the evaluations of Greek and foreign researchers, constitutes an epoch that changed everything. "A glittering galaxy" characterizes him

Rodrigo Podrik Biton. The reference is to a literature that, according to the Italian researcher Mario Vitti, subsequent generations put into doubt but did not manage to overturn anything from its achievements. And this is true if we take into account that it includes two Greek Nobel laureates, Seferis and Elytis, and a pleiad of distinguished names of Greek literature and art.

Moulded in the experience of the climate of war, he remained throughout his life a poetic and philosophic spirit concerned with the fundamental social, political, and aesthetic problems of the time, with space and time, with tradition and the future, with nature and the relationships of the human being with it, as the most substantial. He reaches the point of opposing the mechanisms of society, which, according to him, the human being itself built in order to enslave itself.

Human completeness, according to Lili, is achieved in the respecting of the laws of nature. It is precisely in this nature that he seeks "the harshness of the very Balkan spirit," "the nostalgic predisposition and the lyrical intoxication of the Balkan world," "the strange changeability of the spirit of its peoples," in order to reach the conclusion that "passions here are not softened by any civilization, no culture calms them."

He openly expresses the fear that the society of imposed happiness would prove more dangerous, more insidious, than the barbarities of the past and the wars. He believed in communism and in the internationalism preached by it, since he experienced it as the social matter of the philosophy of Christianity. But the ability of the thinker, which

secured him the role of messenger for the perspective of the times, soon convinced him that the danger was unavoidable. "New ideas plow deeply their own misty horizon," Lili foretells the communist future of the Albanian people.

From this perspective, we owe Jani Lili not simply the removal of the heavy mud of oblivion and denigration, but also a particular honour and dedication for listening to a voice of human sensitivity, a pen that aesthetically scans the reality of its time, which, with certainty, professionalism, and prophetic ability, gives it aesthetic values that transcend time.

## Biography

"When Jani Lili arrived in Australia, in 1948, at the invitation of his brother, Spiros, he was a tested writer, a man of exceedingly broad culture, and a well-known journalist."

Petranis records this arrival in his biographical study Oi Ipirotes stin Australia [The Epirotes in Australia] (2004, p. 58), dedicated to the most distinguished Greek personalities in Australia. He was born in the village of Derviçan of Dropull in 1918. He finished the elementary school of the village and continued at the religious school for teachers in Vella of Pogon, Greece, until 1934.

From 1934 to 1936 he studied at the Zosimea Pedagogical Academy of Janina. Parallel to his studies he wrote in various daily newspapers. From a young age he collaborated with the newspaper “Estia” (Hearth) and the journal “New Greek Letters”. Besides Greek he spoke Albanian and Italian.

After completing his studies at "Zosimea," he returned to his region where he continued to write in various newspapers.

In 1938 he enrolled at the University of Rome, in the Faculty of Philosophy and Literature. With the beginning of the Second World War, he was forced to interrupt his studies and return to Albania. He lives and knows its north. Without realizing it, he ends up in the officer school in Tirana. With this stature he awaits with weapon in hand the arrival of fascism in Durrës.

A dense period follows in journalistic and literary activity in the Albanian language. He publishes writings and articles that belong to literature, culture, aesthetics, and art. His

name is ranked worthily beside the most distinguished names of the time such as Vangjel Koça, Gjergj Fishta, Haki Stërmilli, Ernest Koliqi, Filip Fishta, Aleksandër Xhuvani, M. S. Frashëri, Pashko Gjeçi, Migjeni, etc.

He writes in the most prominent newspapers of the time such as “Tomor”, “Shkëndija”, “Drita”, etc. Lili's engagement with Albanian letters at this time was comprehensive. In his writings and articles (scholarly, critical, aesthetic, and theoretical-literary) he makes efforts not simply to treat various problems of a theoretical-literary and aesthetic character, but also to create for Albanian art and literature the terminology, concepts, and the entire base of literary theory that was missing. He seeks to orient the literature of the time in the spirit of the most distinguished contemporary literary achievements, adapted to the circumstances of Albania. He makes efforts to acquaint the Albanian reader, and especially creators, with distinguished figures of world

literature and art of the time from Greece and Italy or other European countries, with his sole insistence being the qualitative elevation of Albanian literature.

"Jani Lili is found in the company of known names of Albanian culture such as the critic Vangjel Koça or the writer Ernest Koliqi, who, even though they were figures of the fascist hierarchy, did not manage to compromise him politically. Not a single one of his writings is infiltrated by the ideology of the day; on the contrary, he shows himself to be distanced, indeed, as we will observe in his work “The Drunken Balkans”, the author stands in antifascist positions. Such a stance cannot but honour the name and memory of the minority writer."

The other creative category to which we refer here includes some of the endless series of his writings in the most prominent press of the time in Tirana. His journalistic and article-writing work in the biggest newspapers of the period of the Second World War has a high purpose. It aims to create the bases of Albanian literary theory, to give literary knowledge, to make analyses and criticism, to offer and systematize terminology and literature itself. For him, art was "the infallible counsellor of life, the spiritual guide, the promoter toward a height beyond the material."

In his thoughts on literature, he seeks communication with tradition and the establishment of an equilibrium between it and modern art. He claims with conviction an equal relationship in literary exchanges with Europe. But he does not accept its

blind imitation, he is not content with old classicism. He embraces, certainly, the new spirit in world culture, proposing an Albanian literature that bears the seal of its own people, that mines upon Albanian reality and the cradle of its own cultivated and folk literary tradition. He brings to the Albanian literary reality distinguished literary and artistic personalities from Greece and Italy or other European countries, with his sole insistence being the qualitative elevation of Albanian literature.

The other creative category that is in function of the second is linked to the sketches and short literary stories published also in the press of the time in the period 1940-1944, in Tirana.

In their conciseness he shows that he knows literature better when he writes it than when he evaluates it. Upon simple fabulae and subjects taken from everyday life he unfolds his broad literary, philosophical, and social culture. He is helped, apparently, by

the gift of being a journalist, where the ability to observe details constitute the material for the embodiment in his literary art of his culture and his philosophical knowledge.

The art of his word is always in function of the highest purpose. Sometimes he describes, sometimes he psychologizes, sometimes he philosophizes, and sometimes he dreams. The narrative flows with simplicity in events and situations, which, often, even though they stand upon details, lead us to the essence of the author's purpose. His characters, sometimes real and sometimes plasmatic, are not heroes, but witnesses; they are not guilty, but victims in search of a saving road. He invites them into his narrative to give them life, to dramatize and to make his own socio-political analysis more attractive.

Lili's language is creative, adapted with mastery to the characteristic style of his narrative. In its use, the interest in mining even the last word is evident.

Lili does not build his own figurative system through language, but rather puts linguistic symbolism in the service of his aesthetic and philosophical principles, especially regarding the relationships of the human being with nature, with his cultural, philosophical, and social tradition, etc.

All his work has recently been subjected to the process of publication.

Agamemnon Ath. Kommatas. Born in 1903 in Bularat of the district of Gjirokastër. At the age of 18 he emigrated to the United States. Author of many poems and of the historical novel titled “Hasan Odysseus the Gjirokastrit”, published in 1972 in Athens. Through this novel he seeks to show, as he himself says in the preface, “the affinity between the two neighboring peoples, Greek and Albanian, and to contribute to the understanding and strengthening of relations between them”.

Taqis Mihalis Tsiakos. Born in the city of Gjirokastër in 1909, from where he left in 1914 to settle in Parga. After high school in Corfu, he began university studies in Athens for pharmacist. He interrupted his studies to dedicate himself to literature. His first poems and short stories he published in the literary newspapers and journals of Janina. He also published travel notes and literary criticism.

To Tsiakos belong the poetry volumes: “Extinguished Echoes” (1936); “Sands and Arid Lands” (1945); “Petalidhes” (Large Mussels) (1949); “Noontimes” (1956); “Walks and Returns” (1970). With his poetry volumes, Tsiakos occupied an honored place among the traditional creators of Greece of the time.

"Alkis Kastritis" (1912-1989, is the literary name of Jeorjio B. Papadhopullos).

Born in the village of Selio of Upper Dropull. Amid the sufferings of a child orphaned from his father, in 1938 he graduated in philological sciences from the University of Athens. He served as a teacher in Corfu and from 1939 until 1975 he served as a teacher of Greek philology at a Greek school in Romania. In 1977 he returned to Athens.

From childhood he wrote poetry in the literary press of the time. He has published the following poetry volumes: "Sorrowful Songs" (1930, Janina); "Breezes and Storms" (Papadhopullos, 1936); "Songs of Silence" (Papadhopullos, 1937); the children's novels "The Strange Child" (Papadhopullos, 1943) and "The Storm" (Papadhopullos, 1979). In Bucharest he also wrote theatrical pieces for children and youth, as well as many auxiliary school texts.

Mihalis Manos (1910-1973). Born in Dervician and died in New York. He began school in his village of birth and continued his studies in Patra and the Zosimea School. He was an employee at the banking institution of Vasil Shahini in Gjirokastër and his

collaborator in the defense of the educational rights of the Greek Ethnic Minority (1933-35), which became the cause of his internment in Lushnja.

In 1943 he settled in Janina where in 1952 he published the famous journal "Epirote Hearth".

He wrote much poetry and prose, but also many scholarly articles, which remained dispersed. In 1955 he had published in Janina the work "Epirote Anthology" with poems and short stories of Epirote authors. In 1956 he published the collection "Epirote Anthology" with poems and short stories of authors from his region. In the same year he emigrated to New York. In 1957 he published in the USA the book "Imaginary Walks in Greece".

Vasilis Ev. Tsatis (1920-1999). Born in Sotirë of Upper Dropull. At the age of 16 he emigrated to Piraeus, where he tried hard manual labor. Parallel to this he attended school until he received his university diploma in humanities in Athens.

In literature he debuted with the short story "The Carols of Lazarus" (1957). Subsequently he published much poetry and short stories in the literary periodical press of the time. In 1969 he published the volume of short stories "Prose Writings", which was received exceptionally well by the reading public. In 1973 he published the second

volume of short stories with the title “Like Doctors”, and in 1979 “Saint Mary's at Makrialeksi”.

““Jeorjios Har. Gitzios” (1925-1993). Born in Koshovicë and at 6 years of age settled in Athens. He studied at the music high school of Athens and completed higher studies in theory for various musical instruments. In literature he debuted with the poetry volume “Forgotten Harmonies” (1972), and in 1973 he published the novel “Walking on Earth”.

““Manolis Vitos.” From Sminetsi of the district of Saranda, residing in Athens. He occupies a very important place in the narrative prose of the literature in the Greek Ethnic Minority. In a 32-year time period he wrote a full nine volumes of short stories: “In the Nets of Love” (short stories, 1946); “The Wedding of the Poor Man” (short stories, 1951); “The War” (short stories, 1953); “The Sick Man” (short stories, 1957); “Ephemeral Happiness” (short stories, 1961); “Glances at My Life” (short stories,

1965); “The House” (1971); “Short Stories” (1975); “The Struggler” (short stories, 1978).

We mention also the novelist Marika Nathanail-Manthu from Dhrovjani; also from this village was Qiriako Ikonomu, graduate in philology in Paris, and his novel “Tsillo-ya” (“Tsillo”).

We may mention also Jani Kalin from Lesinica of Saranda, with a book of poetry “Analekta” (Selections) and the book with two long short stories, “Freedom”. Also, from Lesinica were Evangjellos Kasiaras with the book “In the Land of Our Fathers” and much poetry and short stories published in the press of the time; Vasilios Zarballas with the collection of short stories “Silent Water”; Vasilios Baras. In this grouping is included also Hristos Njakaris from Koshovitsa, etc.

Also of interest is another category of authors, creators, mainly narrators, of this period. The reference is to authors from the region of today's Greek Ethnic Minority and their publications after 1945. They are fugitives from communist Albania and write and publish under pseudonyms. We mention, for example, M. Dhivriotis, Gr. Zagoritis, Akrokeravnion, and Petron Kavurin, Odh. Qirus, etc.

Finally, we mention the village of Dhrovjan for a particular novelty in the field of art, that of music.

In 1851, Margariti PP.H. Dhrovjaniti published in Constantinople the book “Church Music, Theory and Practice”. The book was written with old musical conventions and

constitutes one of the rare efforts to come to the aid of the people of the Orthodox faith who in church services interpreted Byzantine musical rites with the laws of folk tradition, transmitted orally and from generation to generation.

Odiseas Llappas, from Dhrovjan. Born in Alexandria in 1890 into a wealthy family. From a young age he engaged with theater and music. Song became the passion of his life. He studied in this direction in Milan and sang with great success in the field of opera. He performed on the greatest stages of the world and before many world personalities of art, culture, and politics. In 1936 he settled in Greece, where he died in 1960.

Also, from Dhrovjan was Jerasimos Mikrajannanitis (Anastasios Grekas) (1904-1993). He is considered one of the most distinguished hymnographers of the Post-Byzantine Orthodox Church. He also distinguished himself for the ability to write verses, for his broad culture, and the perfect use of the Greek language. For his work he was decorated by the Academy of Sciences of Athens. As early as 1959 the Patriarchate of Constantinople accorded him a particular status.

Meanwhile, also from this village comes to us in this period another particular contribution, this time in the field of publications.

Stefanos Pargas is the philological name of the publisher, translator, and critic Niko Zelista from Dhrovjan. He was born in his village in 1888 and died in 1938. He emigrated to Alexandria of Egypt, where he distinguished himself as an exponent of the Hellenic cultural movement there.

Among the founders of the journal “Grammata” (Letters), the publication of which he continued himself. With the same name he successfully founded a publishing house. He was simultaneously director of another journal, a magazine type, and founder of Hellenic philological and literary societies (the Hellenic Musical Society, the Educational Group of Egypt, etc.).

From his publishing house saw the light of publication the works of Varnalis, Palamas, Voutiras, Theotokis, Xenopoulos, etc., as well as a series of books by known authors of world literature, translated by him. Pargas is a close friend of Cavafy.

Another category with its own particular place is occupied by contributions in Greco-Albanian letters. We mention the case of Branko Merxhani (Aleksandros Mertzanopullos) with origin from Sopik of Pogon, of the Dilo family, as well as many others.

Meanwhile, as was mentioned elsewhere, in order to avoid any misinterpretation and prejudice, in this monograph are not included many other names, who not only published in the Greek language, but in their time considered themselves of Hellenic ethnic belonging. The most extreme case presents that of Fan Noli. It is understood that this treatment constitutes an object in itself and of interest for social anthropology, multiculture, bi-ethnicity, etc.

Thus, as may be seen even from the short bibliography of the most prominent authors of this period, its literature develops in all genres and types. It continues to maintain the same forms and levels as Panhellenic literature. Indeed, as T. Koças also observes, it continues to nourish Greek literature as an equal, regardless of the particular thematics that it treats in the majority of its creations.

**Part Two**

## Chapter Four. Characteristics of Literature in the Greek Ethnic Minority during the Second World War

### 4.1 Literature during the Second World War

The Second World War created a new reality for the Greek Minority in Albania. After internal vicissitudes and under the influence of the National Liberation Front of the Greek people, the overwhelming part of this Minority took part in an organized manner in the common war with the Albanian people, led by the Albanian Anti-Fascist National Liberation Front.

After decades of relationships that had increasingly put into doubt the possibility of peaceful coexistence, there was occurring joint participation in the same war. This turn of truly historical dimensions for the subsequent relations between the Greek and Albanian elements in Albania, had as determinant factors the common enemy and the aspiration nurtured by the Atlantic Charter for the right of self-determination after the war for those minorities that would fight against fascism alongside the peoples in the states where they lived.

On the other hand, this new reality of relationships was being outlined by a new ideology, that of communism. This means that, for the Greek ethnic minority in Albania, the war in itself, as well as the leading ideology of it, determined not simply a new situation, but the very essence of the new historical moment that stemmed from these relationships. Consequently, it had to process and create new systems of referential values. This presupposed the creation of new models of myths, heroes, and ideologies, capable of serving not only as spiritual nourishment, but also as a need that, through the spiritual reproduction of these values or this new system of reference, credibility and optimism would be created regarding the perspective of this new reality.

In the first plane came the role of literature, and not of just any literature, but of a literature with a historical engagement dictated more by enthusiastic aspiration than by clearly defined purposes.

This literature had to break new paths. First, it had to respond to the level of values created by the reality of the war and the level of the new social and bi-ethnic relationships. Second, it could not avoid the philosophy of communist ideology, which, aided by the reality of the war, had an easier time becoming dominant. Third, its mission

had to be accomplished under conditions of the lack of a coherent literary tradition corresponding to this new reality.

In this direction, this literature could not rely even on Albanian literature. For this, not only the lack of traditional relationships or the scant possibility of communication hindered. Albanian literature itself, on the one hand, did not possess any rich literary tradition, and on the other hand, it too had to confront the problematic of the war, influenced by the philosophy of communist ideology and by the aims of the representatives of this ideology for the taking of power.

Nevertheless, even under these conditions, literature in the Greek Minority found forms for a natural path of development. It is known that at every transitional historical moment, every group or ethnically formed community seeks as an objective necessity a new system of collective behaviour that responds to the new dynamic of development. In the spiritual sphere this is realized by the collective subconscious, which refers to that system of stable values that constitute the spiritual and cultural substrate of the community.

Thus, is explained why the new reality of the war made minority creators turn to the infinite wealth of the universe of folk creativity and select the most meaningful parts for the new conditions that were being created. As such served the cycles of historical folk songs of the brigands in Greece of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. In this case it is not simply a matter of a similarity, however slight, of historical conditions. More evident becomes the need for ready and known heroism models in order to embody them in the new heroes and fighters, for a future not very well known and determined. This reliance upon the rich universe of the values of the folk creativity of their region secured for the minority creators the superiority to become the convincing forgers and expressers of this new system of political and social values, regardless of the fact of how much they served the aspirations of their bearers. Thus, the borrowing of tested models from the past constituted a guarantee for creating the necessary belief in the principles of the new ideology. At this point, the natural development of

literature is seriously put into doubt. Its engagement as a diachronic and permanent social function will mark the beginning of engagement in function of communist ideology and politics.

The retaking of ready and tested models also really served the preservation without interruption of the vertical continuity of the ethnic parameter. This is because the songs

of the brigands constitute in their entirety a natural development of the songs of the Akritai and folk ballads, which in their turn have direct links with the great corpus of myths and classical literature of ancient Greece.

However, as we said, this war cannot be compared with the history of the war of the brigands in Greece, despite the fact that it served as the beginning of the Greek revolution of 1821. The Albanian National Liberation War had new parameters and completely different conventions. It developed within the framework of the war of the Albanian people. Under these circumstances, the relationships of the Greek Minority with the mother nation had more the convention of the global war against fascism and of communist ideology, and very little did they manifest themselves as direct ethnic relationships.

Nevertheless, it is a fact that in this creativity we find all the characteristics and peculiarities of traditional Greek folk song, especially of the historical cycle of the brigands. Distinguished in them is the embodiment in a poetic unit or the joint participation in the poetic action (mainly through personification and hyperbole) of people, nature, ideas, and deities. The dialogue between the hero, to whom the song (poem) is dedicated, and the environment, whatever it may be, as a distinguishing characteristic of ancient epic, the songs of the Akritai, and ballads, remains a general characteristic of the poetic creations of this period. Just as in the tradition of folk creativity, so too in the creativity of this period, nature, in the aspect of figurative connotation, constitutes an earthly paradise that guarantees the completeness and secures the blessedness of the living being, the human being. On the level of poetic narrative action, the relationship of the human being with nature (human vicissitudes in personified nature), unfolds as an endless communication that tends toward a blissful identification with it. In the aspect of the system of values, this link appears as an identity relationship between the values of nature and those of the human being.

Likewise, the confrontation with death, as a continuation of life, occurs as in the traditional songs of the brigands. This continuity, as reality and as aesthetic value in poetry, is achieved through the harmonization and equation of the qualities of nature with those of the human being, regardless of the fact that the relationships are set according to opposite categories, freedom-slavery, life-death. According to this scheme, slavery is equivalent to death (and they constitute the negative pole) and freedom with life (they constitute the positive pole). The key to this model lies in the absolute

identification of life with freedom and in its eventual separation from the state of slavery. In folk songs, this hierarchy of values begins with the principle that life itself has no value, or it is not worth living, if it does not correspond to the real quality of the human being (determined in its relationship with nature). Here stems the concept of the sacrifice of personal life in the name of human dignity and independence. In this way, the human being of folk song, or the folk hero, by preferring death before slavery and desecration, denies in the most evident manner the separation of life from freedom and from his dignity. In fact, by sacrificing life, the hero affirms in an evident manner its integrity, which is identified, or equated, with the completeness of existence as a philosophical category. The following verses present these relationships in the best manner: “The partisans set out / to the highest peaks / because they had slave brothers / and slave sisters...”, or “They were all brave lads / the children of our people / one purpose they had: / death or freedom!”.

In none of the poems of this period is the word "death" mentioned as a negating quality of life. In its place is used the word "sleep," as a moment of quiet and regeneration of life, or completely in harmony with it.

Interesting remains the bearing into the literature of the Second World War of the Greek Minority of the typology of the defensive action of Greek folk song. This means that the action, or the motivating motif for action, in these songs is determined by the hero's opposition to allowing the opponent to snatch something valuable that he possesses. (The same situation appears also in the epic about Gjergj Elez Alia.) Quite the opposite from the typology of action in the West, where the hero acts in the name of snatching from another a value that the other possesses. Thus, our hero reveals to us the value of completeness that stems in itself from a life lived with justice and in full harmony with the natural and social environment.

This philosophy of values of traditional folk song is found embodied also in the literature of the War of the Greek Minority. Indeed, bearing the same expressive means that were used also in the cycle to which we refer, but also in ballads and Akritic songs. Let us take as an example the song for the martyr Spiro Partali. At one point the song says: “Comrades, do not leave me in the deserted forests / take me and drag me, high upon that ridge / make also my grave, my black coffin / let it be deep, let it be wide, let it also have a window / so that I may see my comrades, so that my heart may rejoice...”

Just as in many brigand songs, here too we have the motif of the wounded partisan (in Greek the word “andartis” is used) in the middle of a forest awaiting death. He, as with the brigands, fears death no more than the idea that he will be alone. Therefore, he asks that even after death he may have the possibility of communication (passive) with his comrades (life). The window that he asks for at his grave reminds us also of various variants of the ballad of the immurement (The Bridge of Arta) or even the very grave of Digenis Akritas.

But often nature is used also to express the dramatic quality created by the flight from life on earth. In this case, the action develops according to the principle of positive relationship, negative function.

“Look at the time you chose, Death, to take me, / Now that the branches blossom and the earth brings forth grass...”

The hero-man cannot resist the temptation that he is departing at the time when spring comes.

In the creations of this period, besides the retaking of motifs from folk tradition, of verses, fragments from them, or even whole songs where only the name and the time of the event are changed (phenomena typical of folk creativity), we find the adaptation in the same song of motifs from different songs: of emigration, of nizams, of ballads, etc. (Also, these phenomena typical of folk creativity.) In them we often find also the weapons that the brigands used (the sword) and in the same verses the partisan military formation, indeed, in the Albanian language "brigade." (The song for the martyr Llambi Llambraqi.)

The new elements encountered in the creations of the partisan war period are characterized more by ideological tinges and influences from the revolutionary hymns and marches of the time, whether these were Albanian, Greek, or international. The peculiarity is that they are interpreted in the Greek language. We have, for example, the extensive retaking of the word "comrade." The same word is found rarely used also in the songs of the brigands. In them it is used with the intimate meaning of friend. In the partisan songs, its use takes place in an ideological context.

Likewise, it is known that in the folk songs of the brigands (just as in mythology or in the Akritic epic songs), the consciousness and action of the individual continue to play the main role in the determination of fate and the course of events. The testaments, as

an integral part of the cosmos of brigand epic, have as their object the personal and private aspect. Within this anthropology, the characteristic stance of the hero is a stance of resistance and opposition to factors that put at risk the completeness and integrity of his natural or social being, or appears as an effort to put it back in place after an injustice. Thus, it embodies the model of the hero against society or against forms of power that put at risk his small community. This relationship is indeed true in that it reveals the model of the hero who is ready to sacrifice himself so that others may be saved, revealing to us the model of the defensive hero.

On the contrary, in the creations of the partisan war, these are replaced by collective actions (of comrades, of the people). Also, the testaments belong to elements of collective logic: freedom, democracy, progress, etc. Thus, we have a new relationship of forces embodied in the new ideal, to which the collective hero remains equated and in harmony with nature. On the other side is the social system that seeks to oppose it.

Finally, it must be forcefully underlined that in the creativity of this period, besides the preservation of the line of reproduction of traditional motifs, we also have influences of the parameters of these relationships. Motifs are observed, or even whole songs influenced by the general spirit of the alliance of peoples against the Axis forces, led by the former Soviet Union. Likewise, in the broad gamut of these creations, we have songs influenced by or translated from Albanian.

These influences are better observed on the musical side of interpretation. The marches and other melodies that were used had a common line of the global

convention of the war, communist ideology, regardless of any peculiarity. A characteristic is the fact that this influence, in the musical aspect, extended also to those creations or songs of the Greek Minority of this period that were strongly supported by the heritage of Greek folk poetry.

Already in this period we have the appearance of the declamatory, panegyric, and rhetorical element in poetry. These characteristics, understandable and permissible to a degree due to the situation in which they were created and reflect, gradually transformed themselves into indicators of the ideological and political engagement of the creativity of this period. Indeed, they reach the point of the open manifestation of class struggle. These elements in the future will become dominant and will constitute the fundamental indicator of the literature of socialist realism.

If "war" in the songs of tradition is given in its own rough and heroic reality, but without a determined purpose, in the creations of the war period it is given through the prism of a clearly ideological purpose. War now becomes for "...a people's democracy, for a bright future / freedom, peace, work, civilization..."

Or: “Who saw Giorgaro / Giorgaro Zoto / the first brigand / day and night we saw him / Zoto the plunderer / the old ship-wrecker...”

It is precisely these treatments that minimize to the maximum the literary value of these poems.

From the stylistic aspect, in them the 15-syllable or even 13-syllable verse is preserved, classical or broken, with iambic rhythm. These are the main characteristics of traditional Greek folk poetry, but also of the cultivated poetry of the authors of the Greek Minority for this period and for decades of the post-war period. The efforts to introduce rhyme into them are not very successful.

Also, witnesses of the literature of this period tell us that during the War, sketches and short stories were cultivated, as well as small theatrical pieces. They were sidelined and, in the name of "oblivion," today are not available. (The only creations that were preserved are some sketches and short stories by Lefter Talos, which factually are not linked with the war, but with the period before it.)

For the development of this literature, two "newspapers" of mimeograph were used, one with the name “Our Struggle” and the other “The Voice of the Partisan”.

As may be seen, the nature and physiognomy of this literature, supported mainly on the creativity of folk tradition, created the impression that the literature of the War of the Greek Minority marks the beginnings of literature in the Greek Minority in Albania. This impression was turned into an unverifiable truth and helped much the needs of communist politics to deny the existing literary tradition inherited by the Greek Minority. For this was exploited the known principle that the beginnings of every cultivated literature have their origin in the creativity of folk tradition.

On the other hand, the literature of the Greek Minority (read: poetry) of this period, just as occurred also with Albanian literature, was treated with the terms of folklore, as folk creations (songs) of the Partisan War. (This occurs also for the simple reason that they were created to be sung, that is, to serve the morality of the war.) Thus, for these

poems the term "partisan songs" is used in Albanian, whereas in Greek also "Andartika songs."

It must be said that, regardless of the degree of reliance on folk tradition, in the creativity in Albanian or Greek, the identification with folk creativity or with a form approximate to it (Partisan song, of all the people who fought for freedom under communist leadership) occurs also with another purpose. To verify that the communist spirit and its reflection in art constituted the highest degree "of the nature or spirit of the folk," a characteristic that we will encounter subsequently in all the post-war literature of the Albanian people, also in the cultivated creativity of the Greek Minority.

In the service of the same idea, that the literature of the War of the Greek Minority marks the beginnings of literature in relation to the Greek Minority in Albania, the fact is also used that post-war literature in the minority, compared with the literature created by Greek minority authors within Albanian territory in the period before the War, had a rapid development.

These and other reasons made the few researchers of the period of communist dictatorship of literature in the minority treat the creativity of the war period as the beginnings of a new literature, of "minority literature."

In the criticism of the time, the creators of the War period were called "people who either had no connection with cultivated poetry, or had some knowledge regarding the demands of poetry." Indeed, to these relationships of the creators of this period with literature were dedicated also the elements of cultivated poetry that are observed, according to the criticism in question, in the creativity of the War period. Indeed, the effort of Panos Çukas in his book “A Bouquet of Folk Songs” and of others after him, who speak of concrete creators of these songs, is considered mistaken. This occurs when it is known that a good part of these creators, such as Panos Çukas himself, or Spiros Xhas, Janis Panos, Vagjelis Vasiliou, etc., became the most prominent creators in the subsequent literature in the Greek Minority in Albania.

## Chapter Five. Principles of Socialist Realism and the Literature of the Greek Minority in Albania

### 5.1 Historical Conditions in the Post-War Political Reality

The appropriation of victory against fascism at the end of November 1944 by the Albanian communists was accompanied by the de jure establishment of their power with Enver Hoxha at the head, at the end of 1945 and the beginning of 1946. The logical bases of the policy that would be followed were laid during the war and were based on two main axes.

First, the logic of the elimination of political opponents and individuals who possessed a Western intellectual potential manifested as thought different from that of Hoxha.

Second, in order to secure an internal "unity" that would not put its rule into doubt, Enver Hoxha successfully applied the theory of national-socialist patriotism. The Albanians, according to this theory, had to expend half their energies to turn into consciousness the "defence" from "age-old enemies who wanted to dismember Albania" and from those "who had a thorn in their eye," but which, "under the leadership of the party, knew how to dance in the wolf's mouth."

Thus, the communist system in Albania followed for all its citizens a homogenizing national-socialist policy. This policy acted negatively upon the Albanian people themselves in two main directions. The first direction led to the disfigurement of personal dignity of the individual, in the name of creating a collective dignity adapted to the ideology of the party and led by it, according to the slogan of the "new socialist man." The second direction is linked to the growth, upon this base, of the national-socialist sentiment. Understood are the grave consequences of this policy in the aspect of respecting individual freedom and his rights.

It is understood, likewise, that both these factors had a doubly negative effect upon the Greek Minority, both as Albanian citizens and as members of an ethnic community.

### 5.2 The “In Extremis” Appropriation of Socialist Realist Principles

The consequences were more evident in the spiritual field and especially in that of literature. The communist leadership proclaimed Marxism-Leninism as the leading

ideology of its policy in the field of literature and the arts. Meanwhile, it either applied the most extreme aesthetic principles of it (those of the conflation of literature with ideology), or deformed them in favour of the purpose that literature and the arts be in absolute service of securing its leading role.

Thus, being conscious of the role of literature and the arts in the processing of collective consciousness, the Albanian communist leadership, in the name of developing the theses of Marxism-Leninism, adapted as a principle of Marxist-Leninist aesthetics a saying of Stalin. According to it, "writers are the architects of the spirit of the people."

Likewise, in order to impose the acceptance of the principles of Proletkult of the art of socialist realism in the former Soviet Union, about thirty years were needed. The debate begun in the middle of the first decade of the 20th century was closed at the first congress of Soviet Writers in 1934. (Indeed, it was more a voluntary agreement between politically engaged groups and unengaged ones.)

The Albanian communists needed only a few years to do this. The Third Conference of the League of Writers of Albania, October 1949, determined the direction of Albanian literature as literature of socialist realism, a direction that did not change until 1990.

In Albania, Lenin's thesis on the right of the Party to exercise control over party publications in general was abused. The right of control over literary creativity was turned into a basic principle. This led to the rise and operation to the extreme of the censorship machine, up to self-censorship.

Likewise, in the former Soviet Union, the extremism of censorship operated for a short time. In Albania, a distinguishing characteristic remained the dynamic strengthening, in relation to time, of Party control over literature until 1990.

It is also a known fact that Enver Hoxha supported his political activity by manifesting an evident inferiority complex toward the intellectual superiority of men of letters in general, especially toward those who had studied in the West. Under these circumstances, he absolutized the denial of the right of literary creators to try new and unknown forms in literature and the arts. Thus, writers were permitted to make literary attempts within the logical and ideological framework of the Party, and their creativity

had to constitute a literary propaganda understandable by the masses and, consequently, more effective than political propaganda.

Also in Albania, the criterion of the double standard for the treatment of works of tradition (historicism for the evaluation of the literary work in relation to the time when it was written, and the political criterion for judging a work from the political viewpoint of the time) was not accepted. In Albania, the political criterion of evaluation of the domestic literary heritage became dominant and absolute. This viewpoint of literary heritage, together with the principles of socialist realism of literature, intertwined with the principle according to which the Party constituted the highest degree of the folk spirit, gave a heavy blow to the continuity of literary production in Albania. "The persecution of intellectuals, especially of those who had been outside the country before 1944 and the factual severance from all cultural traditions," says Robert Elsie (1995/1997), "created in Albania a literary and cultural void which lasted until the 1960s. Its consequences may still be felt today."

Under these circumstances, it is understood how much the system of Enver Hoxha could reconcile itself with a free literature and with uncontrolled influences, as could occur with the literature of the Greek Minority in Albania. Such a situation provoked for post-war literature in the Greek Minority a reality of development under the pressure of censorship and self-censorship and the cultivation of a deeply engaged literature in favour of the ruling ideology.

It must also be said that in literary creativity in the Albanian language, the application of the principles of socialist realism under the influence of the line of Sejfulla Maleshova had temporary hesitations. This hesitation was linked to the very fate of the essence of literature as such. The hesitations and reservations regarding the application of these principles, expressed by a part of minority creators, besides the above concern, had in mind also the risk regarding ethnic identity.

### 5.3 Reflection of This Reality in the Spiritual Life of the Greek Minority

Let us see the importance of these peculiarities in the new physiognomy of literature in relation to the Greek Minority of this period.

The communist power, from its very beginnings, created for the minority a situation of pressure up to paranoia. It immediately blocked every human contact with the mother nation and every spiritual link with it outside the control of the party. Indeed, within the framework of communist ideology and in the name of the fight against foreign

manifestations and influences, it managed to block even the penetration of radio and television waves.

Subsequently, it trumpeted at every level and for a long time the slogan of "The predatory aims of the monarch-fascists against Albania." This propaganda led to the strengthening of internal unity by inciting hostility toward Greece. However, simultaneously, it cultivated among the community of the Greek Minority the feeling of guilt for its own ethnic belonging.

In the name of survival, they either had to avoid publicizing this ethnic identity, or had to use it with the formality of "minoritarian" who "lives and works happily in socialist Albania," or had to deny it totally. Thus, all forms of reference to this identity had at their core no value in the real evidence of it.

Everything was supported by the open and boundless fear that E. Hoxha had "educated" from the time of the War and, with the passing of time, itself nourished a multiple and very particular terror. The application of these machinations had created the impression that it was a matter of an internal natural development. As a result, the loss of identity occurred in an imperceptible manner and without causing natural reactions.

The illogical behaviour of the Greek Minority toward its own identity, up to distancing (even if forced) from the mother nation, is linked also to the fact that for 25 years (1946-1971), Greece and Albania had no diplomatic relations with each other.

On the other hand, since Albania was a hermetically sealed state toward the world, the monitoring of human and minority rights was done through the ideological mirror of the party-state.

Likewise, under the pretext of eliminating opponents of the people's power, the communist system annihilated that human and intellectual potential of the Greek Minority that could not reconcile itself with this policy. These were people who had

studied outside Albania, mainly in Greece, who not only possessed a different culture, but possessed the liveliest and most essential links with the mother nation.

Blows were suffered also by pens such as Vangjelis Vasiliou, Nikos Filipa Zahu, Mihalis Hr. Manos, Athanasios Fidhis, Aristidhis Qirushis, etc., who were imprisoned and interned from several years up to the entire period until 1990.

So great and heavy was the blow in the direction of letters, that several years had to pass in order to take the first steps on the road of literature. Thus, the first poetry collection in the Greek language bears the seal of the year 1953, by the author Panos Çukas, with the title “Free Life”. In the same year, the first book in prose in Greek and Albanian by Spiro Xhai is circulated, with the title: “Before the Eyes of Mourgana”.

To keep them under its control, but also to incite devotion in the service of communist ideology, the "Party" condemned from time to time rebellious writers in order to show others that to be obedient means to live with the dignity that the people's power secured. We mention here the writer and poet Fotos Qiriazatis. Likewise, minority Greek creators often had the same fate as many of their Albanian colleagues. They became the object of purges that "the Party undertook for the revolutionization of the life of the country." In the broad pleiad of writers and artists who were condemned after the famous plenum of the Party of Labor of 1974, was included also the well-known prose writer of the Greek Minority, Spiros Xhas. He was expelled from the party, the program of which, as he himself says, he had accepted as early as 1942. He was sentenced to work in production at pension age. His works were publicly unmasked by the front organization and he was forbidden to write for many years.

We quote below parts from the autobiography in the manuscript of Spiro Xhas himself: "In 1974, quite unexpectedly and without having had any remark, I was expelled from the Party of Labor. The basic accusation was: 'I was not in agreement with the party line and I exercised opposition to the policy of the government.' This was the visible side of the medal, the pretext for expelling me from the party. The true reason lay in the fact that I had preserved intact my identity of being Greek."

On the other hand, the Party cultivated among minority creators, as among Albanian creators, symbols of devotion. The party propaganda machine selected the most devoted element, possibly also able and talented, and transformed them into figures

that had to be respected, indeed even imitated by others in their creativity. "The Party" had entrusted them with a heavy monopolizing burden, in all fields of literary and artistic activity of the minority. On the other hand, with them "the communist leader" himself communicated, the most authoritative criticism of the time and the most prominent writers in the country spoke to them with maximal consideration. They represented the Greek Minority in all activities of the cultural and artistic sphere. Indeed, even new talents had to have to a certain degree the blessing of these poet symbols.

It is precisely these mechanisms that cultivated in a diachronic manner the differentiation of literary production in the Greek Minority. On the one hand, they cultivated engaged literature, which often knew the highest degree of engagement, that of devotion. On the other hand, they led to the installation of censorship and the highest degree of it, self-censorship. This latter led to the production of what was called "imprisoned literature."

### 5.4 Infrastructure

The act of writing literature is not linked simply to the historical-cultural moment that determines the starting point of the dividing boundary between cultivated literature and oral, folkloric literature. Simultaneously, it constitutes an element of importance in the complex of the process of the realization of literature as such. This element gains ever greater importance under the conditions of today's literary production, where industrial or extra-creator factors of a true literary work play an increasingly first-hand role. This means that the development of a literature presupposes above all the existence of a developed supportive infrastructure, which includes not simply the technical publishing aspect, but also the promotional and advertising aspect of literature.

Within this framework, we believe it is appropriate to note that, whereas Enver Hoxha adopted Stalinist principles also in the treatment of minorities, certainly these principles would find reflection also in the treatment of literature and the arts in the Greek Minority, as important elements that would verify "the humane principles of the socialist state."

From this viewpoint, and under conditions of total lack of an inherited infrastructure, it is true that the communist system took care to erect a particular infrastructure in the service of the development of the literature of the Greek Minority in Albania. The delays observed in the beginning of the installation of this infrastructure are linked to the objective difficulties of the first years after liberation. Also, the fact that the adoption of Stalin's theses for the treatment of minorities was done with delay had an effect.

True remains the fact that this infrastructure developed slowly, was formal, and stimulated that kind of literature, mainly poetry, that interested the communist system.

In the first place, the controlled stimulation of the development of socialist realist literature of the Greek minority in Albania was stimulated. This development, whether as a purpose in itself, but more as a reflection in art by the minority creators themselves

of the model treatment of it by the socialist power, constituted for this power a basic element for completing the showcase of the care and respect for minority rights in Albania. On the other hand, it secured, through the effective influence of literature, the dedication of this minority to the power. In fact, this mission was required of the literature of the Greek Minority as an inseparable part of Albanian literature in general, just as occurred with all other processes.

