

The history of the characters of Albanian literature for children

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ABSTRACT: The history of Albanian children's literature has passed through different literary periods during its development. Initially, religious texts of medieval literature were used as such literature in schools, but pure children's fiction was born during the period of Albanian Romanticism, to continue further through the literary periods of Critical Realism, Sentimentalism, Symbolism, Social Realism, up to the current of post-modernism. During its development, we sometimes see this literature with religious ideas, sometimes with national ideas, sometimes with strong social criticism, sometimes with efforts to create gender equality, sometimes with left communist ideas. Thus, Albanian children's literature changed over time in its goals, changed in its artistic and ideological commitments: Albanian children's literature during its development was used not only for artistic effects, but it was often used by ideologues as a powerful tool for conveying various political, cultural, ideological, religious, and patriotic ideas to children. So, during its history, Albanian children's literature had not only an artistic role but also a social, economic, and political role. As such, children's literature has been an inseparable part of the political and cultural changes in Albania.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Children's Literature; Character; Albanian; Modern history. XIV-XIX Centuries.

1. *History of the character of Albanian children's literature*

The history of the development of Albanian children's literature is an overview that shows the cultural changes that Albanian culture has gone through since the Middle Ages, when Albanian writing began, until modern times. The cultural changes were also reflected in the characters of this literature, which built the characters in accordance with the ideas of the period, in accordance with its social function. Thus, in Albanian children's literature, there are religious characters during the Middle Ages, national characters during Romanti-

cism, social characters during Critical Realism, communist characters during the literature of Social Realism, to contemporary literature where there is a great heterogeneity of characters representing the different aesthetic principles of the authors of this literary period.

Albanian children's literature began as literature engaged with biblical religious ideas. Although this literature was addressed to children, it did not differ from adult literature in terms of language, ideas, and artistic construction of the text. The literature of the Middle Ages did not have play, or entertainment as part of it, but treated the themes of God, the day of judgment, the punishment of unbelievers, and the reward of believers with great seriousness¹. Albanian children's literature was just as serious during Romanticism when it dealt with issues of the Albanian nation, of its captivity, of the war that must be done to liberate the homeland². Also, the literature of Socialist Realism has not adapted to the world of children, since this literature dealt with issues of communist ideology with which the communist state intended to indoctrinate children and distance them from the Albanian tradition. Albanian literature later began to adapt to the mentality of children, their demands, and their desires and gave its educational message through stories adapted to children's minds. This adaptation to the world of children in Albanian literature was not achieved quickly, it lasted for about five centuries. Albanian children's literature developed gradually, benefiting from the development of other psychological and sociological fields, which have gradually come to know the world of children better. The results of these fields were used by Albanian children's literature to better adapt to the children's world as close as possible to our time. During the development of Albanian children's literature, texts loaded with ideological ideas have been particularly problematic, which have strengthened their level of ideas: such literary texts for children, concentrating too much on biblical, national, and communist ideas, have left aside the children's world, their language, their mentality.

The characters in Albanian children's literature were mostly children. However, these characters have not been the same in each period. So, in literature burdened with religious ideas, national ideas, or communist ideas, children behave like adults, they think deeply and make sharp judgments about religious topics, about the dogmas of faith. Only in periods in which the plane of ideas of the text was not strong, there are child characters who behave like children, who deal with children's preoccupations, and their world.

Animal characters have been present in Albanian children's literature since Romanticism. By telling stories with animal characters, the fable has man-

¹ L. Matrënga, *La Dottrina Cristiana*, Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1964, pp. 11-13.

² N. Frashëri, *E këndimit çunavet këndonjëtoresa II* [Reading Book for Children II], Bukuresht, Drita, 1886, p. 47.

aged to deliver a message with a powerful impact on children. In addition to animals, fables in Albanian children's literature also had characters of birds, plants, and heavenly bodies. The allegorize character of animal characters is not the same in all periods of Albanian literature: animal characters have national characteristics in the literature of Romanticism, they have social characteristics in the literature of Critical Realism, they have symbolic characteristics in the literature of Symbolism, they have communist characteristics in the literature of Socialist Realism. So, the characters of fables get their moral and ethical characteristics, depending on the socio-cultural characteristics of the literary period in which they are found.

The characters of Albanian children's literature continued to increase in variety. Thus, in the old literature, there were mainly religious characters from the Bible and the Qur'an. During Romanticism, fictional characters for children and adults are encountered for the first time, as well as animal characters are encountered for the first time. The types of characters continued to increase in subsequent literary periods, giving characters who differ in age, gender, language, cultural backgrounds, professions, nations, and their inner worlds. Thus, during its development, Albanian children's literature was enriched with different types of characters, which present people from different stages of life, giving different nuances of the reality of life that children encountered during their lives.

