

Technium.

41/2023

2023
A new decade for social changes

Technium
Social Sciences

Powered by

PLUS
COMMUNICATION



International
Communication & PR



Gjergj Kastrioti – Skanderbeg between Literature and Historiography

Kamber Kamberi, Labinot Berisha

University "Fehmi Agani" Gjakova

kamberkamberi@uni-gjk.org, labinot.berisha@uni-gjk.org

Abstract. The figure of Gjergj Kastrioti-Skanderbeg has aroused interest from an early age in historiographers, writers, creators of other arts, but also in military doctrines. With his feats, he drew the attention of various circles and institutions in many countries of the world. The beginnings of the treatment are from the glorious period of 25 years of heroic resistance against the Ottoman Empire, and it is especially emphasized, after his death. The creations are among the most diverse and come from different countries, which means that his heroism had crossed his national horizon. His relationship with the three popes and the proclamation "Athleta Christi" (Champion of Christ) prove his importance and the role he played in the course of his people's history, but also beyond. Also, alliances and coalitions with various European countries for the protection of lands, ethnicity and Western culture make this creativity very rich. Therefore, to approach this corpus for a summarized, perhaps superficial study, a great commitment is required and a selection that does not mean that it is the best. However, in this approach, multiple study methods are required or present, such as deductive, inductive, synthesizing, analytical, historical, comparative, etc. All these are in function to present a reasoned approach with a conclusion based on factual works. Since the volume of this topic is quite wide, a comprehensive approach was impossible, which means that the presentation in this paper is not comprehensive and exhaustive.

Keywords. Skanderbeg, Ismail Kadare, literature, historiography, European

Introduction

The literature about the national hero of the Albanians, Gjergj Kastrioti-Skanderbeg, as a central and master figure of the time, is quite extensive, dating back to his lifetime (second half of the 15th century) and continues to this day, almost in intercontinental size. He, with his feats, attracted the attention of creators for nearly six centuries, thus creating a literary art as rare as it is interesting, but also with many puzzles. In general, it is a literature based and argued with facts, which is proven by many historical data, but which sometimes comes out a little mixed with myth and legend¹. This literature, which is based on our historical-legendary hero,

¹ "The question of whether there is a myth about Gjergj Kastrioti, the main character of the Albanian chronicle, would be pointless. No similar feat, let alone a rare glory like his, could be thought of outside the intervention of myth. In a world where "myth" usually means something overstating, embellishing, related to fame, the question may seem a bit strange. But the answer may seem more surprising than the question: the Kastrioti of Albanians, not only does not gain anything from the myth, but loses, not to say dramatically, loses from it". See I. Kadare: *Dispute*, "Onufri", Tirana. 2012, p. 125.

his exploits together with his fellow soldiers, but also of a wider discourse, extends everywhere in many countries of the world and is expressed in different ways and forms. Considering all its composition and peculiarities, its extent and specifics, it can therefore be classified, grouped and divided into periods with different ramifications.

From the very beginning, we are dealing with an epistolary, documentary literature that, by the nature of its presentation, expresses the state and reports of this period. This grouping includes hundreds of mutual reports between chancelleries mainly in Europe, related to this great name, with his close relations with the Vatican, his relations with the three Popes, and especially his friendship with Pope Pius II². This course of events increased the alarming concern of Christianity in the face of the great danger of the Ottoman invasion, therefore Europe saw an insurmountable barrier in Albania and Gjergj Kastrioti alone. This is also illustrated by Pope Calixtus III with his letter addressed to Skanderbeg, where, among other things, the following words are found that give a high evaluation to this personality:

*"... you are becoming more and more excellent, with your bravery and your actions which will be remembered above those of all Catholic princes..."*³

This is also the reason from which various chronicles and writings with historical, but also literary content, with figures, metaphors and epithets of the most different types appear.⁴ He was called with the highest epithets of the time, such as: "Sword and Shield of Christianity", "Champion of Christ", "Defender of European Civilization", "Great Son of the Church", numerous assessments and descriptions in other writings in continuity of time.

In addition, it is a type of literature that emerges from the chronicles, or even other writings with anathema, cursing and insulting colors full of hatred. They are emotional manifestations of various circles full of fever and anxious concerns, which revolve around this great personality. There are hundreds of reports, decrees, and other imperial documents that also contain orders for the elimination of the "rebel", the "ungrateful", the number one "enemy" of the former largest empire in the world.