For many years, the sole medium that served this purpose was the newspaper “Llaiko Vima” (People's Step), which came out once a week from 1945. In it, literary creations in prose and poetry were published from time to time. In 1956, a literary page was founded in this newspaper, which did not always function as such. It never served as a true tribune of the literary word. Indeed, this role was not achieved even by the 8-page newspaper titled “Literary People's Step”, which began to be published in 1988 as a monthly and biweekly supplement of “Llaiko Vima”.

The broadcast in the Greek language at Radio Gjirokastër, founded also in 1945, cannot claim an effective role in this direction. The cultural broadcasts of Sunday, directed for a very long time by Panos Çukas, had more of a propagandistic character. Nevertheless, it could not be denied that, in the existing darkness, they were another small window in the service of the development of the literature of the Greek Minority, of the preservation of its language and culture.

In 1952, at the "Naim Frashëri" publishing house in Tirana, the sector of publications in the Greek language functioned for the first time with an editor. Only at the beginning of the 1980s did this sector take on a fuller physiognomy. It was expanded with other, younger people, some of whom had studied in Greece. All publications in the Greek language were realized at the "21 January" printing press (previously "Miqësia") in Gjirokastër.

In 1958, the League of Writers and Artists of Albania, in a meeting with minority creators, "took under analysis the development of literature in the Greek Minority." It considered the publication up to that time of 8 books of literature in the Greek language a success and emphasized "the need for the ideological-aesthetic education of minority Greek creators, for a better understanding of the principles of socialist realism."

In 1968, the branch of the League of Writers and Artists of Albania for Gjirokastër was created, which was later followed by that of Saranda. Minority creators were included in these creative structures.

### 5.5 Other Elements of Infrastructure: Criticism

Literary criticism, as an auxiliary institution for the advancement and qualitative growth of the literature of the Greek Minority, did not manage to play this role. On the contrary, it was used to further deepen the engagement of literature behind communist ideology. The truth is that it inherited no tradition. Likewise, criticism in the literature of the Greek Minority verifies in the best manner the Stalinist principle. It was undertaken by people who represented in one manner or another the ideology of the party. Criticism was extremely schematic and aimed simply to evidence the manner of embodiment in the content of the literary work of the demands of party-mindedness. Indeed, for works in Greek, literary criticism was written also in the Albanian language.

Only around the end of the 1980s, a part of the people who had studied in Greece seem to have brought a new spirit in this direction. They were people specialized in literature. They possessed the mother tongue in a perfect manner and a broader culture. Nevertheless, even they saw this literature and the culture of the Greek Minority from the ideological viewpoint of the party in power. The placing of their

cultural authority in the service of evidencing party-mindedness in the literature of the Greek Minority was not without consequences, all the more so if one thinks that they did not have the courage to contribute to the creation of contacts with the literature of the mother nation.

On the other hand, as we said also when we spoke of the object of our study, in the specialized bibliography of both countries with which the literature of the Greek Minority has ties, the place it occupies is small. Not only is there no scholarly study of its nature and development, but articles and studies on particular problems and works are very rare and schematic. We repeat here the data mentioned in the first chapter.

In the “History of Albanian Literature”, publication of the Institute of Linguistics and Literature of the Academy of Sciences of Albania in 1983 (Akademia e Shkencave e RPS të Shqipërisë, 1983), and in the Albanian edition of Robert Elsie's “History of Albanian Literature”, Tirana, Pejë, 1997 (Elsie, 1995/1997), the Literature of the Greek Minority is not mentioned either as part of Albanian literature (as one of its values) or as a literary phenomenon occurring within the Albanian state.

Whereas in the complete edition of the journal “Nëntori” from 1953-1990 and of the newspaper “Drita” of the same period, we noted that the treatment of this literature either does not exist at all, or is at the level of recensions, news, or political declarations.

Likewise, what is observed is that even these rare publications are becoming increasingly rare with the passing of years, up to their complete absence. This occurs at a time when authors from the Greek Minority such as Foto Malo, Spiro Xha, Vasili Melo, etc., treat in the Albanian literary press theoretical and concrete problems of Albanian literature.

Limited and continuously diminishing is also the place of the literature of the Greek Minority in the literary texts of the schools of the Greek Minority. "The works of minority writers that were published in the reading texts of the post-war period in the schools of the Greek Minority, up to 1994, represent only 2.2 percent of the total number of literary texts in these books," says the researcher of these school texts, Athanasios Paskalis.

This very poor infrastructure in publications, media, and people at the disposal of the Greek Minority did not create a real base to support and stimulate this literature. On the other hand, the ideological prism, fragmentariness, spontaneity, and evaluations generally outside aesthetic principles, are the main characteristics of the treatment of this literature in the mass communication and literary media of the minority in the post-war period.

### 5.6 Contacts with the Literature of the Mother Nation

As we emphasized elsewhere, the contacts of the literature of the Greek Minority with Greek literature were so few that, more precisely, it may be said that they were inexistent. It is known that a book in the Greek language, uncontrolled and unpermitted by the system, constituted a political-penal work.

That little literature that entered Albania was mainly literature that was considered by official Tirana as leftist and as such "progressive." Those few books came mainly from Greek political emigrants in Romania who had founded there the publishing house “New Greece”. From the middle of the 1960s, after the breakdown of relations with the former Soviet Union and the other Eastern Bloc, even the books from there were forbidden.

On the other hand, it must be said that even these books were very few in number and were for internal use only by a few trusted people of the system. For the broader

public of the Greek Minority, indeed, and for the great mass of its literary creators, contacts with Greek literature were secured through translations into Albanian of Greek authors from a third language, as was in the majority of cases French.

Also, in the editorial office of the newspaper “Llaiko Vima”, from Greece arrived several leftist newspapers, but also these "for internal use."

Later, around the 1980s, after the policy of opening that Tirana began to follow with Greece, several books by Greek writers were permitted, but even these had to be friends of the communist system in Albania, such as, for example: books by Menellaos Ludemis, Eli Aleksiou, Llambro Mallamas, etc.

Another indicator of these relationships is constituted also by the reality of this literature in school literary texts. In the literary reading of the sixth grade in 1950, the number of pieces from Greek literature was 40; in 1969 there were only 2; and in 1984 there were 5.

Likewise, in the very literary creativity in relation to the Greek Minority, there exists a double function. On the one hand, there is no reference to the links between the Greek Minority and Greece; on the other hand, the promotion and cultivation of relationships between the Greek Minority and the Albanian people is aimed at.

It must also be emphasized that the literature of the Greek Minority in Albania was imposed with the interruption of contacts with its own preceding tradition. Under these circumstances, it communicated with Greek national culture and its own tradition through language, on the one hand, and the tradition of folk creativity, on the other. Both these factors were more resistant than the interventive and eliminative efforts of the communist system against them. "Folk tradition was so strong that the interventions could not neutralize it," says the well-known Greek philologist and writer Hristoforos Milonis. They constituted, simultaneously, the only sources to support the development and creation of the individuality of this literature. From this fund, this literature gave what it could to Albanian literature. However, since the latter was turned into a system of reference, the literature of the Greek Minority took from it what it needed, whether to become a literature of the frameworks of socialist realism, or to serve as such the communist ideology.

In order to understand how this literature was severed from tradition and became an effective means for its recipients to do the same, let us take as an example the short

story by Spiro Xhas, “The Roots of the Republic”. Let us dwell briefly on the beginning of the short story... It was January 11, 1954, Republic Day. The villagers of Zervat had gathered at the school. And shortly after, they all set out for the village cemetery. In front went the girls carrying a large wreath of laurel branches and winter roses. A little behind walked, immersed in thought, Ndini, the chairman of the agricultural cooperative of Zervat. Beside him, officer Lluka, who had come on leave to the village from a border unit where he served...

As may easily be noted, the short story resembles a reportage. From the information it brings us, we may construct the structure of a community at a ceremonial moment, a holiday: A new, political holiday. The celebrations begin from the school. The fallen will be honored at the cemetery at the church. The crowd is led by the new symbol, the wreath. Then the protocol is constituted by two names that represent new institutions, the chairman of the cooperative who represents the new economic link and an officer from the village who serves at the border and tells us the degree of devotion to the system. The names of the characters and the place of the unfolding of the events (the village where the second agricultural cooperative in Albania was founded) permit the author to show the high degree of political integration of the Greek Minority.

If we make a comparison with tradition, we will note. The holiday will be either folk or religious. The place of organization is the church. The symbols are determined depending on the holiday. At the head usually stand the priest, the teacher, or any other person functionally linked to the holiday.

Thus, it is clearly seen how the author distances himself (does not see) from folk tradition, in order to hymnize the new political reality. The very form used, telling in the form of reportage, suits more the departure from traditional reality and the political engagement of the literary work. The selection of the narrator in the third person secures for the author an objectivity to know and control everything. And let us not forget that we are in the year 1954.

### 5.7 From a Monolingual Literature to a Bilingual Literature, and Vice Versa

"The status of Greek and of Albanian in this minority (the Greek Minority, author's note) is equal," emphasizes the well-known sociolinguist Gjovalin Shkurtaj (1999). According to the same author, this means "...the simultaneous and concurrent use of the two languages in the same geographic, economic, or political space..." At this point

we speak of language as an important element of a culture and even more important for the distinction of a certain literature.

Also, the reality to which we refer belongs to the present temporal plane. This means that we have an evolution from another situation. As we said above, in the temporal

period before the war, when this community was experiencing the new status of ethnic minority, that is, it lived "in the same geographic, economic, or political space" with the Albanian people, language, and even more so literature, had rare contacts with those of the "social community" in the majority.

In the new decade after the war, phenomena had begun to change and reality had gained a different speed from that of aspirations. In 1955, Spiro Xhas, speaking of the development of literature in the Greek Minority, emphasizes: "The beginning of the development of literature in the Greek minority is something new and encouraging. But, if we compare the literary production thus far with the needs and demands of the masses, we will see that it is still very scant and does not satisfy these demands at all. We must bear in mind that, for reasons of language, the population of the minority in general does not have the possibility to benefit from Albanian literature and to enjoy it..." and he adds as a need "the translation of some good works of Albanian literature into the Greek language..."

Xhas's observation states that in general the minority continued to live in a monolingual status and its orientation is for this minority to resolve its aesthetic-literary needs with literature of socialist realism, but within the framework of the mother tongue.

In reality, things were happening differently, and Xhas himself from the position of creator contradicts himself. Already in the beginnings of the literature of the Greek Minority, minority creators promoted themselves as bilingual creators. Significant is the fact that the first novella by Spiro Xhas, “The Song of Peace”, 1949, is written in two languages, Greek and Albanian. It also occurs that many of their works, the most prominent creators in the Greek Minority such as Panos Çukas or Spiros Xhas, were initially written in Albanian and then in Greek. Thus, Panos Çukas wrote the book “Wolves with Plows” in Albanian in 1970 and in Greek in 1973. The monograph “Thodhoris Mastoras” he wrote in Albanian in 1976 and in Greek in 1977.

Spiros Xhas, the touching history of the novella “Five Letters”, 1956, published it simultaneously in Albanian and Greek. The novel “The Partisan Hospital”, 1966, was

written first in Albanian and then in Greek. (We note here the fact that the language that takes precedence in prose is Albanian.)

But, like these two authors, there are also others, such as: Nikos Kacalidas, Fotos Qiriazatis, Thomas Sterios, and many others who wrote books (poetry) with equal success in Albanian as well as in Greek.

Nikos Kacalidas, like Spiros Xhas, received recognition for publications in Albanian. His reception in both Albanian and Greek contexts illustrates the cross-border character of his work and supports treating it within more than one literary framework.

But, on the other hand, whereas you cannot find minority Greek creators who have written only in Albanian, you can find minority Greek creators who have written only in Greek. One of these is Andreas Zarballas. The reasons for such a phenomenon must be sought:

First. As Gj. Shkurtaj (1999) tells us, bilingual situations create "conflicts and contrasts of languages and cultures," which "politicians and in general the classes in power, seek to resolve by seeking to impose or to impose a linguistic and cultural unification, whether for practical motives, or for reasons of certain political or ideological designs... or a unification occurs that is nothing other than a pure and simple adaptation of one of the concrete cultures that is chosen as the superior and the more unique."

Under the conditions created by the communist power, members of the Greek Minority saw the possibility of survival and perspective by involving themselves in Albanian society, but by weakening up to hiding their own identity or by manifesting it formally. Thus, we have more a process of adaptation to imposing factors before they act. Consequently, the cultivation of literature in two languages by minority Greek creators constituted also one more indicator of devotion of a particular form on their part.

Second. The above factor oriented the general behaviour of Greek minorities in Albania. From a status, almost monolingual, they gradually passed into a status: a. bilingual, geopolitical (both languages, Greek and Albanian, have equal status with a tendency for marked superiority of Albanian. Also, all relationships with the state developed in the official language); b. familial (mixed marriages); c. technical-economic (all forms of development in economy, culture, education, penetrated into the general and daily activity of the members of the Greek community only in the

official language. Official cultural relationships were conducted in a 70 to 30 percent ratio in favour of the Albanian language. Secondary and higher education was done in the official language).

Third. Another reason constituted the need for as many readers as possible, as necessary for men of letters. Under the conditions of isolated Albania, the only broad public was the Albanian reader. Then, literary life with its competition, decorations, and laurels occurred in the Albanian language. According to N. Kacalidas, "since literature and the arts do not know state borders or language limitations, for a writer, contact with as many readers as possible is an internal need, and this broad audience was the Albanian reader."

This need was increased also by the fact that we had a relative reduction of Greek minority readers. This occurred because knowledge and use of the mother tongue Greek diminished with the passing of time. The reduction was a consequence of the narrowing of teaching in schools and of the perception of economic developments in the country, especially in the field of agriculture, through the Albanian language.

This has value also for creators, who in the overwhelming majority of cases were educated in the Albanian language.

On the other hand, the minority reader had it practically impossible to find in the mother tongue the great corpus of world literature. Indeed, none of the minority translators undertook to translate a work of world literature into the Greek language. Indeed, as we said, even that little Greek literature that the minority reader found was in Greek translated from Albanian, and the Albanian translation itself had been made from a third language.

Such a situation had caused that by the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, the ratio of bilingual literature written by Greek minorities was in an absolute manner in favour of literature written in the Albanian language.

We cannot fail to note also that the geographic distance from the homogeneous region of the Greek Minority led not only to the stimulation of literary productivity in the Albanian language, but also to the increasingly greater weakening of stylistic, lexico-

phraseological, and thematic elements that had links with their origin. A typical example is Spiro Xhas when he writes in the Albanian language.

The need for opening with Greece, noted after the visit of Enver Hoxha to Gjirokastër and Grapsh, March 1978, put an end to this phenomenon. The encouragement of the policy to write in the Greek language found the support and backing of the minority creators themselves. The moment coincides, also, with the period when the new generation of minority creators was reaching its literary maturity.

These fluctuations constitute also one of the distinguishing characteristics of the passage from the first phase to the second phase of the literature of the Greek Minority. Whereas in the phase that will follow, that after the 1990s, the opposite phenomenon will be noted, the distancing from literary creativity in the Albanian language.

It is understood that under the conditions of the general globalization in which we live, the cultivation of a bilingual literature by a minority constitutes an unquestionable literary value. But this cannot be said for the concrete case, since the literature of this minority had no contact with Greek traditional and contemporary literature. As a result, it could not play the role of intermediary and reciprocal influence between Albanian and Greek literature.

Negatively influencing in this direction is also the new phenomenon that characterizes the subsequent phase of the 1990s of the Literature of the Greek Minority. The literary creativity of Greek minority authors is written mainly in the mother tongue, and very few of them, such as Nikos Kacalidas, insist on writing still in both languages. Whereas Jorgo Çati, even though he appears in literature after the 1990s, writes only in the Albanian language. In his sixteen books published after 1995, the majority in poetry, Çati manifests an open inclusive tendency toward Albanian literature.

### 5.8 Cultivation Exclusively in the Genre of Poetry

In April 1990, the newspaper “Literary People's Step”, starting from the concern that the cultivation of prose by minority authors in the Greek language had marked deficiencies, organized a debate in which, among other things, the causes of the non-cultivation of prose were sought. We bring below some of the answers.

Spiros Xhas: "Literature in the Greek language in our country, with some small exception, began to be written after liberation... and it is normal that it should have begun with poetry."

(We note that 14 years later, in an interview given by me on this problem, he answered the same question: "It is true that the communist system did everything

possible for our literature in the mother tongue to develop only as poetry. We prose writers were oriented to write prose only in the Albanian language.")

Andreas Zarballas, in the discussion opened by the newspaper, admits only that we cannot speak of achievements in the field of prose in the Greek language.

(We note that 14 years later, in a conversation on this same problem, he gives this explanation: "Prose has to do with a more complex problematic and requires creative forces capable of treating it.")

Thomas Sterjos: "I would like to refer to the lack of tradition as well as the lack of the necessary experience of the creative forces for this genre."

Fotos Malos: "The causes of weaknesses must be sought within and outside the narrative. Scant experience compared to poetry."

It is a fact that the Literature of the Greek Minority began parallel in poetry and prose.

Prose in the mother tongue was inaugurated in 1949 by Spiros Xhas with the novella “The Song of Peace” in two languages, Albanian and Greek, and as we said in 1953 it was published as a separate book under the title “Before the Eyes of Mourgana”. A year later, the same author published the volume of short stories “The Guards of Democracy”.

This author not only inaugurated it, but kept this creativity alive for a decade and a half, despite publishing parallel also in Albanian. He published in succession, indeed, with the success of the time, several novellas (“Gypsy Love”, “Five Letters, A True Story”), indeed even novels such as “The Partisan Hospital”, laureled in 1966 and translated into several languages.

Likewise, prose in the literature of the Greek Minority in the type of short story reappeared markedly after the middle of the 1980s, which is a period when the constraints of totalitarian isolation had begun to loosen.

This shows that neither the lack of literary experience nor the complexity of the problematic was an obstacle to its cultivation. This is verified also by the reality of the years after the fall of the dictatorship in Albania. Prose becomes almost dominant and in all types. Volumes of short stories, novellas, and novels of minority authors in the mother tongue compete with success also in Greek literature.

Thus, our opinion coincides with the opinion expressed that the reason why prose was not cultivated must be sought in the political direction. Our personal experience gives us the right to say, also, that the stimulation only of poetry in the literary creativity in the Greek Minority is linked to the political argument that this minority, as "small in number," should not manifest abilities and essential values of a community with other claims in literary creativity.

This stance has value only for literature written in the mother tongue and not that written in Albanian by minority creators (as in the case of Xhas). Likewise, in other types of art, the perception of which requires a specialized cultural level, such as painting, sculpture, etc., the same tactic was not observed. It is a fact that the painters, sculptors, actors of this ethnic belonging did not have restrictions for creating in certain types of art.

The problem arose in the field of music. Around the middle of the 1980s, when a group of musicians and men of letters of the Greek Minority in Gjirokastër attempted to compose and interpret songs in the mother tongue outside the folkloric framework, intervention was made with soft methods for them to give up from this attempt, with the pretext that the Greek Minority has as its tradition only folklore.

In fact, there exists a stable link between the cultivated poetry of minority poets and folklore, which we may observe if we compare the stylistics and imagery in folk literary creativity with poetry, especially of the first phase. In general, the retaking of elements from the literary reality of folk tradition is exploited by minority creators, as well as by Albanians, not simply in order to give literature a folk spirit or particular values. More so, it is an oriented demand in order to help social phenomena imposed by social

politics and the power to be accepted as a folk product. Also, this poetry was being used with the same functions as in folklore. It constituted an efficient means for mythicizing communist leadership.

The folkloric form of poetry in the literature of the minority resolved, simultaneously, also two other functions. It was the best means to create for this minority the impression that it maintained ties with its own tradition and, consequently, it created the impression that this was the best way to fulfil and express its own pleasure and emotion.

For the same reasons, this constituted the general tendency of the literature of this period in Albania. This is shown best also by statistical data. 40 percent of publications

in Albania in the period 1944-90 were poetry. In the West, these ratios are something quite unthinkable. But it is even worse. In Kosovo, up to 70 percent of literary creativity was constituted by poetry. The ratios of this nature in Kosovo have an explanation. Since literature here has a marked national engagement, it is understood that it will use also the best means for the cultivation and promotion of this feeling, and this means is poetry.

In the literature of the Greek Minority, things are even more serious. Poetry exceeds the 90 percent mark of literary creativity in general, and it is understood that there is no objective reason for having such ratios.

## Chapter Six. Main Phases of Post-War Literature, Distinguishing Characteristics, Representatives

### 6.1 Classification

Starting from the position or relationships of the literature of the Greek Minority with the communist power, we may divide it into: "imprisoned literature" and "literature written within the system".

"Imprisoned" literature is constituted by the creativity of people who, due to opposition to the communist regime, physically or spiritually were imprisoned, interned, or with a ruined biography, that is, they did not enjoy even those freedoms and civil rights that the communist power permitted other people. As a result, this literature did not serve the regime and was opposed to it. Simultaneously, it was deeply engaged with the fate of individual freedom and ethnic identity put at risk. It is cultivated under difficult conditions. It maintains communication with the literature of the mother nation of a certain period and is written mainly in the mother Greek language. This literature had not seen the light of publication until the fall of the communist regime.

Literature written within the system may be divided into two groups. In the first group we may include literature that has as a characteristic creativity with self-censorship, that is, creators situated between full consciousness for the role of literature and the impossibility of dedicating themselves to true literature, or they used metaphorical-allegorical systems in their creativity, or they wrote parallel to socialist realist literature also another literature, for another time.

The second group encompasses deeply engaged creativity. This literature is thoroughly permeated by the principles of socialist realism dictated by the communist power in Albania. Another important characteristic of it is the loss of communication with Greek national literature. The links with it and with the literary creativity of creators of origin from the Greek Minority are inexistent, with the exception of rare cases. Likewise, this literature was denied any heritage, considering as its own beginnings the literature of the period of the Second World War. In the aspect of principles, as well as regarding other laws of development, it is strongly influenced by Albanian literature and constitutes a part of Albanian socialist realist literature written in the Greek

language. As a consequence, this literature shows interest for the identity and culture of the Greek Ethnic Minority, either in an indirect manner, or in order to put it in

the service of communist ideology. It follows the development of Albanian literature of the post-war period and passes through two phases. The first phase goes as far as the 1970s in time, and the second phase up to the 1990s. It develops mainly as poetry. In the aspect of the language that is cultivated, the passage is noted from literature mainly in the mother tongue, to bilingual literature, where literature written in Albanian, at least from the middle of the 1980s, had gained superiority over that in the mother tongue.

### 6.2 “Imprisoned” Literature

A characteristic of this literature is the fact that the suffocating environment and persecutions by the communist regime were identified with the fate of being "minoritarian," which creates the heavy emotional burden of severance from the mother nation and the nostalgia for lost freedom. In this literature, pain and protest are dominant, regardless of appearance. It communicates directly with this pain that is as much of the people as of the environment that surrounds its creators. Whereas revolt resembles a volcano that knows it cannot erupt. Here a very significant fact must be noted. The revolt in this literature has no link with the simple people of the Albanian population. On the contrary, they are considered "co-sufferers." The revolt is not directed even against the Albanian "environment" in general. Some of the authors of the imprisoned literature of the Greek Minority write, indeed, even in the Albanian language. The truth is that the creators of the imprisoned literature of the Greek Minority, like all other persecuted people, felt very close to their Albanian co-sufferers. They are brought close by the common political opponent, product of communist ideology, and they are separated, without being antagonized, by the fact that freedom for minority creators has another value. It is linked with the denial of the mother nation. This literature was written by three categories of creators.

a. The first category is constituted by creators who suffered punishment in prisons, concentration camps, or internment, or who experienced the deprivation of civil liberties. The main representatives of this category that we may mention are Niko Filipa Zahu, Fotos Qiriazatis, etc.

Nikos Filipa Zahu. Born in 1929 in the village of Lugar. After liberation, his family was declared "kulak." His older brother died in the prison of Spaç, while the other in internment. In 1948 he himself attempted to escape by swimming. He was arrested and sentenced to 18 years in prison. In prison he learned also two foreign languages. Besides poems he wrote also a diary, which he did not find, since the place where he

had buried it had been transformed. The same fate was had also by the poems for three poetry collections. When he was freed from prison in 1966 and it became known that he wrote literature, he was re-arrested. He won freedom in 1990.

The poems that were saved he collected in a poetry collection published in Corfu in 1992. The first poem bears the date 1957 and the last was written in 1990. They have the geographic span of the prisons, concentration camps, and internments of all Albania. They begin with the prison of Gjirokastër and of Tirana, and end with the concentration camps in Laç and in Mamuras. The majority of the poems were written in Llakatund. Only one poem was written in freedom in 1957. He died "poor, but honoured" and without family in 2003 in Corfu.

In the preface prepared by the publisher of his poetry collection, it is said among other things: "Zahu has for us the flame that is never extinguished, he is the thinking man who has visions, he is the simple man who climbs into our consciousness. He is a true poet insofar as he does not serve regimes, but sacrifices himself in the name of the muse and serves feeling."

“Ah! I would have wished with songs / To greet the coming of dawn / To remove every care from Spring / To add light to blossoming”

“But I cannot sing / My voice is choked in my throat / Let me, my heart, weep / Something slaughters me, oppresses me...”

Thus writes the poet in one of his poems in the prison of Gjirokastër in 1958. His verse is simple. He uses the stanza with a varying number of verses, with rhyme and without rhyme. The language is popular. He does not express himself with chosen or complicated imagery. He is more interested in the direct expression of feelings. In his poems we do not have a continuous duel of the poet with power in the name of freedom, but also the man filled with longing for the love of clean air, for the scarf and

the name of a girl, for relatives. All these, even though treated as vital elements that are missing, do not make him pessimistic.

Fotos Qiriazatis. Born in 1942 in the village of Llazat of Saranda. In 1968 he graduated from the philological faculty of the University of Tirana. A year later he was sentenced to one year of re-education through labor, and in 1987 he was sentenced to 15 years in prison as organizer of a Greek nationalist group.

In 1961 he had published the poetry collection “First Flights”, in 1969 “Steps”, and in 1979 “The Road toward the Sources.” Before the period of imprisonment, three times he had presented for publication a volume of short stories that he later titled “Shout in the Night” and all three times it was returned to him "for ideological mistakes." "In 1970," he says in his memoirs, "the book was buried for the first time with the note: 'Dear friend, whoever you are, have a little patience to read these lines. Here you will find the rags of a life that drips blood.'"

He would rework it and publish it as a book of the communist period in 1992 with the above-mentioned title. The evaluations in Greece of the literature of Qiriazatis are among the most positive. He is characterized as a writer who "convincingly seeks a place in modern Greek literature" and continues below: "This poetry and this prose passed through the midst of the darkness of night and were not blackened, were not withered."

"Qiriazatis may be characterized as a true master of the word who has written some of the best pages of modern Greek prose."

Also of this period are the poems of the volume “Light-flowers.” Indeed, he remembers that these poems were written in the winter of 1987 until July of that same year in the interrogation room of Tirana, between interrogation sessions and torture. "Of course, it was not a matter of ink and pen. I needed daily repetition to keep them in memory," the poet says. Two years later, in 1989, he put his poems into empty toothpaste tubes and with the help of his wife extracted them from the prison enclosure.

In fact, the literary productivity of Fotos Qiriazatis unfolds after the 1990s in Greece, which gives him an honoured place in modern Greek literature and certainly ranks him also in the second category of the imprisoned literature of the Greek Minority in

Albania. He distinguishes himself as a prose writer with his novels and as a poet. A characteristic remains the fact that Fotos Qiriazatis, even though after 1990 he resides in Greece, the thematics of his literary creativity remains tightly linked to the homeland, its people, and their problems. This makes him different from many men of letters from the Greek minority residing in Greece, who after the first literary steps with inspiration from their particular homeland, embraced a general literary thematic. Likewise, Fotos Qiriazatis doubles the titles of his works, or in their re-publications changes their title. From the prose of Qiriazatis we mention the two-volume novel “Listen to What the Wind Tells You, Chasing Beauty” (1998), which may be found also with the title “The Poet's

Daughter", as well as the two other novels "The Mythic Palace" (2018) and "When the Bistrica Buzzed".

From poetry we mention: "Poetry" (2007), a collection of the best poems of the period 1966-1991; "Leaf of Life" (2017).

Likewise, Fotos Qiriazatis has engaged in various studies with literature and culture in the Greek Ethnic Minority as their main object.

In any case, Fotos Qiriazatis is known as a rebel of letters and of social life, whom a fiery desire for freedom, great love for people, and his homeland pervades and maintains. He distinguishes himself for an energetic and pathetic style, but one that knows how to use also low tones. The feeling of despair is present, but never does he know how to weep. Even in the moments of greatest despair, he knows only how to light a torch of hope in the fire of love for his place, for freedom, in the broadest sense of the word.

b. The second category is constituted by minority creators who either could not publish literature "because of biography," or the content of their artistic creativity was "anti-constitutional," that is, it could not be published. We distinguish two groupings.

In the first grouping belong those creators who wrote literature and kept it hidden "in the earth," awaiting a better day for its publication. We mention Vangjeli Vasiliou, Aristidhi Qirushin, Fotos Qiriazatin, Niko Litin, Andrea Zarballan, etc.

There were among those creators who, simultaneously, could write also for the account of the principles of socialist realism. This literature was the product of self-

censorship. It often occurred that the writer or poet, situated between the need to self-censor and the consciousness for the true mission of literature, sought such forms of expression and communication that gave their works particular artistic values.

A source of such expressive means was folk creativity, which automatically gained several functions. It served, as we said, as nourishment for this literature and simultaneously as a means of communication with the tradition denied in the name of "the new reality of the party." It served simultaneously also as a way to keep alive and in action tradition itself. An example of this is constituted by the poet and publicist Andreas Zarballas.

Andreas Zarballas. In his notes regarding his third poetry collection, “101 Poems for a Handful of Earth”, published in 1992, he says that the 101 poems of this collection were written in the years 1970 to 1990. The sole reader was his wife, who knew also the place where they were buried. She did not live to see them published, and Zarballas dedicated the book to her with the note: "To dear Merit. When they were under the earth, she was among us. Now that these poems have come out into the sunlight, she is no more." The number 101 in the title is linked to the expression so often heard in the minority regarding the heavy sentences, up to capital ones, of the communist courts against Greek minorities. At that time arose the need for a taboo. The taboo was "He was sentenced to 101," that is, he was sentenced to 101 years in prison. Thus, there was no more salvation for him and freedom for his family. This scene is depicted in a shuddering manner in the poem titled “The Vehicle with No. 11.” The reference is to the number (license plate) of the "gas van of the internal affairs branch" of the district of Saranda. At that time, everyone knew that wherever this vehicle appeared, the next arrest would occur. The poet, in order to make this calamity more frightening, evaluates it from the viewpoint of children, who instead of rejoicing that they saw a vehicle, as would have been natural for the time, they express themselves together with the poet.

“Vehicle No. 11 ravages our villages / Behind it / It leaves two parallel tracks / Full of hieroglyphics / We know this script. It is of death.”

The poems of this collection constitute a rebellious denial of the reality in which the poet lived. They bear unfolded all his human and poetic consciousness. The poet is

conscious that, were the explosive force that his verses possess to be dictated, it would provoke the wrath of "the God of Terror" against him. Therefore, he entrusted them to the mud of his homeland and to Merit, who, in fact, constitute in a broader sense also the starting point for his particular symbolism. Zarballas does not present himself either as an "un-hero" or as a hero. He presents himself simply as a poet and as a human being in a dual position, who understands that it was better to live in that hell, with the purpose of lighting, even furtively, a candle, than to seek death, even as a hero.

It must also be said that even in these poems Zarballas operates with the same expressive means: symbol, metaphor, parallelism. He reactivates with a new dynamic and philosophy the messages of traditional folk creativity, in order to create the cosmos of his particular homeland in the diachronic aspect, as well as the actual. He starts from the moment of reality and plunges into the coded consciousness of the collective identity

given with its symbolism, myths, and metaphors. Subsequently, he returns to his reality with the poetic messages secured from this collective heritage, but adding his own poetic elements.

Vangjelis Vasiliou. Born in Kalcat of Saranda, in 1918. At a very young age, he published his first poems in the literary press of the time in Greece and was considered a pen with great poetic claims. Like many others from the Greek Minority, during the Second World War he joined the partisan movement, where he continued to write poems, now in the service of the war. He is the author of the famous ballad for the hero Lefteri Talo. In 1946-1949 he was imprisoned, and to the prosecutor's accusation of being pro-Greek, he answered: "Mistake, Mr. Prosecutor! I am pure Greek. Pro-Greek may be an Italian or someone else."

After prison, when his friends asked him to write poems again, he answered: "The heart of the poet does not resemble a bell that rings whenever someone strikes it."

Nevertheless, he died in 1991 leaving an unpublished poetic wealth and his long diary. (Unfortunately, his family persistently denies the publication of his creativity.)

In the second grouping are included those creators whose true creativity exploded after the fall of communist power. We mention here Vasili Gjizelis, Tilemaho Koças, Jorgo Çatin, etc. Their creativity distinguishes itself for a high productivity. Also, even

though they are sufferers of the communist system, even though the thematics of their works is often linked with the reality of the communist period, their literary creativity is liberated from personal grudges. They openly unfold the philosophy of peace and forgiveness, under the motto that their deprivations must not be experienced and proven by others. But, nevertheless, however "Freudian" this may seem, these creators cannot hide in their creations their unfulfilled desires at the proper time.

Vasilis Gjizelis. Born in 1938 in the village of Pllakë of Saranda. He began higher studies in philology at the University of Tirana in 1959, but did not finish them. His father was arrested with the accusation of "chauvinism." The court decided that the father be executed and Vasilis himself and his family be interned in Mirditë. In internment he and his family remained until 1990.

In August 1990 he left Albania and settled in Greece. For a seven-year period, from 1991-1997, he published seven books, the majority poetry: “Difficult Road” (Gjizelis, 1991); “Iliriada” (Gjizelis, 1993a); “Blue Kiss” (Gjizelis, 1993b); “I Exist” (Gjizelis, 1994a);

“Stop Telling Me” (Gjizelis, 1994b); “In a Bloody Circle” (Gjizelis, 1997b); “Balkaniada” (Gjizelis, 1997a).

What must be said for the poetry of Gjizelis is the fact that his poetic grudge explodes after so many years of suppression. He takes with him the experiences of a life full of denials, restraints, and diminishments, in order to unite them with the general concerns of the time of his generation and of the future. It seems that his sufferings convinced the poet more to appropriate love, freedom, coexistence, peace, up to devotion. Likewise, he does not hesitate to show that these are not such simple things. All the more so, they may depend on him. This, nevertheless, does not shake in him the conviction of the poet's mission for these ideals. Gjizelis writes:

“And I, in the crossroads of the world, / black knight for years on the road, / stirring the fate of the "gods."“

Unlike N. F. Zahos, the poetry of Gjizelis is possessed by an agile imagery. It seems that he believes in form, in order to better convey his messages, which, in any case, have a clear civil function.

As was said, he is among the few whose creativity developed in both languages, Greek and Albanian.

Tilemahos Koças. Born in 1951 in the village of Vrisera of Gjirokastër. He from birth experienced the fate of the bad biography of many minority Greek and Albanian children. He finished only high school in Gjirokastër, because that is what his ruined biography permitted. His first literary attempts began very late, on the eve of the fall of the system, with short stories published in the newspaper “Literary People's Step.”

In 1991 he is among the first to "escape" to Greece and begins work in construction. Meanwhile, the creative humidity turned from the road of plaster and concrete to that of literature, and the new reality gave him the possibility to be employed as an official translator at the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Thus, in 1991, he published his first volume of short stories “Incident in the Night.” Later followed the other book with the novella “The Last Canary”, 1995, translated also into Albanian with the same title. In 1998 Koças published the third volume of short stories with the title “The Song of That Night” and in the same year the novella “Rain on the Grave.” In 2004 he published the last book of short stories, “Three Generations of Americans.” Here begins the long series of novels by T. Koças that made him very well known in Greece: “The Seven Windows”

(2003); “Certificate of Innocence” (2007); “On the Opposite Shore” (2011); “The Bride's Dance” (2012); “Code of Honor” (2013); “The Dinosaurs of Athens, Journey to the Wrong Country” (2015); “Chinese Ink” (2018); “In the Vortex of the Cold War” (2022).

Likewise, Koças is a participant in several collective volumes with other Balkan and European authors. Meanwhile, as several of his books are translated into Albanian, he himself has translated into Greek works by I. Kadare, M. Ahmeti, and B. Mustafai.

Tilemahos Koças is one of the minority creators who, as Greek criticism expresses, "was the first to open the curtain to show us the everyday life of a people who lived forgotten beside us..."

Koças is a narrator with a simple style. His step, supported on folk narrative, but without falling into folklorisms, is secure. He has a direct communication with his readers, to whom he tells in everyday language things so ordinary and simultaneously so important from their life in the communist system, which they had not been able to

notice. The descriptions distinguish themselves by clarity and the dialogue by vigor. Personal and collective drama, unfulfilled desires, dreams killed by the communist regime, constitute the framework of the thematics of Koças. He does not pretend to present himself as an unblemished hero, but as a more positive value he conveys forgiveness and repentance. The narrators of Koças are continuously participating or non-participating characters in the narrative. In any case, they are the product of his long experience, an experience that the author experienced as suffering and now conveys to his readers in art.

He himself says that 90 percent of his literary material belongs to direct personal experiences from the communist system and 10 percent to the experiences of others.

In an indirect manner, he admits that it is precisely this relationship, forged in his creative studio, that secured him success in Greece. Meanwhile, he never gave up the purpose that "after I finished dealing with the thematics of my particular homeland, I would become a Greek writer in order to deal with the problems of Greek society." The attempt made several times proved to him that in such cases he became invisible, unimportant.

Of interest in this group is the case of Athanasio Fidhi, born in Gjirokastër in 1909 and graduated from the Juridical University of Milan. He wrote poems, short stories, novels, and dramas. But his works remained unpublished. His studies outside the

country, as well as the imprisonment and internment of his brother for 38 years, did not create any possibility for their publication.

A completely particular case presents the poet Jorgo Çati. Born in Qesarat of Saranda in 1953. Perhaps, it was not political reasons that prevented him from writing. But the freedom after the 1990s discovered in his subconscious poetry. This metabolism presents itself to us as a demand of his "I," to prove his own existence as a human being and as a poet. This is realized by pushing away or removing from himself everything that constitutes the essence of his own collective identity, ethnic belonging, and that secures him solitude in the social group that surrounds him. "...a strange poet. A completely particular man... Inexplicable for his own demands," Nikos Kacalidas says of him. In this context, all his creativity is written in the Albanian language. Strange is also the fact that, from all the other constituent elements of ethnic belonging, he

bears almost only geography and toponymy. The cosmos of myths and of other expressive means for his creativity he seeks and finds in the Albanian world.

"One spring day I took the lahuta/ And began a song for Mujo and Halil..." the poet says. Thus, he does not take, let us say, the "lyre," nor does he address Digenis Akritas, who is the homologue of Mujo, nor Areti, who is the sister of Konstantin in the Greek ballad of the dead brother. Likewise, for singing he chooses "...The dyjare, the gajde, the çifteli / And the iso of Labëria we added a little later," which are characteristically Albanian musical instruments.

Among the works of J. Çati we mention: “Voices from Hell”, poetry, 1995; “Tale with a King”, fable, 1995; “Between Love and Pain”, lyrics, 1996; “Mimosas of the Heart”, verses, 1997; “At the Edge of a Dream Awaits a Girl”, lyrics, 1998; “I Sow Among You a Seed”, poetry, 1999; “Murmur Among Gurgles”, poetry, 2000; “Dream Killers”, poem, 2000; “Alter Ego”, novel, 2001; “Puff After Smoke”, poetry, 2003.

c. In the final category are included those creators of the literature in the Greek Ethnic Minority whose literary activity developed outside the boundaries of Albania, but whose creativity is not severed from the reality here. Because of the regime, it was forbidden for the minority reader (but not imprisoned).

We mention here the older and most distinguished creators such as Katina Papa (1903-1957), from Janicati of Saranda; Taso Vidhuri (1888-1967) from Dhrovjani of Delvina; Jani Lili (1916-1965) from Derviciani of Gjirokastër. They left their homeland

long before the War, or during it, but, as we said, their literary creativity remained linked to their homeland.