2. *Characters of religious Albanian literature*

During the Middle Ages, the Albanian countries belonged to the Catholic faith. In the 14th century, the Albanian countries were conquered by the Ottoman Empire and remained part of this empire for the next five centuries. During the time of the Ottoman occupation, great cultural, religious and political changes took place among the Albanians. The cultural changes were more noticeable when a part of the Albanian population began to change their faith and converted from the Catholic religion to the Islamic religion. The cultural changes were more noticeable when a part of the Albanian population began to change their faith and converted from the Catholic religion to the Islamic religion. During this time, two types of literature were written; 1) literature with biblical motifs³ which was written by priests who tried through literature to influence the Catholic population to stop their conversion to Islam; 2) social literature⁴ which was written by Muslims and artistically narrated

³ S. Hamiti, *Letërsia filobiblike, letërsia romantike* [Philo-biblical literature, romantic literature], Prishtinë, Faik Konica, 2002, p. 19.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

Islamic events and characters. Thus, used as children's literature the poems with biblical elements by Lekë Matrënga (1567-1616) and Jul Variboba (1725-1788)⁵, but also the social poems with Islamic elements by Muhamed Kyçyku (1784-1844)⁶. These two old Albanian literatures, even though they were read by children and used by them as school textbooks⁷, are not adequate literature for children: there is no play or humor in them, and they were not written with a language suitable for the young age of children.

The old children's literature with biblical motifs was called Philobiblical Literature⁸ and was written during the XVI-XVIII centuries. This literature artistically recounts events from the Old Bible and the New Bible, recounting events from the lives of the prophets as well as from the life of Jesus Christ. Characters of this literature are biblical characters such as Adam, Eve, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, and Jesus⁹. These characters of the old Albanian literature are limited within their biblical schemes and are characters that are not used to tell new stories, they are not used to give personal ideas of the authors: the characters of the old Albanian literature do not act, do not think, do not talk about something new from what they do in the Bible.

Biblical characters in old Albanian literature, in addition to the artistic segment, also have a didactic segment, given that in this literature they are propagandists of the Catholic religion: biblical characters propagate faith in Jesus Christ, and propagate the piety that Catholic believers should have in the Christian religion. Authors priests, through such biblical characters, tried to influence the faith of Albanian children, in order for the children's devotion to the Catholic religion to be as great as possible. Old Albanian literature with biblical motifs was religiously engaged literature and served for religious indoctrination of child readers, therefore the moralizing segment in this literature was very strained.

In the Albanian culture, during the XVIII-XIX centuries, children's literature with social motives was also written, which was written by the Muslim part of the Albanian population, and this literature recounted events from the Qur'an. The characters of this literature were the Quranic characters like Ibrahim, Nuh, Musa, Yusuf, and Muhamed¹⁰. Especially the Qur'anic story of Yusuf was narrated artistically as children's literature¹¹. These characters have

⁵ A. Deva, *Poezia shqipe për fëmijë 1872-1980* [Albanian poetry for children 1872-1980], Prishtinë, Rilindja, 1982, p. 30.

⁶ M. Hysa, *Autorë dhe tekste nga letërsia e vjetër shqiptare II* [Authors and texts from old Albanian literature II], Shkup, Flaka e vëllazërimit, 1995, p. 181.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Hamiti, *Letërsia filobiblike, letërsia romantike* [Philo-biblical literature, romantic literature], cit., p. 19.

⁹ P. Bogdani, *Çeta e profetëve* [The group of prophets], Prishtinë, Rilindja, 1986, p. 491.

¹⁰ M. Kyçyku, *Jusufi e Zulejhaja* [Yusuf and Zulaikha], Shkup, Vatra, 2002, p. 13.

¹¹ Hysa, *Autorë dhe tekste nga letërsia e vjetër shqiptare II* [Authors and texts from old Albanian literature II], cit., p. 181.

more social characteristics of the Albanian life of the XVII-XVIII centuries: the Quranic characters of this literature were not used for religious indoctrination of children, but they were used to allegorically give social messages about the reality of the time, the difficulties of life, and the problems of state administration¹².

3. *Characters in children's literature of Romanticism*

Authentic Albanian children's literature was born in Romanticism. The first children's literature books were written to serve Albanian students in the Albanian primary schools that were opened during this time. In addition to earlier religious literature that had religious characters of adult age, the literature of Romanticism was for the first time dominated by characters who were irreligious and who were children.

Albanian children's literature of Romanticism was written in the genre of short stories, fables, and poems, which have as their subject the lesson, the right development of the child, his good behavior in the family and society, his good behavior towards nature and animals. To reach this level, the characters of Romanticism literature are children who learn: they are curious to know history and natural knowledge, they are curious to know how life, family, and society work, and they want to know what is good and what is bad. However, the characters of the literature of Romanticism do not choose the ways of play, humor, and entertainment, which are the most suitable forms to influence children. In the literature of Romanticism, a lesson was reached through the dedication of child characters very seriously to knowledge, and their dedication very seriously to research. Therefore, the characters of the Albanian children's literature of Romanticism are very serious, sober, studious children, diligent in their studies, who convey life and its problems with the dedication of the researcher who learns from every detail of life.