Literature about Gjergj Kastrioti-Skanderbeg

Another early and interesting literature about Skanderbeg was created during his lifetime. It is an oral literature created mainly by his Albanian contemporaries. This trend sometimes takes other directions, especially becoming rude and destructive after the death of the hero. The invaders planned and acted ruthlessly, forbidding and violating everything that was related to the great name of Gjergj Kastrioti-Skanderbeg, the culture and the world that surrounded him. They did not even stop and were not satisfied with denying and banning their religion, their language, tradition, heritage, pride, but they also mysteriously disappeared his remains, which are thought to have been buried in the church of Saint Kolli in Lezha.⁵

² Francesco Filelfo (1398-1481) wrote many letters in support of Pope Pius II, who was doing his best to organize the anti-Ottoman crusade with commander Skanderbeg. In Filelfo's letters, to convince the population that the crusade that was being prepared would reap victory, he wrote: "We have Skanderbeg with us and we have Albanians as allies." (Alushi, Demiri, 2009:34).

³ Pope Calixtus III, Gjergj Kastrioti, the Lord of Albania (Theiner, Monumenta Sacra), Vol. 2, no. 6, p. 303-304.

⁴ "Skanderbeg is a great warrior and trained long before the Turks... These (Albanians) are such a strict and fighting people that they were the only ones among all the other nations between the Danube, the Adriatic and the borders of Italy, who always faced the Turks with great bravery and, attacking from all sides, very serious damage was caused to them". (Filelffi, Rikaldi, V. X, year 1464, no. 13. p. 394).

⁵ "History tells nothing about this undoing of him. Did he himself deal with it when he was alive? Were his followers taken away? Apart from a legend of Ottoman soldiers, the spread of which was sometimes encouraged

Despite the efforts, persecutions and other forms of coercion to eliminate and disappear the figure of the hero from the memory of Arbanons, this great name continued to be written about in the first decades after his death.

Starting with the Albanian humanist Marin Barleti⁶ with the work "The History of Scanderbeg", Martin Segoni⁷ with "The Story of Gjergj Kastrioti", which has been called by researchers a historical sketch⁸, the Anonymous of Tivar (so called because the author's name is not known, and with some pages of the work missing, according to Biemmi) with a work about Skanderbeg (circa 1480), Dhimitër Frëngu with his story about Skanderbeg entitled: "Commentary on the affairs of the Turks and of the Lord Skanderbeg"⁹, Frang Bardhi with the apology for Skanderbeg with the title "Gjergj Kastrioti, the Prince of the Albanians". Fragments, forms, dedications and other different writings by other authors are also known. Among all these, the most prominent place is occupied by the great humanist from Shkodran, Marin Barleti, with the work: "The History of Scanderbeg" published between 1508-1510 in Rome¹⁰.

According to Alex Buda, it is said that he (Marin Barleti) was "a high-level writer and a historian who tries to build the correct framework of the Hero's life". This magnificent historical-literary work becomes a reference point and source for many writers and historians, strategists of war doctrines and other subsequent artists from all over the world. Also, this literature dedicated to Skanderbeg was created mainly in Western Europe, distributed at different times after the hero's death¹¹, as well as by many writers, artists and historians.¹² Among these authors, German, French, Italian, English, Spanish, Greek, Slavic, etc. Many of the works of these authors are related to the fair and positive treatment of Skanderbeg's figure and era, but there are those who, for various reasons and purposes, make distortions and deviations of the truth by treating them unfairly. right, but false that do not coincide with

and sometimes punished, according to the judgment of which Kastriot would be more dangerous, the living or the dead, body or soul, no other chronicle has been able to explain the mystery". (Kadare, 2012:136 – 137).

⁶ "The influence and importance of Barleti goes beyond narrow national borders; it has a European, international character. With his progressive ideas, with the majestic figure of the legendary Skanderbeg and with his talented pen, Barleti became not only the most worthy defender, exponent and hymnist of the name and glory of his homeland, but also one of the most fervent preachers and most attractive of humanity. Barleti's work, leaving Skanderbeg in people's memory as a symbol of freedom and the fight against the invaders, became a means of education and mobilization for all of Europe." (Prifti, 2004:43).

⁷ "With the work of Martin Segoni, the Albanian scholarly world was recognized late, in 1970, through the Italian scholar Agostino Pertuzi." (Hoxha, 2007:17).