Among them may be ranked also other representatives, who left their homeland when they understood that communism constituted for them an eventual danger. We mention here Mihali Hristo Manos (1910-1973), from Derviciani of Gjirokastër. Manos left his homeland after the war was ending and the differentiation of stances from the communist power-holders was becoming evident.

### 6.3 Literature Written within the System

Against this literary reality stands literature written within the system, including engaged or party writing. The stages until the return in consciousness of this literature pass from fear to the need for survival, from the need for survival to conviction up to devotion, in the service of the policy of the power.

The era of political gunpowder constituted their inspiration, "as a mixture of fear and revolutionary pathos." The literary viewpoint is a prisoner of black-and-white phenomena, in a thematic mainly caught in the echo "of the freedom won by the war, in the revolutionary rush for the construction of the new life and in the continuation of the war against enemies." This thematic secured for literature the role that the party assigned it in the service of the processes "of the socialist construction of the country." Dalian Shapllo determined the mission of poetry as "a means that serves the masses, to give them spiritual nourishment and emotional pleasure." Thus, as may be seen, we find ourselves in the reality of the rigorous application of the principles of Proletkult literature, processed as the theory of the literature of the class in power in the former Soviet Union.

Nevertheless, it cannot fail to be noted that the principles of socialist realist literature in the literature of the Greek Minority were applied in the form of influence, indeed not a natural one, from Albanian literature. Also, the literary models of the Russian school were an abusive adaptation to the reality here. This occurred because the violent severance from tradition and from contemporary literary developments was imposed, and especially from the literature of the mother nation. Also, persecutions and violence provoked a sterility of creators.

The artistic embodiment in this literature often occurred with a panegyric, declamatory, and propagandistic language. Whereas, since the only literary experience

in the mother tongue remained folk creativity, the reliance upon this experience with the aim of realizing the obligations toward politics often secured a folkloric schematicism.

This is shown best by the titles and content of the first books in the Greek language. “Free Life” (1953) and “The Tractorist Woman” (1957) are the titles of the two poetry collections of Panos Çukas. “To Liberty and Peace” is dedicated, in his first poetry

collection, Janis Panos. Through the poetry collection “My Flute”, the talented poet Pavllos Shutis expressed the same stances, feelings, and thoughts.

By leafing through the 43 poems of the first collection of P. Çukas, which were written in the temporal span of 10 years, but also the other subsequent works, we will encounter titles such as: “Glory to the Party”, “A Thousand Years for Enver”, “To the New Fountains of Dropull”, “New Light”, “The Working Youth”, “The Great Friends” (dedicated to the visit of the delegation of Soviet kolkhozians to the agricultural cooperative of Vrion-Vurg), etc.

The criticism of the time accompanied in this manner the first poetry collection of Çukas and all the post-war literature of the Greek Minority:

"The spirit of the Party is alive in all the poems, whether regarding the problems of the transformation of life in our country, or regarding the internationalist spirit of a militant literature, like ours, of socialist realism," S. Çomora would write.

"Source of inspiration for the poet are the free people, without masters and beys above their heads. They build with their own hands the new life, the life that from day to day becomes better.... The verses of Panos Çukas educate the reader with the new spirit, with the spirit of the party, and are beautifully woven from the artistic side... a distinguishing characteristic of his poetry is the national form and the socialist content," says Spiro Kufo for the same poetry collection.

In the same article, the author S. Kufos cannot fail to note that the prosaic, declarative verses "besides destroying the artistic beauty of the poem, distort also our reality, because they present construction as an easy task and the road that leads to the set objective as paved with flowers, without obstacles and difficulties." Nevertheless, as may be seen, these weaknesses are not noted as damaging the artistic quality of the poetry, but as not giving it the possibility to perform well its function as an auxiliary means of party propaganda. Likewise, already in this first poetry collection we see how stereotyped words and expressions pour forth, such as: brilliance, light, hell, glory,

happiness, treasure, volcano, sweat, steel, life, blood, etc. The word "blood" is repeated 15 times.

These characteristics are dominant throughout the entire first phase of the post-war literature of the Greek Minority, which, like Albanian literature, lasts until the 1970s.

Almost throughout its entire first phase of the post-war period, minority Greek poets also did not manage to resolve the dilemma between the poet as such and his propagandistic mission predetermined. This means that the timelessness of artistic values "as a harmonization of the artistic moment of creation with the new moments of artistic perception" in the perspective of time, did not function in this kind of literature. This was shown also by the fate of many literary works, which, with the change of the system, lost the possibility to exist.

Nevertheless, even in this period it is clearly seen that poetry, unlike prose, remains individual in the sense of the artistic stance toward reality and the poetic unit. As such, it cannot accept entirely the weight of strict frameworks. On the other hand, however engaged a poet may be, he cannot sacrifice all his freedom in the name of political devotion. The very aesthetic feeling of poetic language, the relative freedom of expression that poetry offers, the presence of fantasy in it, and the need for the finding of new expressive conventions, even in order to express in an artistic manner political and social ideas, constitute the distinguishing aesthetic elements of a literature, however much it bears the seal of the political epoch that produced it.

This means that, regardless of our need today to distance ourselves from this political period, nevertheless an objective overview manages to communicate with the values of this literature. The very fact that many minority creators manage to bring back to the public collections of literary creations that could resist even our time without dictatorship and censorship, is very significant. We mention here the poetry collection of Panos Çukas “Greetings, Brothers (A Voice from Gjirokastër)”, published in 1993, or the poetry collections of Nikos Kacalidas, etc.

### First Phase

As basic characteristics of the first phase remain the rapid elimination of hesitations about literature written within the system and the consolidation of the principles of socialist realism. The process of turning into an engaged literature is accompanied by the severance of all communication with contemporary Greek literature.

The preservation of the expressive means of folk creativity and their development toward a cultivated literature, regardless of what they communicate, constitutes another distinguishing peculiarity.

It starts as literature written in poetry and prose and develops mainly as poetry or as poetic-folkloric literature. Its beginnings are mainly in the mother tongue, but, with the passing of time, minority creators of this phase will prefer to write more in Albanian.

Literary prose fades. It takes the form of monographs for heroes from the minority who sacrificed themselves in the war. Also, it was turned into the form of political and publicistic tracts, with a clear political function for the reflection of socialist construction, of class struggle, and of the fight against religious influences and backward customs.

The thematics will remain uniform and will be linked to the war fought for freedom, with the construction of socialism, and the fight against new enemies.

At the finish of this phase, together with the rapid arrival of the new literary element, we have also visible signs of the growing demands to break the literary conservatism that extreme political engagement had dictated. These demands included both literary structures and thematics.

Representatives of this period are Panos Çukas, Spiros Xhas, Janis Panos, Pavllos Shutis, and after them, in the 1960s, Fotos Qiriazatis, Vasilis Koças, etc.

### Panos Çukas

Born in 1925 in the village of Sopik of Pogon of the district of Gjirokastër. He studied at the secondary school for teachers in Vella of the district of Janina. Before reaching 20, he was one of the pens that wrote poems in the military formations of the Greek Minority in the common war with the Albanian people. He is one of the founders of the Greek-language broadcast at the local radio of Gjirokastër (1945) and a regular collaborator with publicistic and literary pieces in the newspaper “People's Step”, from its founding (1945) until his heart stopped beating in one of the hospitals of Greece in 1995. Many of his writings he published under the literary pseudonym "Alqis Anthulis."

For many years he was the main editor of school texts for the pupils of the schools of the Greek Minority. He served as a teacher at the branch "teacher in the Greek

language" at the pedagogical secondary school of Gjirokastër. He has published in the mother Greek language 12 volumes of poetry. In prose in the mother tongue, he has

written three books. He has written in the Albanian language nine books in poetry and prose.

He translated from Albanian into Greek 30 works of the most known authors of tradition and socialist realism. These translations in prose, poetry, and dramaturgy, even though they were directed at different age groups of readers, filled a very great void for minority readers in the mother tongue. He has also translations from Greek into Albanian.

Besides school texts, he himself realized six anthologies for school pupils and in five others he was co-author.

Within this framework, it would be very difficult to enter the effort for verification of the various articles of a political, social, and literary character published in the press of the time in both languages.

The literary creativity of Panos Çukas, as is understandable, traversed the entire period of socialist realism and constitutes one of the main representatives of the literature of the Greek Minority, known also among Albanian readers.

It is true that Çukas is one of the most engaged creators from the Greek Minority in the ideological cause of communism. His works in the majority of cases resemble reportages written in verse or in prose regarding events and dates directly linked to the needs of the ideological consumption of the power. Often, he undertakes "the political-ideological concerns of the party," which exceed the bounds of the Greek Minority, indeed, and of Albania. Heavy and compromising for him remains the position of standard-bearer in the fight against religion.

Nevertheless, Panos Çukas managed to overcome ideological obstacles and limitations to write poetry. He knew how to create literature by applying a source language. Strongly relying on the tradition of Greek folk poetry, the mother tongue became more plastic and more expressive. These qualities gain greater value when the poet distances himself from ideologized themes and penetrates everyday life. Then he knows how to immortalize tradition, to bring ordinary people closer, to

philosophize about life and death. He knows how to caress with love, to elevate in art the relationships of man with his homeland. In short, he is a distinguished lyric poet, although he dared not step outside the ideologically predetermined boundaries. The verse he used is the classical 11-, 13-, and 15-syllable line of folk tradition. We also find

it broken, even using rhyme. His attempts to write free verse were not successful. His contribution in the field of translating literature into analogous languages, particularly from Albanian to Greek, is indisputable. The contribution lies not only in the fact that he created opportunities for minority readers to read Albanian literature in their mother tongue, but in the quality of the translation being such that, without fear, we may say that Panos Çukas made Naim, Dritëro, Kadare, and others speak Greek, and their art gained the finesse of the Greek language. Simultaneously, he brought a valuable contribution to the communication between the two literatures and to the exchange of reciprocal values. Spiros Xhas (1918-2012) He is, undoubtedly, the most dignified representative of postwar Greek Minority literature in the cultivation of the prose genre. The 50 years of creative work seem not to have exhausted his inspiration and ideas for writing even at the age of 86. He was born in the village of Sofratikë in Lower Dropull. He too studied at the teacher training school in Vella of Ioannina. He then worked as a teacher in the villages of the Greek Minority in Albania. He joined the antifascist movement and held important posts in the military formations of the Greek Minority. Here he made his first literary attempts. In 1949 he published his first novella in the newspaper "Laiko Vima," titled "To tragoudi tis eirinis" ("The Song of Peace"). In 1953 this novella, with minor changes, was published in Greek and Albanian with the title "Përkundruell Murganës" ("Mprosta sta matia tis Mourganas," 1953); in 1954 he wrote the short story collection "Rojet e demokracisë" ("Oi frourroi tis dimokratias"); in 1956 the novella "Pesë letra, një histori e vërtetë" ("Pente grammata, mia pragmatiki istoria"); in 1962 "Dashuri cigane" ("Tsiganiki agapi"); in 1966 the novel "Spitali partizan" ("To partizaniko nosokomeio"). By 1966 he had written a second novel, "Qyteti i ri" ("I nea poli"), as well as children's novellas, "Kur ndërtonim hidrocentralin" ("Otan oikodomousame ton ydroilektriko stathmo") and "Llampa e minatorit ndrit" ("I lampa tou minadorou fotizei"). In 1970 he wrote two monographs on the People's Hero Lefter Talo and on Thanas Ziko. Spiro Xhas also authored one of the two or three dramas written by minority authors. The work in question is the four-act drama "Akti i fundit," published in the magazine "Nëntori," no. 1, 1958. After regaining the right to publish, at the beginning of the 1980s, he published in Albanian the novel "Kronikë

Dropullite" (1989). In his creative plans was the rewriting of this novel in Greek, as well as the publication of the novels "Misioni i largët" (The Distant Mission) and "Trëndafilat e majit të kuq" (The Red May Roses). He did not publish them due to political changes in the country. He returned to literary creation when, after 1991, he settled in

Greece. But apparently, it was somewhat too late to bring something new to the prose of the Greek Minority, although he remains its father for the postwar period. It must be said that the prose of Spiro Xhas, despite its high productivity, could not escape the schematicism imposed by the method of socialist realism. His characters, although they may speak Greek, are characters and types abundantly found in Albanian prose of the 1950s. (This applies, indeed, even to his novel "Kronikë Dropullite.") Exceptions here are the characters and situations in "Pesë letra, një histori e vërtetë" ("Pente grammata, mia pragmatiki istoria") and "Dashuri cigane" ("Tsiganiki agapi"). The conflicts and antagonism in his works have a partisan black-and-white coloring, while the thematic focus, until late, remains almost the same: "The war that gave us freedom," "the efforts to build the new life," "the justice of the party line," the dark past, which we must keep in mind at every step of life, and so forth. Even many of his later short stories manifest a nostalgia for the beauties of a life not lived in the socialist period. Janis Panos (1917-1989) He began his literary activity already during the war period with another well-known ballad about Lefter Talo, as well as other poems in which, particularly, the elegy for the Glinë massacre caused by the Balli Kombëtar in August 1943 stands out. In 1960 he published the poetry volume for children "Kënga e Vurgut," in 1962 "Lirisë dhe paqes" (To Freedom and Peace), as well as the volume "Në kudhrën e përgjakur" (On the Bloody Hoe). His inspiration remained that of the war and of work for socialism. He is one of the few who attempted to write drama. He published in Albanian the drama "Në zjarrin e luftës" (In the Fire of War), but without any success and without being able to withstand the test of time. Janis Panos also engaged in translations from Albanian to Greek. He translated poems by Mjeda, Agolli, Siliqi, and others. Vasilis Koças (1940-2013) He was born in the village of Krioneri in Upper Dropull, in the district of Gjirokastër. His relatively young age gives the impression that it would have afforded him the opportunity to join the generation of young creators of the Greek minority, to follow the example of his contemporaries Zarballas, Qiriazatis, Kacalidas, and others. But Koças remains a typical poet of the first phase of postwar literature. His verse is that of folk tradition. Indeed, the effort to be as partisan as possible often damages the simple finesse and elegant subtlety of

folk verse. His attempt to apply rhyme or free verse is also unsuccessful. Vasilis Koças, even in the poetry written after the fall of communism, seeks and finds leaders to whom to dedicate the same declamatory and panegyric verses, elevated upon an unrefined folk language. He wrote poetry, mainly in Greek. His best work is considered

to be the poem "Ishe ndonjëherë në Dropull" ("Isoun pote sti Dropoli," 1977). His other works are "Këngët e stinës" ("Tragoudia tou kairou," 1965); "Vargje satirike" ("Satyrikoi stichoi," 1968); "Drita komuniste" ("Kommounistika fota," 1969); "Mirë se erdhe prill" and "Bisedë me gruan time" ("Aprili kalosirises" and "Syzitisi me ti gynaika mou," 1973); "Motive shtegtare" ("Taxidiarika motiba," 1974); "Poezi" ("Poiimata," 1986). He also wrote poetry for children. He also engaged in translations of Greek and Albanian authors. Pavllos Shutis (1922-2009) Unassuming, but a cultivated, lyric poet. Surprising in his verse and figuration, and with a distinct individuality. He did not submit much to ideological frameworks, but neither did he violate them to the point of being penalized. At various times he wrote three volumes of poetry. In 1955 he published the volume "Fyelli im" ("I flogera mou"). It was the second in the mother tongue in the postwar period, but was judged the most artistically accomplished. In 1965 he published the second volume, "Me lirën dhe thumbin" ("Me ti lira kai to kentri"), and in 1983 "Kontribute" ("Prosfora"), in which he compiled selected poems from the first two volumes and unpublished or periodical-published poems. Shutis is a poet who wrote only in the Greek language, but distinguished himself greatly for the elegance of his translations from Albanian to Greek. Likewise, Shutis was known for the assistance he gave to talented young people. Persefoni Gjini Almost the sole female poet who accompanied literature in the Greek Minority throughout the entire postwar period. Her source verse, supported by traditional folk verse, simple rhymes, and the use of comparisons, parallelisms, and metaphors so well-known and successful in folk creation, are characteristics that give life to her poetry. Persefoni Gjini, with her poetry, attempts and is present in every problem of the time. She is often considered a folk poet and is taken as an example of how a folk rhapsodist can follow and reflect socialist reality. In this sense she stood between cultivated poetry and the folk rhapsodist. Even her poetry volume bears the same title "Vargje rapsodike" ("Rapsodikoi stichoi"). Indeed, many of her creations were turned into folk songs, regardless of how well they withstood the test of time. Nevertheless, Persefoni Gjini remained the woman poet of the Greek Minority who enjoyed the respect of all. She was born in 1931 in Poliçan of Gjirokastër and died in 2007 in Gjirokastër.

### 6.5 The Second Phase

Main

Characteristics In terms of ideological positioning (relations with power). The weight of imprisoned literature drops considerably. Parallel to the demands for committed literature, increasing tendencies for a literature liberated from ideological commitment become evident. Meanwhile, another type of literary commitment also appears, connected with efforts to highlight ethnic identity. Even in this phase, self-censorship and censorship continue to remain evident. In literary terms, an effort is observed for a qualitative artistic elevation, both in the direction of discoveries, forms, and expressive means, and in that of thematic content. In terms of literary genres, poetry remains dominant, mainly lyrico-political and ideological. But we have increasing pressure from prose, mainly the short story and the novella, especially toward the end of the 1980s. A characteristic is also the translation of an ever-increasing number of literary works into analogous languages and creation in two languages. Creation in the Greek language gradually gains superiority over creation in the Albanian language by the minority creators themselves. Qualitative demands are connected with the arrival on the scene of a very large number of young creators. The scarce critical thought of that period evaluates literary maturity, which determines the nature of the second phase in the literature of the Greek Minority, as a product of "the construction of the economic base of socialism and the country's transition to the phase of full construction of socialist society." This thought, so well -known in Albanian literary criticism as well, has no real basis even if we proceed from the principles of socialist realist historiography. This is because in the period announced as "the construction of the economic base of socialism," the liberal spirit, openness, and rapprochement with the West observed in Albanian literature and arts provoked the wrath of the communist leadership to bring them back to the line of "the national foundation and the folk spirit." The Fourth Plenum of the Albanian Party of Labor in 1974 was a brutal act against efforts for a new qualitative breath of art and literature. The new spirit, in the renewal of literature even in the Greek Minority, is connected with internal pressure coming from the new generation of creators, but also from increased contacts with the outside world, especially direct contacts of the Albanian reality (the Greek Minority) with Greece. The generation of creators of this phase in the Greek Minority expressed other concerns for literature. It does not agree with the preservation of traditional literary structures. In poetry, free verse is used effectively. The dilemma between the freedom of the poet and the freedom conditioned by the predetermined role of the poet is gradually resolved in favour of the freedom of the poet, understood as much as the

ideological frameworks cannot be violently breached. Indeed, the new generation of creators noticeably avoids even the thematics imposed by communist ideology. In the creation of young creators, a social thematic liberated from ideology appears vigorously. Lyricism in general gains a broader breath. Demands for a different treatment of tradition and ethnic affiliation are also noticeably observed. The creation of a particular symbolism, allegory, and metaphors drawn from folk creation and re-dimensioned in the actuality of the time become the main expressive means of the poetry of this period, especially that after the 1980s. In this prism, the cultivation of literature in the mother tongue marks a serious turn. Almost all young authors who had begun their creative work in the Albanian language now write either only in Greek or in both languages. Parallel to the older creators, new names also appeared. The main representatives are Nikos Kacalidas, Andreas Zarballas, Petros and Odhiseas Çerkezis, Hristos Vidhuris, Thomas Sterios, Fotos Qiriazatis, Fotos Malos, Spiros and Stavros Llajos, Vasilis Bariabas, Vasilis Qeramas, Minas Lekkas, and even younger ones such as Stavros Dajos, Spiros Kallos, Alqis Papas, Alekos Papas, Vangjelis Millos, Mirela Kallanxhi, Kostas Nushas, Spiros Hristos, Tilemahos Koças, Vangjelis Zafiratis, Amalia Qedru, and others, who would consolidate their creative individuality after the 1990s. In the 1980s of the last century, literature for children increased greatly, especially poetry. Meanwhile, demands for the cultivation of prose grew, especially from young creators. In 1985 we also have the first short story collection by the new author Stavros Dajos. In the periodical press in the Greek language of that period, Thomas Sterios (Sterjopullos), Spiros Hristos, Tilemahos Koças, Petros Çerkezis, Spiros Llajos, Panajotis Barkas, and others wrote their first short stories. Some of them, such as P. Çerkezis and S. Llajos, would later return entirely to poetry, to pass later to prose. Tilemahos Koças, Spiros Hristos, and others would dedicate themselves to prose to become prominent representatives in the literature of the Greek Minority. There are other names who, as often happens, with the passage of time abandoned literature. The type of prose is mainly the short story. A characteristic is that the thematics has little connection with current events. Young prose writers feel safer when they tread known thematic paths. These belong to the past or to the war, but particular interest is presented by short stories with plot-ideas. In this period, in 1981, the first drama in the mother tongue was also written. Its title is "Dashuri e dimerëzuar" ("Chimoniasmeni agapi"). It is the only one that was staged during the communist period. Actors and the entire directing staff were from the village of Skore

in Pogon. The author of the drama, Panajot Barka, was simultaneously director, screenwriter, and actor. Nikos Kacalidas Poet, prose writer, essayist, translator. For his literary creation he has been honored with many titles and medals. Minister without portfolio for minority issues in the Albanian government, cultural attaché at the Albanian embassy in Athens. He was born in Upper Leshnicë in the district of Saranda in 1949. He graduated in literature at the University of Tirana. In the field of letters he appeared very quickly. He continues to be a poet, although from his hand have also come more than 30 essays (studies) on authors and various problems of the literature of the Greek Minority, as well as a large number of translations, especially poetry from Greek to Albanian. Now he tests his strengths in the long prose of the novel. He writes verses with the same ease in Albanian as in Greek. He began his poetic creation as a representative of the new generation of poets in Albania. Most of the poetic volumes of his first creative decade, the 1970s-80s, are written in Albanian. Indeed, he is one of the few Greek minority poets who continues to have very good communication with the Albanian public. Even now he writes with the same ease and warmth poetry in the Albanian language. ("Profecia e drurëve," 1998; "Fati i Amarandos," 2003; and "Pagëzimi i zogjve," 2006.) He is simultaneously one of the most productive poets of the Greek Minority and one of the most productive in Albanian literature. He has written more than 30 poetic volumes divided into two categories, verses and poems. His literary productivity increased excessively in the last two decades. In this period, Kacalidas makes steady steps in the cultivation of poetry in the mother tongue, without forgetting the Albanian reader either. Meanwhile, his maturity as a creative person is confirmed also by the fact that he attaches great importance to prose. Among the works of this period we mention: "Shala e kalit" ("I sela tis selinis," 2007), poetry; "Heraldikët e Kihlit" ("Ta eraldika tis Kihlis," 2008), poetry; "Gjarpër i shtëpisë" ("Ofis oikouros," 2013), poetry; "Lutja e perendimit të diellit" ("O paraklitikos tou iliovasilematos," 2014), poetry; "Lumë prej dafine" ("Dafnopotamo," 2015), poetry; "Zgjimi i syve të fjetur" ("To xypnima ton kimomenon ofthalmon," 2020), poetry; "Parmenda e henës" ("To aroto tou fengariou," 2004), his first novel; "Mekate nate" ("Nychtas anomimata," 2006), short stories and novellas; "Rreth Omonias dhe demonëve të tjerë" ("Peri Omonias kai allon daimonion," 2018), novel; "Niktoparoriti" ("O nyhtopororitis," 2019), novel; "Marshimi i borës" ("I epelasi ton hionadon," 2021), prose. Regarding prose, it is worth repeating the statement of the Greek writer Menis Kumandareas made in the presentation of the novel "Niktoparoriti." Even though

Kacalidas's prose is written in the days of our century, the Greek writer Menis Kumandareas says of it, regarding structure, aesthetics, and art, it recalls Kafka, Kundera, Andric, Myrivilis, and Kadare. And all of these wrapped and structured with a rich language, with many hidden virtues that lead one to a world as ancient as it is modern, which springs from the crossing of the Epirote dialect with the cultivated language. Kacalidas, from the very beginnings of his creative work, showed determination to write poetry, and at every step he takes he aims for a new peak. The poetic work of Nikos Kacalidas received several prizes and recognitions. With the first volume "Fjalët e thëna në pranverë" (1971) he received the "Prize of the Republic." With the third volume "Shtëpitë tona në Jug," he received the "Second National Prize" in poetry. This was followed by several prizes given by the newspapers "Drita" and "Zëri i rinisë" as well as the magazine "Nëntori." In 1989 he was decorated by the President of the Republic with the title "Naim Frashëri" for distinguished services in literature. In 2003 he received the "Silver Pen" prize for translation of the year, awarded by the Ministry of Culture, for his translation into Albanian of the Greek Nobel laureate Odysseas Elytis. A number of honors, prizes, and decorations have also been awarded to him in Greece. Worth mentioning are the "First Panhellenic Prize" for the poem "Asqitis," 2003, and in the same year the "First Balkan Prize" "AIMOS" given by the Balkan Commission of Sofia for the volume "Një qind, njëqindgjethet e Arushës së Madhe" (One Hundred, One Hundred Leaves of the Great Bear). He is the poet with acquaintance with many well-known personalities, such as the Nobel laureate Odysseas Elytis, Melina Mercouri, the national poet of Cyprus, Kostas Montis. He enjoyed the particular sympathy of Dritëro Agolli and today of I. Kadare, and others. Indeed, we would say that this is part of his egocentrism, which in the creative process manifests itself with an individuality as readable as it is convoluted, but which in general is seen as a value. An expression of this poetic egocentrism is his explanation of his own poetic "cosmos." This world begins with himself, his family, and his homeland. In this framework the poet attempts to create his own philosophy, his archetypes that rise in the simultaneous lyricism and epicism of his poetry, which in fact are inspired by poetic perceptions often of others, but which he gives the breath of his world. The poetry volume “Profecia e Drurëve” (The Prophecy of Trees) invites attention to the sources and development of its poetic vision. Indeed, when one reads Kacalidas's poetry in the Albanian language, one is reminded of motifs of

Elytis, Seferis, Ritsos, and others. The same thing happens when one reads Kacalidas's poetry in Greek. One is immediately reminded of Kadare, Arapi, Podrimja. He takes this stimulus, or something else that impressed him excessively, and puts it into his poetic world of metaphors, symbols, and personifications so tightly connected with the trees, birds, waters, and rocks of his homeland, to form them into something poetic that belongs to his egocentrism. Indeed, the participation in this process of the stars, lightning, clouds, moon, and everything else celestial is noticeably felt, seen from the viewpoint of his homeland. Also, since Kacalidas writes so freely in both languages, with the same poetic manner, in his creation he often creates his own poetic syntax, which flows from the internal communication of the analogous languages. In this framework he constitutes an example for comparative literature. Being a poetic intermediary between the two languages, he manages to create not only his own creative individuality but also to influence the analogous literatures. As an indicator of this may be taken the evaluation he receives in both countries. Andreas Zarballas He was born in 1942 in the village of Llazat in Saranda. After his studies he worked for a short time as a teacher and then as a journalist at the newspaper "Laiko Vima." In 1981 he published his first poetry volume, "Këmbëngulim" ("Epimenoume"). In 1985 the book of journalism "Udhëtim në vendin tim" ("Taxidi ston topo mou"), and in 1989 the second poetry volume "Djemtë e Diellit" ("Ta paidia tou Iliou"). In 1992 he published the third poetry volume, "101 poezi për një grusht tokë" ("101 poiimata gia mia houfta gi"). In 2004 the study "Harta tjetër" ("O allos chartis"). In 2006 and 2007 he prepared two anthologies, the first with poems by Greek minority poets translated into Albanian, and the second with selected short stories by prose writers from the Greek Minority. In 2008 he published the volume with his best short stories "Fati i Alkinout" ("I moira tou Alkinou") and in the same year a volume of essays about folk songs titled "Gjaku i së dashurës" ("To ema tis agapis"). In 2009 he published the new poetry volume "Fallhedhësi me shkop" ("Ravdomantis") and in 2016 the poetry volume "Balada e shtamnës" ("I balada tis stamnas"). As a man of letters, Zarballas also devoted importance to analogous translation, from Greek to Albanian, such as selected poems in the Balkan Aimos poetry anthology, and vice versa from Albanian to Greek. Despite his not very abundant productivity, he is considered one of the prominent poets and one of the most powerful pens in the literature of the Greek Ethnic Minority in Albania. In himself he constitutes a poetic school. Conscious of his mission as poet and journalist, he has the merit of being one of the first to break the frameworks

of the older generation. Zarballas is also strict in his demands for quality in literature. His influence was direct for the qualitative step that the poetry of the creators of the Greek Minority made in this phase. His position at the newspaper "Laiko Vima," as the only periodical that published literature in the Greek language, also helped greatly. Andreas Zarballas is so connected with the fates of the land to which he belongs, that his poetry, even when published under the rigorous "inspection" of the dictatorship, found means of communication with the pulse of ethnic affiliation, and this feeling he conveys with the courage that the art of metaphors, parallelisms, and his particular symbolism equip him with. When he wrote poetry that would be buried somewhere, the pessimism of the fate of being doubly despised and forgotten becomes more clearly evident. As we said, he is the poet of the creation of his particular symbolism that serves the mission of his poetry, but also serves his community to orient and define itself. The well-known Greek philologist and short story writer Hristoforos Milonis writes of Zarballas: "In his poetry, language manages to realize its finest function and express not simply bad fate on the surface of the everyday, but also 'the deepest movements of the soul,' dreams, wounded dignity, and the bitterness of a people who have been forgotten. His world is a closed world, but in unity with fate and historical memory, with geographic cohesion and the distinguishing characteristics of cultural identity and the inner life of his own community. In him the poet is organically fused who, ultimately, becomes its consciousness and voice..." His verse is spare and simple. Through a striking syntax, he manages to convey emotion to his reader without difficulty. He knows and uses the word with precision when he wants to create poetic colorations, or to convey philosophical meditations. He is a poet more of reason than of feeling. Nature, colours, sounds have value for Zarballas when they help him penetrate better to the soul of the people. Motifs of folk tradition, as well as the classical folk 13-or 15-syllable verse, take on a new artistic value, always by being actualized in content. In the same manner and with the same purpose he treats ancient Greek mythology. Zarballas seeks to "hide" behind these forms in order to be as allegorical as possible in his messages forbidden for the time. Andreas Zarballas does not care only for the verse. His greatest care is in the message he wishes to transmit. He wants it to be as accurate, as complete, and as broad as possible. The creation of poetic unities with a certain thematic focus, but with as broad a message as possible, not with long poems, but with as short poems as possible, remains another characteristic of the poet. Within this framework, he creates his own symbolism, which on not a few

occasions has been transformed into the symbolism of the poetry of other minority creators. We take here as an example the emotional and symbolic load that the word "vendi ynë" (our land) gained in his creation. Under conditions when the use of the word Greece and names or surnames produced from it were forbidden, a new notion had to be created to define ethnic affiliation. And the phrase "o topos mas" (our land) was found to define both the particular homeland of the poet and subsequently of all others, as well as the relations with Greece. We also mention the symbols of the Dropullite scarves, the tree and the roots, and so forth, which are worth broader attention. One is impressed by the sensitivity shown by the poet toward everything. Particularly, with doubt, the poet views "the transformations of socialism." He is perhaps among the rare poets who were concerned, for example, about the intervention of socialist man into the natural environment in the name of gaining bread land. (The poem "Kënga për prallin e madh," from the poetry volume "Djemtë e Diellit.") The poet does not become a Don Quixote to go out and stop this catastrophe, but writes a poem that weeps for the uprooting, in the name of this purpose, of a centuries-old oak. For the poet it is not merely a mountain slope left without its old tree, but together with this emptiness the poet sees the loss of the songs that were connected with this oak. The poet's consciousness goes, therefore, further. Environmental objects constitute, for him, parts of a people's culture, and their destruction, besides killing nature and the environment, also destroys this culture. Zarballas, says Fotos Qiriazatis, "is a spare and simple poet, with verses that have as their epicentre more reason than heart, but lyric and dear, compassionate and bitter, with visible sorrow for the great abandonment to the mercy of man-eaters, all stress and anxiety, but also faith and hope clenched between teeth...." As a final word for this note on A. Zarballas, we would mention the continuous demand upon him for greater productivity. But apparently the poet, disappointed by the developments that followed after 1990, seems to be leaving less and less room for literature and occupying himself with the different documentation, at least, of the history of "his land" in all directions.

### 6.6 Other Representatives of This Phase

As was said when speaking of the periodization of the literature of the Greek Ethnic Minority, the last decade before the fall of communism, the 1980s, are characterized by an explosion of young creators. Another important characteristic of this period is that their creation is permeated by the abandonment of partisanship and excessive

ideological commitment toward a literature, especially poetry, that is as lyrical, human, and with high artistic and aesthetic demands, so that

it may be said to constitute a denial of the previous schematicism. Another characteristic is that a vigorous return to creation in the mother tongue is observed. Also, the genre of poetry loses its monopoly before the pressure of prose, particularly the short story and the novella. We speak of the category of creators who will set the tempo and diapason of the literature of the Greek Ethnic Minority of the ongoing period, that after the fall of the communist system. Among them are creators who had prior affirmation, but they are followed by many deputy creators who will affirm themselves subsequently. Parallel to this, the selection of literary qualities was noticeable. Among them we mention: Petros Çerkezis. He was born in 1946 in Poliçan of Pogon, district of Gjirokastër. He studied Literature at the University of Tirana. For a long time he worked as a teacher and then as a librettist at the Gjirokastër theater. He first published poetry at the age of 20. He began his creation in the Albanian language in poetry and prose. In Greek he wrote at the beginning of the 1980s. His poems were compiled in six volumes for children and adults. We mention: "Në tokën e stërgjyshërve" (In the Land of Ancestors), poetry, 1977; "Duarshtrengimesh" (Handshakes), poetry, 1984; "Dridhet pala e fustanellës" (The Fold of the Kilt Trembles), 1987; "Grabitesit e Diellit" ("Oi listes tou Iliou," The Robbers of the Sun), poetry, 1998; "Në bregun e kohës së vrarë" ("Stin ochthi tou skotomenou chronou," On the Shore of Slain Time), poetry, 1999. Until this period his prose, mainly short stories in Greek and Albanian, was scattered in the periodical press. The year 2003 also marks his last publication in the Albanian language from him. The work in question is the volume of poetic prose titled "Panteoni i dashurive të flijuara" (The Pantheon of Sacrificed Loves). At the beginnings of the first decade of the new century he dedicates himself entirely to prose, especially the long form. In 2005 he publishes his first novel titled "Abordi" ("I ektrosi," The Abortion). In 2017 he publishes another volume in prose with narratives titled "Pemët dhe vdekja" ("Ta dentra kai o thanatos," Trees and Death). A year later comes the second novel, "Dalja e madhe" ("I megali exodos," The Great Exodus), and in 2019 the third novel "Fejesë e zjarrtë" ("Pyrinos arravonas," Fiery Engagement). A characteristic remains the fact that the scale of the echo of the particular homeland in his creation is not as intensive as in other contemporary and weighty creators in the letters of the Greek Ethnic Minority. Also, his work shows that he is a creator in search, but more in search of the place he will occupy in literature. This determines also the type of literature he writes. Petros Çerkezis

participates in several publications in prose and poetry by groups of authors. Under his care saw the light of publication two

anthologies with poems by authors from the Greek Ethnic Minority, reciprocally in 1996 and 2019. He also distinguishes himself for quality translations in the respective languages, Greek and Albanian. He also engages in studies and essays connected with the literary heritage of the Greek Minority. In Cyprus, where he has lived since 1994, the literature produced by him has been received very well, especially the prose, which distinguishes itself for a poetic narration. Thomas Sterjopullos. Poet, prose writer, and researcher. He studied medicine at the University of Tirana. His love for literature appeared very early. He wrote first in the Albanian language. Among four books published before the 1990s, only one, titled "Njerëzit që dashurova" ("Oi anthropoi pou agapisa," The People I Loved), 1984, was written in the mother tongue. Subsequently he would write only in Greek. In the relationship between poetry and prose, an equilibrium is observed. The works written by him in the period 1997-2022 are as follows: "Helenizmi i panjohur" ("I agnostos Romiosini," The Unknown Hellenism), approach to folk tradition, 1997. "Njerëz në kufi" ("Anthropoi sta synora," People at the Border), short stories, 2004. "Vdekja e Kosta Tabanit" ("O thanatos tou Kosta Tambani," The Death of Kosta Tabani), short stories, 2010. "Të shkruara në tokë" ("Grammena sto choma," Written in the Earth), short stories, 2012. "Vizitë nate dhe tregime të tjera" ("Nychterini episkepsi kai alla diigimata," Night Visit and Other Stories), 2014. "Kujtime nga Hio" ("Enthymion Chiou," Souvenirs from Chios), poetry, 2017. "Njerëz" ("Anthropoi," People), portraits, 2019. "Në fushën e Dropullit" ("Stis Deropolis ton kampos," In the Plain of Dropull), collection of articles and comments, 2021. "Satira kundër luftës së Vasil Mani-Kazinieri, shënime biografike" ("I antipolemiki kai koinoniki satira tou Vassili Mani-Kazinieri," The Antiwar and Social Satire of Vasilis Manis-Kazinieris, biographical notes), 2022. Coming from the field of medicine, he brings another sensibility to the literature of the Greek Minority. The thematics of his poems distances itself from ideologisms. In them the convention of peace and love predominates. He knows how to convey subtle feelings to the reader. He applies rhymed verse and free verse. And his chosen figuration is source-based and relies mainly on metaphor. Sterios also distinguishes himself for his lyricism even when he writes prose. His characters distinguish themselves for accurate delineation, achieved more through the presentation of their world, action, and thought, than by describing them. Lyricism is evident already in the plots of the short stories, which flow from the composition of the

narrative. The characters and heroes of Sterjopullos's prose are people of the terrain. The space in which they act constitutes the particular homeland

of Sterjopullos. Mainly we speak of people who believed in justice and in the words "of the apostles of equality and freedom," people who shed their blood because they believed in communist society, but in the name of class war found themselves facing brutality, the denial of free speech, and the right of ideas. In their effort to react, they are destroyed. An important place in his activity in the field of letters is also occupied by the study of the history and traditions of his own land. The various studies in this direction also inspire the literature written by him. Fotos Malos. Despite his origin and position as a literature pedagogue at the university, his contribution to the literature of the minority is not what was expected. In general, the promising signs of the beginning were not justified, and he could not rise to the level of other prominent creators in the minority. Stavros Llajos. Although of a relatively young age, he seeks to occupy a place in the literature of the Greek Minority. His first poetry volume "Një grusht det" ("Mia houfta thalassa," A Handful of Sea), 1985, in the mother tongue, sings of the sea, fishermen, the sun, birds, and light. His poetry has, surprisingly, a perspective not tainted by obligatory commitment. Vangjelis Milos. The heavy weight of the "bad biography" does not prevent him from writing true poetry with the sweetness and simplicity of the folk song, far from the noise of empty panegyric. Alekos Papas. He is a representative of the youngest generation with completely new pretensions, which are raised upon concerns that question the relations of political power with the individual in general. His poems of this phase, although sometimes not very accomplished, contain within them a philosophy of indignation that springs from the impossibility of changing these relations built backwards. He is a poet who seeks freedom, and his demand is specified in political freedom. Mirela Kallaxhi. She will bring to the pages of the newspaper "Laiko Vima Letrare" poems with an original, meditative, and sensual lyricism. Also, poems with a new spirit will be brought by Vangjelis Zafiratis, Zisos Llucis, Kostas Nushas, Jorgos Mitilis, Amalia Qendro, Panajotis Barkas, Athina Papa, and others. The cultivation of prose, mainly the short story and the novella, is done by authors who quickly confirm themselves in this type, such as Tilemahos Koças, Andreas Zarballas, Thomas Sterjopullos, Spiros Hristos, and others.