Next to the child characters, the children's parents are the most frequently encountered characters in this literature. Parents are also very devoted and demand that children take life seriously, therefore they react to any inappropriate behavior that children do: parents wonder how their child damaged a flower in the park¹³, how they broke the mirror¹⁴. Parents are also very devoted and demand that children take life seriously, therefore they react to any inappropriate

¹² Hamiti, *Letërsia filobiblike, letërsia romantike* [Philo-biblical literature, romantic literature], cit., p. 21.

¹³ N. Frashëri, *E këndimit çunavet këndonjëtojeja I* [Reading Book for Children I], Bukuresht, Dritë, 1886, p. 39.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

behavior that children do: parents worry because their child has damaged a flower in the park¹⁵, or because their child has broken a mirror¹⁶.

Adult characters in the literature of Romanticism serve to direct children's conversation towards a certain problem, therefore children in literary units are accompanied by their mother¹⁷, father¹⁸, uncle¹⁹, grandfather²⁰, friend²¹, wise old man²². Adult characters explain problems to children, and solve puzzles for them, always being at the service of the children's world. So, the child characters in this literature with the help of adults learn from their mistakes²³, learn from the harmony that exists in nature²⁴, learn from the advice of adults²⁵.

The number of characters in each unit of the literature of Romanticism is small. However, the authors of this literature have connected the literary units among themselves, and from one literary unit to another they add a variety of characters, so that the child readers while reading gradually learn about the complexity of life, about the different social groups with which they are surrounded: in the literature of Romanticism there are characters of different genders²⁶, of different ages²⁷, of different professions²⁸, of different nations²⁹, as well as of different religions³⁰.

To inspire children readers for good deeds, to direct them towards good and useful deeds for the family, for the circle, and for society in general, the literary units of Romanticism have a positive approach to positive characters and a negative approach to negative characters. Children in these units are motivated to be humane and generous with others like the heroes of these units³¹, to be loving like them³², caring³³, who love people³⁴, love animals³⁵, love na-

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 23.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

²⁶ N. Frashëri, *E këndimit çunavet këndonjëtoje II* [Reading Book for Children II], Bukuresht, Dritë, 1886, p. 36.

²⁷ Id., *E këndimit çunavet këndonjëtoje I* [Reading Book for Children I], cit., p. 19.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

³¹ Id., *Abetare e gjuhës shqipe* [Albanian language primer], Bukuresht, Dritë, 1886, p. 58.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 58.

³³ Id., *E këndimit çunavet këndonjëtoje I* [Reading Book for Children I], cit., p. 5.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

ture³⁶, children are motivated to be loyal like the heroes of Romanticism³⁷, to have self-confidence like them³⁸, to learn in school like them³⁹. Authors of literature of Romanticism have chosen in their units characters who are optimistic⁴⁰, who learn at school⁴¹, who love their mother and father at home⁴², love nature⁴³ and through such characters they aimed to bring a positive spirit to child readers. The characters of literature of Romanticism are far from any evil work or any evil thought. In this way, the characters of the literary units of Romanticism are more characters sketched as positive, without their inner human world where good and evil met: the characters of Romanticism literature are simple, uniform, without meditations, and without the world of their internal.

The characters of literature of Romanticism are far from any evil work or any evil thought. These characters do not have a certain age, just as they do not have proper names, but general ones: they are called the boy⁴⁴, the old man⁴⁵, the mother⁴⁶, the father⁴⁷, the little ones⁴⁸, the son⁴⁹, the daughter⁵⁰, the lame man⁵¹, the traveler⁵².

The Albanian community belonged to the Catholic faith and the Islamic faith, and the authors of Albanian Romanticism built children's literature with characters from both faiths. In Romanticism children's literature, there are characters of the Islamic faith, such as Ali⁵³, Kamber⁵⁴, Hasan and Hysen⁵⁵, dervish⁵⁶, Fatima⁵⁷, Ahmet⁵⁸, but there are also characters of the Catholic

³⁶ S. Frashëri, *Abetare e gjuhës shqipe* [Albanian language primer], cit., p. 58.

³⁷ N. Frashëri, *E këndimit çunavet këndonjëtoresa II* [Reading Book for Children II], cit., p. 47.

³⁸ Id., *E këndimit çunavet këndonjëtoresa I* [Reading Book for Children I], cit., p. 13.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴² S. Frashëri, *Abetare e gjuhës shqipe* [Albanian language primer], cit., p. 57.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁴⁴ N. Frashëri, *E këndimit çunavet këndonjëtoresa I* [Reading Book for Children I], cit., p. 13.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁵⁸ Id., *E këndimit çunavet këndonjëtoresa II* [Reading Book for Children II], cit., p. 6.

faith, such as Christ⁵⁹, the Priest⁶⁰. The romantics tried to unify the Albanian nation, therefore they narrated stories where the characters were people of different faiths who lived in Albanian society in harmony with each other, a society which has mutual understanding between believers of different religions, where there is no enmity and no hatred between them.