⁸ "With Martin Segon, interest in the Albanian theme appears for the first time in our literature, which will find excellent followers with Barleti and Beçikemi." (Hoxha, 2007:17).

⁹ "This historian is the author of a work with first-hand historical source values, authentic and humanistic, the fruit of a long work, published 12 years after the Hero's death, a work which, unfortunately, has not found the right place as a reference and support in the treatises of various researchers of Skanderbeg's time". (Alushi, Demiri, 2009:28)

¹⁰ "This work is the main source, the second in chronological order, for Skanderbeg's life. The first source is the work published in 1480 in Venice by an Albanian, whose name is unknown, but who is said to have been from Tivar." ("Vatra", 2004:10).

¹¹ "Years later, Kastrioti, doubly free, disembodied, even unburied, in other words, in the perfect conditioning of a ghost, would start his weaving across the continent." (Kadare, 2012:137).

¹² "We can say without exaggeration that today in the field of Skanderbeg studies, the problem of Gjergj Kastrioti and world literature is one of the most important and the most current. Clarifying the different aspects of this problem would help to understand more deeply the greatness of the work of the hero and his era in the ideological and moral plane, the important international role of the war that the Albanian people did under the leadership of Skanderbeg and the reasons for the vitality of inappropriateness of this great historical figure." (Kostallari, Vol. I:371).

historical and scientific reality. Therefore, it can be said that the works of these dubious authors are already known by readers and especially by scholars in the relevant fields.

In addition to these well-known authors and their literary or historical works, there are also operas, poems, various fragmentary prose, etc., but there are also other types of works, from visual art such as: paintings, engravings, sculptures and reliefs, by authors who they are from different countries of the world.

In this whole, there are also literary compositions that are against the figure of the hero, or have as their goal the alienation, disfigurement or falsification of the history of Skanderbeg, or the appearance of the historical hero of the Albanians in a different way. This happened also due to the lack of information, lack of knowledge of the historical circumstances, but it could also have happened differently, that through these distortions it is intended to achieve certain goals. One of these transfigurations appears in the book entitled "Chronicle of the Origin and Progress of the Ottoman Gate" by the author Saidin Turku (Saad-el-Din), surprisingly translated and published in Spanish in 1652. Here, the Hero, is treated mainly as a symbol of evil and wickedness. This work, especially the translation in Europe, had a goal, a possible effect, which I. Kadare neatly breaks down in his work "The Dispute":

"Skanderbeg's fame was, in essence, dangerous, because it was associated not only with the memory of an Ottoman failure, but because it dangerously damaged an Ottoman strategy in action. The dream of bringing Europe to its knees continued. Unlike Albania, which, tired and numb, was entering the second century of captivity, was forgetting Kastriot, Europe did not separate from him. This proved that it not only knew the Ottoman dream, but continued to turn a blind eye to its threat." (Kadare, 2012:141)

With these recognitions of various existing works, but from the discoveries and new literary, historical, and other forms everywhere, the truth about the phenomenon of Gjergj Kastrioti-Skanderbeg and his era is being illuminated and completed.¹³

A period of Albanian literature, with prominent authors that shows the treatment of this topic, is that of the period of the National Renaissance during the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century. This literature constitutes the peak of the dedication of the period of Skanderbeg and the portrayal of his figure, by the Albanian and Arbëresh authors of Italy. In the context of the time circumstances it is a relatively large approach in terms of quantity and value compared to the previous treatment. In a way, it is a revival of this idol of the Albanians. In the circumstances of the creation of nation-states in Europe, in the general efforts to gain independence from various countries of the Balkans, while Albania was still languishing under Ottoman captivity and the claims of its neighbors, the Albanian Renaissance (and especially the Arbëresh of Italy) with their entirely Western orientation, glorified the great figure of Skanderbeg and made him part of the general national consciousness.