### 6.7 The Ongoing Period

We speak of literature written after the 1990s. In fact, it is not simple to determine the term for the periodization of the literature of this period. The term phase or period suits it. If we take World War II as a reference point, the term phase must be used. If we take the relations with analogous literatures as a reference point, the term "period" must be used. Since the second criterion is

The ongoing period after 1990 is distinguished not only by an increase in production but by a change in the function of commitment. Writing remains socially and historically engaged, yet its principal subject is no longer the prescribed construction of socialism. It turns toward the individual and collective consequences of dictatorship, migration, disrupted family histories, and the recovery of cultural memory. This reorientation connects authors who began publishing during the earlier phases with writers who debuted after the fall of communism.

Memory is consequently both a theme and a formal problem. Memoirs, diaries, biographies, short stories, novels, and lyric poetry make it possible to move between public history and personal testimony. Petros Kurtis's prose titles, including Bileta nga sketera [Ticket from Hell] and Unaza e gjakosur [The Bloody Ring], foreground coercion and injury, while his poetry and monographic writing participate in the broader reconstruction of local experience. The primary bibliography records the full range of these works, avoiding the need for an extended catalogue in the analytical narrative.

Place and displacement provide a second organising concern. Much of this writing is produced in Greece or across the Albanian-Greek border, yet the particular homeland remains a principal point of reference. The result is not a simple restoration of pre-border identity. It is a literature attentive to life between two states, two literary systems, and two forms of belonging. In this respect, the ongoing period resumes contact with Greek literature while retaining historical experiences that are not interchangeable with those of writers based permanently in Greece.

A third feature is generic diversification. Poetry remains prominent, but prose acquires greater weight through novels, short stories, life writing, local histories, and documentary forms. Kostas Nushas and Fotos Papas extend poems into musical settings, while other authors use prose and life writing to document minority experience. These practices broaden the literature's public circulation and create connections among literary, musical, and historical representation.

Finally, the period involves a reassessment of the socialist past. Some texts preserve experiences of imprisonment, censorship, or compromised biographies; others reconsider participation in the former system. This material must therefore be read critically, especially where retrospective narration seeks to justify earlier choices. The ongoing period is unified less by a single style than by a shared effort to negotiate memory, accountability, and cultural continuity. My own post-1990 drama and documentary work is listed in the primary bibliography for completeness, but it is not used here as evidence of the period's aesthetic achievement.

dachtylidi," The Bloody Ring), novel, 2011. "Dashuri dhe lot" ("Agapi kai dakrya," Love and Tears), novel, 2012. "Klithma pas gojës së mbyllur" ("Kravges mesa apo to fimotro," Screams from Behind the Gag). "Brutalitete" ("Omotites," Brutalities). "Një penë bërtet" ("Mia pena fonazi," A Pen Screams). "Duke numëruar valet" ("Metrontas ta kymata," Counting the Waves), poetry. "Unë me gjuhë të prerë" ("Ego me tin kommeni glossa," I with Cut Tongue). "Goditje çekiçi" ("Sfyries," Hammer Blows), poetry, 2019. We also mention: Spiros Hristu with poetry, studies, literary criticism, and especially with volumes of short stories and a novel, such as: "Njeriu tjetër" ("O allos anthropos," The Other Man), 2001; "Pulëbardha ishte në kohë" ("O glaros itan stin ora," The Seagull Was on Time), 2009; "Në kthesën tjetër" ("Stin alli strofi," At the Next Turn), 2015; "Gjëmat e kohrave" ("Ta simia ton kairon," The Signs of the Times), 2016; "Nuk kam fjalë veç lule" ("Den echo logia mono louloudia," I Have No Words Only Flowers), 2018; "Me pamje nga deti" ("Me thea ti limni," With a View of the Lake), 2019. After these volumes of short stories came his first novel "U gjetem për të mos humbur" ("Vrethikame na mi chathoume," We Met So as Not to Be Lost), 2020. Vasilis Dilos with the novel "Parajsa është në krah" ("O paradisos ine dipla," Paradise Is Next Door). Jorgos Shukuras with the volume of short stories "Neraidha e trishtuar" ("I thlimmeni neraida," The Sad Fairy). Vasilis Hristu with the volume of short stories "Nënë, e shkreta nënë" ("Mana... kaimeni mana," Mother, Poor Mother) and the novel "Këngët e Elenit" ("Ta tragoudia tis Elenis," The Songs of Helen), 2020. Stavros Paputsis comes with volumes of short stories "Prishmeri në ankth" ("Enagones prosdokies," Agonizing Expectations); "Në tokën e ndarë të Epirit" ("Sti chorisimeni gi tis Ipeirou," On the Divided Land of Epirus); "Tespihët e shpresë" ("To komboloi tis elpidas," The Beads of Hope); "Të qash e të qeshësh" ("Na klais kai na gelas," To Cry and to Laugh), 2020; with volumes of poetry "Dehje e pashmangshme" ("Anapofeakti methixi," Inevitable Intoxication); "Përmbi një shekull" ("Pano apo enan aiona," Over a Century); as well as with two

biographies "Ajo që i shkon Andrea Martinut" ("To prepon tou Andrea Martinou," What Befits Andreas Martinos), 2015; and "Dhimitris Stefos, njeriu, shkencëtari, i përndjekuri heleni" ("Dimitris Stefos, o anthropos, o epistimonas, o katadiokomenos, o Ellinas," Dimitris Stefos, the Man, the Scientist, the Persecuted Greek), 2018. Minas Lekkas. A poet who in the literature of the post-World War II period was little known because he lived far from areas with compact Greek Minority populations. After the 1990s he is present in the literary press of the time. He published the poetry volumes "Këngë të burgosura" ("Fylakismena tragoudia," Imprisoned

Songs); "Gjërat e çuditshme të Athinës" ("Tis Athinas ta paraxena," The Strange Things of Athens); "Margaritarët" ("Margaritaria," Pearls); "Urat" ("Gefyres," Bridges). His poetry, often with classical verse, distinguishes itself for rationality of thought and shows its value in turning into philosophical art the ability of observation and intensive experience of reality. Lekkas also distinguishes himself for poetry of current problems, especially political ones. Vangjelis Zafiratis. He has a long journey in the field of poetry in which he distinguishes himself for the effort to create his own poetic individuality. His poetry, even when it is lyrical and distinguishes itself for finesse, shows that it is a product of the poetic "laboratory." He has the ability to nourish his poetry with the fruits of scholarly work and folk creation. He published the poetry volumes "Poezi" ("Poiimata," Poems); "Mua fushat më njohin" ("Emena oi kampos me gnorizoun," The Plains Know Me); "Loti i gurit" ("Dakri tis petras," The Tear of Stone), 2002; "Gurë dhe det" ("Petres kai thalassa," Stones and Sea); "Borzilok gjethedredhur" ("Sgouros vasilikos," Curly-Leaf Basil); and in the Albanian language "Qyteti i larë në diell" (The City Washed in Sunlight); "E zeza është e bardhë" (Black Is White). He also published the study "Vetmia e gurit" ("I monaxia tis petras," The Loneliness of Stone). Kostas Nushas comes with the poetry volume "Simfoni legjendare" ("Thryliki symfonia," Legendary Symphony) with poems about Bistrica, Himara, Dropull, and the second poetry volume "Rrethi i kuq" ("Kokkinos kyklos," Red Circle). Nusha showed a particular commitment to setting to music and turning into songs many poems by Greek minority creators. Alekos Papas with the poetry volume "Udhëtimi modern i Odiseut" ("To synchrono taxidi tou Odyssea," The Modern Journey of Odysseus). His poetry written in free verse distinguishes itself for bold figuration, borrowing motifs from Greek mythology to use, like Cavafy, in the thematic approaches of the day, especially those devoted to ethnic identity and the politics of the day. He works much with the verse even when it has narrative forms. Alqis Papas with the poetry volume "Urat" ("Gefyria," Bridges). A distinct, promising voice with

echo in the Greek and Albanian public is that of Kristo Armando Gjezos, originally from Himara. Although relatively very young, born in 1988, he has a considerable literary productivity in various genres and types. In 2012 he published the first poetry volume "Frikë e parealizuar" ("Anekplirotoi fovoi," Unrealized Fears), which was awarded the first prize as a debut in literature. This was followed by the novel "Balta" ("I lapsi," Mud), the volume of short stories "Traballa" ("Trabala," Tumble), and the children's book "Pema që kishte për kokë një top" ("To dendro pou eiche mia bala gia kefali," The Tree That Had a Ball for a Head).

With roots from Himara and Dropull is also the poet Dhimiter Kokaveshi. He has a visible literary productivity. He wrote in both languages, and for his literary creation he has international recognition and evaluations. Three of his poetry volumes are: "Stalakmitet" (Stalactites), 2004; "Fati i dritës" (The Fate of Light), 2009; and "Meteoritet" (Meteorites). More present and more consolidated in this period comes the voice of women devoted to literature. We mention: Mirela Kallaxhi. "Gjurmë dhe shtigje" ("Ichne kai perasmata," Traces and Passages), 2020, Athens. A voice in Greek letters that promised already when she was in high school. She distinguishes herself for an authentic, meditative lyricism that moves in the sphere of the metaphysical and the sensual. Elsa Xhumba. "Sa mban një ëndër" ("Oso kratai ena oneiro," As Long as a Dream Lasts), 2016, Gjirokastër. The title of the volume is a clear expression of her poems. With short verse, with surprising thoughts and effective figuration. Her lyricism has to do with life and the desire to live it, even for moments and unrealized desires. Rodhavji Gogoni. "Dashuri dritëhene" ("Erotikes fengovoles," Moonlit Love), 2019. Although her poetry was compiled by herself into a poetry volume, she is considered a consolidated poet with a complete lyrical identity. The prizes she has received verify this. Athina Papa. "Udhetime të pa fishkura" ("Amaranta taxidia," Amaranth Journeys), 2020; "Pafundësi shpirti" ("Abyssos psychis," Abyss of the Soul), 2021. The publication of her poems is somewhat late. The lyricism of her verse expresses feelings and thoughts together. She likes classical verse with rhyme. She keeps quiet tones to express her own experiences, to which she gives generalizing values, or that enable the reader to find himself. Katerina Karaxha. "Fije dhe ndjenja" ("Nimmata kai aisthimata," Threads and Feelings), 2018; "Valsi i penës" ("To vals tis penas," The Waltz of the Pen), 2021. A young poetess with pretensions and ambitions. Mirela Mitro. We mention her not so much for broad literary productivity. She writes poetry, mainly meditative. But for the fact that she is the only one who holds the academic title of associate professor.

She also distinguishes herself for her contribution in the field of translation. It is understood that the authors and their works to which we refer above constitute a small part of that great literary production of this same period and of the previous ones. Another large and important part was mentioned when we spoke of the writers and poets of previous periods. But we may also mention the well-known novelist Ilia Fuqi and his fellow villager, also novelist, Thanasi Mejdi. We add here Anastasia Katsalidha, Marko Ziana, Dhimosteni Pasko, Panajota Isari, Niko Ballkoni, Vasil Muka, Spiro Peko, Thanasi Pappan, Emilio Pando, Mihali Kiosi, Mimi Kosta,

Vasili Pirali, Irini Rafti-Andrucon, Theodhori Mantziarin, Kosta Misho, Aristidhi Iasonidhi, Aristoteli Spirou, Harallambi Foto, Zisi Karvella, Thoma Pili, Foti Meniko, Melina Papa, Foto Papathanasi, and others. In this period, contacts with pan-Hellenic literature are free, while contacts with Albanian literature become increasingly rare. Increasingly rare are the minority creators of this period who write in both languages, Albanian and Greek. Besides Jorgo Çati, Vasili Gjizeli, or even Niko Katsalidhas, other authors from the Greek Minority who write literature also in the Albanian language we mention Panajoti Boli, Grigori Jovani, Sotiri Thano, Dhimitri Tsagan, Thimjo Thimjo, Thanasi J. Pilafan, and others. Among them, P. Boli lives and works as a teacher and journalist in his birthplace. The world of children and the human concerns of those around him are his preferred themes. He has written poetry in the Albanian language since the 1980s. He began prose much later. Besides full publications, he continues to publish poems and short stories in the Albanian literary and periodical press. Among his publications we mention the volume of sketches "Sy të trishtuar" ("Thlimena matia," Sad Eyes), 2016; "Nostalgjia çapitet në rrugët me kalldrem" (Nostalgia Strolls on Cobblestone Streets), 2019, poetry; "Sonte Hëna" (Tonight the Moon), 2022, short stories and sketches; meanwhile he has ready for publication several other books of poetry, prose, and journalism. A characteristic case in itself is that of Grigor Jovani. Born in Dropull and raised in Laç. He studied philology and specialized in journalism. Even after 1991, when he moved with his family to Athens, he continued to write literature and to be engaged with letters in the Albanian language. He distinguishes himself for his contribution to the Albanian-language media in Greece. Meanwhile, literature remains his life's passion. He has written the poetry volumes "Botë pa dashuri" (World Without Love, 1977); "Punishtja e ëndrrave" (The Factory of Dreams, 2004); "Udhëtoj brenda vetes" (I Travel Within Myself, 2008); "Blu e thellë" (Deep Blue, 2012); "Vreshtat e Dionisit" (The Vineyards of Dionysus), six books in one (2015); "Taverna e të marrëve"

(The Tavern of the Mad, 2022). For publication he has the novel "Ura e mbretit" (The King's Bridge) and the book of short prose "Klinika" (The Clinic). Jovani does not hide the knitting into himself of the Albanian identity, despite his Greek origin. A Few Words on Research Infrastructure, Orientation, and Criticism It cannot fail to be observed that this literature develops scattered in the Hellenic reality. The absence of a structure to follow, gather, study, and promote it remains a serious problem. This problem is connected with the fate of preserving its identity in the future as literature of the Greek Minority, and it cannot be otherwise as long as this

Minority is located in Albania. Evident is also the absence of criticism and of the infrastructure of criticism. Literary production is not subjected to the process of literary criticism. Specialized authority is lacking, just as the infrastructure is lacking, newspapers, magazines, and so forth. The organization of promotional activities are numerous but cannot replace the act of literary criticism. Meanwhile, only some of the powerful pens have the fortune to be subjected to specialized criticism, but within the framework of all Hellenic literature. Likewise, proper studies on its present nature and its future are lacking. In this sense the literature of the Greek Ethnic Minority is indeed free, indeed this freedom of it continues to preserve a certain traditional commitment, but in general, it is disoriented and without the proper cultural impact in a society that has emerged from a dictatorial system. Nevertheless, nothing can be viewed and multiplied by zero. There exists an early tradition with valuable contributions. We speak of associations, groupings characterized as literary, publishing houses. Well-known is, for example, the contribution to Hellenic letters and especially those of his homeland, of the benefactor Kristaq Zografos in Constantinople. We mentioned at an earlier point in the study the case of Niko Zelistas from Dhrovjani. He founded in Alexandria a publishing house with radiation and contribution of great value. He is also known as founder of Hellenic philological and literary associations, the Hellenic Musical Society, the Educational Group of Egypt. Also in Alexandria, Egypt, his fellow villager Odhiseas Llappas founded the literary society "Eskili," and so forth. This tradition is still preserved today. We mention the association EKAVI in Athens, the literary and letters association of Poliçan and Pogon. Also of great interest is the contribution of the publishing house "Botime të letërsisë moderne" ("Ek doseis synchronis logotechnias," Publications of Modern Literature) of Nikolla Nikas from Bodrishta of Gjirokastër, the IBE Institute and Ipeirotiki estia in Ioannina, and so forth. The Contribution of the Elikranon Foundation In this framework the role and contribution of the publishing house and the Elikranon

Foundation in Athens and Saranda must be emphasized. This dual institution is engaged in several activities directly connected with the letters of the Greek Ethnic Minority. It undertakes the publication of the greater part of the literary production of creators from the Greek Ethnic Minority. Statistics show that it has published more than 120 books of literary nature by more than 45 authors. On the other hand, it gathers and reprints the literary heritage of decades and past centuries. In its archive it now numbers more than 150 literary works of various genres and types, as well as dozens of newspapers and magazines of literary nature. Likewise, Elikranon

has been transformed into a center of meetings, exchange of thoughts, circulation of books, bibliography, ideas, and thoughts. Elikranon has also undertaken the gathering, systematization, and preservation of this multi-volume literary production. The Foundation contributed also to the bibliography of this study and has our thanks.

**Part Three**

## Chapter Seven. Theoretical and Literary Approach to the Poetic Work of Panos Çukas, Nikos Kacalidas, and Andreas Zarballas

### 7.1 Myth and Ideology

Unlike the first two parts of this study, which had a constative and descriptive character, the third part has as its object the complete and in-depth analysis of the literary work of three poets: P. Çukas, A. Zarballas, and N. Kacalidas. The aim is to highlight concretely the artistic and aesthetic values of the literature of the Greek Minority through the analysis of the concrete works of these three representatives of this literature. The selection was made according to several criteria. First, they belong to different phases within the period of socialist realism. Second, although they belong to the same creative method, their poetic engagement, the language used, and the poetic technique are different. Third, this presupposes difficulties in the manner of organizing the structure of the study and in the continuity of presenting the material.

The aforementioned reality makes the full realization of the set aim difficult, in any case. The simplest way would have been to limit ourselves to issues and criteria of poetic form and structure. But this, in itself, would have clashed with the principles and basic orientation of the thesis defined in the preface and in several subsequent chapters, namely that of the poetic message encoded in myths and borne in the creation and re-creation of these in the real and philosophical concept of time and space.

On the other hand, the poets themselves attempted to remove from their work that literature whose aesthetic function expired together with the closing of the communist power cycle, and promoted that part of their tradition with enduring values beyond this engagement, as well as that newly created product. This makes it reasonable for us to focus precisely on this literary production and, in accordance with the chosen method, we thought to operate on the basis of several general criteria.

The poetic volumes taken into consideration are:

P. Çukas: “Γεια σας αδέρφια (μια φωνή απ' το Αργυρόκαστρο)” [Hello Brothers (A Voice from Gjirokastër)], Athens, 1993.

N. Kacalidas: “Pagëzimi i Zogjve” [The Baptism of Birds], Tirana, 2006. Included are selected poems from the poetry volumes “Pagëzimi i zogjve”, “Eliksiri i Gurit” [The Elixir of Stone], “Shtëpia e erërave” [The House of Winds], “Hiri i hidhërimit” [The Ash of Bitterness]; the volume “Profecitë e drurëve” [The Prophecies of Trees], Tirana, 1988;

and “Η μοίρα του αμάραντου” [The Fate of the Amaranth], Athens, 2003, which includes the poetry volumes “Bashi i yjeve” [The Forecourt of Stars], “Natësira e lulenatës” [The Nightness of the Flowering], “Vaji i malit të vrenjtur” [The Lament of the Sullen Mountain], “Limonj të hidhur” [Bitter Lemons], “Loti i ciklaminës” [The Tear of the Cyclamen], “Ambrozia e gurit” [The Ambrosia of Stone], “Njëmijë guacka deti” [A Thousand Sea Shells], and “Dhe sfinksi foli” [And the Sphinx Spoke].

Andrea Zarballas: “Njëqind e një poezi për një grusht dhe” [One Hundred and One Poems for a Fist of Earth], Athens, 1992.

The detailing of themes and motives, which required voluminous work, allowed us to conclude with the following categories:

1. The category of nature

2. The category of man (society)

3. The category of metaphysical forces (gods, fate, saints, etc.)

To enable an analysis based on these categories, it is necessary to understand several theoretical notions related to them, which will help us establish a relationship as essential and natural as possible with the previous premises.

First, we present the idea of myth and ideology as an organic relationship between them. We begin the reasoning from the difference between language and literature as two communication tools that use the same code. The distinguishing feature of language must be sought in the "referential function" of the sign. In literature, and particularly in poetry, "the aim and object of communication is the message in its concrete form," it is the "poetic function."

In relation to this function of poetic language, Nietzsche used to say that "the more abstract the truth you want to announce, the closer to the senses you must bring it." And N. Kazantzakis adds: "But now I hasten to express feelings with words; in future writings I will devote all care to the verse and to an even more difficult issue: to lighten every word and expression from 'meaningful' content; only emotion, essence, music. Absolute simplicity with simple, pure figure, with vision." According to Elytis, his poetic art constitutes "a method of understanding the world through the senses."

This difference consists in the fact that poetry belongs to polysemantic linguistic systems and appears as a subjective mode of reference, whereas language is an

objective mode. However, while this function appears as a subjective value, in reality, to a large extent it is determined by codes that function at the level of the individual and collective subconscious and link or coincide with the ideology of a society (in the historical aspect). The phenomenon constitutes, according to Barthes (1964), a part of ideology.

Every poem is structured on the basis of two axes, the syntagmatic and the paradigmatic, which are joined organically. The first corresponds to the linguistic level and the second to the poetic function. The two are confounded organically between them. On the plane or axis of the syntagmatic, ideological messages of the creator occupy their place through space, time, characters, and actions, which are embodied in the paradigmatic axis. Consequently, the "ideological cosmos" of a work is the model or achronic system in which the poet's worldview and anthropology are encoded, whereas the "mythic cosmos," the myth, is the transformation of this conception of the real world into concrete myths, that is, into histories with acting subjects, space, and time, created by the poet, in such a way that they constitute an isotope with the ideological cosmos.

Thus, myth is discourse-text, of another semantic level, the structure of which, the relationship between signifier and signified, sign-object, is not an arbitrary structure, as happens with the linguistic sign, but in an extremely motivated manner and always raised above the semantic linguistic system. Always according to Barthes (1957), what in the linguistic system is a sign in the system of myth is transformed into a simple signifier and the semantic meaning in the linguistic system is transformed into form. As such, myth is a linguistic discourse "borrowed" from language as a communication

system and which "returns" to this function, but enriched with the polysemantic ability secured (in the literary plane) by metaphor and the other figurative system. It can be said that it is a created reality, a plasmatic one, which is served to the reader as true through a semantic linguistic system loaded with emotion that bears a certain ideology. This means that when the poet manages to remove the contradiction between myth and reality, which is achieved through the fusion between them, then he guarantees irreproducible poetic success and admired equilibrium.

In this context, we believe it is important to emphasize still several other viewpoints regarding myth, which give us the possibility to understand that myth is a social product, created by society to serve it, and to perform this function it is borne diachronically by adapting to the level reached by it.

Psychoanalytic approaches offer distinct accounts of myth. Freud relates myths to the symbolic transformation of wishes and conflicts, while Jung connects them with archetypes and the collective unconscious (Freud, 1913; Jung, 1959). These approaches are used here as interpretive frameworks, not as proof that every literary myth has a single psychological origin.

Ideology is nothing other than all manifestations of the knowledge and worldview of the world (figures, myths, ideas, meanings), whether they are correct or mistaken, approved as constituent activities by any human society and used by them as a tool for the rehabilitation of right and the defence of their interests. It can be divided into two categories: permanent ideologies and partial ideologies. The first constitutes an organic part of human society in the diachronic aspect, and partial ideology has a historical character and expresses the corresponding attitudes of every society in a certain time.

Elytis, in his polysemy regarding myth, among other things treats it as a pre-seen vision within the framework of a "political" function of poetry that thickens the past, the present, and the future. Speaking of Greece, he believes that this visionary myth exists in a latent manner, it simply "requires a little pure heart" to manifest itself.

At this point, the importance that the existence of "a belief" takes on, in the form of ideology, in the creation of a myth must be emphasized, which presupposes that the world of myth is a dramatic world, a world of actions, forces, and powers that clash. In this framework, the model of action in myth is not nature, but society. Nature reflects in myth the unique, human society of its own life.

After this approach, let us return to the concrete poets and the analysis of their work with the main instrument, the categories defined above. The criterion for their selection is the main categories characterizing literature as the art of time. These are the categories of space (up-down, inside-outside) and time (now-then-later). In these relationships, the subdivision "up" includes the sky, divinity, cosmic space, "the other world," metaphysics in general. The subdivision "down" includes, on the one hand, the earth and nature, and on the other, society (social and natural reality).

In the category of time, the subdivision "now" links to the present "reality," whereas the subdivision "then" links to the past, the myth. The subdivision "later" is linked to the future, which for all three poets constitutes a comparatively vague and undefined dimension, modelled in the form of desire, or even of the rhetorical question.

To operate as well as possible, within these categories can be placed organically the relationships we chose in the second chapter: individual-society, nature-culture, freedom-slavery, and life-death, as typological criteria of the popular tradition borne in cultivated literature.

## Chapter Eight. Panos Çukas

### 8.1 Biography

The 80 years of his life can be considered, without fear, as the life of an indefatigable worker of the Greek language in the oasis isolated from the mother state of the Greek Minority in Albania. This title is given to him by his activity in the field of letters as a poet, prose writer, publicist, translator, editor, folklorist, and orator. He is considered a "minority poet of Albania." More than 150 articles and evaluative notes have been written about him in all the Albanian and minority press, but also in Greece. The most well-known literary authorities from the country, but also from Greece, have expressed themselves about Pano Çukas. Dritëro Agolli: "Pano Çukas is a poet with fine artistic taste. His verses have pathos, romantic figures, and symbols that we encounter in the traditions of classical literature..."; Adriatik Kallulli: "...a formed poetic individuality that tries to reflect our reality in an original manner, with processed tools and figures."; Andrea Varfi: "His poetry communicates, it is warm, accessible, original..." Ismail Kadare, Aleks Çaçi, Llazar Siliqi, Spiro Çomora, Dhimiter Shuteriqi, Petrit Ruka, Zija Çela, Jorgo Bulo, Dalan Shapllo, and others have also expressed themselves.

He was born in 1925 in the village of Sopik in Pogon of the district of Gjirokastër. He studied in the secondary school for teachers in Vellas of the district of Janina. Before reaching the age of 20, he was one of the pens that wrote poetry in the fighting formations of the Greek Minority in the war shared with the Albanian people. He is one of the founders of the Greek-language program on the local radio of Gjirokastër (1945) and a regular collaborator with publicistic and literary pieces in the newspaper “Llaiko Vima”, from its founding (1945) until his heart stopped beating in one of the hospitals of Greece in 1995.

Many of his writings were published under the literary pseudonym "Alqis Anthulis."

For many years he was the main editor of school texts for pupils of the schools of the Greek Minority. He served as a teacher in the branch "teacher in the Greek language" in the pedagogical secondary school of Gjirokastër.

He has published in his mother tongue 12 volumes of poetry. We mention: “Ελεύθερη ζωή” [Free Life], 1953; “Ποιήματα” [Poems], 1955; “Η Τρακτορίστισα” [The Tractor

Driver], 1957; “Ανατολές και δύσεις” [Sunrises and Sunsets], 1964; “Το νέο τέλος ενός παλιού θρύλου” [The New End of an Old Legend], 1977; (in Albanian the same year); “Κορυφές και ορίζοντες” [Peaks and Horizons], 1977; etc.

In prose in the mother tongue he has written three books: “Τα ξαραβωνιάσματα” [The Breaking of the Engagement], 1970; “Λύκοι με ράσα” [Wolves in Cassocks], 1973; (in Albanian in 1970); “Θοδωρής Μάστορας” [Thodhoris Mastoras], 1977; (in Albanian in 1976).

He has written in the Albanian language nine books of poetry and prose: “Çelësat e lumturisë” [The Keys of Happiness], 1967; “Urdhëroni në vendlindjen time” [Command in My Homeland]; “Koka e gjarpërit” [The Head of the Snake], 1973; “Kështu nisën të vinin pranvera të reja” [Thus Began the Coming of New Springs], 1981; “Soditje nga bedenat” [Observations from the Cradles], 1982; “Në lulëzim të përbashkët” [In Joint Blossoming], 1985.

He translated from Albanian into Greek 30 works by the most well-known authors of the tradition and socialist realism. We mention: “Afërdita përsëri në fshat” [Aphrodite Returns to the Village], 1957; “Atdheu” [The Homeland] by Çajupi, 1959; “Kohë lufte” [Time of War], 1974; “Princesha Argjiro” [Princess Argjiro], 1977; “Nënë Shqipëri” [Mother Albania], 1980; “Antologji e poezisë shqiptare” [Anthology of Albanian Poetry], 1981; “Komisari Memo” [Commissar Memo], 1981; “Shqiponjat fluturojnë lart” [The Eagles Fly High], 1982; “Familja e peshkatarit” [The Fisherman's Family], 1983; “Njeriu me top” [The Man with the Cannon], 1984; etc. These translations in prose, poetry, and drama, although addressed to different age groups of readers, filled a very large gap for minority readers in the mother tongue.

He also has translations from Greek into Albanian, for example, “Dëshira e vërtetë e shqiptarëve” [The True Desire of the Albanians] by Naim Frashëri, poems by Asdreni, Livadhitisi, Kristalis, Kalvos, etc.

In addition to school texts, he realized himself six anthologies for the pupils of the schools, and in five others he is a co-author.

In this framework, it would be very difficult to enter the effort of verifying the various articles with political, social, and literary character published in the press of the time in both languages.

The literary work of Pano Çukas, as is understandable, spanned the entire period of socialist realism and constitutes one of the main representatives of the literature of the Greek Minority, known also among Albanian readers.

He is considered a "spoiled child of the system." The truth is that Çukas is one of the most engaged creators from the Greek Minority in the ideological cause of communism. His works in the majority of cases resemble literary reportages written in verses or in prose about events and dates that linked directly with the needs of the ideological consumption of the power. He often takes upon himself the "politico-ideological concerns of the party" that exceed the limits of the Greek Minority, indeed, and of Albania. A heavy and compromising position for him remains that of the standard-bearer in the war against religion.

Nevertheless, Panos Çukas knew how to overcome obstacles and ideological limitations and write poetry. These qualities gain more value when the poet distances himself from the ideologized theme and penetrates everyday life. Then he knows how to immortalize tradition, to bring ordinary people closer, to philosophize about life and death. He knows how to caress with love, to raise to art the relationships of man with the homeland. In a word, he is a distinguished lyric poet, although he does not dare to go outside the ideologically determined relationships.

As we emphasized, his contribution in the field of translation of literature into the analogous languages, particularly from Albanian into Greek, is indisputable. The contribution does not lie only in the fact that he created the possibility for minority readers to read Albanian literature in the mother tongue, but in that the quality of the translation was such that, without fear, we can say that Panos Çukas made Naim, Noli, Dritëro, Kadare, Migjen, and others speak Greek, and their art gained the finesse of the Greek language. Simultaneously, he brought a precious contribution to the communication of the two literatures and to the exchange of reciprocal values.

### 8.2 The Model of Poetic Myth in the Volume, “Γεια σας αδέρφια (μια φωνή απ' το Αργυρόκαστρο)” [“Hello Brothers (A Voice from Gjirokastër)”], Athens, 1993”

In his long creative activity, Panos Çukas has been characterized as a deeply engaged poet and writer. After the fall of the dictatorship, in the name of the timelessness of aesthetic values, he performed a "katharsis" of several volumes of his poetic work. And it seems he was satisfied with the proposal he made to readers, a

proposal that includes 45 poems in the volume in question in the Greek language. Nevertheless, the attempt at "katharsis" did not manage to totally erase the deep trace of the poet's relationship with the experience of the time. What is important is that this experience comes to us not simply of a social nature but as a worldview, indeed a stable one. As we shall see, the poetic worldview, despite the difference in the nature of the poetic myth, is equally stable also in A. Zarballa, but not in N. Kacalidas.

For Panos Çukas, the real space of the action of the poetic unit, unlike Kacalidas and Zarballa, can be determined only in an indirect manner. This is achieved by following in his poems the re-taking of several traditions from the cycle of life, names of characters or heroes linked with a certain territory, stigmatizing social phenomena such as emigration, etc. The "space" of the poetic myth has a horizontal spread that cannot be measured. Vertically it begins with the Sun, the stars, and divinity to set the lower limit at the earth and the nature unfolded in it, the mountains, the sea, the rivers, the fields, the flowers, the plane tree, the colors, the sounds.

Regarding the category "time," it must be said that the poet chooses from the category of historical time (which is linked with culture and no longer with nature) the "individual time" and places it in natural time as a relationship, nature-culture. He maintains toward it the attitude of deceptive conviction, which ends in disappointment, that if time did not exist, it would be a creature of unknown happiness. He does not state the disappointment, but it can be discerned as a feeling of privation.

### 8.3 The Place of Man (the Individual) in the Mythic Model of P. Çukas's Poetry

Between man and myth, and in the center of them, the poet places man, who functions according to the relationships individual-nature, nature-culture, individual-society. From the outset we emphasize that the man of Çukas's poetic myth is a social man.

That is, unlike the traditional man or hero, who, as we saw, opposes society or certain social systems that endangered the equilibrium and harmony of his relationship with nature, a relationship which, we said, determined the nature-culture relationship, the man of Çukas's poetic myth is in harmony with nature and society.

"Great is MAN, who in the heights / with wide wings flutters, / in the ethereal secrets to discover, / the voice of the stars to hear..."

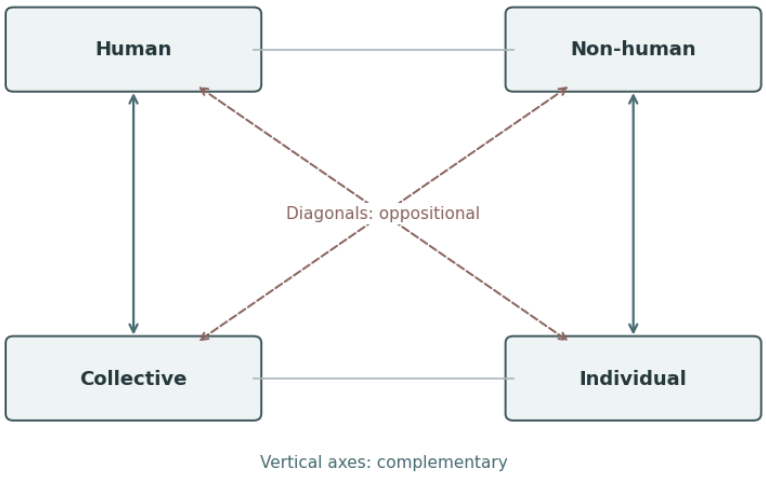
It is true that the "man" of the poet establishes "cultural" relationships with nature. They are not traditional relationships. They are distinguished from those because the poet's man does not impose himself on nature, but adapts to it. (He discovers secrets, touches the voice of the stars). He elevates himself to the immeasurable levels of nature to be included, to become part of it not as submission, and nature allows him richer knowledge and culture. Right there the poet hastens to give us two other dimensions of his man. His existence as such is linked with the ability to feel in the depths of the soul "the pulse, joys, sufferings /..." of his people. And within this framework to be able to undertake contributions in their name, however small they may be. The important thing is not to give up before difficulties. "His powerful shoulders he lowers / bright dreams upon them he casts / and climbs upward, even if little by little / only obstacles he leaves behind." "Ο άνθρωπος" [The Man] (Çukas, 1993, p. 42).

In Çukas's poetic system the logic of Marxist principles functions. According to it we have the discovery of a deeper unity of the instinct of life (eros) with the social structure based on the concept of the comrade and of socialization, and the promotion of this as the basic principle of interpersonal relationships and of the organization of society. This principle harmonizes man, society, nature, and culture. It replaces the initial unity of man with nature and the world and legislates as the basic rule of social organization the voluntary activation of the individual and reciprocal contribution, without intervention from above and external imposition. It ensures the equality of all members, denying any individualistic-egoistic expression that could disturb social harmony in relation to nature. According to this principle, the notion of "individualism" implies the loss in him of human quality.

Graphically we could represent this with Greimas's (1970) semiotic square:

**Figure 1**

*Semiotic square of human and collective relations in Çukas's poetic model*




Note. Human and non-human are positive terms in the author's reading; collective and individual are negative terms. Vertical axes are complementary and diagonals are oppositional.

In this figure, the notions "human" and "non-human" are positive, and the notions "collective" and "individual" are negative. On the vertical axes the notions are complementary, whereas according to the diagonals they are oppositional.

The poet says:

"...Like two happy and fragile birds / a nest woven with dreams let us create / the warm nest of our family / bathed in the holy light of harmony / there let our children play / worthy children of our family of society /..."

In his volume the poet Çukas has avoided the model of man from the Eastern Marxist countries. (According to this model we have in a first phase the displacement, appropriation, and disappearance of the individual "unit" by a higher authority (divinity, nature, political power), in a second phase the submission of the "unit," and in the end the absence of individual values.) Within Marxist principles, he chooses the communal-collective model, which in fact is an expression of the traditional model of social organization. (According to this model we have a first phase that deals with the perfection of the "Unit" within a wider human community, in a second phase we have his socialization, and in the finale the promotion of social values.)

Also, his model (communal-collective) differs from the Western model.

**Table 1**

*Western and communal-collective models in Çukas's poetic system*

| Western Model | Communal-Collective Model |
|---|---|
| Priority of the individual | Priority of the collective |
| Formal equality of the individual | Essential equality of comrades |
| Personal effort | Collective effort |
| Competition for survival | Social action and reciprocal contribution |

### 8.4 The State of Plenitude

Perhaps it is precisely the adoption of these poetic models that have allowed P. Çukas to nourish his poetic subject with optimism and on this basis to raise the model of his

myth. If we characterized it differently, we would say that it is pervaded by the state of plenitude. Plenitude also stems from another fact, that in Çukas's poems dualities are absent, especially in relation to his poetic self. This state of plenitude is completed even more by the participation of nature as an element that guarantees the truthfulness of the optimism and his not-at-all-dualistic affirmations.

Nature and man in Çukas constitute a harmony of plenitude where nature very simply can be dictated and felt as a paradise for man when he is in harmony with society.

"...Like a shy smile on the rosy lips of a maiden / the dawn casts light on the mountaintops /... The day paints the sky with immaterial lilacs / so much so that even the stars have made lilac into gold."

"Do not seek me anywhere / somewhere apart from the noise of life / far from the outburst of nature..."

These are the words that the poet puts in the mouth of the muse in a monologue of hers with his self, which in fact is nothing other than his inner consciousness regarding the required reality of his poetic myth, as an expression of his plenitude. And he adds:

"I am an untamed coquette / In life and the noise of the world / I find strength and light from time to time /... Only there will you find me / With my wine you will become

intoxicated / As a living being you will live life / And with your verses / Hearts you will ignite with thoughts /"

Here we note how nature (light) and life (man-society) constitute a unit of creative force for the poetic myth. It is also a striking example of how the poet avoids the contradiction between reality and myth, or at least is conscious of this, as a guarantee for the aesthetic success of his poetry.

In the poem "Λαλούμενα" [Folk Musical Instruments] (Çukas, 1993, p. 48), nature and its sounds are "translated" into music that constitutes an "immortal and triumphant language" for man. (Now it translates "the deep hidden secrets of the soul of the sea" /... Now it resembles... "the cataract and the hoofbeat of the horse" /... Now "it rivals the nightingale" /... It, folk music, can resemble "siren operas" and "Circe symphonies," thus bringing us out to another shore, that of the cultural product as metamorphosis of

nature into human forms. Its greatness the poet sees in the fact that through music was achieved, according to mythology, "the conquest of Hades's castle," and it is that which, if it is hyperbole, when "the violins' nightingales can awaken even the dead," is reality when "...they revive and make the living more alive." /...

In the following poem "Plasmim" [Creation] (Çukas, 1993, p. 49), it is the colours of nature that have set the rhythm, the coloration, and the composition of folk costumes.

In Çukas the weight of memories does not constitute a novelty to justify disappointment and to regulate "through the literary act" what he himself did wrong in real life, but he views memories as an outlet and strengthening of hope. He finds this hope in the essence of nature, in light and in nature itself. In that nature on which man relied to highlight the events of his life. (The olive branch, symbol of peace and indicator of glory.) It is enough to know how to interpret it.

"On the olive branch I see the hero beside virgin glory / A tree speaks to me of nightingales, of fresh aromas through forests. / And every dawn tells me to await years of happiness."

Or the poet says about the withered and forgotten vine by all:

"...And only in bloom / in my memory will I remain / for my first love blossomed among its leaves / and it makes everything that lives with it immortal."

A corresponding unit with the nature-society relationship is the Sun-love relationship. The love defined by the functional component of the presence of light in Panos Çukas appears three-dimensional. This is love as a premise for the continuation of life, life as a product of love (a mother's love), and love for the homeland, abstract but extremely essential. In this range of love the Sun is present, as a whole, or with its elements such as light or warmth. The Sun, if we refer to Elytis, is a natural element with social values and as such constitutes the peak of the poetic cosmos. The Sun constitutes the beginning of creation, the source of life and light. The light of the Sun softens everything, removes every dividing boundary, and brings into direct and intimate contact all living things. These qualities of the Sun observed by Elytis, Seferis, Kalvos, Sikelianos, in the social aspect have as homologues love also in Çukas's poetry.