The fable began to be written for the first time in the literature of Albanian Romanticism and in this literature the characters of animals and birds are encountered for the first time. The animal characters represent people with different characters: the wolf represents the aggressive man⁶¹, the dog represents the loyal man⁶², the horse represents the helpful friend⁶³, the fox represents the cunning man⁶⁴. However, the characteristics of the animal characters of this literature are connected with the problems of the time, with the creation of the Albanian state, with its slavery, with its fight for freedom, so the animal characters represent the characteristics of Albanians in the 19th century: the wolf has the characteristics of the conqueror who puts the captive «down»⁶⁵; the horse represents the helpful friend⁶⁶, which protects the Albanian from enemies; the fox represents the cunning and ungrateful man «as the conqueror»⁶⁷. The presence of animal characters in the literature of Romanticism is proof that in this period of Albanian literature, allegory began to be used: in this literature, through animals, their actions, behaviors, hatred, love, and betrayal, in an allegorical form was built the national theme of Albanian Romanticism.

4. *Characters of children's literature of Critical Realism*

Critical Realism as a literary period entered Albanian literature after the independence of Albania (1912). Critical Realism brought a critical discourse in Albanian literature, criticizing the defects of Albanian life, Albanian society, and the Albanian state, with the aim of this literature influencing the improvement of Albanian society and the state. Authors of Critical Realism such as Ndre Mjedja (1866-1937), Çajupi (1866-1930), Noli (1882-1965), and Migjeni

⁵⁹ Id., *E këndimit çunavet këndonjëtoreja I* [Reading Book for Children I], cit., p. 18.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁶¹ Id., *Vjersha për mësonjëtoret të para* [Vjersha për shkollat të para], Bukuresht, Dritë, 1886, p. 53.

⁶² Id., *E këndimit çunavet këndonjëtoreja I* [Reading Book for Children I], cit., p. 15.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁶⁴ Id., *Vjersha për mësonjëtoret të para* [Vjersha për shkollat të para], cit., p. 42.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

⁶⁶ Id., *E këndimit çunavet këndonjëtoreja I* [Reading Book for Children I], cit., p. 31.

⁶⁷ Id., *Vjersha për mësonjëtoret të para* [Vjersha për shkollat të para], cit., p. 42.

(1911-1938), criticizing the vices of the Albanian environment, tried to build an ideal Albanian society, without moral and economic problems, without corruption, nepotism, and without absolutism in governance.

Children's literature of Critical Realism dealt with social issues that affect the poverty of Albanian society, lack of education, lack of health care, gender inequality, and the plight of Albanian women. To build these themes the authors used characters suitable for each theme which are the best illustrators of the themes. Thus, one of the main themes of this literature is work, because the authors of this period thought that through work Albanians regulate the difficult situation of Albanian society. The characters encountered in the units with the theme of work are the boatman⁶⁸, the worker⁶⁹, the sailor⁷⁰, the shepherd⁷¹, the farmer⁷². In the literary units with the theme of poverty, poor, miserable characters are encountered⁷³, such as the beggar⁷⁴, the miserable old man⁷⁵, the poor⁷⁶, the orphan⁷⁷, trying the authors of this period to present the theme of poverty from the position of the characters who experience poverty on their backs. From their position, the Albanian world is given, its defects, social vices, false social morality, avarice. Whereas, the literary units that deal with the theme of women have female characters of different ages and places, such as the mountaineer⁷⁸, the girlfriend⁷⁹, the grandmother⁸⁰, mother⁸¹, daughter⁸², wife⁸³.

Characters from this period are also found in other periods of Albanian literature, but while in other periods they have national characteristics (Romanticism), symbolic characteristics (Symbolism), and communist characteristics (Socialist Realism), what makes them special these characters in the literature of Critical Realism is their social character, which makes the same characters appear in this period with new characteristics. Thus, both the external appearance of the characters of Critical Realism and their inner world are at the service of social themes. The clothing of the characters is poor, with

⁶⁸ N. Mjedja, *Guxo [Dare]*, Tiranë, Naim Frashëri, 1953, p. 8.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁷³ A. Bishqemi, *Historia e letërsisë shqipe për fëmijë [The history of Albanian children's literature]*, Elbasan, Sejko, 2001, p. 108.

⁷⁴ Migjeni, *Prozë [Prose]*, Prishtinë, Rilindja, 1977, p. 42.

⁷⁵ Mjedja, *Guxo [Dare]*, cit., p. 12.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

torn clothes⁸⁴, with 'barefoot' feet⁸⁵: «...the one in the torn shirt has a yellow shoulder, the other has a belly like a board, that other one there is ready to faint from hunger...»⁸⁶. Meanwhile, the inner world of the characters is loaded with meditations on the difficult economic situation in which they find themselves: the beggar «remembers the time when there was no need to beg. On the contrary. Do you remember how he helped the beggars who came every Saturday at the door of his shop when he was a blacksmith... And today? He is rarely helped by anyone, because there are many beggars»⁸⁷.