Without romanticism we can figuratively say that that literature played the role of the many battles that the hero had fought in his life. The question arises, is there romanticism, is there mythicism, is there realism in this literature about the figure of the hero? It has all three of these at the same time in its entirety. This literature that was created around the figure of Skanderbeg can therefore be said to be half-romantic and half-realistic. The question would be

¹³ "Great knowledge of the military art may be drawn from the life of Gustavus Adolphus, and from that of Charles XII, king of Sweden, as well as from the life of Ziska of Bohemia; and it would be an invaluable work, if a sufficient account of the exploits of Skanderbeg could be secured, for he excels among all the generals of old and of the present day as the leader of a small defending army. I have found Skanderbeg in the History of Turkey, but nowhere else..." (Wolfe, Devizes, 1756:296-297).

asked, where is the realism, or where is the truth? Is it not known and real that, in addition to dozens of pashas who led the expeditions against Skanderbeg, among them two sultans were defeated at the head of their armies in the forest lands. Of course, there are also romantic shades in all the renaissance, from the first to the last. There is not a single pen of theirs that did not mention Skanderbeg, in their own ways, some briefly, some with comprehensive works. The "Great Father" of this Renaissance, Naim Frashëri, with the verse work "The History of Skanderbeg" which seems to have been written hastily as a necessity of the time, because the nation was in danger (especially after the Congress of Berlin and the League of Prizren, 1878). It is a heroic epic that describes with a powerful pathos the general national ideals, which were in accordance with his humanistic and romantic ideal. This historical poem (with over ten thousand verses) fulfills the requirements of the time for raising hopes and strengthening the national faith to mobilize in all aspects a liberation war against Turkey.

Also across the sea, people from Arbëresh like Jeronim De Rada, who would write works about this period and directly about the hero "Misfortunate Scanderbeg", Gavril Dara Junior, also about the glorious era and the Hero of the "The Last Song of Bala", Dhimitër Kamarda, who calls him with nostalgia and pride, the Great Kastriot, Zef Serembe praised Garibaldi by comparing him with our Gjergj, Skiroi and other authors. Therefore, their works are a program of national awareness, of awakening general moralization with the figure of Kastriot and the period of the "Great Age". So, without detailed analysis, it can be freely said that Renaissance literature laid the foundations for later literature to return to this great figure of the Albanians. In continuation of this time, it is worth mentioning the research works of the Romanian historian C. Marinesco with a work published in 1923, the German historian Babinger with the work about the era of Skanderbeg, published in 1931, a work of his also published in 1934, the qualified researcher Ohly, with a paper published in 1933, etc.

As always, at different times the vanguard of national consciousness was literature. Writers were still at the forefront of literary dedication, regardless of religion, profession or origin. Gjergj Fishta with his work, which resonated everywhere, with the reflection of a different situation with the hero's death, with his resurrection after several centuries out of concern for the homeland. After so many centuries, the Hero can't sit still even in Heaven because of the troubles for the fate of the homeland, in his melodrama "Under the Roof of Heaven." Ndre Mjeda, with his warm verses, especially in the poem "Lissus" in another optimistic form, brought Kastriot to his compatriots to revive their hopes. In the same way, Etëhem Haxhiademi with his way of presentation indirectly reflects the figure and role of Skanderbeg and his era with a literary drama. Even Faik Konica with his talent and elegance in publications everywhere in magazines and newspapers, Albania, Trumpet of Krujë, Vatra (Hearth) etc. with his essays and especially as a reflection of this in an essay in the book "Albania". Fan Noli, who, not by chance, wrote with the dedication of a rare master the scientific study "History of Skanderbeg, Lord of Arbëria (1405-1468)", 1921. Athanas Gegaj, with the dissertation entitled: "L'Albanie et l'invasion turque au XV-e siècle", published in French in 1937, Ernest Koliqi with the dramatic poem "Scanderbeg's War Cry" and others. Now we have a more substantive, more scientific, more artistic and more diverse literature and treatment that is mainly created by Albanians everywhere. An effort is made to finally square and defend the truth, remove doubts and eliminate malicious tendencies that were often directed and were directed against the hero. Such a serious effort was also made by Fan Noli with his study, who already in the introduction of the paper emphasizes the importance and authenticity of the hero's deeds:

"...the main point in the history of Skanderbeg is a historical fact, on which, however, there should not be even a hint of doubt. In 1443, Skanderbeg took control of the Kruja castle and defended it continuously against Murat II (1421-1451) and Mehmet II (1451-1480), for a quarter of a century. Kruja fell only in 1478, ten years after Skanderbeg's death. As a result, the main problem in Skanderbeg's career is this: Did Murat II and Mehmet II one after the other, make any serious attempt to conquer Kruja, and were they each time forced by Skanderbeg to give up the siege of withdraw? If we answer this question in the affirmative, and if these great expeditions led personally by two great sultans are proven facts, then everything else becomes of secondary importance." (Noli, 2004:12)

The actualization of the Skanderbeg era, its illumination, authenticity and role in the history of peoples, was fair and necessary for general recognition. In the first place, this would serve the Albanians to recognize this history of this period, their national hero and trampled identity. This was a call of time, a kind of resurrection of Christ to give hope to people, their despair and great disappointment.