"I see the light in a sunray, spring in a flower / with a kiss a thousand words I feel holy love expresses," the poet P. Çukas tells us in the poem "I See the Light in a Sunray" (“Θωρώ το φως σε μια ηλιαχτίδα”) (Çukas, 1993, p. 60).

If we note, the message "I see the light" constitutes a complex moment with a polysemantic load that contains not simply the tableau of the shining of light and identification with nature but also the original communication and identification with love as the foundation of life and of its continuity. We cannot but note here the fact that while light is experienced from a sunray (minimum), love is declared divine (maximum).

In the poem "Martesë" [Marriage] (Çukas, 1993, p. 31), the beginning of the action at the wedding (as one of the three dimensions of the cycle of life) has its origin in the action of the Sun. With two personifying metaphors borrowed from folk creation, the poet determines for us the interdependence between the Sun that "shines, shines" in the bride's window and the actions that must follow. ("shines, shines" a functional repetition in favour of the intensity of the solar energy and beauty). For the bride this is a sign that she must adorn herself and "puts upon her face the shining sun," the poet says.

The loss of love is equal to the loss of light, reason, and life itself.

"My love died...../ and took my heart, my reason, and my light," the poem "E çmendur" [The Madwoman] (Çukas, 1993, p. 66). In this case the Sun (light) - love relationship takes on a new dimension, or more precisely is better evidenced through the relationships noted in Greimas's (1970) semantic square. Light-love (life), darkness-death. The absence of light when love "dies" is automatically transformed into a cold

and dark environment. This fact we note better in the poem "The Sarcastic Smile of Death" (Çukas, 1993, p. 40), where this smile appears "sunless" and "icy."

For the poet it is clear that when beauty is equivalent to love, then their fusion is achieved with the Sun. Where beauty seeks to trample upon and ignore love, or to subjugate it, the Sun "withdraws" its presence, or is devalued.

"And what if you find the Sun on your face, / The night that hides in the maiden's soul clouds it /...." "Bukuria" [Beauty] (Çukas, 1993, p. 58). We note that for the poet nature is extremely

sensitive and maintains its own position when harmony of his qualities is not respected in man. In the concrete case, the harmonization of beauty with love.

### 8.5 The Nature of Poetic Duality in P. Çukas

Also, the poem in question is among the few where the poetic narrative is built upon a contradiction and duality of the poet with a positive action (beauty) and a negative function (trampling upon love).

This duality in other cases has an inverse relationship. In the poem "Një dëshmori" [To a Martyr] (Çukas, 1993, p. 19), we have the verses:

"The enemy's bullet he took, tribune of bravery. / Before you taste the final joy of Victory, / but your death became for us a shining star / and shows us all the way to reach Freedom."

Thus, as can be seen, we have a negative action, such as death, but with a positive function, such as illuminating the road for the common goal with the martyr, which was victory. With the same scheme and logic is also built the poem for the People's Hero Thodhori Mastora, as well as the entire cycle of heroic poems. It is the case to emphasize here that this kind of duality, we would say positive of the poet, is linked with his worldview that the individual voluntarily and without anyone imposing himself reaches the extreme, sacrifices his life, in the name of society or its ideal. On the other hand, it is this sacrifice that guarantees him immortality.

Such a treatment presents once again the position of the traditional folk hero, who was ready to deny himself, to confront the system (culture) that violated his equilibriums with the environment (nature) up to the sacrifice of himself so that others might live. Indeed, the relationships are the same. The enemy represents a social system, war,

culture that is imposed on the individual-hero. The difference lies in the fact that the martyr does not act alone, but within the framework of the community. Even the fate that is personal is in function of the fate, or the collective aspiration.

### 8.6 Communication with Folk Tradition

This is also the viewpoint of the poet's relationship with tradition. He bears tradition in adaptation and in full function with his worldview, or within the model of his myth. A

meaningful example is the poem "Rrapi i moshuar" [The Aged Plane Tree] (“Ο Γερο-πλάτανος”) (Çukas, 1993, p. 13).

"Ancient, many-branched, deep-rooted, heavy-shaded, / stands an ancient plane tree in the middle of my village /..."

It does not take much effort to orient ourselves. It is known that the plane tree or generally the tree in the center of the village, or in the field, constitutes for the traditional social structure in the wider territory than that of the minority, Epirus, a natural base object for the organization of the traditional social structure of a community. Within this concept, the plane tree is given as "ancient" and in the "middle of the village." As such it gains the values of a natural cultural monument. The poet takes this element, so used in folk tradition since antiquity, to put it in function of the new social organization also in the minority, that of socialist socialization.

"...And there in the paved and shaded square / the joy of comrades often takes the road /..." or "...It cools the faces of skilled farmers / who in the shade sit around the plane tree /..."

This re-taking does not lose the artistic values of the "myth" of the new. On the contrary, the emotional load caused by the presence of the traditional element is enriched by the movement of nature and the new people depicted by the poet's language.

And while we have a classical case for the function of a natural monument in the social organization of a village-community in the poet's time, he does not content himself with that. Within the same poem he treats another dimension of the anthropological character of the traditional function of the tree. That of the link of man with the earth, nature, his homeland as an expression of his own ethnocultural identity. He does not choose the rock (as we shall see with N. Kacalidas) but the tree, which, besides having

the known link with the Oracle of Dodona, is a living organism and its living qualities extend as deep into the earth as into the sky. Simultaneously it serves life both directly and functionally. The poet says in a philosophical manner:

"Whoever on the earth that bore him / deep roots casts. / Let storms howl as much as they want, / no one can uproot him."

The poet P. Çukas, as we said, carries communication with tradition within the model of his own poetic myth. The ethical relationships between generations, in family and society, the attitude toward work, life, the relationship of the individual with the collective are traditional elements, which although they do not have a direct reference, are re-taken to be placed in a new reality, that of Marxist principles.

Çukas in his creative style remains a poet of the traditional verse, very simple, without excessive figurative and linguistic loads, but applying a source language. The verse used by him is the classical 11, 13, and 15-syllable of folk tradition. We find it also broken, using, indeed, rhyme. His attempts to write free verse were not successful.

We can say without fear that he constitutes a case where his poetry rises more upon internal linguistic structures combined with a rhythm analogous to the poetic message. By relying strongly on the tradition of folk poetry, the mother tongue in Çukas's poetry becomes more plastic and more expressive.

## Chapter Nine. Nikos Kacalidas

### 9.1 Biography, Works

He is one of the most prominent representatives of the second phase of the literature of the Greek Minority, but also of Albanian literature in general.

He was born in Upper Leshinica of the district of Saranda in 1949. He graduated in literature at the University of Tirana. In the field of letters, he appeared very quickly. He continues to be a poet, although lately he devotes more importance to prose, indeed to the long prose, the novel, as well as to short stories and novellas. From 2004, when he published his first novel "Parmenda e Hënës" ["Το άροτρο του Φεγγαριού", The Plow of the Moon], until 2021, Kacalidas published reciprocally 6 volumes with poetry and five with prose. (See Chapter Six, main phases of postwar literature, distinguishing features, representatives, second phase.)

Kacalidas is distinguished for the large number of essays (sprovat) on authors and various issues of the literature of the Greek Minority, as well as for his numerous translations, especially poetry from Greek into Albanian. He writes verses with the same ease in Albanian as in Greek.

He began his poetic creation as a representative of the new generation of poets in Albania. The majority of the poetry volumes of his first creative decade, the 1970s-80s, are written in Albanian. Indeed, he is among the few Greek minority poets who continue to have very good communication with the Albanian public. Even now he writes with the same ease and warmth poetry in the Albanian language, as well as in his mother tongue. ("Profecia e drurëve", 1998; "Pagëzimi i zogjve", 2006.)

He is simultaneously the most productive poet of the Greek Minority and one of the most productive in Albanian literature. He has written over 30 poetry volumes divided into two categories, short poems and long poems.

We mention some of them, from the beginning until 2004: "Fjalët e thëna në pranverë" [Words Spoken in Spring], 1971; "Flugeri", 1975; "Shtëpitë tona në Jug" [Our Houses in the South], 1982; "Shtrati i lumit tim" ["Η κοίτη του ποταμού μου", The Riverbed of My River], 1982; "Lirikë Diellore" ["Λιόφωτο λιανοτράγουδο", Sunlit Lyric], 1985;

“Anedet”, 1989; “Refleksione” [“Ανταύγες”, Reflections], 1998; “Pagëzimi i zogjve”, 2004.

His literary productivity increased excessively in the last decade of the past century. In this period, the poet made steady steps in the cultivation of poetry in his mother tongue, without forgetting the Albanian reader either. He has written nine long poems. We mention: “Zërat e vendlindjes sime” [“Οι φωνές της γενέτειρας μου”, The Voices of My Birthplace], 1990; “Kori tragjik i përgjakur” [“Ματομενη τραγική χοροδία”, The Bloodied Tragic Chorus], 1990; “Bibla e të vrarëve” [“Η βίβλος των σκοτωμένων”, The Bible of the Slain], 1991; “Shtëpia e erërave” [“Το σπίτι των ανέμων”, The House of Winds], 1991; “Rrënjët e pemëve” [“Οι ρίζες των δέντρων”, The Roots of Trees], 1992; “Baladë e fundme, e përzishme” [“Στερνή μπαλάντα, πένθιμη”, Last, Mournful Ballad], 1993; etc.

To this period belong also several poetry volumes: “Vaji i malit të vrenjtur” [“Το μοιρολόι του βουρκωμένου βουνού”, The Lament of the Sullen Mountain], 1994; “Anija e Qipros dhe limonat e hidhura” [“Το καράβι της Κύπρου και τα πικρολέμονα”, The Ship of Cyprus and the Bitter Lemons], 1995; “Dhe sfinksi foli” [“Και η σφίγγα μίλησε”, And the Sphinx Spoke], 1995; “Ambrozia e gurit” [“Η αμβροσιά των βράχων”, The Ambrosia of Rocks], 1997; “Këtë dikton gjaku im” [“Αυτό εστί το αίμα μου”, This My Blood Dictates], 1997; “Njëqind, njëqindgjethet e Arushës së Madhe” [“Εκατό εκατόφυλλα της Πούλιας”, One Hundred, One Hundred and One Leaves of the Great Owl], 1997; “Loti i ciklaminit” [“Το δάκρυ του κυκλάμινου”, The Tear of the Cyclamen], 1998; “Porta e erërave të veriut” [“Η πύλη των βοριάδων”, The Gate of the North Winds], 1998; “Profecia e drurëve”, 1998; “Një mijë guacka deti” [“Χίλια κοχύλια”, A Thousand Sea Shells], 1999; “Bashi i yjeve” [“Η πρόρα των άστρων”, The Forecourt of Stars], 2001; “Fati i Amarandos” [“Η Μοίρα του αμάραντου”, The Fate of the Amaranth], 2003; etc.

His first poetry volume, while still a student, was well received by the public and he was distinguished as a promising poet. Nevertheless, from his first steps it is noticeable that within the young poet was hidden the world of his father and his family circle, steeped in Greek culture and the folkloric tradition of his region. This origin seems to determine the poet's different individuality within the framework of the other Albanian poets of the time. Perhaps, he is distinguished not so much by the scrupulousness and rhythm of the free verse he uses, as by the lyricism that stems

from this reality and the courage to stretch the boundaries of metaphor, metonymy, and symbol beyond the usual to the area of the surreal.

"Let us rearrange again the membrane of the sun / for the phosphorescence of bones" (the poem "Ekehiria," volume “Pagëzimi i zogjve” (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 176)); or "On her eyelashes she had hung the emblem of the moon. / On her lips a bird pecked the moon and her breast opened. / The sea foamed and the borders of mandarins blazed. / The moon slid into the bosom of the sea counting the traces of the gods /..." (the poem "Epifania e hënës" [Epiphany of the Moon], Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 62); or "I do not know what is inside the mythology of the stone. / I do not know what is behind the crow's caw. / outside the walls a flying fig has sprouted / the soul of a warrior / honoring his hands like a monster of winds. / Drop by drop drips the bloody milk of the fig / from the leaf torn by the stone's vein. / behind the towers the phantom of blood enters and exits." "Kështjella e vjetër" [The Old Castle] (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 89); or "...Under the hung slabs of clouds I skewered the crow with the blade of lightning" (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 130).

However, Kacalidas linked this genesis to the engagement toward the principles of socialist realism. He showed that he knew talent did not have much value against the attitude the state machine would take toward this talent. He temporarily accepted the challenge. According to the imposed rules of the time, he made a compromise with the state's propaganda machine, often to the detriment of poetic truth, but to gain what people of art always desire, the public. The lyrical bitterness intertwined with dramatic notes was linked with a theme determined by the ideological pathos of the time. His "ego" was fed more and more with the "great concerns" that the "leader" and the "party" had to solve, especially in the international arena. He compromised himself when he here and there identified poetry with the official attitude toward religion.

The warmth of the public and the awarding of his first poetry volume highlight also his egocentrism, a poetic feature that would be cultivated under other conditions and would be evidenced more in the future as a feature of the "cosmos of Kacalidas."

The poetic work of Niko Kacalidas knew several prizes and evaluations. With the first volume “Fjalët e thëna në pranverë”, 1971, he received the "Prize of the Republic." With the third volume “Shtëpitë tona në Jug”, he received the "Second National Prize" in poetry. Several prizes followed given by the newspapers “Drita” and “Zëri i rinisë”

as well as the magazine “Nëntori”. In 1989 he was decorated by the President of the Republic with the title "Naim Frashëri" for distinguished services in literature. In 2003 he received the "Silver Pen" prize, for the translation of the year, awarded by the Ministry of Culture, for the translation into Albanian of the Greek Nobel laureate Odysseas Elytis.

A number of honors, prizes, and decorations were also awarded to him in Greece. Worth mentioning is the "First Panhellenic Prize" for the poem "Asqitis," 2003, and in the same year the "First Balkan Prize" "AIMOS" given by the Balkan Commission of Sofia for the volume “Një qind, njëqindgjethet e Arushës së Madhe”.

Nikos Kacalidas is not content with merely writing poetry. He is on the move and continuously makes efforts for his poetry to be known and to gain popularity. He is the poet for whom various promotional, critical, acquaintance, and jubilee activities have been organized, more than for any other creator of the Greek Minority: in Albania, Greece, Cyprus, Germany, Bulgaria, and elsewhere.

Also, he is the poet who achieved acquaintance with many well-known personalities such as the Nobel laureate Odysseas Elytis, Melina Mercouri, the national poet of Cyprus, Kosta Montis. He enjoyed the particular sympathy of Dritëro Agolli. He shows the same sympathy to Ismail Kadare and many other personalities of literature in Albania.

All of this, we would say, influenced noticeably his egocentrism, which in the creative process appears with an individuality as readable as it is convoluted, but which in general has been seen as a value.

"Creator with two identities," Ismail Kadare expresses himself about him in the preface of the volume “Pagëzimi i zogjve”. He is a poet equally talented in both, constituting for researchers a special case, when the same poetic spirit manifests itself in such different languages as Albanian and Greek.... a poet with a brilliantly surreal metaphorical poetry, compared at times with the gloominess of Seferis and the brightness of Elytis, and at times with Albanian dates of stone, mountain, light, sea, present in the most important part of his work, which makes his poetry Balkan with Mediterranean colors."

Dritëro Agolli will express himself about him: "...He is not only the most complete poet of the Greek Minority, but among the distinguished poets in Albania."

Moikom Zeqo: "The poetry of Niko Kacalidas is a bright fragility in the equinox of the seasons. In his verses one finds the tragic quality of the times. Lyricism is in symbiosis with harsh epic dimensions."

"Companion of poetic wanderings" Ndoc Gjetja will call him. "...one of the most distinguished poets, who is read and honoured in our country," Ndoc Papleka will express himself.

Llambros Mallamas: "His art is distinguished by an immediate and majestic style."

Dhimitris Iatropullos: "His poetry bears the aroma of the akritic tradition, his forms are cultivated, his linguistic treasure splendid. Weighed between the dramatic and the tragic, never falling into the maudlin, while his existential outburst often touches the peaks and summits of the actual agony of the world. His originality is emphasized in the style that at times seems as if Rigas Velestinlis draws a curtain, at times Solomos opens a surprising window, and at times an anonymous Byzantine aoidos goes galloping on his horse before you."

Pano Çukas: "To Niko Kacalidas, we older poets must take off our hats." And Andrea Zarballa: "Niko Kacalidas is a poet."

### 9.2 The Biographical Element and the Poetic Myth

The description hitherto of Kacalidas's creation convinces the reader that he had his path of ascent and success predetermined. On this path of ascent, it is fitting to note the observation of researchers and his contemporaries regarding the biographical data of the withdrawal from the great urban centres and culture of the time and the closing and isolation in the narrowness of his homeland. It was an action that clashed both with the mentality of the time and with the experience followed by people of culture and art in all times, an experience that links their brilliance with metropolises, great urban and civil centres.

The problem after this is posed as to whether this withdrawal influenced his work positively or negatively. To take an answer, I think it is time for a psychoanalytic

approach to the biographical data of Kacalidas. As Sadik Bejko notes in the preface of the book “Eliksiri i Gurit” [The Elixir of Stone], Tirana, 2004, Niko Kacalidas, even when young, appeared in the world of Albanian letters as a hope and promising voice. Meanwhile, he saw his talent under the wings of the great writers of the time such as I.

Kadare and under the caressing of medals and titles. On the other hand, he proved that the audience of readers did not want to know so much about his lyrics. The aura of glory that he hoped belonged to him, he neither proved it nor did people notice it. In a word, he did not understand that distinction and poetic confirmation were two different things. This fact, apparently, and as his friends and comrades tell, he faced as a denial of his own talent. Psychoanalytically he experienced it from the positions of the inferiority complex and as a deprivation that led to the denial of reality and his isolation in his homeland. "Society" as impossibility to fully reach and possess it, gained in his consciousness the quality of the persecutory pursuer. This feeling is repeated for Kacalidas when he aims at the creation and confrontation of the cosmos and his fantasy which, as he declares, "is rooted (within him) and continues to pursue me with the mania of persecution."

Perhaps his close link with his homeland influenced this attitude. This is confirmed by Kacalidas himself in the poetry volume “Lirikë diellore” [“Λιόφωτο λιανοτράγουδο”], published in 1985. It is also true that around 15 years from 1975 until 1990, he would wander in a narrow geography, from Leshinica to Saranda, not with the feeling of harakiri, but of searches to "impose" himself on reality. The case constitutes a classic example for the existentialists. In these searches he showed that he was not nostalgic for trifles. He preserved and administered with dignity in his creation what he saw, heard, and learned there: The color of the sky, the whispers of the sea, the fairy tales of his grandmother with dragons, the classical mythology linked with his homeland and the surrounding lands, nature, the gods. He began to speak and converse with them, within a universal personifying logic, and to force them to accept that he was the lord and god of them. Faced with the real world of the urban centers, which he apparently could not face and did not try to adapt to, but moved away from it and experienced this as deprivation, he raised his own cosmos. Meanwhile, the feeling of deprivation was orienting him toward the hypertrophy of the poetic subject and the extremization of his egocentrism. In the poetry volume “Lirikë diellore” [“Λιόφωτο λιανοτράγουδο”], published in 1985, he distances himself greatly from engagements with the political

and ideological problems of the time, encountered with such great intensity in the preceding volumes “Shtrati i lumit tim” [“Η κοίτη του ποταμού μου”], 1982, and in the same year “Shtëpitë tona në Jug”, a volume that won the second national prize in poetry. Perhaps this event for a 25-year-old, the poet experienced as deprivation and simultaneously as challenge. Only thus can the fact of the change of poetic course in

the volume “Lirikë diellore” be understood. Examined with care and from the present level of Kacalidas's poetic road, we will note that this volume constitutes an empirical miniature of the future profile of his poetry. The poetic subject shifts gradually to the center of the poetic myth. The myth itself is fused with natural elements of his region, with the re-taking of folk tradition and the open tendency to create new myths with the poetic subject himself as hero. A characteristic is the fact that nature, people, and traditions are in an admirable harmony. "...Bathed in light before me stretch the shore and the sea..." the poet tells us, who addresses his beloved: "...Only love the mountains that rise to the sky / then you will feel me more, you will love me more..." The overcoming of the antinomy in the relationships between individual and society, nature and culture, etc., noted also when we treated folk tradition, is linked with the fact of the principles of engaged literature imposed by the socialist state. This certainly constitutes one more reason that the poet feels even more the disappointment. It is best verified by the fact that in the poetry volumes that will follow, and especially those we have undertaken to analyse, there will be evidenced with a tendency of growth the effort not to allow the integration of the self into a historical-social environment (except that of Leshinica), because it clashes with his own myth, created by the poetic subject for the "world" (cosmos), based on qualities that resemble the unreal.

An expression of this poetic egocentrism is his explanation of his own poetic "cosmos." This world begins from himself, his family, and his homeland. Within this triangle Kacalidas tries to cultivate and awaken the entire galaxy of the Greek poetic world from Homer and mythology to Elytis. Therefore, he says "I believed in the tragic, Homeric, and dreamlike beauty of the world" and continues: "Always rooted within me and continues to pursue me with the mania of persecution and another mythical and strange trinity, my cosmos, of my fantasy." According to the poet, this trinity of his world consists of: First, the Heavenly World, the World of the Gods. "All skies are sown with the gods of my ancestors." Second is the World of the Living, "of my contemporaries, the wise, the storytellers, the workers, the shepherds, the tinkers, the millers, the tar-

makers"; third is the Underworld: "The dead. Planted generation after generation, down there..... and the trinity became flesh and bone and was called Upper Leshinica. Lower Leshinica...," the poet explains. In this framework the poet tries to create his own philosophy, his own archetypes, which rise in the simultaneous lyricism and epicism of his poetry. He tries to achieve self-awareness on the basis of his own criteria, which do

not stem from the contemporary social environment, but he bears with him as an ideological edifice coming from another cultural climate.

What are its constituent elements:

- The cosmos of the mythological world.

- Ancient literature as the embodiment of this mythology in the form of archetypes.

- The rich folk tradition as bearer and actualizer of this mythology.

- Nature as the interaction of space, time, and metaphysics.

- The family environment and the community of the closed traditional Leshinica, isolated, which in terms of civil life continued its own tradition, almost untouched by the influence of the communist regime. In this environment two elements of importance were intertwined: the living folk tradition reflected in songs, tales, fables, myths, legends, historical events linked with the grandmother, and the reflection of Greek culture, reflected in his father.

- Within these elements was added also the influence of the literary achievements of the time in both countries.

### 9.3 The Chronotope of Kacalidas's Poetic Mythology

The real space of Kacalidas's poetic action, as he himself says, is his homeland. The space of the poetic myth (the topos) is another thing. It consists of the geography of ancient Greek mythology; of the space of the cosmos of the stars, the Sun, the Moon, the planets; of the relief of the mountains, the seas, the rivers, the forests, the atmosphere; the biology of plants, flowers, animals; the metaphysics of the spirit and the gods. All this space often has no link with the ethnotopos, as we shall note with Zarballa. At this point Kacalidas resembles Çukas.

In the dimension of this space, the concept of the time of the poetic myth (Chronos) is integrated. The physiognomy of the described space has included within itself also the element of time as an actualized diachrony, or synchrony. This relationship is helped more by the fact that both space and time in Kacalidas's poetic myth are placed in the real space of his homeland and their action is linked with the time of his own poetic subject, which in the concrete case is determined in an egocentric manner by the poet's own I.

"Now I carved the boat in the esper magic / with a wooden plank a downpour from the filigree of cradles /... I called Odysseus: Jump first. / I called the Argonaut together with his prophecies... / The Molossian dog I nailed as a statue, totem in the bosom to bloody the seas /.... And finally, the crow and an ovum. / To soften Charon at the entrance of Acheron...." (The poem "Barka e Noes" [Noah's Ark], poetry volume “Pagëzimi i zogjve” (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 98).)

Graphically, the space of Kacalidas's poetic myth can be represented with a triangle at the base of which are placed: The cosmos of the mythological world and the archetypes created on its basis, and the rich folk tradition as bearer and actualizer of this mythology. On one lateral side we can place the space of nature, and on the other side the metaphysical environment.

The time of Kacalidas's poetic myth, graphically, could be represented in a rectilinear manner as present time, or as the contemporaneity of the poetic unit, which is linked with the action of the poetic subject. On such an axis the poetic subject places all his poetic elements that are linked with a space and time that belongs to the past, a past that crosses historical boundaries, to meet mythology, so that from this interaction the future may be determined. This is also the nature of the timelessness of Kacalidas's chronos. He, like Kadare, has been transformed into the absolute master and creator of them. This gives him the right to smash time, to change its direction, to make it turn back, or to stand still, to have only rain and autumn, fog and a Homeric space, or an abstract one.

Space-Nature Metaphysical Environment

Sky: clouds, lightning, Sun, Divinity, God,

Moon, stars, light, wind, UNI Saints (in the ether)

snow, rain, fog, dew OF rep. on earth, man, fate Earth: Mountains, sea, trees, POETIC Spirit of the dead and the stone, birds, rivers, SUBJECT living

Mythological gods

Cosmos of the mythological world, rich folk tradition

After these approaches we can present schematically also the structure of Kacalidas's poetic myth.

"MYTH" | "REALITY"

Nature - homeland | Society - emigration (isolation)

Security - faith | Doubt - unfaithfulness (existential search)

Return (homeland) - modesty | Denial of return - (in society) egoism

Light - dawn (daybreak) | Darkness - night

Transitory moments (optimism) | Transitory moments (pessimism)

Smile - beauty | Pain - deformity

Aspiration - hope (relying on the past) | Disappointment - hopelessness

Aspiration of the future | Lack of perspective

Nature - love | Society - death

Plenitude - existence | Privation - inexistence

Adoration of man | Adoration of the "ego"

Life | Death

Poet (poetry) - God of man | Man - Betrayal of the spirit

I write poetry - I cultivate and develop the poetic myth - I exist

The presentation and analysis of Niko Kacalidas's poetic mythology constitutes objective difficulties both in relation to the effort to periodize his work, and with the multitude of themes treated in it, with creation in two languages, and with the contradictions presented by his poetic consciousness. Here we are not speaking of the period before the 1990s, but also after this period, indeed even in the work selected by himself. As we said, this was one of the reasons that, to minimize these difficulties, we concentrated on the poetry selected by him and which certainly belongs to the post-dictatorial years.

Relying on the relationships determined above, we will try to analyse the problematic of his work, starting from two poles encountered in it and which determine the very unity of this mythology. The pole determined by the state of "privation," which is localized and expressed in a spatial concept "here-below" and temporal "the present-now."

The second pole determined by the state of "plenitude," which is mapped in a space "above" - the sky, the cosmos, but also his particular homeland of the poetic subject, and in time toward the past "then" and linked with the history of this homeland.

### 9.4 The State of Privation. The Category of Nature

Nature in Kacalidas, unlike what happens in both folk tradition and in general in the great Greek poets, Seferis, Elytis, Ritsos, appears to us as dualized according to the "poles" we mentioned above. This duality, because of the nature of the poetic consciousness, contradictory, appears to us also within the same poem, a reality encountered especially in the long poems.

In the poems written in the mother tongue, nature, unlike those written in Albanian, is more in harmony with reality and it seems that only the pole of plenitude functions. What is important to emphasize here is the fact that when the poet meditates on general ideas of a diachronic-philosophical character and when he adapts to the logic of folk creation, nature is his "ally." (In the volume “Profecia e Drurëve”, the poems

"Shpirtrat e poetëve" [The Spirits of Poets], p. 11; "Këngë Ballkanase" [Balkan Song], p. 12; "Imitacione" [Imitations], p. 17; "Malet e Ballkanit" [The Mountains of the Balkans], p. 20; "Në tre kaseta magnetofoni" [On Three Tape Cassettes], p. 30; etc.)

In the pole of the state of privation, nature appears threatening, dark, and frightening. Darkness, ice, clouds, lightning, thunderclaps give their presence with density to show the superiority and sovereignty of the "opposing" forces. Simultaneously they also give us the position of the poetic subject, who although declares that it was his wish to be far from society, feels lonely, despite his efforts to the contrary. Kacalidas does not hesitate to underline this situation from the first pages of the volume “Pagëzimi i zogjve”. In the poetic prose, "I called the birds of virginity," he informs us:

"...The traces of my blood had been lost in snow licked by the rabid wolf with howls of apocalyptic nights. It was then that I called the birds of virginity to save me from the death of forgetting with the moon's bandage of the shores and the fairy of Arian's forests. And they found drop by drop the traces of my blood spilled in snow, in the palimpsest of the roads of the northern asterism. Far from asbestos, from the oxidation of the leaf and acetylene...." Volume, “Pagëzimi i zogjve” (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 9).

The poetic subject is threatened with "death by forgetting" by savage nature. He does not question the decision to stay "far from asbestos, from the oxidation of the leaf

and acetylene...," but on the chosen road solitude was threatening. The density of solitude, manifested also as the omnipotence of the poetic unit, closed doors, the motif so frequent of the window, whether closed or open, given with perspective with direction from outside and afar, next to which the poetic subject is continuously in waiting, mark the world of the periphery in which this subject moves. A characteristic remains the fact that within the existentialist logic of the poetic subject, the latter aims to impose himself upon them and to triumph over them. So true is this, that often the quantitative and qualitative growth of the dimensions of "evil" - savage nature, serves to evidence the force of the poetic unit. This is also the essence of the dramatic and tragic in Kacalidas's work.

"Snow falls in the yard, traces the stars of the birds. / I open the evening leaf at the window with the branches of the chestnuts. / I speak with birds in the kingdom of the tree. / The white trap and the silence of lightning and the horn of thunders /.... The

cave dove paints the aureoles of the absurd and the crumbs of the ascetic. /... The woodpecker guards the status in the statues of trees. / At dawn all trees had turned into statues /..." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 19). And the poet: "...And one plank remained to me. / And this is enough, to return on one plank to my Ithaca." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 100). Or: "And I would give my spirit beside the shores and busts of trees, struck by the cymbals of thunders, blinded by lightnings." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 9). Meanwhile, he is equally conscious that salvation must be sought in nature.

"In my winter mirrors, snows the sorrow of snow. / Drop by drop drips sorrow from the vines and snowflakes. / With one snow butterfly I populated the desert of the spirit / and the kiss rustled." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 122). Me, the poet says, were saved "the birds," (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 24), "the tree" (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 28), "the stone," etc.

And it is he who in this tragic nature undertakes to save life through the tree of peace.

"...In the hail of thunders the martyrology of grass / I have gone out to the shores to save the olive trees..../ The moon stopped in my regions and drank all the wells of blood.." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 123).

Lightning and thunder appear 35 times in various poems of the volume “Pagëzimi i zogjve”. Concretely: "The cymbals of thunders.... blinded by lightnings," p. 9; "The lightning's straddle," p. 14; "The trees after thunders are the crosses of lightnings / the

birds dye their eggs with the red of lightnings," p. 19; "The thunder is in the burial of the earth," p. 23; "The birds of lightnings," p. 26; "They weigh upon the roses of the blood of lightnings," p. 31; "The cypress tops clashed with the yataghans of thunders," p. 33; "The amphora of thunders," p. 34; "In the puddles pissed by the downpour of thunders upon the knolls of lightnings," p. 34; "A lightning tattoo," p. 51; "The throne of lightning in the bone of stone," p. 56; "From the cracking of the moon the snakes of thunders creaked / the snakes of vines," p. 61. "In the knighthood of autumn, the mittens hold the lightnings," p. 66; "All night the wind breaks the buds of thunders /.... Overturned Pinelas dyed with the blood of thunders," p. 76; "There are kisses - as much as the flashing of a thunder," p. 79; "The burnt photographs of thunder flashes," p. 92; "The thunders bit the tail of the stars," p. 112; "Thunder of filigree," p. 113; "The lightning's knives flash," p. 117; "The late autumn of lightnings," p. 122; "Beyond the cypress nailed a lightning," p. 122; "Blood dripped on the cross of thunders," p. 123;

"Under the hung slabs of clouds I skewered the crow with the knife of lightning," p. 130; "Clouds skewered with knives of lightnings," p. 131; "Skewer the electrons of thunders to make me ash in hearths of lightnings," p. 141; "Riding plague in the monkhood of clouds / pushes with the banners of thunders, / treads with the spurs of the hooves of lightnings / the tiles of the roof," p. 154; "The crested thunders danced upon crests," p. 155; "They were not snakes, thunders were being skewered with scythes of lightnings," p. 160; "Blood dripped upon the calcified stones of thunders, / compasses of thunders," p. 169; "Snakes of lightnings," p. 187; "The thunders nailed silences deep into the marrow," p. 195; "A noose on the neck at the turn of a thunder," p. 201; "...in waiting for the thunder's sickle," p. 199.

The night and the moon, alongside thunders and downpours, are characteristics of this state of privation. In the volume “Pagëzimi i zogjve”, the word "moon" is used 190 times without counting repetitions. We reflect the cases of usage, as with the words "thunder" and "lightning," to prove the great degree of repetition of the same word, to evidence the place that several elements and details occupy in N. Kacalidas's creation, as well as to see the wide range of usage of metaphor, personification, and metonymy by him, as an effort to turn them into symbols of the subject and of his poetic mythology. Such words are also: "tree," "stone," "sea," the names of several flowers, etc.

"The moon's bandage," p. 9; "The moon's suicide," p. 10; "The moon's St. Mary," p. 15; "The moon's udder," "The moonlit forests," "The moon's shrine," "The moon's

sinners," "The moon's clutches," "The moon's birds," p. 16; "The moon's eggs," p. 17; "The moon's stone," "The moon's baptistery," "The moon's womb," "The moon's palm," "The moon's tail," p. 18; "The moon's lantern," p. 20; "The moon's globe," "The moon's elbow," p. 21; "The moon's basin," p. 22; "The moon's sheet," p. 25; "The moon's misericord," p. 26; "The moon's surveillance," p. 27; "(I covered) with a chip of moonlight," p. 28; "The moon's window," p. 29; "(The polyphony) in the moon's cassette," "The diffused Oracle," p. 33; "The moon's cadence," p. 34; "(The asparagus) the moon's path," p. 39; "The moon's bandage"; "The moon's bosom," p. 47; "The moon's nest," "The epiphany of the moon," "The moon's roof," "The moon's tiles," "The moon's altar," "The diffused one," "The moon's house," "The moonlit nights," "The moon's milk," "The moon's eyelash," "The cracking of the moon," "The moon's

helmsman," "The moon's emblem," "The moon's key," "The moon's leopards," "The moon's valley," "The moon's silence," "The moon's nag," "The moon's sanctity," "The moon's path," "The moon face," "The moon's coin," "The moon's cradle," "The moon's eggs," "The moon's bandage," "The hungry moon," p. 86; "The moon's stalagmite," p. 96; "The moon's eclipse," p. 97; "The moon's horn," p. 98; "The moon's sickle," p. 102; "The moon's temple," "The moon's balcony," p. 135; "The moon's misericord," p. 117; "The moon's disk," "The moon's sieve," "The oscillations of the moon," "The moon's clog," "The moon's coffin," p. 141; "The moon's timpani," p. 147; "The moon as helmet," "The moon as shrine," "The moon's stairs," p. 156; "The moon as conductor," p. 157; "The moon's chaise longue," "The moon's skulls," p. 158; "The moon's bib," p. 159; "The moon's soup," p. 162; "The moon as hat," p. 165; "The wedded moon," p. 172; "The moon's nape," p. 175; "The moon's cup," p. 182; "The moon's saucers," p. 186; "The metaphysics of the moon," p. 187; "The moon's figs," "The moon's tail," p. 188; "The moon's shreds," p. 190; "The twenty-year-old moon," "The mythical moon," p. 191; "The eaten moon," p. 192; "The moon's knife," "The moon's head," p. 203; "The moon's sickle," p. 209; "The moon's distaff," p. 215; "The moon's monocle," p. 216; "The moon's abortion," p. 229; "The moon's miter," p. 229.

In relation to the moon, the sun is "peripheral" and "unable" to intervene in the action of the poetic myth. The presence of the sun occurs to make comparisons of the form of folk tradition, "sun face," "beautiful as the sun," etc., or to be used simply as a reference system, "Place me beside the sea, facing the sun," “Pagëzimi i zogjve” (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 141); "The sun's nest in shelter with April buds" (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 28). Even when it happens that the sun has a more active position, this does not stem from

the nature of the sun, but from the will, or the relationship of the poetic subject with the sun, which is understood to stand above it. Exceptions are the cases when his poetic mythology is linked with Cyprus.

A characteristic is also the fact that "the moon" as a myth-forming element in the poetry written in the Greek language is excessively limited. On the contrary, "the sun" "increases its participation" as an active and acting element in Kacalidas's poetic narrative.

The same fate as the moon is shared also by other details such as "tree" and "stone." The stone has taken in the poems in the Greek language the form of "rock," since in

Greek the phonetic aspect of the word is finer. Enigmatic remains the reason that forced Kacalidas to withdraw from the active fund of the vocabulary of his poetic myth the element "tree," used in Albanian with the term "dru-ri."

### 9.5 The Category: Society-Man

Kacalidas, starting from the fact of the placement of his poetic self at the center of his own cosmos, overturns the model of Elytis, Livadhitisi, Ritsos, but also of Çukas regarding the role and responsibilities of man in relation to the world. The unity and existence of Elytis's cosmos, for example, is structured on the basis of the reciprocal dependence of nature with man and society. It determines human morality and activity according to the model of nature's values and links this, as far as consequences are concerned, with the future of this cosmos.

Precisely, this overturning does not allow Kacalidas to correctly solve the overcoming of the contradiction individual-society, which presupposes the manner in which the desirable harmonization between the principle that demands the priority of the general interest and collective eudemonism (happiness as the final aim of every human action) and the demand for self-perfection and individual eudemonism will be achieved. Unlike the poets we just mentioned, but also unlike P. Çukas and A. Zarballa, Kacalidas does not solve it, not even as a painful dramatic process of awareness that leads from clash to unity and to the harmonization of individual and social values, in a passage from individual bio-matic experience to collective-social experience. He solves it as individual will that comes as a consequence of the domination of the instinct of individual sovereignty.

"...The wretched house, the extinguished fire / denial from the blessing of the ash. / The purse frozen at the window. / The vine trellis in the yard creaked in its bones. / The house hanging on its ribs creaked its beams. / The grandmother by the hearth creaked her skulls. / The tree taken out to the hearth creaked the marrow of fire. / Death that occupied the threshold in the yard, froze from snow. / The witches fogged the shores of the rivers, buried the chestnuts' nape of the dead. / The clouds skewered with knives of lightnings..." “Pagëzimi i zogjve” (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 130).

It can easily be noted that if nature is wild, threatening, and dark, man in the mythology of the poetic subject is peripheral, unfortunate, deprived. "Some old men"

"....They sleep in the parks of August with grass between their fingers /... Their sleep enters the shreds of the earth to revive the blood / In the pits of hunger there is no room for graves. / The crows shrieked at the ominous telegrams of the leaves, the necrologue pages of autumn." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 91).

Other dimensions are created by this relationship when the poet becomes aware that his "cosmos" is being abandoned and he knows very well that without people this "cosmos" has no value whatsoever.

"...The branches leafed out over graves / cannot even manage to bury the remains. / On the 11th they will escort Jani and on the 12th Andron / on the 12th, ten old men with a stretcher will take uncle Vasil / with 3 we will transport barba Marko (his son had no visa, it was said on the cell phones). /... And later will come the turn of papa Theodhoriu, but who / will bury the others?" (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 163).

This is one of the poems of a particular style. It resembles a reportage, or a report. He sufficed with the refraction of time, within one day. And it sufficed so much that the "report" conveyed with an eroding emotion the drama up to tragedy of the privation of a community from life.

Understandably, the poet does not identify himself with this category of people. On the contrary, he underlines even thus the "ego" of his autarkic and charismatic self, which aims with the description of the privative state to arouse the urge for non-abandonment. The poet will return to this motive often to reach a peak with "the ballad of the sullen mountain."