The authors of Critical Realism tried to give the social side of the characters, for this reason, they presented the characters in their social activity, in their work, learning process, or during the search for alms. The characters of Critical Realism are not characters who sit at home, at social parties, debating long topics among themselves, they are active characters, at work, in activities and constant movement: the sailor is seen catching fish in the great waves of the sea⁸⁸, the female worker appears as she harvests wheat with difficulty⁸⁹, the beggar appears in his extreme poverty asking for alms⁹⁰. So, this literary period presents the characters in their difficult daily life, in order to give the Albanian life at the height of difficulties.

In the children's literature of this period, there are characters with universal names, such as the old man, the boy, mother, father, but each of them has a special individuality: one is rich⁹¹, the other is poor⁹², one is arrogant⁹³, the other is modest⁹⁴, one is a miser⁹⁵, the other is the one who gives alms⁹⁶, one is useful for society⁹⁷, the other is useless for them⁹⁸.

The characters are universal in their names, but their characteristics and problems are of the Albanian environment. The authors build the characters with Albanian characteristics because through their literature they intended to hit the Albanian environment, to present the concrete defects of Albanian life, and their literature to influence those defects to improve. Therefore, the characters of Critical Realism are characters with Albanian characteristics, with Albanian behavior and morals of the early 20th century. The authors of

⁸⁴ Migjeni, *Prozë [Prose]*, cit., p. 44.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.

⁸⁸ Mjedja, *Guxo [Dare]*, cit., p. 8.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁹⁰ Migjeni, *Prozë [Prose]*, cit., p. 44.

⁹¹ Mjedja, *Guxo [Dare]*, cit., p. 13.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

this period did not want to give the weaknesses of man in general, but the weaknesses of the Albanians of their time, so that their texts could influence the Albanian society and state to improve Albanian life at the beginning of the 20th century.

Negative characters in this period have a social character, so children's literature of this period is filled with characters such as misers⁹⁹, cunning¹⁰⁰, boasters¹⁰¹, lazy¹⁰², liars¹⁰³, deceivers¹⁰⁴, conceited¹⁰⁵, characters who appreciate only money¹⁰⁶, who do not help others¹⁰⁷. These characters are portrayed with negative elements, so that they have a negative effect on child readers, so that they distance themselves from negative characters and their behaviors. Thus the children's literature of Critical Realism is the literature of the contrast between positive and negative characters, the contrast between useful and useless characters, the helper and the miser, the poor and the rich, the worker and the unemployed. The contrasts even extend to the characters of the fables of this period, such as between summer and winter, between the wolf and the lamb¹⁰⁸. Negative characters in the literature of Critical Realism are a source of social injustices, social irregularities, social stagnation, abuses, etc.

In the children's literature of Critical Realism, many fables were written which enriched Albanian literature with many other types of animal, bird, and plant characters. The most frequent animal characters in this period are: bird¹⁰⁹, elephant¹¹⁰, cow¹¹¹, dog¹¹², goat¹¹³, wolf¹¹⁴, lion¹¹⁵, ants¹¹⁶, swallow¹¹⁷, pigeon¹¹⁸,

⁹⁹ Migjeni, *Prozë [Prose]*, cit., p. 42.

¹⁰⁰ Mjedja, *Guxo [Dare]*, cit., p. 36.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

bee¹¹⁹, ears of corn¹²⁰, wheat¹²¹, weeds¹²², fox¹²³, frog¹²⁴, monkey¹²⁵, sheep¹²⁶. The social character is what distinguishes the animal characters of this literary period from other literary periods: the elephant allegorically shows the power that wealth has in society, so when the elephant is dressed in gold, everyone respects him, when he is dressed simply, no one respects him¹²⁷; the dove saves the bird, showing the need for help that the members of a society have for each other¹²⁸; the bee allegorically shows the positive effect that human work has on society¹²⁹: wheat and weeds allegorically show the useful man (wheat) and the useless man (weeds) in society¹³⁰. Therefore, if in Romanticism the wolf and the lamb were characters that had the character of the conqueror (the wolf) and the conquered (the lamb), in Critical Realism these characters have the social characteristics of the strong man (the wolf) and the weak man (the lamb) in society¹³¹.

The literature of Critical Realism was an engaged literature, a literature with a mission, that by presenting different social strata, characters from those strata, tried to influence the improvement of the Albanian society and state.

5. Characters of children's literature of Symbolism

Children's literature of Symbolism did not deal with social themes, it was not an engaged literature that tries to influence the Albanian society, but it was more universal literature, which dealt with universal themes of man, his inner world, his dilemmas. The main themes of this literature are love¹³², family¹³³, death¹³⁴, lies¹³⁵, stages of human life¹³⁶. For example, the literary unit dealing with the subject of human life stages presents the universal characteristics

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹³² L. Gurakuqi, *Vjersha [poems]*, Bari, Laterza & Polo, 1940, p. 44.

¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

of man in childhood, man in youth, man in maturity and man in old age¹³⁷, without specifying a particular man, of a certain time or place: it is not specified whether the character who goes through these stages of life is Albanian or from another nation, it is not specified whether he is from the 20th century or another century. The purpose of the author of the Symbolism in this unit is to give the four main stages of human life from birth to old age, so that the changes that a person experiences from birth to old age apply to every person¹³⁸.

Just as the themes of Symbolism literature are universal themes, the characters of this literary period are also universal. The characters do not have characteristics of the Albanian environment, but they have universal characteristics of people of all countries. In this literary period, the character of the young man summarizes the permanent preoccupations of the young man: hope, fantasy, fragility, kindness, agility¹³⁹, then the new character is energetic¹⁴⁰, quite active, warrior in life¹⁴¹, with great willpower¹⁴². On the contrary, the character of the old man in this literature is dominated by the universal characteristics of the old man, such as memories, indolence, fatigue, and passivation¹⁴³, he is more meditative than the young¹⁴⁴, but he is often nervous and without the will to live¹⁴⁵. The man character has universal male characteristics such as strength, toughness, he stands out for working outside the home¹⁴⁶, while the woman has universal female characteristics, such as beauty, motherhood, work inside the home, as well as care for her children¹⁴⁷. The characters of the literary period of Symbolism stand out with universal characteristics which characteristics are found not only in Albanians, but in people of other nationalities.

Symbolic literature often used symbolic signs of time to give character characteristics: the young character is compared to bright signs, so youth is like a light¹⁴⁸, like a ray of the sun¹⁴⁹, like spring¹⁵⁰, while the old character is compared to signs that give life in the west and above, life near death, so old age is like autumn, like late flowers, like autumn nature¹⁵¹. The authors of this

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ Asdeni, *Lulëkuqja [Poppy]*, Prishtinë, Rilindja, 1968, p. 13.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ L. Gurakuqi, *Vjersha [poems]*, cit., p. 58.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ Asdeni, *Lulëkuqja [Poppy]*, cit., p. 12.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

literature frame figures from the seasons and from nature to show man and the changes he undergoes over time. Therefore, nature is extremely present in Symbolism literature, its changes are used to give the changes that a person undergoes during life, also its changes give the differences between people based on characters, ages, and professions.

The human characters of Symbolist literature are generally not named by proper names but by general names. The escape from proper nouns shows the attempt of this literary period to give universal characteristics to the person: one character is called a girl and she summarizes the general characteristics of a girl¹⁵²; the other character is called mother and summarizes the general characteristics of the mother¹⁵³; the character named farmer¹⁵⁴ has universal characteristics of the farmer, so he is a guardian of the field, a great worker, a man of goodwill¹⁵⁵, good health¹⁵⁶, useful for the family and society¹⁵⁷; the shepherd character guards the cattle¹⁵⁸, knows nature well¹⁵⁹, knows different animals, and distinguishes them based on their characteristics¹⁶⁰; the suffering man has such universal characteristics as he is lonely, hard-hearted, introverted¹⁶¹, without showing where the source of his suffering is, which could be the country where he lives, society, nation, economy, education, he is simply presented in the literature of symbolism as suffering, avoiding local and temporal characterizations to summarize the most universal characteristics of this man.

Animal characters are also universal characters in the literature of Symbolism for children. If the animal characters in the literature of Critical Realism had a social character that was related to the Albanian environment at the beginning of the 20th century, the animal characters in the literature of Symbolism have universal human characteristics: the wolf in the literature of Symbolism has universal characteristics of the abuser¹⁶²; the dog summarizes the universal characteristics of the faithful man¹⁶³; the horse has universal characteristics of the human helper¹⁶⁴.

¹⁵² Dh. Pasko, *Pylli i gështenjave* [Chestnut forest], Tiranë, Ndërmarrja shtetërore e botimeve, 1958, p. 30.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ Asdeni, *Lulëkuqja* [Poppy], cit., p. 31.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 49.

¹⁶³ Dh. Pasko, *Pylli i gështenjave* [Chestnut forest], cit., p. 39.

¹⁶⁴ Asdeni, *Lulëkuqja* [Poppy], cit., p. 16.

6. *Characters of Socialist Realism*

After the end of the Second World War, Albania remained part of the Eastern European states in which the communist ideology spread. At this time, a new literature began in Albania, which was called the Literature of Socialist Realism.

The literature of Socialist Realism was engaged literature that defended the political, economic, and cultural ideas of communist ideology. This literature was a propaganda tool in the hands of the Albanian communist state that glorified communism and criticized, insulted, and mocked everything non-communist, such as Albanian tradition, religion, and other non-communist ideas of the political and cultural plane. Blaming other ideologies and glorifying communism are the basic ideas of Socialist Realism literature.