In continuation of this creative work, today's literature is created after the Second World War and continues even further by writers, poets and artists of other fields, who deal with the figure of Kastrioti and his period. So, Skanderbegiadae is still relevant today after more than five hundred years, remaining as a topic of treatment and inspiration for Albanian creators, but also foreigners, that is why definitions are also given for this topic, such as that of the literary scholar A. Vinca: "... The figure of Skanderbeg has been and continues to be present in the entire span of Albanian literature - from Barleti to Kadare, but also before and after them."¹⁴

Written works dedicated to "Skanderbegiadae", either in prose, such as: Sabri Godo "Skanderbeg", Haki Stërmilli "The Knight of Skanderbeg", Skënder Drini "The Albanian of our Ridges", Bilal Xhaferri "The Fall of Berat", Ismail Kadare "The Castle" (Eng.trans. "The Siege"), Virgjil Kule "Gjergj Kastrioti Skanderbeg – The Last Crusader", Dhosi Liperi "Skanderian Mythology" and many others, regardless of whether they treat the figure of Skanderbeg directly or indirectly, often their meeting points are so unavoidable in words and messages.

Looking at all these Albanian writers, poets, and even historians who have created works about the figure and the glorious era of the Hero, it must be singled out one fact, that in this general mosaic, the stones that Kadare has placed are brilliant. Therefore, since he is the most dedicated and unique among today's writers in dealing with the figure of Skanderbeg and his era, in defending the historical truth and his great role, for all this he certainly deserves a special consideration.

Ismail Kadare has approached this important topic from different perspectives, multiple and original, bringing to our literature innovations for the time when they were written, but also the later ones that are current for today and also mark culminating achievements. The works that are directly related to the figure of Skanderbeg and his era, a period that can also be called "Skanderbegiadae", Kadare wrote in poetry and prose, or even in the so-called *literary essay*. This work spans more than half a century. The date of the first writing in poetry is the year 1957 for the exhumation of Skanderbeg, a topic he returns to after eleven years (1968)

¹⁴ "Skanderbeg triumphantly returns to Albanian literature in the 60s, becoming a frequent object of inspiration especially on the eve of the 500th anniversary of his death - in 1967-1968, but also later. There is almost no contemporary Albanian poet, regardless of where he lives and creates, in Albania, in Kosovo and in other ethnic Albanian countries or even in the diaspora, who has not dedicated a verse or poem to the impressive figure of Skanderbeg." (Vinca, 2004:37)

with a rework under the title "Ballad of the Exhumation". Two years later (in 1970), he publishes the well-known novel "The Castle", which deals with the theme of one of the 24 battles of the hero and his comrades. Rather than a classic picture, the hero here is not in the plan of the main character, but is presented in another form, as a "spirit", where the action and his main role in the whole work are felt. This spirit is observed or felt everywhere in hundreds and thousands of people, comrades and opponents as well.

Following the chronological order of writing the works, one should look at the other poem, "Death of Skanderbeg" which, outside of the classic narrative description, the author sees the figure of the hero identified with the homeland, even when he is on his deathbed. His body and limbs are figuratively the map of the homeland. In 1976 he once again returned to the figure of Skanderbeg with the poem titled "The Portrait of Skanderbeg" which, together with two other poems, constitute a wonderful artistic trinity, poems with which he manages to poetically complete the figure of Gjergj Kastrioti - Skanderbeg in three states.

In the poetic volume "Sunny Motifs" (1968), the author has a poem entitled "In Rome at Midnight". The poem is motivated during a trip of Kadare to Rome, where under the midnight rain, he searches for a medieval inn where Skanderbeg stayed five centuries ago. His shadow stretches figuratively across space and time, and the horse's clatter also sounds under the rain five centuries later. These, including the poem "Terror in Kosovo", where a resurrection of the hero is assumed, after time has called him, constitute some of Kadare's main poetic creations that are directly related to the figure of the hero or "Skanderbegiadae."