"The dead will rise. They will take the road of return to their homes / but where will they find the living?" the poet asks to seek hope in hopelessness. Below he himself

states that the glass of hope is neither half full nor half empty: "With three candles lit and three extinguished in the howls of the wind.... / The dead will rise because my mountains smoked sorrow." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 94).

Abandonment gives even darker colours to privation in the poem "Hieroret e gurit" [The Hierophants of Stone], p. 105. Even the gods turn their backs and abandon him, and society treacherously "played the ignorant."

### 9.6 The Category: Metaphysical Forces

The view hitherto gave us the possibility to approach the category of metaphysical forces that act or interact with the poetic subject, or are "under the power" of the latter. This means that in Kacalidas the metaphysical action is not linked only with the sky, with paradise, or with another world. Metaphysical factors and their action are constituent parts of his cosmos. He recognizes the role of "creator" of this cosmos and of the poetic subject himself. In this category are included as such factors that act in the sky: God, the saints, etc.; on earth: the birds, the tree, the stone, the spirit, etc. They are factors that act in space, according to the up-down relationship, and in time according to the relationship past-present. In this space we will place also the gods, or the metaphysics of mythology, which as time of action belongs to the past.

From the determinations hitherto two important moments result for us: First, the poetic subject widens the range of factors of metaphysical action. Second, their action is not independent of the will of this subject. In relation to this we add still that their individuality, or their actions, are not given, constant, and consequent. They change up to the contradictory. What is important here is the fact that within the logic of the mythology of Kacalidas's cosmos they are demythologized. This, we think, is the most interesting aspect of this category, and we will examine it in detail. It becomes interesting because the poet follows the same line also in his attitude toward classical Greek mythology and folk tradition.

1. Kacalidas does not support either the biblical line of the genesis of the world or that of the materialists. He follows his own line, that of particular natural elements, but different, which in this mission are animated. He tells us that:

"In the beginning were the birds and the spirit of the birds," “Pagëzimi i zogjve” (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 22);

"In the beginning were the birds and the amaranth of the spirit walked upon the river of Lithisia," (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 35);

"In the beginning was the stone and the throne of lightning in the bone of stone," (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 56);

"In the beginning must have been the trees. / In the beginning must have been autumn," (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 67);

"The first is the sun in the archangel temple." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 48); etc.

"In the beginning was the kiss, you told me, in the beginning was the kiss," “Profecitë e drurëve” (Kacalidas, 1998c, p. 96). In the poems in the Greek language as the beginning of the creation of the universe were the rocks and their roots, the mountain, the sea. "In the beginning were the rocks and their roots / in the cracks of the earth and the sea," (Kacalidas, 2003, p. 165).

What makes his concept of "genesis" interesting is the fact that, although he does not find the source of "genesis" in the holy spirit ("the word," Kadare says), still he starts from "the one," a unit, but that belongs to the material world. Also, after every material unit as we noted above, follows a series of other factors, different, but material and spiritual. Thus, in the bird line follow the stone, the amaranth, the constellations of the stars, the day, the night, etc. In the Sun line follow the archangel, St. Nicholas, the grandfather of the seas, and after him the grandmother, Olga, the dove that sleeps with the angels. In the stone line follow the tree, the blood of the dove, the poet's fist, the code of faith.

But the poet tells us, in the spirit of whichever of these factors is present the spirit of the poet. "...in the spirit of the stone and in / the spirit of the tree, / in the spirit of the wind and in the spirit of the birds, / the spirit of the poets will have entered, necessarily /..." (Kacalidas, n.d., p. 22).

This contradictory, or multiple, position regarding "genesis" takes on another profile when he seeks it in a dialectic between water and spirit:

"...The thunder is in the burial of the earth. / The winds dwell in the burial of fire, the waters dwell in the burial of the winds / The earth is in the death of the waters / The wandering of the spirits turns into waters / The immortality of the waters is in the roots of the earth / From the root of the earth gurgle the life-giving waters / From the gurgling

waters are born the spirits. / From the metempsychosis of the spirits the metaphor of the birds. / And together we exchange our spirits / And from our ash is the resurrection of the stone and the resurrection of the grass. / From our spirit the root of the stone germinates / From our spirit the root of the tree germinates. /" And the opposite: "from fire, from fire, from fire... / from the river, from the river, from the river... / From the bird, from the bird, from the bird..." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 23).

2. The poetic subject demythologizes the role of the god/s and to put them in the service of his own cosmos he treats them as his collaborators, of his positions and his aims. This demythologization has two features. First, in their birth he gives primacy to nature. "...The trees crucified on the Golgotha of stone. / The birds moistened their lips with drops of dew. / The woodpecker pecked the nail for the liberation of the trees. / Jesus rises from the crosses of the tree." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 15). In the poem "Krishti u ngjall" [Christ Is Risen] he opposes the religious formula of the resurrection of Christ, as determinative also for the resurrection of nature, spring. "I saw the lilac's bud and the cherry's leaf. / And the bird that came out of a sea shell / and prepared for the sermons and baptisms of the birds. / In the spiritualism of the leaf dew washed the glasses of the birds. / From the springs descended the murmuring monk for the psalms / of the rivers /" (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 42). The poet announces to us with this parallelism not expressed to the end, but understood from the title, that it is religion that put the resurrection of Christ in the heart of spring and not the opposite.

The poet ironizes the biblical myth according to which Christ managed to multiply bread and wine and as a consequence it sufficed for ten times the people present. In folk tradition it found place in expressions and proverbs, "bread and salt and heart," "where it does not reach it abounds," "the good word suffices," etc. In the poem "Një bukë e Krishtit" [A Bread of Christ] in the volume “Fati i amarandos” (Kacalidas, 2003, p. 70), he says: "...A bread of Christ divided on the eyebrow of the mountain / And they ate. And left. / And all were satiated gnawing the moon. And all / the uneaten at crossroads/."

Second: The poetic subject considers it a moral right to put even the holy trinity in function of his own cosmos, "in the name of the father, the son, and the holy spirit." He changes it according to the situations created in particular parts of his poetic mythology. "In the name of water, mud, and fire," “Pagëzimi i zogjve” (Kacalidas,

2006b, p. 24); "In the name of the father, the son, the precious bird..." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 21); "In the name of the stone, in the name of the tree, in the name of the father," (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 124); or the formula of the religious prayer "Our Father who art in heaven" he paraphrases by adding "and now descended to the shores," (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 199), leaving once again to be understood in all sorts of ways that the heavenly function of divinity has no meaning without the link with the earth and his own cosmos, which is unique. The same position is held also by the spirits of the dead. (The poem "Fise Eliziane" [Elizian Races], p. 172.)

Third: The gods, whether pagan or not, have ordinary human behavior. "The fires of the forests scorch the mysticism of leafing. / On the plain Zeus has brought out his boils and scratches them for the fires. / Pan's beard burns on Hermes's back. / And Artemis with the slain deer, thrown over her shoulders, as if to escape the fire?.." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 192). "...in your armpits that smell of the billy goat's manhood" (To God). (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 205). "On the shores Poseidon growled /... He scratched his beard on the shores as if seeking something /..." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 150). "Now after the traces of the purse in snow walked Jesus. St. Mary in search of her son. / The white Christ with snowflake will wash the slippers of sin /.." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 175). "In the great hall I heard the gods / conversing in the evenings with the goddess, Olga, / my grandmother. / I heard what they whispered in Nikola's ear, my grandfather, the deity of the sea...." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 158).

Fourth: The gods are equal, "take orders" from the poetic subject, and always in the service of the community, or are "under" his protection.

"Saturn, do not swallow me for I am a chromosome brother with Zeus," (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 178); "How could I save, I wonder, the gods, how could I save the forests? (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 192). "He will urgently take the Olympic 'Zeus' to come, for the transplant of my heart /... He will urgently take the Olympic 'Zeus' to come for the transplant of my ribs. /... Only you stand on your feet, let your spring gurgle"..." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 178). "The only one, I, the lion, born in July, roar at Zeus..." ("The Zodiac of Zeus," (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 190).) "...I am not naive, Zeus, I told him. I myself know everything. You have me, said god Zeus. If Saturn who sleeps afar, in the ribs, provokes you, enter the hierophancy of the stone. Deceive him..." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 105).

### 9.7 The State of Plenitude

The relationship with metaphysics constitutes also an indicator of the plenitude of the poetic subject toward myth. (While not excluding the state of privation, since the plenitude that he aims to achieve with this type of relationship is in fact unattainable, remains within the framework of desire and only feeds his egocentrism, since in the end it will be accompanied by disappointment.)

Plenitude, as we said, is embodied in the absence of duality of the unit of the poetic self and parallelly in the positive harmony of the presence of nature with it. A meaningful case is the poem "Ostracizmi" [Ostracism], (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 210). The poet states that he was "banished from the shores" for being a "crazy vagabond after the sun and the girls of the sea." He left and left the shores his name "written with sea pebbles" and found rest passported among the stars as their inhabitant, reigning over the mountains.

In Kacalidas, plenitude appears also as an expression of his will to be everywhere, to control and direct even the sun in its mission:

"With the secret bastard key of the sun, / I unlock with my bleeding fingers the heart of the rose. / And I keep the secret bastard key of the sun. / For only I have the secret, bastard, key of the sun! / While I have locked the bolt of evening / and no daisy has eaten me the wolves." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 204).

Plenitude is meaningful when the poetic subject manages to establish a harmony between nature and the individual or society. For example:

"The bosom with the virgin's down and the pomegranate big-bellied in the adoption of the rib. / The cymbal strikes the shore's chick graduated. / The houses lost in the lilac's leafing. / The shores supported on the jasmine's bosom. Beside our houses the arrow of dreams whispering in the ear of the stars. / April step by step conquers the shores of grass. / The nuances of chlorophyll poured through the slabs of the yard." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 142).

Having in mind the folk tradition of giving human traits through natural elements, Kacalidas manages in the poem "Imitacione" [Imitations], Volume “Profecia e drurëve”

(Kacalidas, 1998c, p. 17), to take from nature everything that is beautiful and to adapt it to the traits of man (the poetic unit) on the basis, of course, of an external similarity (metaphor).

"The rainbow arched and became my eyebrow. And it dripped on my eyelash / the amber of dew. / The rocks burst... and became my forehead. And became my head. / The Sun came out and told me: 'I will become your eye' /.... But the spirit and the heart my mother gave me."...

The unfolding by him of the values of the traditional hero who is ready to sacrifice himself for others, or in the name of beliefs and ideals, of the cosmos that the poetic subject himself created, are indicators of the plenitude of the poetic unit, a consequence of the essential harmonization of his interests with nature, society, against factors that aim for the opposite.

"They said for the threshold of night St. Bartholomew. /... They said we should remove our names, tear off the door plaques. /.... With more visible letters on the door, I rewrote my name. / Let them crucify me. Let them mark me on this night of howling. / And let them say for the threshold of night St. Bartholomew." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 211).

The motive of his death as sublime sacrifice in the name of this harmony and of his own cosmos is dense and multi-planar in Kacalidas's poetry. The same aim is served also by his "non-death," or the resurrection of the poetic subject. In the name of this logic, the poet in the poem "Ekehiria," asks the gods that the "sun" too be sacrificed "for the sake of peace." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 176).

And nevertheless, the state of plenitude does not constitute a distinguishing feature for the poet. It is not constant and develops within the state of privation, which is promoted as disappointment, but also as impossibility that the reality of his cosmos constitutes a challenge against reality, as he manages with the unfolding of the poetic mythology of this cosmos.

### 9.8 The Demythologization of Mythology

We said that, initially, folk tradition, folklore, and then cultivated literature, like Greco-Roman classical literature, found in ancient Greek mythology a structure of archetypes

with timeless aesthetic values capable of being referred to and re-taken at any time as a possibility for the growth of the quality of aesthetic values. Equally true is that only with rare exceptions have demythologizing attempts of this mythology been made. Despite originating from positive aims, to evidence that repetitions under today's conditions of the tragic and epic quality of this mythology have the value of a stale comedy, these attempts were ill-fated.

Kacalidas, apparently convinced that his cosmos is worthy of a comparative similarity with this mythology and that his poetic subject is equally capable of twisting it to demythologization or deconstruction, dares also in this direction, as a challenge in itself. He chose three ways:

First: The heroes and archetypes of ancient mythology are turned into characters of his own poetic mythology. Kacalidas is not very interested in the message that the heroes and mythological archetypes bear and transmit. He is interested simply in one, or several elements, indeed only the name. As such they are "loaded" with action in the time and space of Kacalidas's Cosmos and in the service of messages often uncoded, ordinary, or as an aim in itself.

"It was then that I called the birds of virginity to save me from the death of forgetting with the bandage of the moon of the shores and the fairy of Arian's forests." “Pagëzimi i zogjve” (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 9). "A purse on the crest of the horse mad after Aphrodite," “Pagëzimi i zogjve” (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 21); "On the seashore I will die, like the Heraclid in the solitude of the mound with the shells," (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 24); "To hold in my fists Icarus and Daedalus" (for with elastic bands he shot birds, that fell to earth), (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 45). Often it seems that the entire poem is built so that this link of the poetic unit with mythological elements is noticed, or "they are asked" to line up in the poem without any cause, or meaningful link, indeed not even formal similarity.

"My days I counted which are as the flashing of a lightning, /... From under the sheep's belly, I come out of Odysseus's cave. /... I raised the Cyclopean stone to muddy the seas in spite of Poseidon." “Pagëzimi i zogjve” (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 79). Such is also the poem "Qëni i Itakës" [The Dog of Ithaca], p. 162. The poet exploits precisely this mythic element to describe a dog no different from the dogs of all times.

Second: The poet changes the essence of the myth, or the myth itself, or devalues it: "I was one of Odysseus's and the sirens saved me," (!!) “Pagëzimi i zogjve” (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 116). In the poem "Dyshimet e Odiseut" [The Doubts of Odysseus], p. 138, the poet links Odysseus's return to Ithaca with the number of trees. The doubt that they might be only a thousand makes him ask himself: "Yesterday I encountered at sea the storms for Ithaca with Poseidon himself, / only for the thousand trees of Ithaca?" It is seen clearly that demythologization is not linked simply with the change of content, but more with the essence of the mythological hero, which was

alertness and clarity of thought, determination for the noble aim of returning to the homeland with every kind of sacrifice. Also, the element chosen to deheroize Odysseus, "wood," plays the role of the key in mythology and in the continuity of folk culture. The wood, the old olive tree of Odysseus, constitutes the means of his recognition with Penelope. The same detail is used by the folk ballad of recognition to realize the reunion of the newlyweds, separated for many years, according to several variants, because of a war, a service to the king, or emigration.

Such poems we can mention also, "Odiseu" [Odysseus], “Pagëzimi i zogjve” (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 100); Also in this poem, Kacalidas leaves aside the characteristic identity of Odysseus of mythology, which was action, vicissitudes, and dangers, as part of the wealth and values of his return to Ithaca. Kacalidas tries to justify the passivity of his Odysseus by evidencing only one element, that of the return to Ithaca "even with one plank." The same reasoning has value also for the poem "Muret e Trojës" [The Walls of Troy], “Pagëzimi i zogjve” (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 136), in which the poet, in the name of evidencing the beauty of Helen, sacrifices not simply the true reasons of this war, but also the degree of intellect of those who planned both the attack and the defense and consequently the epic quality of this war. The demythologization of the essence of this mythological war, which in fact encompasses the logic of all secular wars, occurs within the logic of the egocentrism of the poetic unit of Kacalidas, expressed in his regret that he was not the builder of the walls of Troy. In the poem "Tundimi i Odiseut" [The Temptation of Odysseus], “Pagëzimi i zogjve” (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 74), demythologization is the expression of the long-standing duality of the poetic subject himself. This is noticed more if we have in mind the fact that mythological heroes (and in later folk creation), the more so Odysseus,

take upon themselves without equivocation all the action and continuously give a positive solution for the collective they represent.

Third: Through the re-taking of motives or poetic myths of other poets regarding this mythology, to arrive at his own myths, which, we think, never reach the levels of the predecessors.

In the poem "Leopardi," “Pagëzimi i zogjve” (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 74), the poet's motto is: "How many times have you awakened me with your cries. / Beastly guard that sleeps within me." In terms of the philosophy of unity as a consequence of opposites this is a truth. But, if we have in mind the poem of the Greek poet K. Kavafis about

Ithaca, he decodifies the message of Odysseus's journey to Ithaca, to increase its values by codifying this journey in function of a philosophical message. By synthesizing mythological elements participating in Odysseus's journey to Ithaca, Kavafis tells us that on your road you will not encounter sorceresses and naiads, if you did not have them within yourself. Kacalidas with the same code of Kavafis tells us that evil coexists with man as something necessary. For Kavafis the evil that becomes part of man depends on man himself and his will. For Kavafis it is a social product, whereas for Kacalidas a biological trait of the individual.

The demythologization of mythological myth in the poem "Kali i drunjtë" [The Wooden Horse], “Pagëzimi i zogjve” (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 137) is linked with the relationship established between the people within the walls (of a city) and their waiting up to impatience for the wooden horse to enter even by destroying the walls. This poem is a parallel with the poem of K. Kavafis, "Waiting for the Barbarians." Kavafis's philosophy sees the coming of the barbarians as "a kind of solution" for a society in total degradation. According to Kavafis, this is the reason the barbarians are awaited by all the structures of the state. The waiting for the wooden horse by the defenders of Troy in Kacalidas's poem has no link with mythological reality. On the other hand, the poet does not present any reason to justify the action. "Would it ever enter by demolishing walls, since we melted waiting in temples?"... In the concrete case the demythologization is very ill-fated because the relationships of the defenders of Troy with the wooden horse make Kacalidas's new poetic myth negligible.

In concluding this approach, we want to emphasize that this manner of creating poetic myths, starting from fables, or the philosophy of the creations of other poets, folk tradition, etc., is a norm for Kacalidas. Therefore, it is considered correct what is said, that when one reads poetry in the Albanian language by N. Kacalidas, one is reminded of Greek poets such as Seferis, Elytis, Ritsos, etc., and vice versa. When one reads poetry in the Greek language one is reminded of Kadare, Agolli, Podrimja, etc. He justifies his "originality" or creative individuality with three ways. First, he adapts it to his own poetic self by establishing relationships of the first person. Second, he displaces the myth to the geography of his own Cosmos. Third, he clothes it with his own characteristic animistic and surreal figurativeness.

### 9.9 Relationships with Folk Tradition

If we exclude the creation of the myth of the flower, or of the "Amarandos" grass in the Greek-language poetry volume “Fati i Amarandos”, a marked indifference of the poetic self is noted in relation to this tradition. Or more precisely, Kacalidas maintains an "appropriating" position toward these values in function of his own cosmos. These elements with a stable status and proven aesthetic values in the areas of folk tradition do not serve in continuity and in a natural manner as coherent structures also for the mythology of Kacalidas's cosmos. "Christ was crucified in Leshinica and all the plain to the edges of the dusks / to bring out to my Golgotha /..." the poet says, (Kacalidas, 1998c, p. 136); or, "From there began the root of the sun and of lightning. From there began the root of grass," (Kacalidas, 1998c, p. 99).

The aforementioned relationships underline the fact that Kacalidas's cosmos has gained an overpopulated brilliance by appropriating all the achievements of human culture known to the poet, but as an aim in itself.

Words, expressions, verses, motives, etc., of folk literary tradition become part of the articulation of discourse in the poetic myth of this cosmos. This happens more, as we said, when the poet expresses himself in the Greek language and more concretely when he uses the characteristic folk verse, with or without rhyme. The worldview of folk tradition, either is rare in Kacalidas's poetic mythology, or is treated according to his own poetic models and aims of the poetic self, or by deforming, demythologizing, or treating one-sidedly those elements.

From the elements of nature we clarified, for example, the role of the tree, the bird, the sun, etc., in the organization of the folk worldview, in the treatment and correct solution of the relationships individual-nature-culture-society, in the determination of the state of plenitude and privation, of metaphysics, etc.

It is true, on the other hand, that the tree and the bird (as well as the stone) occupy a place of honor in Kacalidas's poetry. Poetry volume titles such as “Profecia e drurëve”, or “Pagëzimi i zogjve”, speak clearly of this. The tree and the bird gain the trait of the creator of the world, of the taker and giver of prophecies, of the communicator with the sky and the earth, with divinity and spirit, become saviors of the poetic subject, but do not establish the relationships that these two elements have in the cosmos of folk tradition. "Your black eyes. Wonderfully black. Wonderfully magical. The heavenly

temple, (I fallen upside down in them as if from an ancient pagan prophecy / kneeling before Dodona.)" (Kacalidas, n.d., p. 40).

We said that the tree in folk tradition, but also in cultivated literature (The Plane Tree, in Kadare), is not linked with the trait of prophecy, but with the link with the earth and resistance. In Kacalidas the essential trait of the tree is prophecy.

The symbol of the link with the earth and resistance has been delegated to the stone. "Here we positioned ourselves. / The stone of my plain has the shape of my face. / Here we slept. Upon stones. And the moon's flash fixed my face in the negative of the stone /..." (Kacalidas, 1998c, p. 118). (Ismail Kadare in the preface of the volume “Pagëzimi i zogjve”, considers the stone an element of Albanian cosmogony, as is the mountain.)

Here is the moment to emphasize also an interesting phenomenon that occurs with the poetic self of Kacalidas. We said above that elements such as the tree or the bird occupy a place of honour in Kacalidas's poetry. These two elements we singled out as among the most essential in Greek folk tradition with direct links with the Oracle of Dodona. The place of honour for them Kacalidas leaves in the poetry written in the Albanian language (!!). Their activation in the corpus of poetry in the mother tongue is almost unnoticeable. This constitutes an intermediation of the poet to transmit to the poetry in the Albanian language not simply two poetic elements so important in Greek folk tradition, but also a poetic mythology raised on the basis of them. The

"transmission" in Albanian poetry of the genetic tradition of the poet (from the ethnic viewpoint) gives us the argument to underline his success in Albanian poetry.

From criticism in the Albanian language it has been said that it is not known which is the poet's primary language, but by comparing around 53 poems that are found simultaneously in both languages (volumes “Fati i amarandos” and “Pagëzimi i zogjve”) it is easily noticed, the poet's freedom in the use of the Greek language. The poetry in the mother tongue manifestly shows fluency and originality. Nevertheless, when the poet writes in Albanian, rightly he is considered a worthy cultivator of the Albanian language.

To see better the mechanism of the refraction of folk tradition in his poetry let us analyse two examples.

1. Let us take first the poem "Monogjirja" [The Monobreast], (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 83). The title is a translation from the Greek μονοβίζα, which means a woman with one breast. Monoviza, according to the legend in the folk tradition of the Greek Minority, is identified with the woman who came out of the sea, burned Phoenicia, and destroyed everything around. Folk tradition thus mythicized the destructive act of the Illyrian queen, Teuta, identified with the greatest destruction ever to occur. The destructive abilities were linked with her single breast full, instead of milk, with poison, and everything that was sprinkled with this poison was destroyed from the foundations. In the myth of the folk legend no explanation is given as to why the destructive woman remained with one breast.

The poet, relying on the semantics of the Greek word, one breast, creates around this word a poem with deeply positive loads and without any link with the myth of the legend. The poet says: Our Father who art in heaven... / why do you tease the beauty of breasts? / Now one breast remained for me. / The other the knives of pain cut off. / The other the erinyes took away. / From drinking I drink the milk of the spirit. / And the mother mono-breast remained with her one breast sanctified. / But the other breast was thrown to the dogs in a cancer ward / or in the morgue the doctors keep it for student expeditions? / Now one breast remained for me, where I lean late at night / I eavesdrop, will the cut breast ever grow again? /

Our Father who art in heaven..., / Why did you leave me the mono-breast mother, / why do you tease the beauty of breasts?

In the Greek-language variant of this poem, (Kacalidas, 2003, p. 83) the poet preserves the line of the legend's myth. Indeed, he chooses for the verse the traditional 15-syllable in double stanzas, with kissed rhyme. This gives the poem a greater affinity with the legend.

In the Albanian variant, the originality in translation from the Greek of the word "monoviza" was enough, preserving in Albanian the same manner of word formation as in Greek (single-mono + breast-vizi), to create a poem. The impression relies on the "orgy" of the poetic self against God as the causer of this fate, as well as on the lament for the cut breast, at times for the mother's milk and at times for the eroticism of breasts. Faced with both variants the poet reveals to us the lack of his exigency toward folk creation.

2. "Τα λιόκλαδα του Κλήδονα" [The Olive Branches of Klidona] is the title of a poem in the Greek language, in the volume “Fati i Amarandos” (Kacalidas, 2003, p. 125), which is linked directly with one of the most interesting folk traditions in the summer season. It is placed on the day of the Vernal Equinox. It is the day when the Sun reaches the peak of its heat and maximizes the hours of the day in comparison with the night. According to tradition, on this so hot day that coincides with the feast of St. John, great fires are lit to burn all dry things. In the practical aspect it was believed that this helped in cleansing the agricultural land of bad weeds and consequently in increasing the fertility of the land.

In the metaphysical aspect, folk tradition expresses a great concern because precisely on this culminating day of the sun's activity upon the earth, the sunspots are noticed, the weak side of the sun, which is believed that if these spots grow, the Sun will lose its warming and life-giving ability. Precisely at the peak of the sun's warming activity, the people thought of winter. The lit fires, according to tradition, would help the Sun at this critical and transitory point not to lose its energies. On this day girls and boys burn in these fires byzylikets (herb bundles) placed in a braid to protect themselves from the burning and disease-full sun of March. So great were these fires made that when the people see any great fire, they say: "It has become St. John's."

This day, in the temporal aspect, is a transitory moment. According to tradition, at every such temporal moment (New Year, Easter, the change of months, of seasons) one must be careful and try one's luck. Young girls rise very early in the morning and go to take "unspoken" water from the mountain springs, before being caught by the dawn's light, and bring it home as luck together with olive branches or laurel.

The fortune-telling tradition of summer comes from antiquity. The word, Κλήδονα, in ancient Greek has the meaning of chance, omen, which is found in the sound clothing of the word. As a verb it has the meaning of throwing the dice, or provoking fate.

In Kacalidas's poem these elements are present, but they do not manage to turn into aesthetic values this metaphysics of folk tradition, which stems from the dialectic of nature. He suffices simply with the descriptive character to evidence the fable of his poetic myth hidden in the reading of fate by the girls according to their desires, or the idea that fate is found in man's will and is not given or unknown.

As a conclusion to this analysis we can say that Kacalidas's models for as correct a relationship as possible with folk creation have no link with the models chosen by

Solomos, Palamas, Seferis, Ritsos, Kalvos, Sikelianos, (we mention names of Greek poets with whom he has a spiritual contact and communication, as well as influence in his poetry). They have relied on the models of traditional folk creation which at the center have the nature-culture relationship as a cosmogonic relationship also for the new Greek culture. In the elements of nature, the Sun and light, within their contradiction, are considered: Elytis, "The head of the poetic cosmos is the Sun"; Seferis, "Greek light, I believe, has a function of the embodiment of divine values in man" (essay v. 2, p. 55, Athens, 1974). Palamas, Light evidences as the ruling category of nature clarity and purity, etc.

Kacalidas, comparatively with other natural elements, keeps his distance from both light and the Sun. "In the palms of the amaranth / the sun knelt / to suck the food of immortality /..." (Kacalidas, 2003, p. 73). In his poetry the main place is occupied by the moon and the stars, then darkness, daybreak, and then thunders. In the work of God for every day of the week, according to Kacalidas, light comes sixth. On the first day it was the turn of the rocks, on the second thirst, on the third hunger, on the fourth

the roots, on the fifth pain, on the sixth light, and on the seventh it was his, the poetic subject's.

Contradiction

Kacalidas's poetry is characterized by two basic poles. One is nature, the other the consciousness of the poetic subject.

The first impression created by contact with his poetry is a small world of nature, mapped in his homeland Leshinica. The poetic sensitivity concentrates on the infinite details from "the life of nature," in such a way that it intimizes its side and superficial appearance to allow the reader to see his poetic subject with the eye of the primordial creator. From this viewpoint his poetry is characterized by a multi-planar contradiction, which stems from the lack of an organic system of its constituent elements as well as from the varied "ideological" messages of the poems.

Here once again we want to note that the same natural elements continuously place in space and time different metaphorical and metonymic relationships, at times exclusive, at times harmonious, at times oppositional and at times negating. That is, they undertake at times positive-approving functions and at times negative-negating functions. And this situation, understandably, does not stem from the internal

contradiction of every element as part of the contradictions that ensure the unity of the universe and embodied with such naturalness in folk creation. It has its source in the justification of the immediate aim of the poetic subject and in the contradiction between this momentary aim come as influence, as inspiration, as idea, or as image, of the declared aim for his poetic cosmos and "the other cosmos."

We have tried to make a classification of the contradictory nature of N. Kacalidas's "poetic universe." The classification necessarily accompanies the statement that this contradictory nature should be taken neither only as an emetic, or antivalue, nor only as a value.

Contradiction within the verse: «Άκαμπτος ο Σίσυφος, / κυρτός στην ακαμψιά του» "Unbending Sisyphus, / hunched in his unbendingness /..." (Kacalidas, 2003, p. 65). This becomes a cause for a logical contradiction and a source for other contradictions.

"...The hills of the amaranth / dinosaurs that scratch their horns at the stars." (Kacalidas, 2003, p. 73).

Contradiction between verses: «…Αρχαίο πένθος των κυπαρισσιών… / χρησμούς ανθών και νυκτωδίες και λιβανίσματα /…» "Ancient mourning of the cypresses... / prophecies of flowers and nightness and incense?" (Kacalidas, 2003, p. 89).

Contradiction within a poem: It is of two kinds, with positive effects (of the type - the waters flow and the springs, / the children run to see the bride) and with negative effects (of the type - see the time you chose, may death take you / now that nature blooms and the earth sprouts grass). The blade of grass, the poet tells us, in the poem with the same title, (Kacalidas, 1998c, p. 54) sprouts "on the face of the woman who sleeps after the first kiss... /... on the ellipsoid of the castle's stone /... on the bronze bell... /... on the swallow's tail... /... through the howling of the rib... /... between the lips of the kiss... /... in the reflections of the waters... /". But "The blade of grass does not sprout (oh, it simply does not sprout) on the grave of the emigrant's mother." In the poem "Zogjtë, të dashurat" [Birds, the Beloved Ones], Volume “Fati i amarandos”, a similar contradiction is repeated four times.

At this point we want to emphasize that Kacalidas uses regularly in the construction of internal contradiction the technique of folk ballads. He increases excessively, to hyperbole, one side of the contradiction, (in the above case the sprouting of grass) to

better underline the other side, (the sorrow of the mother who died without seeing her son.)

Contradiction between poems. We divided it into three other categories.

a. In relation to the worldview of his poetic mythology. (For this point we have spoken much in other parts of this analysis.)

b. In relation to the function of the poetic tools from one poem to another. (The sun, for example, at one time the poet needs it to be frozen, at another time to determine the color of his eyes, at another time to be at the head of the temple, at another time to kneel before the amaranth, at another time to be sacrificed together with the sea for the sake of peace, etc. The sea, in one poem, (Kacalidas, 2003, p. 212) tells us that to widen the sea even the sacrifice of blood is worth it. In another poem tells us that

he will drink the sea in the moon's cup, let the sea dry up, etc.) This contradiction can be seen also in the creation of lexical fields and semantic fields during their usage for the creation of figures, especially metaphors (including personifications) and symbols.

c. In relation to the principles and positions of the poetic subject on the same phenomenon, object, or event. (We take as an example the position regarding Odysseus, Ithaca, Penelope, the Gods, the birds, the stones, the trees, etc. Concretely: In the poem "Jemi treqind" [We Are Three Hundred], (Kacalidas, 2003, p. 231) we have a poetic narrative of heroic resistance in current times realized through a parallelism with the three hundred fighters of Leonidas at Thermopylae. (Intertext as configurational.) One page later, on p. 232, comes the poem with the title "Thermopile" [Thermopylae]. Deheroization is provocative. The poetic self of Leonidas's three hundred is dualized. They do not frighten the Persians, but their own from behind and the existence "of the foxes of the fields." (Intertext as archetype renewal.)

### 9.10 The Construction of Poems: The Phenomenon of Influence

This manner is often also a cause for a logical contradiction, which violates in continuity the logic of the narrative. Nevertheless, the logic of the narrative is violated more for subjective reasons. For the poet the core of the fables of the poetic myth often becomes an impression coming from sources of the most varied kinds. This impression, in the form of the word, the impressive expression, the idea, etc., he seeks to use as a fable and to build his myth. (Through configurational intertext + Intertext as archetype

renewal.) The action in the myth narrative is pushed forward through sentences that show the performance of an action after another action has been performed before. When at the center of the poem he places his poetic self (this happens very often in the poetry written in the Albanian language) the narrative usually ends with a rhetorical question.

In the effort to become original he tries to create something different by exploiting the entire possible arsenal calibrated and justified with his own figuration. The arsenal of figuration activated, however wide it may be, is the same. This means that the extensions noted lead to hyperbolizations without aesthetic functions and to contradictions without values. With this mechanism we can explain also Kacalidas's efforts to turn influences from other creators into personal values.

We take as an example the verse, "At night the saints come out of the cave and play hide-and-seek..." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 61). Automatically it reminds one of the famous verses, characterized as surrealist, by J. Ritsos, "Every night the statues come out of the well and climb the trees," (the poem "Vendi imi" [My Place] included in the poetry volume “Pasqyrat” [Mirrors], written during the dictatorship when Ritsos was interned on an island.) In Ritsos this verse comes after a poetic narrative regarding the desolation of the country because of the dictatorship. After this, Ritsos poses the question in the first-person plural: "How did it happen that they allowed the arrangement of the house with a rigid hand?!" And as a solution he found the exit of the statues from the well. The statues thus symbolize the brilliance of Greece of history (ancient or the Greek revolution, or the war of 1940). This diachronic time is marked through a spatial element, the symbol of the well. The statues do not stay on the surface where the onlookers stay, the people who left Greece to be administered with the rigid hand of the dictatorship. They climb the trees, rise above them as symbols of inspiration. Ritsos realizes on a vertical spatial plane the action in historical time. But with Kacalidas. His "saints" have no similarity with such a function. On the contrary, it seems that the entire poem "Epifania e hënës" [Epiphany of the Moon] and the messages it bears, start from this verse and develop to justify this verse.

Kacalidas takes the same verse also in two other cases. In the poem "Ruani çelësin" [Keep the Key], Volume, “Fati i amarandos” (Kacalidas, 2003, p. 147), he says: "And let the buried statues wash your eyelashes with pomegranate water / Let the rose garden be renewed and cover the busts / And let us choose laurels, weave wreaths?" Perhaps

understanding the insufficiency of his own to reach the aesthetic power of Ritsos, Kacalidas returns to the motive once again by placing his own poetic self at the center of the motive. He says concretely in the poem "Duke kërkuar puset" [Looking for Wells], (Kacalidas, 2003, p. 120). "Looking for wells I fell inside wells. / And from under the earth I rise to come out of the wells. / If you seek me, you will certainly find me in wells / I am a palm tree that grows from the depths. / And if above they await my branches. / The branches will be renewed."

With this logic Kacalidas takes the other known verse of Ritsos that compares the three clouds near the moon with three calves drinking water from it, the poem "Romiosini," a verse used by Kadare in the form "three calf clouds drink water from

the moon's post office." Kacalidas compares the clouds with does, (Kacalidas, 2003, p. 179) and "From the instincts of the birds the leopards of the clouds scattered," “Pagëzimi i zogjve” (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 19).

For this we are convinced also by the fact that the poet for every place he visits writes poetry relying on what is representative for that place. Following this line in the poetry volume “Profecia e drurëve” we note that, when the poet visits Pogradec, in the poem dedicated to the city he addresses Lasgushi, (Kacalidas, 1998c, p. 163), when he goes to Berat he refers to the castle, Onufri, (Kacalidas, 1998c, p. 162), when he is in Gjirokastër, "sleeps with Argjiro," (p. 185-6.)

This is the mechanism with which Kacalidas interweaves into his poetry folk sayings, phraseology, verses of folk songs.

The Greek language, as a language, has an influence and a noticeable presence in the arsenal of poetry in the Albanian language. A freedom of Kacalidas's Albanian poetic language is noted to accept lexical and syntactic structures of the surface from the Greek language. The opposite is not noted, which speaks to the fact that the Albanian language is more open for the poet to accept his linguistic offers "borrowed" from another language. Also, in the creation of the poetic myth in the Albanian language there are many elements coming from the Greek world, and here we do not have in mind only mythology. And again, we will say that the opposite is not evaluable, which means that the poetic integrity of Kacalidas is determined by his ethnic identity.

This does not exclude on the other hand influence from Albanian authors, particularly from I. Kadare. In Kadare, the climate, the relief, the rain, the colour of the

sky, the fog, the mud, constitute a dialectical identity with "Chronos" and action as a narrative act, which often remind us of Homeric scenes of the description of nature. This is valid also for Kacalidas. Worth noting is the fact that the ethnotopos of Greek literature and culture takes other forms in later periods. It is linked with the sea, space, blueness, whiteness, and the sun. Kadare in his creation preserves adequate links with the Homeric nature of the topos (Rocky Mountains, high and cold mountains, grey clouds, background of a tragic decor, begins I. Kadare, “Gjeneralin e ushtrisë së vdekur” [The General of the Dead Army].)

At this point Kacalidas, as was emphasized elsewhere, adheres to Kadare's line and not to the developments that the Greek literary ethnotopos followed.

Preferences in Time

From this viewpoint, when it is spring, he does not write poetry about summer or autumn and vice versa. The most preferred time for his poetic myth are the transitory moments, the dividing boundary between two situations: In the daily arc of time, he prefers dawn-daybreak, between months he prefers April, May, September, and December. If we note, we are speaking again of months that mark the passage from one seasonal moment to another. Between seasons he chooses spring and autumn.

### 9.11 The Poetic Subject, Myth, and Surrealism

Within the poetic mythology of N. Kacalidas the attempt of the hero-poet does not have a visible definition. It is found continuously in development without giving us the model of a solution within a framework, even that of his declared "cosmogony." This becomes more evident when he writes in the first person. A distinguishing feature remains the fact that the poetic narrative definitively ends in a rhetorical question as an expression of his impossibility to give a solution even though he himself poses the question. Or, as we saw, his self is at the center of everything. After this he returns to the line of poetic narrative with a series of explanations. "...When will the waters subside, I wonder, to send the dove among the orb?" The poet asks in the poem "Barka e Noes" [Noah's Ark], poetry volume “Pagëzimi i zogjve” (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 99). The question comes after the ark has been prepared by himself for the journey. After the rhetorical question continues the explanation of the series somewhat fragmentary and without logical link: "If I do not find olive branches, surely one leaf will be found." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 99).

His poetry starts from a single principle. Everything in the living world, in nature and metaphysics constitutes a value and can be turned into poetry according to the novelty that every value tangible by the senses must have an impact on the human spirit, must find there its homologue. Another thing is that the harmony achieved in nature on the basis of opposites and in a unique system, the poet reflects as imposition or will even arbitrary of the poetic subject of his own self in function of the moment come as a

detached idea, or as image. This, as well as the opposition often with the cosmogonic system of folk tradition and classical mythology, determines also his differentiation from poets whom he tries to resemble, Elytis, Seferis, or even Kadare.

To a large extent this has fragmented and dualized also his pretended surrealism. Surrealism, as is known, is composed of two components: The first claims that behind the world of senses there exists also a second paradise of plenitude, as an expansion (and not the opposite) of the world of senses. The perfection of man depends on the possibility of discovering this dimension, (which is also the true one since it brings one closer to the subconscious by moving away from every logical system and link with reality). The second claims that to achieve this aim one must deny every limitation and accept every freedom in the use of the word, the verse, the surprise in the combination of words and the creation of impressive figures by overcoming even the real possibilities of metaphor and metonymy. From this viewpoint Kacalidas's surrealism suffices itself with the second component. The first can be treated simply as a consequence and not as an aim, or as an effort of the author. "Was it the moon or your heads leaning on my shoulders? / In any case the jasmine of the bosom had caught fire. / The half-moon of the lip had caught fire. / And I wandered the shores toward the house of the moon, / to find it at night by ringing the bell of the stars. / With the moon's distaff tied on my head I howled in the puddles of silence /..." (Kacalidas, 2006b, p. 62).