The literature of Socialist Realism describes a world that is divided into two opposite oppositions: on one side is the good communist world, while on the other side is the bad non-communist world. Since this is how each literary text was constructed in this literary period, this influenced literature in the Socialist Realization to be clichéd in strict, rigid rules, impoverishing the texts in ideas, because in this literature everything was reduced to communism and non-communism, having no other vital nuances, other topics and ideas, worries and concerns with which the individual may be preoccupied. This led to the fact that characters in this literature are built the same: they change in age and gender, profession, in residence, but they do not change in character, since all characters are reduced to positive communist characters and negative non-communist characters. The construction of literature in such a form made literature in this period not present the world of children, their desires, their worries, their play and fantasy, but on the contrary to present the communist ideological dimension which stifled this literature with ideas that can hardly be understood by children. Each segment of the children's lives presented in this literature is explained by communist ideas, by the conflict between communism and other ideologies.

The positive characters in the literature of Socialist Realism are the good part of society, they are diligent children, and volunteers in social activities, while ideologically they represent communism, therefore they are against religion¹⁶⁵, against tradition¹⁶⁶ and against any other ideology. Communism was identified with positive characters, therefore these characters in this literature are hyperbolized to the point of worship. On the opposite side to them are the negative characters who represent other ideas, such as tradi-

¹⁶⁵ B. Dedja, *Kalamajt e pallatit tim [the children of my palace]*, Prishtinë, Rilindja, 1973, p. 42.

¹⁶⁶ S. Spasse, *Të fala nga fshati [Greetings from the village]*, Prishtinë, Rilindja, 1979, p. 25.

tional, religious, and fascist ideas¹⁶⁷. Such characters in this literature are German¹⁶⁸ and Italian fascists¹⁶⁹, other enemies¹⁷⁰, Albanian saboteurs¹⁷¹, traditional leaders of the Albanian country¹⁷², religious clergy¹⁷³. These characters harm the state, kill people, and behave badly in society, in the family, at school, and at work.

Literary works in Socialist Realism always end with a happy ending for the positive characters and with punishment for the negative characters. The punishment of children who have a negative character is symbolic, their behavior grade is broken at school¹⁷⁴, they are forced to do voluntary work¹⁷⁵, they are forced to sleep with donkeys and cows¹⁷⁶, but in all cases, they are punished.

In Socialist Realism, in each literary unit, in addition to a story with children, there is always a story with adults whose representatives are the children's parents, their grandmothers, their teachers, or members of their society. In the story with children, negative child characters are punished¹⁷⁷, in the story with adults, negative adult characters are killed¹⁷⁸. The punishment of negative characters served as a threat to every child reader who, if he is not in line with the communist system, may find the punishment of negative characters. Thus, in the literature of Socialist Realism we do not have a free society, but a society that is strictly controlled by communist ideas: in this literature it does not happen that a non-communist man is valued more than a communist, it does not happen that a criminal is not punished.

Children's literature of Socialist Realism at its epicenter had children's characters dealing with very serious topics. The characters of Socialist Realism are children, but they have ideals as high as adults, they aim to regulate the family, society, the city, make different nations fraternize, to develop the communist organization of the school¹⁷⁹, and spread communism among them youth, as well as identify non-communist traitors and expose them to society¹⁸⁰. Therefore, a miniature communism is found in the lives of the children's characters of Socialist Realism literature, in the activities that they develop in the family,

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁰ Dedja, *Kalamajt e pallatit tim* [the children of my palace], cit., p. 21.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷² Spasse, *Të fala nga fshati* [Greetings from the village], cit., p. 38.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

¹⁷⁴ Dedja, *Kalamajt e pallatit tim* [the children of my palace], cit., p. 76.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

¹⁷⁶ Spasse, *Të fala nga fshati* [Greetings from the village], cit., p. 34.

¹⁷⁷ Dedja, *Kalamajt e pallatit tim* [the children of my palace], cit., p. 86.

¹⁷⁸ Spasse, *Të fala nga fshati* [Greetings from the village], cit., p. 44.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

at school, and in society. Such stories motivate child readers to socialize, to develop voluntary activities in society, but obviously, these stories also have a negative side because they do not present the lives of children, or their worries, so the child characters in the literature of Socialist Realism are ideologically charged as much as adult literature characters are charged. In this way, the child characters in Socialist Realism carry on their shoulders ideological missions that exceed the competencies of children and their abilities.

Compared to the characters of previous periods who suffer from the conqueror (in Romanticism), or suffer from poverty, unemployment, or poor medicine (in Critical Realism), the characters of Socialist Realism are free, have welfare, have food, have room for recreation, they have books, they have good education, they have good medical service and they have new houses donated by the state¹⁸¹. Simply in this literature, communist characters lead an artificial life with all the good things. The reason for such a life is the communist state in which they live well, where there is no corruption, there is no injustice, no poverty, no economic problems: all conditions of life are regulated by the advent of communism as with the stick magic. The contrast of the characters between the difficult life they had earlier and the good life they had in communism are used by the authors of socialist realism as a contrast to which they propagate the communist relation to other currents: the contrast of bad life previously and life without problems in communism is found in the background in every literary work of the period of socialist realism.