The portrait of Skanderbeg, presented at different times, often with fragmentary nuances, or indirectly, is also given in many of his works. Apparently, the figure of the hero is constantly in the consciousness of the writer and appears to him as a permanent preoccupation and concern, wherever he is. Kadare brought this hero with literary or non-literary means among the Albanians as an image, as a persistent hope of freedom and a message of remembrance in the frequent dramatic events experienced by the Albanian nation.

An interesting treatment that comes from a lot of information and historical knowledge and that is transformed into literary art with philosophical nuances about the figure of the hero after death, his grave, the emptiness of the grave, or the condition of the unburied, Kadare also does in the novel "The Secret Report" (2008). Here too, his importance, feats and role in the living are shown, reflecting the complexity of the drama even after death. Even the soil of the grave could not cover his deeds and his name. And the tomb, even if it was, or was considered to be, is not only figuratively empty.¹⁵ Therefore, this state, the secrets that that grave hides, were creating other states in succession, with many question marks.¹⁶ Including all this, the

¹⁵ "Since he was not found in the grave, because he never died, or even if he went into it, he did not stay in it, he has carried the secret to another nowhere, such that, as it was said, neither thought nor language have presence. History offers nothing about this undoing of him? Apart from a legend of Ottoman soldiers, the spread of which was sometimes encouraged and sometimes punished, according to the judgment of which Kastrioti would be more dangerous, the living or the dead, body or soul, no other chronicle has been able to explain the mystery." (Kadare, 2012:136-137)

¹⁶ "All afternoon and part of the night he was busy with drafting the report. Twice he tore the sheets, to start over again. Never had the use of Ottoman seemed so difficult, if not impossible. All the work was in the central opinion of the report, said the Vizier of Order. The bad thing was that it was exactly what terrified Tuz Efendi, the thought that now that the Ottomans had brought Albania to its knees, they had to get rid of its ghost, Kastriot." (Kadare, 2008:450).

hero of the Albanians, regardless of whether he was buried or "unburied", the Ottomans had to undo this period with his whole figure, or his ghost.¹⁷

All these works of Kadare, where the figure of Kastriot is treated, are reflected as a closing dome in the last essay "The Dispute", where this author returns to the treatment of the figure of the hero in the plan of the times and beyond it. Interesting and intriguing conclusions emerge from this treatment. However these conclusions are argumentative, they have an indisputable consistency. Thus, suddenly, the question arises, how is it possible this excellent approach, this transcendental, multidimensional and multifaceted combination to finally bring a wide picture that is only Kadarean for the complex figure of the Hero, and that as: unparalleled warrior, rare military strategist, special commander, wise chieftain, defender of civilization, staunch to the point of legend, maker of alliances, meanwhile, which was for the time something rare and unremarkable, Kadare also treats him as a *political being*. Thus completing the complex prop, he highlights and focuses in the right place of the picture all sides invisible or unnoticeable before. Ultimately, thus creating a lasting image of him that comes across as earthly as well as heavenly. Inviolable and timeless hero.

Kadare also elaborates on the hero's vision of the time and general circumstances, on the ability of his political consciousness. The awareness that he could free the country for a while, but he was more aware that without the help of Europe, he could not stand for long in front of the huge Ottoman empire. Therefore, he traveled for agreements, help and attempts at alliances, meetings with cardinals, popes, the king of Naples, and others. His help with the army, bringing European soldiers to fight in Albania, was his Western vision. And there was no other way for the Balkan lords to remain outside the European file. Therefore, the author sees Skanderbeg as a intermediary: "... between himself and Europe he put a knot, a mysterious relationship, what he knew better than anything else in this world: war." (Kadare, 2012:53).

Conclusion

The brilliant *literary essay* of Kadare, which is as much philosophical, can be considered as a paradigm, as a key to enter the interior of the Skanderbeg matter and also to find the code and the final and most complete breakdown of the figure of Skanderbeg, his role, of his era and permanent reflection.

As a conclusion, therefore, we can say that it is the feats of the Albanian hero, which make up the entire artistic edifice of several centuries treated everywhere. All these writers, historians and artists that we mentioned and others who are numerous and could be added to them, although the conceptualists express it in different forms, generally have the same focus, meeting point - *Skanderbeg as a magnificent emblem not only national, but also European*.