Kacalidas in the selection of the "sign" in the semiological sense starts from the structuralist criteria of the two axes, paradigmatic and syntagmatic with infinite tendency, to find words as difficult as possible, his own creations, words borrowed from Greek, or word-formed with the rules of analogous languages. He gives particular importance to the signifier, without thinking of the signified. Here lies the source also of his going so far in the comparisons between two signs for the construction of metaphor, metonymy, or personification and symbol. In the construction of this type of metaphor, which he uses with a very great density, Kacalidas has chosen the comparisons according to the

relationship animate-inanimate. The opposite is extremely rare, indeed, rarer than the relationship thing-thing. In the construction of metaphor according to animate-thing similarity relationships, he borrows the rule of

folk tradition, but the overcoming of the measure often does not help, or leads to a surrealism that does not aim at the essence of phenomena through the senses.

### 9.12 The Phenomenon of Repetition

Repetition is another weapon in Kacalidas's poetic arsenal. Repetition plays the role of an aesthetic tool when, like everything, it does not exceed the measure. In our case it is more an expression of the multiple links of a certain contingent of words in the effort to create striking metaphors with the definition of symbol. Such are: the moon, the bird, the tree (the olive), the leaf, the stone, the shore, the sea, the mountain, and in Greek the "Amarandos" grass. Among the most preferred flowers are jasmine, cyclamen, and lily. (In what follows we will give more complete data on the cases and manners of their usage.) Repetition is noted as:

Repetition as a stylistic tool: gradation, alliteration, tautology;

Repetition as a word in itself in free or fixed phrases;

Repetition from fragment of one poem to a poem in itself;

Repetition as idea;

Repetition for the creation of motives (life-death, thunders, the bird, the stone, baptism);

From usage in one poem as a verse, to usage as a title in another poem; From title in one poem to title of a cycle or poetry volume;

Repetition of the title in the first verse of the poem. (In the volume “Profecia e drurëve” out of 151 poems in 34 titles the repetition occurs in the first verse in a complete manner and in 25 poems in an indirect manner.)

This makes Kacalidas no exception from today's generations of poets, indeed constitutes a typical example. This is about the lack in these generations of referential poetic worldview systems, which enable the search, recomposition, and promotion of the universal truth. In their place is encountered the personal vision, which leads to the

variety of individual truths, as a modern expression of the fragmentation of man's unity with the World.

In what follows we present several tables regarding the density of usage of the poet's preferred word-signs, their link in free and fixed phrases, the creation of lexical and semantic fields, etc., in the volume “Pagëzimi i zogjve”. In this volume 53 poems are translated from Greek and are found parallel also in the volume “Fati i Amarandos”.

The following tables reproduce the page references and occurrence markers from the source. Additional occurrences indicated by forms such as +1 are retained within the expression field.

**Table 2**

*Occurrences of “tree” in Pagëzimi i zogjve*

| Page | Expression |
|---|---|
| 9 | tree busts |
| 9 | the altar of the tree |
| 10 | temples and busts of the tree |
| 15 | the altar of the tree |
| 15 | liberations of the tree |
| 15 | crosses of the tree |
| 17 | vertebrae of the trees |
| 19 | kingdom of the tree |
| 19 | statues of the trees |
| 19 | peaks of the trees |
| 23 | roots of the tree |
| 24 | spirit of the trees |
| 25 | ABC of the trees |
| 26 | prophecies of the trees |

| Page | Expression |
|---|---|
| 26 | wonders of the trees |
| 31 | trembling of the tree |
| 32 | heads of the trees |
| 32 | ideograms of the tree |
| 32 | sarcophagus of the tree |
| 33 | tree tops |
| 34 | wooden spoon |
| 34 | bare trees |
| 34 | capillaries of the tree |
| 34 | undulation of the trees |
| 36 | prophecies of the trees (13-prophecy of the leaf) |
| 48 | prophetess of the trees |
| 51 | vertebral column of the trees |
| 52 | trees break dawn |
| 53 | the wind bit the trees |
| 56 | the tree in the statue of the wind |
| 64 | upside-down tree Page |
| 68 | dynasties of the trees |
| 70 | permanence of the trees |
| 76 | trees weep |
| 94 | veins of the trees |
| 97 | nakedness of the trees |
| 97 | undressed statues of the trees |

| Page | Expression |
|---|---|
| 97 | wrinkles of the trees |
| 105 | altars in the echo of the tree's circles |
| 106 | (fatal) forks of the tree |
| 114 | trees of mourning |
| 114 | dresses of the tree |
| 114 | hundred-armed trees |
| 114 | roots of the trees |
| 116 | archipelago of the trees |
| 117 | crossed trees |
| 117 | (creak) bones of the trees |
| 121 | trees leaf out |
| 125 | labyrinth of the tree |
| 129 | lick the ash of the tree |
| 137 | wooden horse +1 |
| 137 | trees hanging over chasms |
| 149 | prophecies of the trees |
| 164 | dynasty of the trees |
| 164 | rings of the trees |
| 164 | carve the cypress tree |
| 168 | (grow on) crosses of the trees +1(169) |
| 169 | engraving for the trees |
| 175 | in the bark of the trees |
| 188 | tree of crucifixion |

| Page | Expression |
|---|---|
| 227 | miniskirt of the trees |

**Table 3**

*Occurrences of "stone" in Pagëzimi i zogjve*

| Page | Expression |
|---|---|
| 9 | temples of the stone |
| 15 | Golgotha of the stone +1(35) |
| 15 | altar of the stone |
| 21 | the cleft of the stone |
| 22 | the invitation of the stone |
| 23 | resurrection of the stone |
| 23 | root of the stone |
| 24 | wild stones |
| 28 | muteness of the stone |
| 29 | downpour of the stone |
| 30 | mitre of the stone |
| 30 | nakedness of the stone |
| 31 | thresholds of the stone |
| 32 | philosopher's stone +1(111) |
| 33 | architraves of the stone |
| 34 | in the quartz of the stone |
| 34 | explosion of the stone |
| 35 | heart of the stone |
| 35 | neighbourhood of the stone |

| Page | Expression |
|---|---|
| 35 | consolation of the stone |
| 54 | stones of waiting |
| 56 | bone of the stone |
| 79 | Cyclopean stone |
| 80 | stone of bitterness |
| 80 | stone of thunder |
| 80 | metaphoric stone |
| 80 | three-step dance of the stone |
| 89 | mythology of the stone |
| 89 | vein of the stone |
| 97 | frozen stones |
| 98 | mute stones |
| 102 | elixir of the stone Page Expression |
| 103 | hieratic of the stone +2(106) +3(107) |
| 105 | nakedness of the stone |
| 105 | amaranth of the stone |
| 109 | elixir of the stone +1, +1(119) |
| 107 | hieratics of the stone +1 |
| 111 | remarried the stone |
| 111 | stone of Leshnicë |
| 112 | chunks of the stone |
| 114 | threshold stone |
| 114 | hearth stone |

| Page | Expression |
|---|---|
| 114 | grave stone +1(134) |
| 114 | virginity of the stone |
| 114 | elixir of the stone |
| 114 | my navel cut with stones |
| 115 | serpent of the stone |
| 115 | roots of the stone |
| 118 | grave stones |
| 120 | demography of the stone |
| 121 | amphora of the stone |
| 121 | stones rusted |
| 121 | planted stones |
| 122 | geography of the stone +1(157) |
| 122 | stone of the hillsides |
| 124 | clepsydra of the stone |
| 126 | stock exchange of the stone |
| 127 | three things held by stone |
| 128 | synagogue of the stone +3 |
| 129 | stony bay |
| 130 | ash of the stone |
| 130 | wrinkle of the stone |
| 132 | in the cracking of the stone |
| 132 | mythology of the stone |
| 133 | Medusa who petrified the stone |

| Page | Expression |
|---|---|
| 133 | pain of the stone |
| 134 | stones crack +1(146) |
| 134 | stones grown on graves +3 |
| 187 | oval stones of statues |
| 149 | genesis of the stone |
| 149 | skulls of the stone |
| 154 | in the residence of the stone |
| 155 | the stone wrinkled |
| 156 | philosopher's stone |
| 156 | grandmother's stone |
| 158 | bones of the stone |
| 162 | shuddering of the stone +1(209) |
| 164 | pagan stone +1(165) |
| 164 | black horses of the stone |
| 166 | stones freeze |
| 169 | on graves on the stones |
| 169 | engraving for the stones |
| 174 | stones of the hillsides |
| 187 | quartz of the stone |
| 188 | diagonal of the stone |
| 188 | genealogy of the stone |
| 189 | menopause of the stone +1 |
| 190 | zodiac of the stone |

| Page | Expression |
|---|---|
| 196 | stone of solitude |
| 197 | genetics of the stone |
| 197 | peck at the stone |
| 199 | ambrosia of the stone |
| 200 | in the fist of the stone |
| 205 | knighthoods of the stone |
| 205 | the stone bubbles |
| 205 | tongue of the stone +1 |
| 217 | solitude of the stone |
| 227 | will pierce the stone |

**Table 4**

*Occurrences of "jasmine" and "cyclamen" in Pagëzimi i zogjve*

| Word-sign | Page | Expression |
|---|---|---|
| Jasmine | 10 | rope of jasmine |
| Cyclamen | 14 | towel of cyclamen |
| Jasmine | 15 | jasmine of the bosom |
| Cyclamen | 26 | trembling of cyclamen |
| Jasmine | 35 | spiral of jasmine |
| Cyclamen | 34 | cyclone of cyclamen |
| Jasmine | 35 | root of jasmine |
| Cyclamen | 63 | cyclamen of the stars |
| Jasmine | 37 | enigma of jasmine |

| Word-sign | Page | Expression |
|---|---|---|
| Cyclamen | 73 | Erinyes of cyclamen |
| Jasmine | 50 | dialect of jasmine |
| Cyclamen | 74 | in the house of cyclamen |
| Jasmine | 62 | jasmine of the bosom |
| Cyclamen | 79 | cyclamen of the road |
| Jasmine | 90 | jasmine intoxicates +2 |
| Cyclamen | 79 | garment of cyclamen |
| Jasmine | 90 | I have business with jasmine |
| Cyclamen | 80 | violet brotherhood of cyclamen |
| Jasmine | 90 | eyes of jasmine |
| Cyclamen | 81 | cycle of cyclamen |
| Jasmine | 90 | wind of jasmine |
| Cyclamen | 111 | eye of cyclamen |
| Jasmine | 90 | planting of jasmine |
| Cyclamen | 119 | tear of cyclamen |
| Jasmine | 95 | fire took jasmine |
| Cyclamen | 119 | I have some business with cyclamen |
| Jasmine | 95 | jasmine withers |
| Cyclamen | 125 | dynasty of cyclamens |
| Jasmine | 95 | a few hours guard jasmine |
| Cyclamen | 131 | bulbs of cyclamen |
| Jasmine | 106 | jasmine buzzes |

| Word-sign | Page | Expression |
|---|---|---|
| Cyclamen | 132 | cyclamen trembled |
| Jasmine | 113 | enigma of jasmine |
| Jasmine | 117 | Behind the door clings jasmine |
| Jasmine | 124 | jasmine of the evening |
| Jasmine | 129 | aroma of jasmine |
| Jasmine | 130 | crosses of jasmine |
| Jasmine | 155 | baptized jasmine |
| Jasmine | 157 | holy breath of jasmine |
| Jasmine | 181 | marose jasmine |

**Table 5**

*Occurrences of "hillsides" in Pagëzimi i zogjve*

| Page | Expression |
|---|---|
| 14 | wanderings of the hillsides |
| 14 | candles of the hillsides |
| 19 | herbarium of the hillsides |
| 25 | leopard of the hillsides |
| 66 | autumn of the hillsides |
| 69 | bones of the hillsides |
| 71 | lemon groves of the hillsides |
| 76 | the curve of the hillsides |
| 79 | hillsides of carnation |
| 80 | I would petrify the hillsides |

| Page | Expression |
|---|---|
| 80 | pyrrhic jumps of the hillsides |
| 80 | petrification of the hillsides |
| 86 | my hillsides |
| 86 | three suns grazed on the hillsides |
| 88 | hillsides of Leshnicë |
| 92 | serpentine winding of the hillsides |
| 102 | stars dance on the hillsides |
| 111 | alabaster of the hillsides |
| 114 | hillsides of Acheron |
| 114 | Cyclops spits the hillsides |
| 117 | (my crosier) bridge for the hillsides |
| 117 | Babel of the hillsides |
| 119 | like a saint on the hillsides |
| 121 | panting of the hillsides |
| 121 | hillsides thunder |
| 122 | hillsides of Acheron |
| 123 | white stones of the hillsides |
| 124 | hillsides rise statuesque |
| 124 | in the sequestration of the hillsides |
| 126 | (snow shaking) on the hillsides |
| 127 | eavesdropping on the hillsides |
| 129 | in the armpits of the hillsides |
| 130 | genealogical hillsides |

| Page | Expression |
|---|---|
| 131 | fog on the hillsides |
| 134 | hillsides will burn |
| 137 | hillsides trembled |
| 137 | that the hillsides might shine |
| 141 | balconies of the hillsides |
| 143 | hillsides leaning on the bosom of the lilac |
| 143 | April conquers...the hillsides of grass |
| 145 | urgent fax of the hillsides |
| 150 | Poseidon snored the hillsides |
| 150 | hillsides shuddered |
| 150 | scratched the beard of the hillsides |
| 160 | medusas blaspheme the hillsides |
| 165 | labyrinths of the hillsides |
| 174 | crumbs of the hillsides |
| 174 | stones of the hillsides |
| 175 | mountainous hillsides |
| 176 | hillsides of the moon |
| 176 | hillsides of basil |
| 177 | in the whiteness of the hillsides |
| 178 | hillsides will dry up |
| 180 | Marina of the hillsides +7, +5(181) |
| 180 | shore of solitude |
| 185 | Paleolithic hillsides |

| Page | Expression |
|---|---|
| 188 | hillsides awoke |
| 191 | wandering the hillsides |
| 197 | pagan hillsides |
| 197 | solar hillsides |
| 197 | chlorophyll of the hillsides |

**Table 6**

*Occurrences of “moon” in Pagëzimi i zogjve*

| Page(s) as printed | Expression or grouped expressions |
|---|---|
| 9 | "Spiral of the moon," |
| 10 | "Suicide of the moon," |
| 15 | "Saint Mary of the moon," |
| 15 | "pouch of the moon," |
| 15 | "moon forests," |
| 15 | "shrine of the moon," |
| 15 | "sinners of the moon," |
| 15 | "clods of the moon," |
| | "birds of the moon" |
| 17 | "eggs of the moon," |
| 17 | "stone of the moon," |
| 17 | "baptistery of the moon," |
| 17 | "womb of the moon," |
| 17 | "palm of the moon," |

| Page(s) as printed | Expression or grouped expressions |
|---|---|
| 18 | "little tail of the moon," |
| 20 | "lantern of the moon," |
| 20 | "globe of the moon," |
| 21 | "elbow of the moon," |
| 22 | "basin of the moon," |
| 25 | "sheet of the moon," |
| 26 | "cornucopia of the moon," |
| 27 | "surveillance of the moon," |
| 28 | "with a flake of moon," |
| 29 | "window of the moon," |
| 33 | "in the cassette of the moon," "The widespread oracle," |
| 34 | "chain of the moon," |
| 39 | "path of the moon," |
| | "spiral of the moon" |
| 47, 86 | "bosom of the moon,", "nest of the moon," "epiphany of the moon," "roof of the moon," "tiles of the moon," "house of the moon," "moon nights," "milk of the moon," "cusp of the moon," "cracking of the moon," "ocean of the moon," "emblem of the moon," "key of the moon," "leopards of the moon," "valley of the moon," "silence of the moon," "the pale horse of the moon," "sanctity of the moon," "path of the moon," "moon face," "coin of the moon," "cradle of the moon," "eggs of the moon," "spiral of the moon," "the emaciated moon," |
| 96 | "stalagmite of the moon," |
| 97 | "Eclipse of the moon," |

| Page(s) as printed | Expression or grouped expressions |
|---|---|
| 98 | "horn of the moon," |
| 102 | "sickle of the moon," |
| 102 | "Temple of the moon," |
| 135, 117, 117 | "Balcony of the moon,", "cornucopia of the moon,", "disk of the moon," |
| 117 | "sieve of the moon," |
| 117 | "oscillations of the moon," |
| 117 | "sandal of the moon," |
| 141 | "coffin of the moon," |
| 147 | "timpani of the moon," |
| 147 | "helmeted moon," |
| 147 | "shrine moon," |
| 156 | "stairs of the moon," |
| 157 | "moon love messenger," |
| 158 | "chaise longue of the moon," "skulls of the moon," |
| 159 | "bibelot of the moon," |
| 162 | "soup of the moon," |
| 165 | "moon in a hat," |
| 172 | "widowed moon," |
| 175 | "nave of the moon," |
| 182 | "cup of the moon," |
| 186 | "saucers of the moon," |

| Page(s) as printed | Expression or grouped expressions |
|---|---|
| 187 | "metaphysics of the moon," |
| 188 | "figs of the moon," "tail of the moon," |
| 190 | "wrinkles of the moon," |
| 190 | "twenty-year-old moon," |
| 203 | "head of the moon," |
| 191 | "mitral moon," |
| 209 | "sickle of the moon," |
| 192 | "eaten moon," |
| 215 | "horn of the moon," |
| 192 | "jackknife of the moon," |
| 216 | "monocle of the moon," |
| 229 | "abortion of the moon," |
| 229 | "mitre of the moon," |

Note. Some source entries group several expressions under a single page reference; that grouping is preserved.

**Table 7**

*Occurrences of “bird” in Pagëzimi i zogjve*

| Page | Expression |
|---|---|
| 9 | bird of virginity |
| 11 | baptism of the birds |
| 12 | engraving of the birds |
| 13 | genesis of the birds |

| Page | Expression |
|---|---|
| 13 | imitation of the birds |
| 13 | beakings of the birds |
| 13 | pecking of the birds |
| 13 | chirp of the birds |
| 13 | chirp of the birds |
| 14 | birds of hunger |
| 14 | council of the birds |
| 14 | guards of the birds |
| 15 | loves of the birds |
| 15 | chorus of the birds |
| 15 | wings of the birds |
| 15 | bird of speech |
| 16 | little tail of the bird |
| 16 | flocks of the birds |
| 17 | blood of the birds |
| 16 | baptism of the birds + |
| 17 | inventory of the birds |
| 18 | circles of the birds |
| 18 | birds of the trees |
| 19 | stars of the birds |
| 19 | road of the birds |
| 19 | Golgotha of the birds |
| 19 | psalms of the birds |

| Page | Expression |
|---|---|
| 19 | instincts of the birds |
| 20 | nests of the birds +1(36) +1(76) |
| 20 | bones of the birds |
| 21 | holy bird |
| 21 | graves of the birds |
| 22 | coops of the birds |
| 22 | birds of kisses |
| 22 | chord of the bird |
| 22 | ration of the birds |
| 22 | nests of the birds |
| 22 | spirit of the birds |
| 22 | eye of the birds |
| 22 | chirp of the birds |
| 23 | metaphors of the birds |
| 23 | baptized birds |
| 23 | embraces of the birds |
| 24 | spirit of the birds |
| 25 | double of the birds |
| 26 | birds of lightning |
| 26 | virginity of the birds +1(30) |
| 26 | Siamese birds |
| 27 | kisses of the birds |
| 27 | vineyards of the birds |

| Page | Expression |
|---|---|
| 27 | birds of the stars |
| 27 | leaves of the birds |
| 27 | colonization of the birds |
| 27 | blood of the birds +2(51) |
| 29 | Fluger of the birds +1 |
| 29 | windows of the birds |
| 29 | sleep of the birds |
| 29 | Orpheus of the birds |
| 29 | stammering of the birds |
| 29 | manes of the birds |
| 29 | paths of the birds |
| 29 | bosom of the birds |
| 29 | roots of the birds |
| 29 | Babylon of the birds |
| 30 | gospel of the birds + evangelization (30) |
| 30 | Saint Mary of the birds |
| 30 | jumping stations of the birds |
| 31 | knees of the birds |
| 31 | dreams of the birds |
| 32 | cemeteries of the birds |
| 32 | requiem of the birds |
| 33 | adrenaline of the birds |
| 33 | pagan birds |

| Page | Expression |
|---|---|
| 33 | bird of hope |
| 33 | velvet of the birds |
| 33 | bird of snow |
| 33 | birds of Fata Morgana |
| 34 | spirit of the birds |
| 34 | pecking of the birds |
| 34 | saxophone of the birds |
| 35 | eyes of the birds +1(35) |
| 35 | crucifixion of the birds |
| 35 | antiquarian of the birds |
| 35 | gilded birds |
| 35 | house of the birds +2(35) |
| 35 | heads of the birds +2(35) |
| 36 | mourning of the birds |
| 36 | cavities of the birds |
| 36 | chorus of the birds +1(37) |
| 36 | cortege of the birds |
| 38 | consecration of the birds |
| 39 | asparagus of the birds |
| 40 | birds of autumn |
| 43 | Daedalus of the birds |
| 43 | imitation of the birds |
| 44 | cellular of the birds +1(44) |

| Page | Expression |
|---|---|
| 44 | coverage zone of the birds |
| 45 | hollows of the birds |
| 46 | bird of dawn +1(105) |
| 46 | bird of dusk |
| 47 | porcelain of birds |
| 47 | traces of the birds |
| 48 | sorceress of the birds |
| 50 | jargon of the birds |
| 52 | puppets of the birds |
| 52 | pecking of the birds |
| 53 | wings of birds |
| 55 | blueness of the birds |
| 57 | offering of the birds |
| 60 | bird of hunger |
| 60 | fantastic birds |
| 60 | birds of wonder |
| 63 | amphora of the birds |
| 79 | birds are baptized |
| 88 | buds of the birds |
| 97 | jumps of the birds |
| 97 | bird nests |
| 106 | birds in love |
| 106 | feast of the birds |

| Page | Expression |
|---|---|
| 114 | house of the birds |
| 130 | ash of the birds |
| 130 | spiral of the birds |
| 132 | systematization of the birds |
| 132 | cardiogram of the birds |
| 132 | heart of the birds |
| 153 | birds of God |
| 154 | imitations of the birds |
| 158 | twisted path of the birds |
| 173 | birds of kisses |
| 176 | liturgy of the birds |
| 181 | birds of the sea |
| 185 | I baptize the birds |
| 187 | snow bird |
| 188 | the birds woke me |
| 191 | linguistics of the birds |
| 199 | ABC of the birds |
| 219 | birds of autumn |

**Table 8**

*Greek words and expressions in Pagëzimi i zogjve*

| Page | Word, expression, or note |
|---|---|
| 9 | asterisks of (the north) |
| 15 | dodecaphony |

| Page | Word, expression, or note |
|---|---|
| 15 | xylophones |
| 27 | archaeopteryxes +5(119,130,156,187,207) |
| 27 | amaranth +1(34), +2(35)+7(93, 95,105,115,125,197) |
| 31 | protoplast (in the meaning: of the Lord) |
| 32 | cemeteries (of the birds) +1(111) |
| 33 | jasmine |
| 36 | litany |
| 43 | Daedalus (distinguished architect of mythology, built the labyrinth of Crete) |
| 61 | epiphany of the moon |
| 98 | eremism +3+(128,173,188); not a Greek word, but a creation of the author from wind or aroma |
| 105 | apocalypse +1(106) |
| 106 | pericope (apocalypse) |
| 106 | Coquinolithari +1(178) |
| 109 | ostracism (of the stars) eksostrakismos +1(210) |
| 111 | cataclysm |
| 115 | radicchio (cabbage) |
| 123 | martyrology (of grass) |
| 128 | skulls |
| 129 | heraldry of the wind +1(133)+1(156)+1(197) |
| 129 | (lands) Cimmerian |
| 129 | monocline +1(216) |
| 135 | tramundanas +2, +1(166) |

| Page | Word, expression, or note |
|---|---|
| 141 | lepitka (lepidium) |
| 153 | gufallas +1(160) |
| 153 | icons-iconostases |
| 153 | terratore (in the meaning of terrace) |
| 153 | nafora +1(157)+1(197) |
| 158 | ambrosine-ambrosia |
| 160 | palindrome |
| 170 | clepsydras |
| 174 | crumbs |
| 176 | ekehiria |
| 179 | epiphany of the south |
| 181 | lands of Jalli (gr. Giallo) |
| 182 | oneiric |
| 182 | phallus |
| 188 | reeds |
| 197 | heliotropism +1(198) |
| 197 | Cimmerian |
| 197 | anacreontic |
| 197 | erinys-like |
| 221 | ephemeral |

Note. An incomplete source entry containing occurrence counts without a recoverable expression has been omitted.

**Table 9**

*Difficult words in Pagëzimi i zogjve*

| Page | Word, expression, or note |
|---|---|
| 9 | palimpsest (of the roads), +3(21,22,84) +3(72) |
| 10 | suicide (of the moon) +3(27,119,121) |
| 21 | shermasheku |
| 33 | esperandoja of the spirit +1(128) |
| 33 | Fata Morgana |
| 34 | asparagus +3(39) |
| 35 | diadem |
| 64 | gujave +1(64)+1(69) |
| 66 | aelekini (of autumn) |
| 69 | acupuncture |
| 72 | chrysanthemum +2(87)+3(92,119,170) +2(118) |
| 97 | coleoptera |
| 98 | magic espera |
| 98 | endemic strawberries |
| 103 | hieratic of the stone +2 +4(105,182,184)+5(106,107) |
| 112 | hedonism +1(128) hedonistic |
| 125 | my diadem +1(188) |
| 129 | (stream)edic of Aphrodite +1(131) |
| 129 | dark blindness |
| 130 | petals of asphodel |
| 130 | krill +1(153) |

| Page | Word, expression, or note |
|---|---|
| 130 | navigation (solar) +1(197) |
| 141 | agave +2(230) |
| 147 | petals of aposperitis |
| 153 | krezmuar |
| 153 | absidat abrashe |
| 153 | angrat |
| 153 | asphodel +2(172)+1(181) |
| 160 | cherubim +1(176) |
| 180 | wind of buthtim |
| 182 | hermaphrodite |
| 188 | arlikenit |
| 197 | esperides |
| 197 | trishtilet |
| 224 | aedes |

**Table 10**

*Word formation influenced by Greek*

| Form | Greek source |
|---|---|
| Evening song | εσπερινός |
| Shores | ακρογιαλιά |
| Monogira | μονοβίζα |
| Prickly pear | φραγκοσυκιά |
| Sunset | ηλιοβασίλεμα |
| Lemon balm | μελισοβότανο |

| Form | Greek source |
|---|---|
| Day-night | μέρα-νύκτα |
| One-day | μονοήμερο |
| Snowflake | χιονονιφάδα |
| All-simanis | Not glossed in the source list |

**Table 11**

*Words created by the poet*

| Page | Word or expression |
|---|---|
| 86 | Fatthënë (12 times) |
| 133 | gushfarfuri |
| 147 | yllthet |
| 184 | gjethësimanisë |
| 121 | trees leaf out |
| 122 | gjetthëroi (the kiss) |
| 129 | endërrmiku |
| 131 | gjethnaja (according to Kadare, thashethemnaja) |
| 140 | gjethërrenja |
| 163 | gjethuan |
| 223 | gjethërua |
| 167 | mooning, mooned |

**Table 12**

*Lexical fields and associated forms*

| Field or headword | Associated forms |
|---|---|
| Source | of the moon; of the bird |

| Field or headword | Associated forms |
|---|---|
| Baptistery | of baptism |
| Little tail | of the moon; of Butrint; of the stars; of the moon |
| Horn | of snow |
| Cassette | of the wind; of storm; gypsy; of the birds; of the sea; of hope; of the moon; of the stars; of the bird; of the wind; celestial |
| Fluger | of wood |
| Window | of sunset; of horn; of hope; of seagull; of lightning; of chestnut; of night; of rose; of zoology |
| Prophecy | of the leaf; of the wood; of the stone; of the springs; of the wasteland; genealogical; of the bird |

Note. Associations are reconstructed from the compressed source list; wording is retained conservatively.

**Table 13**

*Additional lexical-field terms*

| Term | Page |
|---|---|
| horns | 154 |
| busts | 21 |
| eardrum | 63 |
| mountains | 13 |
| coqs | 91 |
| hills | 25 |
| beard | 150 |
| bronchial mushrooms | 129 |
| scratch mushrooms | 150 |

| Term | Page |
|---|---|
| lions | 127 |
| shins | 162 |
| wings | 166 |
| absurdity | 153 |
| shoulders | 203 |

## Chapter Ten. Andreas Zarballas

### 10.1 Biography and Features of His Poetry

"No revolution, neither in art nor in life, has more hope of success than he who uses tradition as a foothold." The novelty belongs to the Greek Nobel laureate Odysseas Elytis, but, respecting measure and relationships, it can be borrowed to characterize Andrea Zarballas and his poetry.

To argue this novelty in the poetry of A. Zarballas, we will follow for him, indeed especially for him, the methodology of relying on the poetic text on the one hand (of the volume “101 poezi për një grusht dhe” [101 Poems for a Fist of Earth], 1970-1991), and on the other hand on the approach and knowledge of the historical framework and the social-political phenomena that determine the poetic mythology of Zarballas's work. We can determine, therefore, two lines: That of poetry as such and that of his particular homeland, the "place," the topos, the ethnotopos of the poetic subject, traversed by the duality of the poetic self between myth and reality. It must be noted that external politico-social factors (culture in relation to nature) force the poet to move in an alternative manner between myth and reality, and these two poles feed reciprocally the feeling of optimism (state of plenitude), or of pessimism (state of privation). In cases when the poet manages to avoid the contradiction between myth and reality, then he is characterized by the state of plenitude and the opposite.

A. Zarballa was born in 1942 in the village of Llazat of Saranda. After his studies he worked for a short time as a teacher and then as a journalist in the newspaper “Llaiko Vima”. In 1981 he published the first poetry volume, “Επιμένουμε” [Epimenoume, We Persist], and in 1986 the second volume “Τα παιδιά του Ήλιου” [The Children of the Sun]. In the period between the publication of the two poetry volumes, he published a collection of publicistic writings with the title “Ταξίδι στον τόπο μου” [A Journey to My Place]. In 1992 he published the third poetry volume, “101 ποιήματα για μια χούφτα γη” [101 Poems for a Fist of Earth].

In 2004 the study “Ο άλλος χάρτης” [The Other Map]. In 2006 he is a translator of Greek poetry into Albanian and vice versa, of Albanian poetry into Greek, in the anthology of Balkan poets, AIMOS. In 2006 and 2007, he prepared two anthologies,

the first with poems by Greek minority poets translated into Albanian, and the second with selected stories of prose writers from the Greek Minority. In 2008 he

published the volume with his best stories “Η μοίρα του Αλκίνοου” [The Fate of Alcinous] and in the same year a volume with essays about folk songs with the title “Το αίμα της αγάπης” [The Blood of Love]. In 2009 he published the new poetry volume “Ραβδομάντης” [Ravdomantis, The Diviner], which he considers as the third part of the trilogy of his poetry volumes, and in 2016 the poetry volume “Η μπαλάντα της στάμνας” [The Ballad of the Pitcher].

A. Zarballas is known for letters in the Greek and Albanian languages also for his numerous and serious translations into the analogous languages, Greek and Albanian. Also, he is almost the only one who does not write literature in any other language except the Greek one.

Despite the not very abundant poetic production, he is considered one of the most prominent poets and one of the most powerful pens in the literature of the Greek Minority in Albania.

Zarballas in his poetic work embodies visibly the principle that ethnic elites (in the academic or even political power form), starting from the aim of control (historical perspective orientation) of the people, in the meaning of the community, create and support a social creative mechanism, which precedes the setting aside of the opposite case, chaos. He understands correctly that this community for every moment of the historical present seeks a "useful" past. In this context he starts from his time to confront it with the "golden periods" in the past. In the service of this mission, the primary place is occupied by myths, or legends, which are considered as objective criteria determining ethnic identity.

Zarballas constitutes in himself a poetic school. Conscious of his mission as a poet and journalist, he has the merit of being among the first, at the beginning of the 1980s, to break the frameworks of the old generation of minority writers and poets, indeed in several directions. First, he totally orients the poetic myth toward tradition as a worldview and ideology. In the aspect of form, or poetic expression, he does this by successfully replacing the traditional verse with rhythm and rhyme with free and broken verse. Second, he engages the subject and the poetic myth with the fates of

his particular homeland, "our place," (“ο τόπος μου-μας”), giving symbolic power to it. Third, he becomes a determinant factor that minority poets can successfully write poetry also in their mother tongue. The influence in these directions was direct. His position in the newspaper “Llaiko Vima”, as the only periodical that published literature

in the Greek language, helped a lot, as well as the authority and strictness that he manifested in the demands for quality in literature.

Andreas Zarballas is so linked with the fates of the place to which he belongs, that his poetry, even when published under the rigorous "inspection" of the dictatorship, found means of communication with the pulse of ethnic belonging, and this feeling he conveys with the courage that equips the art of metaphors, allegory, parallelisms, and his particular symbolism.

When he wrote poems that would put them somewhere underground, the bitterness of the fate of being doubly despised and forgotten is evidenced more clearly. He is the poet of the creation of his particular symbolism, which serves the mission of his poetry, but also serves his community to orient itself. The Greek philologist and storyteller Hristoforos Milonis writes about Zarballas: "In his poetry, language manages to realize its finest function and to express not simply bad fate on the surface of the everyday, but also 'the deepest movements of the spirit,' dreams, the wounded dignity, and the bitterness of a people that have been forgotten. His world is a closed world, but in unity with fate and historical memory, with geographical cohesion and the distinguishing features of cultural identity and the inner life of his own community. In him the poet is organically fused, who, ultimately becomes its consciousness and its voice..."

His verse is spare and simple. Through a struck syntax he manages to convey emotion to his reader without difficulty. He knows and uses the word with precision when he wants to create poetic colorations, or to convey philosophical meditations. He is a poet much more of reason than of feeling. Nature, colors, sounds have value for Zarballas when they help him to penetrate better into the spirit of the people.

"Zarballas," says Fotos Qiriazatis about him, "is a spare and simple poet, with verses that have as their epicenter more reason than the heart, but lyrical and dear, pitiful and embittered, with visible sorrow for the great abandonment in the mercy of cannibals, all stress and anxiety, but also faith and hope clenched between teeth...."

The motives of folk tradition, like the classical folk verse of thirteen or fifteen syllables, gain a new artistic value, always by being actualized in content. Zarballas seeks to "hide" behind these forms to be as allegorical as possible in his messages prohibited for the time.

Andreas Zarballas does not care only for the verse. His greatest care is in the message that he will transmit. He wants it to be as accurate, as complete, and as deep and wide as possible. The creation of poetic unities with a certain theme, but also with a message as wide as possible, not with long poems, but with poems as short as possible (quite unlike Kacalidas) remains another characteristic of the poet. Within this framework he creates his own symbolism, which in not a few cases has been transformed into the symbolism of the poetry of other Greek minority creators. We take here as an example the emotional and symbolic load that the phrase "our place" gained in his creation, which turns into a synonym of the aesthetic category of space, the topos, simultaneously inseparable from the other category, time, chronos. The emotional load increases even more if we have in mind the conditions when the usage of the word Greece and the names or adjectives produced from this name "were prohibited." Consequently, a new notion had to be created to determine ethnic belonging. And the notion “ο τόπος μας” ("our place") was found, to determine, as the particular homeland of the poet and subsequently of all the others, as well as the relationships with Greece, but also the distinction from the common "socialist" homeland. Also, we mention the symbols of the Dropulli kerchiefs, of the tree and of the roots, etc., things to which it is worth devoting wider attention. All together constitute the particularity for Zarballas, the ethnotype of his for the Greek Ethnic Minority, realized through...

### 10.2 The Chronotope of His Poetic Mythology

Zarballas does not hesitate to affirm that the present and the future have their origin in a substantial moment of the past and develop as a recycling experience of this reality, as the timelessness of the ethnotype. This is about an internal dynamic of this time, as an image of eternity, as Barthes defines it, which is identified in a space-bearing of symbols, metaphors, archetypes, heroes, demythologized myths, or even newly created as mythicization of history, or as re-mythicization of myths to guide

history. It is linked with an anthropomorphization of nature and history in function of the literary message and the ethnotopos.

Everything seems to take its start from an observation of the poetic subject. He evidences with pain a rupture, a crisis between the chronotope of his contemporaneity and that of the past, and this, according to him, endangers the future. "...They kill our grandfathers who died in centuries / they kill our children who have not yet been born...," the poet says in the poem "Pemë dimri" [Winter Tree], Volume “101 poezi për një grusht

dhe” (Zarballas, 1992, p. 31), and adds: "How do they kill us thus? / And we pretend we do not hear weapons..."

For this he engages in the re-creation of a new reality of diachronic and synchronic relationships of his own topos as a guide to the future.

Everything in Zarballas happens and moves in a space-topos which from this viewpoint constitutes the ethnotopos and which again is timeless. It is realized with the synchronization of the past with aesthetic tools. The past in Zarballas's case, unlike Kadare, is identified, secure, consolidated, and useful for the present. (Kadare seeks this glorious past for as distinguished an identification as possible of the present and the future of his own ethnotype.) It is linked with the return to a tract as identified as it is glorious, such as the Homeland. In Zarballas, unlike Çukas and Kacalidas, this useful past functions in complementary dependence with his tract (topos), showing that the past unites through ethnic space (the tract, the topos) with the future. At this point Zarballas comes very close to Greek poets such as Solomos, Ritsos, Elytis, etc., and like them tries to create what Elytis says, the new myth of the Hellenes. There is only one difference. Elytis believes that the actual myth of his compatriots exists and "a little good and free heart" suffices for it to be evidenced to you. Zarballas seeks to create it and oscillates between pessimism and optimism, hope and disappointment. "Do not speak! Silence, do not shout! The pen dreams of another Lefter." Zarballas says.

### 10.3 The Topos

We said that the poetic subject of Zarballas moves in an identified spatial plane, described as “ο τόπος μας” ("our place"). In this aspect Zarballas and Kacalidas start

from the same narrow geographic concept of the action of the poetic subject. The former equates it with the village of his birth, Leshinica. The latter is somewhat wider. The geography of the movement of his self is "five mountains," "two fields," "three rivers." (Zarballas, 1992, p. 78).

In Zarballas's poetry, interesting and simultaneously meaningful remain the relationships of the poetic subject with the "topos" realized through a metaphor, repeated and stable to the point of symbol. The metaphor in question is realized through the tree. In his poetic myth it represents the poetic subject himself or man in general. The poet says: "...In his mountains (of the topos) I am rock, in the forests I am tree..."

(Zarballas, 1992, p. 100) and continues "...If a storm or a downpour catches me on the road / a tree raises before me as a shelter..." (Zarballas, 1992, p. 101).

In the poem "Erë" [Wind], (Zarballas, 1992, p. 44) in an effort to tell us the metaphorical relationships between man and the natural elements, he makes an interesting classification of these relationships. The tree can be uprooted like man, but man can shrink but is not uprooted (!!): "Tonight, even the mountains will bend like trees. / The trees will be uprooted like men. / The men gather in their silence like worms..."

In the poem "Pllatovuni nën dëborë" [Platovuni Under Snow], Zarballas takes the element of the tree/ves from the legend-myth of the old man who kills the water dragon to create his new myth, of the relationship of the poet's generation that is not yet fulfilling its duty toward the topos, its homeland: "Today Platovuni / resembles an endless thread of white paper / with its two rows of trees like fifteen-syllable verses / two verses drawn out like the scream of the dragon / at the moment of burning. / White unwritten paper the History of my generation / and we still nothing! / We have not yet written the two verses for the new dragon / like two rows with trees / on the other page of our bitter history. /" (Zarballas, 1992, p. 41).

The poetic and aesthetic functions of the tree in Zarballas's poetic mythology are linked with its functions as a natural cultural monument in traditional folk life, and ultimately lead us to the relationships of this natural monument with the civilization of the Oracle of Dodona. Thus, as we said, we have the passage from reality (the functions of the tree in primitive life) to myth (the Oracle of Dodona), from myth to reality (the function of the tree in the organization of the traditional structure of life, preserving or gaining

elements and cultural content) and from this reality to poetic material (the literary myth). The personification of the tree in the aspect of the link with the earth brings in an organic and unsolvable manner the anthropomorphization of the earth, the topos in the meaning of the homeland. "Our olive trees are not trees. They are our grandfathers. / Wrinkled. / Centenarian. / They do not intend to leave this life. / The roots are their hands. / Rough and long hands / that enter deep into the earth / to hold the soil /...." (Zarballas, 1992, p. 19).