Therefore, the importance of this period, or the dimensions of Kastrioti, after all this treatment odyssey, can be illustrated with a definition, both literary and philosophical, given by Kadare:

"Looking for a simple but lapidary phrase, to give the dimensions of the hero, Noli mentioned the march of two famous sultans against him: Murat II and Mehmet II. The logic

¹⁷ "When Albania thought that nothing was left of Gjergj Kastrioti, it was impossible to grasp that it was Albania, and only Albania, that had the greatest treasure of the hero: his physical absence. For it was not easy to grasp that while a body, even the body with the grave that held it, could be moved to another place, a void could never be moved. It would remain in the life of lives, where it was first discovered, that is, where the absence occurred. And the emptiness, in other words, the spiritual body of Kastriot, had started life precisely in the cathedral of Lezha, in Albania." (Kadare, 2012:56).

was simple: as long as the two great emperors made this journey because of Kastriot, this was enough to measure the stature of the hero." (Kadare, 2012:234).

Consequently, Ismail Kadare, knowing well and generally studying the works about Skanderbeg and his era, from Barleti until today, reaches interesting and indisputable conclusions, which are not encountered by other authors. The treatments done now and for centuries, in different places and forms, to focus the phenomenon, General Gjergj Kastrioti, in the long-standing attention, everywhere.

If the truth has ever fluctuated or guessed, the reality of the phenomenon of Gjergj Kastrioti-Skanderbeg as an "Honorary Citizen" of Europe and beyond, is indisputable. Therefore, for his merits, Ismail Kadare would deserve the crown of the sovereign.

References

- [1] Aliu, G. (2016). *Romanet e Ismail Kadaresë 1963-1990*, Instituti Albanologjik, Prishtinë.
- [2] Alushi, Q. & Demiri, M. (2009) *Skënderbeu (nga M. Barleti tek O. Schmitt*, Naimi, Tiranë.
- [3] Bardhi, F. (1967). *Skënderbeu (apologji)*, Naim Frashëri, Tiranë.
- [4] Barleti, M. (2004). *Historia e Skënderbeut*, Vatra, Shkup.
- [5] Dado, F. (2016) *Lexuesi në kurth, Estetika e Kadaresë*, Onufri, Tiranë.
- [6] Frashëri, K. (2002). *Skënderbeu - Jeta dhe vepra (1405-1468)*, Toena, Tiranë.
- [7] Hoxha, F. (2007). *Letërsi e hershme shqiptare*, Camaj-Pipa, Shkodër.
- [8] Jaka, Y. (1990). *Skënderbeu në letërsinë frënge*, Instituti Albanologjik i Prishtinës, Prishtinë.
- [9] Kadare, I. (2009). *Kështjella, Vepra 3*, Onufri, Tiranë.
- [10] Kadare, I. (2012). *Mosmarrëveshja*, Onufri, Tiranë.
- [11] Kostallari, A. *Figura e Skënderbeut në letërsinë botërore*, Konferenca e dytë e studimeve albanologjike, vëll. I, f. 371.
- [12] Kule, V. (2012). *Gjergj Kastrioti Skënderbeu- Kryqtari i fundit*, Copyright, Tiranë.
- [13] Lloshi, XH., Kuanrud, Xh. (2018). *Skënderbeu në vendet Nordike*, Instituti i Trashëgimisë Shpirtërore e Kulturore të Shqiptarëve, Shkup.
- [14] Mandala, M. (2012). *Studime filologjike për letërsinë romantike arbëreshe*, Naimi, Tiranë.
- [15] Mandala, M. (2009). *Ismailand-i dhe urat kronotopike kadareane*, Hylli i dritës, nr.1. Shkodër.
- [16] Mezini, A. (2007). *Gjergj Kastrioti, "hero" në Filipine*, "Iliria Post".
- [17] Noli, F. (2018). *Gjergj Kastrioti SKËNDERBEU*, Naimi, Tiranë.
- [18] Përliçev, G. (2021). *Skënderbeu*, Beqir Musliu, Gjiilan.
- [19] Plasari, A. (2018). *Skënderbeu, një histori politike*, Botimet IDK, Tiranë.
- [20] Simon D. C. (2000). *Lourdusamy, në parathënien Don Lush Gjergji, "Nëna e dashurisë"*, LSHK&FKK, Italy.
- [21] Sinani, Sh. (2009). *Për Prozën e Kadaresë*, Naimi, Tiranë.
- [22] Schmit, O. (2008). *Skënderbeu*, Tiranë.
- [23] Vinca, A. (2004). *Fije të pakëputura, "Pro Kultura"*, Shkup.