"...And our patience becomes a plane tree nailed deep beside the shores of the rivers / pride cypress and fir on the plain..." underlines in the poem, "Dhe ne këmbëngulim" [And We Persist], (Zarballas, 1992, p. 28).

The multiple function in reality of the tree root in relation to the earth is also found in Zarballas's poem. (It is known that through the root the tree takes nourishment from the earth and grows. In direct relationship with the depth of the roots the tree secures its standing above the earth. Also, the roots hold the earth, protect it from erosion and landslides.) In this aspect, Zarballas's poetic myth unfolds two main opposing motives. Uprooting and rooting (in the concept of holding the earth around the root). Let us treat these motives in the poem "Një pemë" [A Tree] taken from the poetry volume “Djemtë e Diellit” [The Children of the Sun], p. 64. "Around the hut, the fields are foreign, / around the foreign fields the flocks / A tree, which they planted in our yard, / was so that the farmer could lean his plow / hang his sickle / climb up there in summer / throw a ripe fruit / into the hands of his child. / A tree that we planted was so that we would be protected so the wind would not take us. / They uprooted even that / and remained an empty hole in our yard, / and remained an empty hole in our spirit / where sorrow went and sprouted. /..." The poem refers to the reality before the Second World War, but has gained timeless value. The timelessness stems from the fact that the community that the poet represents experiences its own ethnic identity with the doubt that stems from two factors. The first factor has to do with the feeling of forcible severance from the mother nation and violent isolation from contacts with it. The second factor is linked with the reactions for the protection of its own ethnic identity (of its particular homeland-topos) from the assimilative forces of state policies or even of other factors closely linked with the ethnic identity of the majority. In this direction, the link of people with the earth of their particular homeland is inseparably linked with the

issue of ethnic identity. The aesthetic clothing of these relationships is realized through the metaphor (symbol) of the tree. This happens mainly for the reasons mentioned above. If we take the first part of the cited poem, the real functions of the tree are linked with the anthropological features of the social life of this community, in relation to it. For this reason, when the poet tells us that "a tree that we planted was so that we would be protected so the wind would not take us," we must understand the necessity of the link with the earth as a way to protect the particular ethnic identity. The opposite action, uprooting and the impossibility of resisting, shows precisely the doubt to the conviction that the leveling and assimilation of this identity constitutes an achieved aim on the part of the majority. Thus, we have the evidence of a horizontal force that acts from the outside (a social force, the state) with direction from the inside (nature, ethnic

identity is natural) and a vertical resistance from below (the roots) with direction from above (the tree.)

Here is the moment to emphasize that Kadare also used the metaphor of the tree successfully to structure the poem "Shqiponjat fluturojnë lartë" [The Eagles Fly High]. In it we find the same directions of forces as in Zarballas. Also, with success and within Zarballas's logic, P. Çukas used the metaphor of the tree. Indeed, in the same poem (analyzed when the case was raised), Çukas intertwines the two motives, the link with the earth and the function of traditional social organization. This observation is not valid for Niko Kacalidas.

Also, A. Zarballas tells us that the natural aesthetic elements in his poetry have a stability, that is, they are used with unchangeable values that stem from the very nature of the elements of nature (the Sun, the moon, the tree, etc.). This brings Zarballas close to Greek poets such as Solomos, Seferis, Sikelianos, Elytis, Ritsos, but not to Kacalidas.

These relationships, or this conception of the poetic subject with his topos, could be represented graphically as follows:

SUBJECT POETIC

THE PAST HOMELAND OTHERS

(Those Who Do Not Love It)

Let us analyse these relationships in turn.

The past. It constitutes the shining paradigm in historical diachrony. This is about a structure of consolidated archetypes, created during a chronotope that crosses the temporal boundaries of history, which guided their bearers in every historical perspective. This diachronic space includes both the panhellenic cosmos and the local world “ο τόπος μου” [my place], the particular place of the poetic subject. It comes to us through the metaphysics of mythological gods and divinity and Christian saints, mythic heroes, legends and folk songs, as well as the archetypes that they create in relation to space and time in the timelessness of the homeland's chronotope. The geography in time of these factors is very wide and is re-taken as a message for various aspects of the contemporaneity of the poetic subject. In the poem "Jemi edhe ne" [We Are Also Here], p. 7, the verse "It was then that one more string was cut in Homer's lyre" suffices to give us the entire feeling of the poetic subject regarding the injustice of the establishment of borders. In the poem "Automjeti me nr 11" [The Vehicle with No. 11],

(Zarballas, 1992, p. 10), the verses, "From the time of the Minotaur they load us one by one / and take us to feed Death." take us to the ancient culture of Crete. The myth of the Minotaur, whose life was linked with the periodic death of the youths that were needed for food, brings us the dimensions of the sacrifices of the members of the community represented by the poetic subject in the time of the dictatorship. In the poem "Limani" [The Port], p. 12, the Prometheus of the contemporaneity of the poetic subject underlines the degree of disfigurement of human dignity by the dictatorship. In the poem "Tezgjahu" [The Loom] the poetic myth is created upon the archetype of Penelope's patience, but also of the folk ballad. In the poem "Korfuzi" [Corfu], p. 15, the plank desired by Odysseus's boat suffices to announce the persistence in reaching the mother homeland. The poem "Butrinti" [Butrint], p. 17, has within it the architecture of an ancient city with "heroes," statues that are losing in the time of the poetic subject their ancient glory in the battle with the death of his time. In the poem "Jashtë në oborre" [Outside in the Yards] the presence of the sphinx suffices

to understand the silence of the parents of the poetic subject's generation. The name Thermopylae in the poem "Deti" [The Sea], p. 20 suffices to announce the message that victory is determined by right and bravery and not by the magnitude of force. In the poem "Mbledh gjakun" [He Collects Blood], p. 22, Dhimo of the folk ballad appears who collects the blood of his beloved to show five vilayets their fault in relation to the tragic end of this love. (In parallel the poetic subject seeks to take the collected blood of his country to ten countries in Europe.) In the other poem, "Dhe gjaku nuk duket" [And the Blood Is Not Seen], p. 23, the houses of his topos are built in "the valley of Fear," (according to mythology the Goddess of Fear). In the poem "Presin pyjet tanë" [Our Forests Await], p. 25, the absolute truth of the myth regarding Samson's hair gives the poet the possibility to create his myth of hope. The name of his son in the poem "Paridi" [Paris], p. 30 takes us to the archetype of the abduction of the beautiful woman.

And so, on we will find ancient Greek mythology, the ballads and legends of the poetic subject's topos, St. Kozman, St. Mary, the knight slain in the field of Dropull, the trees that stand like the revolutionary of the Greek revolution Thanasis Dhjakos with the captain of Vurg of the two world wars Thimjo Loli, etc. (We will return to this phenomenon when we speak of chronos.)

The Mother Homeland. It constitutes the great privation of the poetic subject. The poetic subject places in distorted proportion the severance from the mother homeland

with the lack of the oceanic feeling of harmony with cosmic dimensions among the members of his community. Nevertheless, the aspiration of the homeland by the poetic subject constitutes the essence of Zarballas's poetic mythology in relation to it (the mother homeland). The poet is indeed true that he notes the problem in the establishment of borders, but, for him, absolute privation comes from the hermetic closing of these borders and the loss of every contact with the mother homeland. These opposing relationships determine and the tragedy of the topos of the poetic subject.

Zarballas in the aesthetic contouring of these relationships activates with a new dynamic and philosophy the messages from the past mentioned above. He starts from the moment of reality, "is advised" by the coded consciousness of the collective identity given through symbolism, myths, and his own metaphors, so well known, and returns to his reality with the poetic messages secured by this collective heritage, but adding

his own poetic elements. In this artistic terrain the poet creates the symbolism of his topos, which at times through sacrifices, and at times in a passive manner, aspires to the mother homeland. Thus, the poet, seeing the white kerchiefs of the Dropulli women that make an exception in all the clothing of the South, turns them together with the topos, Dropull, into a symbolic ship that accepts the challenge of the death of the communist dictatorship and goes toward the homeland:

"The Dropulli kerchiefs are white sails. / And Dropull sails. It takes anchor the hawser. It takes anchor the cables / that tie it in the foreign port. / Difficult the journey. / The waves that the God of Terror raises are mountains. / Every day travelers fall. / But the sails remain white. They have not blackened / neither in the sea of emigration, / nor in the narrows of death, / nor in the middle of the sea of slavery. No Theseus / travels with this ship. / And Dropull sails / with its fully white sails open to the winds. / It goes toward the Homeland." (Zarballas, 1992, p. 51).

In the poem "Gjithë natën" [All Night], (Zarballas, 1992, p. 21), the homeland approaches the poetic subject in his dream. The poet underlines here the idea that the homeland is not simply a geography, but a cosmos placed between space and time; it exists as a "community product of fantasy," as Anderson (1983) defines it, the individuals of which do not know each other but are convinced of the existence of the characteristics that unite them. The author underlines also that not even in dream does this aspiration have fate. "All night / the homeland was so close to me tonight! The poem

begins and ends: "All night / the moon remained nailed in the sky. / And it had a yellow circle around / like an eye that does not sleep."

The feeling of privation takes on another dimension when the poet states that "We did not know then, young men, that eternity begins at the homeland. / We did not yet know that we had no homeland." (Zarballas, 1992, p. 59). The relationship of the poetic subject's relationship with the homeland increases the amplitude of the dramatic in the poem "Limani" [The Port]. (Zarballas, 1992, p. 12). The poetic subject complains about the indifference of the homeland toward them. In the sea, which in such a case resembles a field where only "the flower of the desert" sprouts, a ship comes more rarely and leaves without greeting, the poet says. The absence of this greeting becomes heavier when it forgets "us, nailed to the rocks / none of us being

Prometheus." Thus, when in his topos the dictatorial state wants people tied even when they present no danger to it.

The same relationships are revealed also by the poem "Korfuzi" [Corfu], (Zarballas, 1992, p. 15). The "prayer" of the poetic subject that "Corfu" approach becomes because he cannot, since, "...For years a rifle barrel takes aim at our life straight in the forehead / and we cannot move /..." The poet at no time denies love and aspiration for the homeland, as he is certain that this will never happen. "What remains to me, wretched Corfu / Ship stranded in the open sea?" the poet will conclude at the end of the supplications to Corfu that "does not approach."

The Others. The poetic subject does not start simply from the ancient principle that to know oneself better one must confront oneself with the others, with those who do not love you, the opponents, the enemies. Indeed, it seems he does not need this novelty. He has no time for it and it is not that he does not know the topos of the others. He knows it as he knows also the others and counts them: History that passed through his topos like a beast and cut one more string from Homer's lyre. (Zarballas, 1992, p. 7) Those who come to plant (graft) their language upon ours. (Zarballas, 1992, p. 80) Those who took barba Thodhor's land and he went mad. (Zarballas, 1992, p. 35)

But above all is the communist dictatorship. The number "101" in the title of the volume we are analyzing is linked with the expression so often heard in the minority regarding the heavy sentences, up to capital ones, of the communist courts against the Greek minority. Then the need arose for a taboo. The taboo was "He was sentenced to 101," that is, he was sentenced to 101 years in prison. Thus, there was no more

salvation for him and freedom for his family. This scene is depicted shudderingly in the poem with the title "Automjeti me Nr. 11" [The Vehicle with No. 11]. This is about the number (license plate) of the "gas of the branch of internal affairs" of the district of Saranda. At that time everyone knew that wherever this car appeared the next arrest would occur. The poet, to make this calamity more frightening, evaluates it from the viewpoint of the children, who instead of rejoicing that they saw a car, as would have been natural for that time, expressed themselves in the name of the poetic subject.

"The car with No. 11 harrows our villages / Behind / It leaves two parallel tracks / Full of hieroglyphics / This writing we know. It is of death...."

This repeated scene brought the deformative consequence of man. On the one hand "Shtetrrethimi" [The Siege], (Zarballas, 1992, p. 70), where the poetic subject admits that their values are not secure even when they are closed deep in the heart. "All I closed in our hearts... / We secured the gates well. / But they insist on bursting them like old castles / Instead of stairs and cannons / they have the spy's ear. / Even the friend's / even the brother's /...."

It brought on the other hand "Kur na thanë se i vranë" [When They Told Us They Killed Him], (Zarballas, 1992, p. 34). "When they told us they killed him / we burst into stormy applause. / We stood for a long time / on our feet / applauding death. /..."

It brought indeed also the self-isolation and fatality of the poetic subject. "Close the gate fearfully / and leave the world outside like a black dog / the world that pursued me all day / that pursues me all life /... But I cannot stay closed forever / Sometime I will go out / and one day, I know, it will eat me." (Zarballas, 1992, p. 11).

Or, "I do not go out to the door of glory /... Only to the threshold of the old house, I go out / Where to go? / No door awaits me. / Before the thresholds fear opened deep channels / like then / around the medieval towers /... At the gate of my house, I lean. / Behind me is a voice. That rises from the foundations /..."

And all these consequences underline the fact that the third factor against the topos of the poetic subject were his own people.

On the plane of this poetic mythology the poetic subject experiences his drama that stems from the fact of the deep knowledge of his topos and the impossibility of acting, all the worse to change it. This deep drama unfolds as a wide privation. "Life here is bitter," the poet says, "but death is even more bitter," (Zarballas, 1992, p. 7). The

dimensions of this drama are given in the poem "Natë dimërore" [Winter Night] (Zarballas, 1992, p. 46). The paradigm consists of Homeric details placed in a surreal syntagm. "Black sterile night, / struck by lightning / stretched in a coffin. / Dressed in black the clouds / weep over it. / A star that skulked yonder the horizon / resembles the candle at the head of the coffin. / A raindrop outside on the tin / keeps the rhythm of a funeral melody / What pushes the wind with giant hands / the coffin of the night / or of my place?" The poet describes by enumerating the natural elements that participate in a funeral ceremony of gigantic dimensions. Nature can never be blacker

and more ominous than that. The comment coming at the end of the poem with a parallelism between the funeral coffin of the night and of his place, leaves no room for other analyses, pessimism and privation.

Autumn, rain, night have an absolute role in giving the state of privation of the poetic subject. Dawn and..."The night flees from the shoulders of nature / finds shelter in the heart /..." (Zarballas, 1992, p. 48). A characteristic of theirs remains the statism that grips also life. "I said good evening last night to the graves / it was night and the leaves were falling. / Our life no longer has two meanings /.... Above and below / we will have the same pulse /... Do you remember from our first morning / brother we had death. /..." (Zarballas, 1992, p. 29).

It reaches its peak when this privation reaches the poem "E diel" [Sunday], (Zarballas, 1992, p. 55). The poet fixes a moment of prayer for the dead. The contrasts created by the view place in question the very meaning of life.

"Between the overly white graves / the black silhouettes of the mourning women / Oh God / which is more beautiful, death or life?"

This is the poem. Placed in Greimas's (1970) semiotic square we note that only on the diagonal axes do the couples establish affirmative relationships, whereas on the vertical and horizontal ones they establish oppositional relationships, which means that the situation moves far away from ordinary normal logic.

Black White

Life Death

According to this semiotic analysis for the poetic subject black implies life and white implies death. This makes it possible for black to be identified with white and life with death.

This is in general the relief of Zarballas's poetic mythology in relation to the topos, or with his ethnotopos. It is characterized, as we saw, by the state of privation, despite the fact that the poet here and there makes efforts to place an equilibrium between pessimism and optimism. Very easily it can be noted that the effort in question is enough only to affirm that hope has not yet spoken its fatal word.

Also, it must be stated that the state of privation is more the result of the state of his topos, created by the confrontation of the three determining factors of its essence. The past, the mother homeland, the others. Outside this reality of relationships, the poet manifestly unfolds an admirable and simultaneously surprising state of plenitude.

"The day put out the candle even for the last star. / A bird tunes the guitar upon the tree. / The sun bathes in the river. / A flower takes off its worn shirt / on the string of a sunray. / Good morning, oh world, good morning! / How many good mornings I will still send you /" (Zarballas, 1992, p. 87).

Or "Source, source of Bistrica, / the blue eye of my place, ah blue! / Young green eyebrow above the graves of the trees / and grass around the green eyelashes. Always with light from the dawns, with light from the noon / always deep and clear the eye of my place." (Zarballas, 1992, p. 94).

We brought these two examples to prove that when the poetic subject communicates directly with the topos, his place, then he removes as if by magic the pessimism and nature gives him its own tools to draw and create the myth of optimism and plenitude.

The harmony of nature and myth with reality create a joyful symphony in the poems "Llambri" [Easter], "The Children of the Sun," "Klarinet" [Clarinet], and especially in the poems at the end of the poetry volume: "Hyj në vresht" [I Enter the Vineyard], p. 96, and "Udhëtoj në vendin tim" [I Travel in My Place], p. 100. The poet's motto is: "Am I inside my place / or it inside me? / And we both are one." (Zarballas, 1992, p. 100). Nature and history, nature and traditions in a perfect harmony between them create for the poetic subject an earthly paradise.

### 10.4 Chronos

Chronos, the time of the poetic myth of Zarballas, is organically fused with the topos, space. Just as time and space cannot be separated in the concept of the homeland, so

the chronotope cannot be separated in Zarballas's poetic mythology. Every separation is made simply for methodological reasons.

In Zarballas's chronos are included, as contemporaneity, events, dates, names that have acted in time and different periods, before the time of the poetic narrative. This,

we said, helps the poet to give his myth truthfulness and substantiality as much as the myths or legends. It also helps to create the feeling of natural continuity, which because of the rupture of the present with the past, could be hindered in the future. On the other hand, his myth does not establish cause-and-effect relationships with the past, since he is conscious that the cause is the very actuality of his political, social, and cultural environment. Reference to the past is sought to function as a code of behaviour for the poetic contemporaneity and for the future, to have communicative ability and harmonious relational ability with the timeless Chronos.

Zarballas, like Kadare, reaches what Anderson (1983) calls "Synchronic oversight" or "prophetic foresight." This quality in Zarballas, as in Kadare, is secured by aesthetically evidencing what constitutes the very "unexplainable" essence of literature, its extemporarily.

From this viewpoint Zarballas, like Kacalidas, takes the shining matter-bearing world of myths, especially of the Hellenic world and the local one, (particularly Zarballas) by embodying it in adaptation to the idea of integral and timeless commonality, with ethnic identity. (Kacalidas evidences only the second part of our statement only when he writes in Greek.)

Unlike Kacalidas, who identifies the time of the poetic myth's action with his own time, thus a horizontal axis, the poetic action in Zarballas usually only starts from his time, a present-contemporaneity. This temporal moment narrates a certain moment of the state of the poetic myth, which in general suits the state of "our" topos, (our place). Regardless of the grammatical time forms of the verbs used, the poetic subject extends the action into historical and mythological past, or into the infinitive, with the aim of determining the future. This is about a time in the space of the diachronic identity of the poetic mythology of A. Zarballas. In this sense the present of the poetic subject serves as a starting point for the timeless present of Zarballas. This timeless contemporaneity has two other dimensions. One has direction from the past (now-here vs below-then). The other starts from the extreme point of the past to aim at the future. (Below-then vs now-here vs above-later.)

The linking ring between them remains consciousness, worldview, or the ideology of the poetic subject, which is found continuously between the two determining

categories of his state: Reality and Myth. The poetic subject moves and acts continuously to achieve the harmonization of these two categories. When he achieves it and this is noted when he addresses the past (below-then), the poetic subject is characterized by plenitude. (As we showed when we spoke of the topos, this does not always happen.) And the opposite, when he starts from the present to see the future the poetic subject appears dualized, openly shows disbelief and doubt, and is characterized in general by the state of extreme privation.

We concretize the described scheme with two examples from the poetry volume we are analysing: "Today Platovuni / resembles an endless thread of white paper / with its two rows of trees like fifteen-syllable verses / two verses drawn out like the scream of the dragon / at the moment of burning. / White unwritten paper the History of my generation / and we still nothing! / We have not yet written the two verses for the new dragon / like two rows with trees / on the other page of our bitter history. / Still nothing! /"

And "The plains drink the rain, the trees and the olive trees / drink the villages and the graves /.... My place drinks the wine of autumn / and within it awakened, moved the roots. /... We will resist, I say!" (Zarballas, 1992, p. 47).

Graphically, this manner of functioning of the poetic myth of A. Zarballas could be represented:

? ?

Above -later

(the future)

esent now-e pr her Th e

Below - then

(the past)

[Graphic showing a vertical axis with "Lartë - pastaj (e ardhme)" [Above - later (the future)] at top, and "Poshtë - atëherë (e shkuara)" [Below - then (the past)] at bottom, with "Tani - këtu (e tashmja)" [Now - here (the present)] in the middle.]

What is the present or the timeless contemporaneity of Zarballas? It is a three-dimensional present realized through the present. Grammar does not have much value. For the poetic subject it is important to emphasize that in every present and future the past has a role and function, a past that has embodied in one, space and time and comes to the present as a decoded message to orient the future. The poet realizes this by interweaving linguistic tools with intertext as archetype renewal and configurational intertext. We concretize with two examples. The title of the first poem is: "Tezgjahu" [The Loom], p. 13.

"Sometimes, / when we see that patience is running out in the cistern of the spirit / like water in a cistern / one by one / mostly two by two / we descend down to the shore of the sea. / A little below our sea / a little beyond our sea / is Ithaca. / We sit upon the rocks of the shore / and we watch the waves / and we listen to the waves / that bring on their back that simple tuk-tuk / that simple tuk-tuk / of Penelope's loom. / We sit upon the rocks of the shore / until the cistern of the spirit / fills again with patience?"

From the grammatical (linguistic) viewpoint, no verb is in the past tense. Nor in the future. Three elements from mythology, (Ithaca, Penelope, and the loom, which in a certain way form the archetype of patience) sufficed to establish an intertextual relationship between the present of the poetic subject and the mythological past. This relationship starts from the need of the poetic subject to establish a link with a certain message, waiting, patience, resistance, a message for which the poetic subject needs to use as spiritual nourishment in the present and in the future as continuity and in a repeated manner. This need is determined by the pressure exerted by an undeclared, but understood, force, the monist state (culture), against the poetic unit. It destroys the equilibrium between the poetic unit and his identity given in a natural manner, (nature). The poetic unit has no possibility to react in an active manner, (as in folk tradition) and this state produces in him a drama that de-heroizes him by causing the state of privation.

The second poem bears the title "Ullinjtë tanë" [Our Olive Trees], (Zarballas, 1992, p. 19).

"Our olive trees are not trees. They are our grandfathers. / Wrinkled. / Centenarian. / They do not intend to leave this life. / The roots are their hands. / Rough and long hands / that enter deep into the earth / to hold the soil / They clasp around the villages. Like then /.... like now / lest the winds blow and take our language / lest the villages speak another language / that the olive trees do not understand. / Our olive trees are

not trees. When we leave / and when we return / we pass among grandfathers... /... Our road passes among the olive trees."

In this poem the "past," the myth has another nature. It is identified in the binomial grandfather-olive. The grandfather, man (elderly) who in tradition and folk practice bears experience and wisdom. The olive tree, nature, besides the other qualities that ennoble it in the relationships with man, is identified with the grandfather, the human factor, and in the metaphorical sense adds to him its own longevity. (The olive tree comes from centuries and its destination in the future is unknown, the grandfathers do not intend to leave this life.) It gives resistance and the link with the earth. The grandfather, society is equated with the olive tree and gives the tree, nature, the proper consciousness, culture to gain the role of protector. The relationship below-then here has real forms. (Below, the earth where the roots spread, the grandfathers' hands; then, the longevity of the olive tree and the grandfather, for which the poet finds time to outline also other unifying details, such as the wrinkles, signs of old age for both elements of the binomial.) The olive tree gives the poet the possibility, together with its vertical linearity, which links the underworld, the earth, and the above-world, to give also the tri-dimensional aspect of time, (the past, the present, the future.) Thus, we note that the timelessness of the present in this case is realized through configurational intertext. This, because in this poem also no grammatical verb form belongs to the past tenses. Nor to the future tenses. Only the present is found, indeed in its primary meaning. The grammatical temporal elements help the process (like then.... like now.)

In this poem, unlike the first, we have a harmonization between nature and man. This gives the poetic subject security ("Our road passes among the olive trees") and the possibility to announce optimism, thus, a state of plenitude.

It is the moment here to emphasize that the poetic subject, as far as the state of plenitude, or privation in relation to what constitutes the foundation of his mythology, Our Place, “ο τόπος μας”, is dualized. The duality is linked with the aspect of the future of his fate where the optimism of the poetic subject alternates into pessimism, whereas the opposite (as we said when we spoke of the topos) either happens rarely or does not happen at all. Also, this future is determined by the present.

The "game" with time becomes for Zarballas the main instrument to solve, according to the ideology of the poetic subject, the relationships between myth and reality, chronos and topos. Through a double intertext he brings into his contemporaneity (in function of

timelessness as confrontation and as need for an organic fusion of the past with the present, or as harmonization of myth with reality) the mythological archetype and the archetype of local legends as well as the tradition of folk song.

"Butrint passed the threshold of death, / but was taken hostage /... (With the meaning that its archaeological heritage is used to evidence other identities. Our note.) The warriors of Butrint are invalids / Someone the leg, someone the arm, someone the head left in the battle with death. / Apollo has lowered eyes / and Zeus remains nailed to the wall, without his thunders. / On the steps of the amphitheater a group of youths / follow the modern tragedy of abduction. We feel it. We must endure only the bitterness of the hostage city." (Zarballas, 1992, p. 17).

We analyze the moments: The first verse announces to us that the city entered immortality, but, (second verse) it is taken hostage. In the second cited fragment the metonymic reference to the warriors is made through the statues, which as they are, become contemporaries with the poetic self. The aforementioned metonymic relationship gains a more metaphorical nature, when the poet tells us that these "warriors" are invalids, not because of the winning of their real glory (won then, experienced as myth). But, in battle "with death," time, the natural and social conditions that want to rob them of, or dedicate to others, their glory. (Now, reality.) Thus, myth and reality in this case do not have harmony. The poetic subject feels deprived and expresses the privation with the feeling of bitterness and abandonment that forces him to confront alone this situation.

The time of the action is the contemporaneity of the poetic subject. Also, in this case the grammatical verbs are all in the present. Also, the verbs of the first two verses, which are in the simple past, have the meaning of continuous time that comes from the past to the present with the aim of the future, a thing that gives the poetic subject the right to announce that this state will continue to be also in the future regardless of his passive resistance.

In the poem "Dhe ne këmbëngulim" [And We Persist], (Zarballas, 1992, p. 28), the poetic subject interweaves into the text of the poem a verse from a historical song, to evidence the disappointing hope in relation to the fates of his topos. Also here, from the grammatical viewpoint the narrative happens in the present time, the link with the past is made through a verse of a folk song created in a certain historical moment as an expression of a likewise certain situation.

"...'Still this spring, still this summer'...," is the folk verse interwoven in the poem of persistence and hope of seven verses. The history of the verse is simple. In the period of the formation of the Greek nation-state, the inhabitants here cultivated the hope that they should make a little patience (still this spring, still this summer), that "Moskovi," Russia, would finally decide for their union with the mother nation. It did not happen. And in this way the other "optimistic" verses are also devalued in this poem. "And we persist / And our patience becomes a plane tree nailed deep beside the shores of the rivers / pride cypress and fir on the plain, / aspirations trumpet sprouted on the thorns / our hopes, hidden under the stone of patience / drawn-out song / 'Still this spring, still this summer....'"

We spoke a little above about the internal dynamic of Zarballas's time-chronos through which he realizes timelessness and said that it is identified in a space-bearing of symbols, metaphors, archetypes, heroes, demythologized myths, or even newly created as mythicization of history, or as re-mythicization of myths to guide history.

From this viewpoint, the poet, to give truthfulness to his myth, but also the claimed continuity, creates mythic subjects of mythological dimensions or according to folk tradition. These appear at times as desire (when it is a matter of changing the present). "...Every day we think of the awakened peasant. He is very late / to appear with the loaded beast / on the road of our generation /..." (Zarballas, 1992, p. 10). And at times

as accomplished reality (when it is a matter of stigmatizing, or describing his lived reality.) ".../Our houses trembled in the valley of Fear../," the poet says in the poem "Dhe gjaku nuk duket" [And the Blood Is Not Seen], p. 23. According to the logic of the creation of mythological factors in antiquity, he creates his own poetic elements "... And Dropull swims. / The waves that the God of Terror raises are mountains / every day travelers fall into the sea /... No Theseus travels with this ship /..." (Zarballas, 1992, p. 51). In the second example we have the creation of a god, that of Terror, that aesthetically interacts with a real mythological hero, Theseus.

The poem "Llambri" [Easter], p. 84, constitutes a special case where the poetic narrative is placed in the past. The myth belongs to the future in the form of hope. This is achieved through the usage of verbs in the future tense by the poetic subject who narrates in a moment of the past. The poetic subject unfolds the hope that after the banning of religion, Easter will be re-celebrated one day in his place. The poet is not interested in telling us when this will happen. He is more interested in showing us the

belief that it will happen. To realize this, he uses time. Through it he brings the moment of the celebration of Easter closer. In parallel, he is helped by the approach of the angle of view upon the event. He realizes this by using as many verbs as possible and bringing many details from these celebrations. The poem begins: "Once Easter will come also to our villages /..." It informs us of the moment of waiting. The time when Easter will come is still undetermined. Then, the poet continues in the second verse, "The swallows will clatter their scissors to cut the ribbon / tied on two old olive trees in the center of the village /..." And shortly after he informs us "Easter today! /..." The narrative after this indeed follows actions in the future tense, but they have an extraordinary density and the angle of view approaches very close upon them. The certainty of the poetic subject that Easter will come is expressed with the verses "...we will come from the graves / to tell the good news to our grandfathers /..." and from "once" that we had the first announcement for the coming of Easter, he closes the poem by telling us that this "once" has approached very much, has become "tomorrow."

As a final word for this note on A. Zarballas, we would mention that continuous request toward him for more productivity. But apparently the poet, disappointed by the developments that followed after the 1990s, seems to be leaving less and less place

to literature and is dealing with the evidence, in a different manner, at least, of the history of "his place" in all directions.

## Conclusion

In concluding this monograph, the lingering impression after continuous revision is that, although much has been said, one remains indebted to the object and defined objectives. Nevertheless, among the things we have discussed, the following may be highlighted as the most essential: Traditionally and theoretically, it is true that the Literature of the Greek Minority in Albania constitutes a reality accepted by all. Equally true is the fact that this reality has been accepted, at times as a known phenomenon unworthy of attention and at times as a "taboo," attention to which causes concern. This situation led the various factors connected to it to adopt different stances toward the same object. The worst aspect is that these stances do not address the essence of this literature, its nature and function. Thus, there are no answers regarding its characteristics as a contact literature of a region. There are no evaluations of the extent to which and how it created its own individuality, or the extent to which it could play the role of intermediary between the two literatures in contact and the extent to which it benefited itself, and so forth. These concerns determined our object, leading to the conclusion that this literature is connected to a cultural region with its own characteristics. The creators and bearers of this literature ethnically belong to the Greek nation as a territorial continuation and politically to the Albanian state. Its literary product developed in close dependence on the social, political, and historical factors that acted upon its cultural identity during the period of its existence as a minority within the Albanian state, as well as prior to this geopolitical moment. To achieve our objective in determining the distinguishing characteristics of this literature, we followed two paths: First, we deemed it necessary to confront this literature with the factors influencing its general character traits. This refers to the category of general principles of comparative literary historiography. Under conditions of total absence of a theoretical base on the historiography of this literature and its characteristics, one of the first problems of our work was that of periodization and nomenclature. For the periodization of this literature, we preferred the principle of adopting historic-political periodization, interwoven with Mukarovsky's principle, according to which the historical treatment of literature occurs in a double interweaving: as "development" of its internal "structures" and as "creation" in relation to the "external" social reality. The pursuit of this path is connected to the fact that the Literature of the Greek Minority in Albania developed as a literature influenced by historical and political developments. On the

other hand, the historiographies of Albanian and Greek literatures followed more or less the same principles. As a result, we distinguished the following periods: The first period includes the stage of direct contact with the literary creation of folk tradition. The second period coincides with the long Ottoman occupation until the birth of the independent Albanian state. A distinguishing characteristic is that it developed as an inseparable part of the general Greek literary movement. It developed as philological activity and led the Enlightenment and Romantic movement of the region. Although it fell within the field of letters, it aimed at obtaining and cultivating in the consciousness of the time a Western-anti-Ottoman vision. The period up to World War II. A characteristic of this period is the development of literature with the status of being an ethnic minority within the Albanian state. This literature continues to maintain contacts with the literature of the mother nation. Meanwhile, contacts with Albanian literature are so weak that they cannot be taken into account. The period of socialist realism. Communications with Greek national literature are almost non-existent. The numerous influences from Albanian literature are more a consequence of the creative method. The literature of this period developed mainly as poetry. From a literature written in the Greek language in its beginnings, it turned into a bilingual literature in which the Albanian element, especially toward the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, became dominant. We classified the literature of this period as "imprisoned literature" (comprising the literary creation of people who, because of their opposition to the communist regime, were physically or morally imprisoned, interned, or had compromised biographies) and "literature written within the system". We divided the latter into two groups. In the first group we included literature characterized by creation with self-censorship, and in the second group, deeply committed creation. The period in development. We consider this to be after the 1990s. It is characterized by rapid development and the cultivation of almost all literary genres and types. Contacts with Pan-Hellenic literature are free, while contacts with Albanian literature become increasingly rare. As an intermediate phase is that of the World War II period. Special importance was accorded to the main authors of this literature in all periods. Regarding nomenclature, we preferred the term "Literature Pertaining to the Greek Ethnic Minority in Albania" to designate the entire literary heritage of this minority even prior to the establishment of borders, and the term "Literature of the Greek Ethnic Minority in Albania" for the literary heritage after this historical moment. Proceeding from the characteristics of this literature, the method used is that of a comparative

historiography strongly supported by the sociology of literature, as well as the method of comparative analysis of representative works by the prominent poets of the Greek Minority in the post-World War II period, specifically P. Çukas, N. Kacalidas, and A. Zarballas. The comparison is made on several planes based on the relationships of folk creation with nature, culture, society, and with the literary production of other authors. As a viewpoint, the experiential mode of evaluating the literary phenomena of this region was preferred. Second, we followed the path of studying internal literary phenomena. We distinguished the category of comparative planes of structure or internal literary stratification: the phonetic stratum with the meaning of euphony and stylistics; the semantic stratum based on the word and the meaningful product that springs from its use according to the rules of poetic language; the stratum of plots, motifs, and especially myths, and so forth. In this endeavour, we operated with several categories of relationships of literature with nature, humanity, and metaphysics, according to the relationships individual-society, nature-culture, freedom-slavery, life-death as typological criteria of the folk tradition carried over into cultivated literature. The comparative planes include comparison with folk tradition, with cultivated Greek poetry, with poets of Albanian literature, and comparison among them. On these comparative planes as well, several levels are observed. The objective was that, relying on the aesthetic laws of the function and nature of literature, we would provide as complete an idea as possible regarding issues connected with the historiography of the development of the Literature of the Greek Minority. We treated this issue within the system of spatial and temporal reference, as essential and determining elements of the course of this literature. Likewise, we approached: the ethnic affiliation of its bearers and creators in relation to the literature produced; the relationship ratios with Pan-Hellenic and Albanian literature and with the Albanian people in general, and so forth. Viewed within the temporal reference system, a characteristic of many of these factors remains their variability depending on the geopolitical changes of the region in which this literature was born and developed. This reality has been seen as a process of differentiation from the cultural and literary identity of the mother nation, which, during the dictatorship period, resulted in language being almost the only common element between the literature of this community and Greek literature. Whereas, in the case of relations with Albanian literature, it resulted in language remaining almost the only distinguishing element between this literature and that of the Greek Minority. A factor that influenced excessively in preserving the distinct identity of this literature is

the folklore of this region and the relationships of literature with it. In connection with this conclusion, it is appropriate to emphasize that the work, both in its aspect of the effort to construct the history of this literature and in the study of representative works by the prominent poets of the Greek Minority, departs from and argues the idea that this literature has continuous communication with traditional life and literary folklore. In this communication are carried over the archetypes created by the Pan-Hellenic mythological cosmos and classical Greek literature, as well as the refractions that these archetypes underwent in the later folk tradition, in the later epic, ballads, myths, and legends of Pan-Hellenic and local character. We believe that the efforts to study the Literature of the Greek Minority from this viewpoint remain interesting in the work. As such, this literature is evaluated as constituting a contribution and a constituent value for all Albanian literature and culture. (Only in terms of ideological framework may it be considered equivalent to all committed Albanian literature with language as its only distinguishing feature.) Simultaneously, it also constitutes a value and a different characteristic for Greek literature. These characteristics spring from the fact that this is a contact literature. In historical currents, its contacts are at times bilateral and at times unilateral. The work emphasizes that the relationships of this region's literature with the literature of the mother nation passed from the stage of an identified literature, prior to the establishment of borders; to a literature with no contact, in the post-World War II period; to pass, in the post-1990s period of the last century, to the stage of full recovery of contacts with the literature of the mother nation, up to attempts at identification with it. In relation to Albanian literature, these contacts passed from natural ones in the period prior to the establishment of borders, to the almost complete loss of these contacts in the period up to World War II. In the post-World War II period until the 1990s, we have intensive communication with tendencies toward identification (regardless of language) with Albanian literature, to pass again to the opposite extreme, similar to that of the 1912-1939 period. This situation brought about a phenomenon that can rarely be encountered in the history of the development of cultural and artistic phenomena, particularly under the integrative and globalizing developments of the last century and beyond. It led to the reduction of the possibilities of the Literature of the Greek Minority to gain the role of double transmitter between the two literatures, the Greek and the Albanian. The subject matter of the study is organized upon this structure. It is divided into three parts and 10 chapters. The first two parts are connected with historiography according to periodization. The dividing

timeline of the parts is the World War II period as an event determining the change in the creative method of literature and the relationship ratios of its analogous literatures in contact. The third part engages with the study of selected poetry by P. Çukas, N. Kacalidas, and A. Zarballas. The selection of poetry was made by the poets themselves, considered as prominent in the Literature of the Greek Minority in the post-World War II period. At the end of the study there is an almost extensive bibliography of authors of the Ethnic Minority Literature, included or not in this study. The effort gave us the first archive of titles of works of this literature and their authors. Finally, we believe that within the framework of the objective we set for ourselves, for a study of literature pertaining to the Greek Minority in Albania, we achieved the objective. The study not only organizes the history of this literature but views it within the comparative framework on several planes: in that of the heritage and actuality of relations with the literature of the mother nation and that of Albania, in its own internal reality and in that of Albania. It is understood that it would have been an impossible undertaking had we set as our objective the study, at all levels, of all literature, or of a specific genre, or of a single period. It was a difficult undertaking stemming mainly from the fact that it is the first study of this kind with the literature of the Greek minority as its object. This leaves much room for criticism, suggestions, and debate. All are welcome. But more welcome is the desire to open a new window not only in the study, systematization, and comparative promotion of this literature, but also to view it differently from how it has been treated by all factors responsible for the literary and cultural reality of the region in question. Claiming to have done only something modest, we conclude by saying that this study as well proved that the appetite was whetted.

The archive and the close readings also have different evidentiary functions. The primary bibliography aims at documentary breadth, whereas the interpretation depends on poet-selected corpora. Because that selection may exclude works the poets no longer valued or wished to circulate, the conclusions about individual poetics are necessarily provisional. Future research should compare the selected texts with early editions, periodical publications, and unpublished material.

Gjirokastër, research updated 2001-2022; explanatory and editorial revision, 2026

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Reference policy. The secondary and theoretical list contains works used in the argument. The primary bibliography has a different, archival function: it records works by minority authors whether or not each item is individually discussed. Publication details that could not be established from the source material have not been supplied by conjecture. General periodical titles and uncited works-consulted entries have been removed; specific articles used in the study remain in the secondary list.

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