For the first time in the literature of socialist realism, urban characters are encountered, who have a communist reason in the literature of this period: the communist state has collectivized land to children in the villages and gives them dwellings in the city. In addition to urban characters, characters that are first encountered in the literature of socialist realism are the characters of the state administration that are numerous in each literary work. Everywhere in the literature of this period, there is a large pile of characters representing the state, and administration, giving the idea that the Communist state works well and is present everywhere. So, every literary work in socialist realism has characters such as director¹⁸², worker¹⁸³, engineer¹⁸⁴, Commissioner¹⁸⁵, referent¹⁸⁶, Chief¹⁸⁷, Chairman¹⁸⁸. Even a building has its organization which has a bunch of characters that are located in all these positions¹⁸⁹.

¹⁸¹ Dedja, *Kalamajt e pallatit tim [the children of my palace]*, cit., p. 7.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 52.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

Children's characters in socialist realism have a dose of a rebellious child: the family and society in this literature have many disagreements and many objections. Children disagree with parents, with siblings¹⁹⁰, disagree with teachers¹⁹¹. But they come together among themselves to communist ideals, communist organizations, and communist activities where they stand as a single body. Socialist realism strives to separate children from their family and society, this literature strives to educate children that their real family is only the communist system.

7. Characters in contemporary children's literature of Kosovo

It is more difficult to talk about the characters of contemporary Albanian literature for children because this literature is more complex, with many dominant artistic periods. The characters in contemporary literature are characters who generally have symbolic names, which indicates the artistic character of this literature that values art more and appreciates the figure, and ambiguity. In this literary period, the characters are encountered with names such as Bird¹⁹², White Man¹⁹³, Mountain¹⁹⁴, Short Girl¹⁹⁵, Light¹⁹⁶, Apple¹⁹⁷, Hunters¹⁹⁸, Goodsmell¹⁹⁹, Red-tail²⁰⁰, The Goat²⁰¹, Aries²⁰², Red-beak²⁰³, Warrior²⁰⁴, brother²⁰⁵, enemy²⁰⁶, son²⁰⁷, mother²⁰⁸, Child²⁰⁹, Fisherman²¹⁰.

Even in contemporary literature, there are some characters with interna-

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

¹⁹² R. Hoxha, *Lugjet e verdha* [Yellow spoons], Prishtinë, Rilindja, 1963, p. 5.

¹⁹³ Ivi, p. 6.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 48.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

²⁰⁴ V. Kikaj, *Gurrrat* [Founts], Prishtinë, Rilindja, 1987, p. 82.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

tional names, such as Diana²¹¹, Antigona²¹², Mrika²¹³, Pal²¹⁴, Goti²¹⁵, Goneteta²¹⁶, Tony²¹⁷. These are not traditional Albanian names, but these are the names of characters found in different world literature. Each period of Albanian literature has a kind of names that dominate it, while international names of contemporary Albanian literature are the result of the impact of globalization on Albanian literature, the result of the communication of Albanian literature with other people's literature.

The characters of contemporary literature are closer to the lives of children, their desires, closer to their demands, and their mentality. The characters of this literature behave as a child, they are very optimistic about life²¹⁸, give flowers to their teachers²¹⁹, love their mother and father²²⁰, they play with animals²²¹, take care of nature²²², they want to have the sun for themselves²²³, and even the planets behaves like a child: the moon behaves like Silver hair²²⁴. Characters in contemporary literature are not engaged with ideas that are not suitable for children, as happened before with the religious literature of the Middle Ages, with the national literature of Romanticism, or with the communist ideological literature, in which literature exceeded the world of children. The characters of contemporary literature better present the children's world, using play as a form through which children learn better²²⁵, using the characters' adventures in exotic places that attract children's attention more, as well as using children's imaginary communication with the moon, winter, summer²²⁶. Contemporary literature takes advantage of the latest achievements of psychology and sociology about the world of children and uses them in literary stories to give the mentality of children in a more adequate way.

The characters of contemporary literature are curious to know nature, to know people, and animals, to go out into nature, to enter into adventures, to encounter problems, triumphing over them, but often also failing in front of them²²⁷. The characters of contemporary literature lead more human and not

²¹¹ Rr. Dedaj, *Vepra letrare 4 [Literary works 4]*, Prishtinë, Faik Konica, 2008, p. 104.

²¹² *Ibid.*, p. 130.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

²²² *Ibid.*, p. 51.

²²³ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

²²⁴ Kikaj, *Gurrat [Founts]*, cit., pp. 87-88.

²²⁵ Dedaj, *Vepra letrare 4 [Literary works 4]*, cit., p. 104.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 217.

²²⁷ Hoxha, *Lugjet e verdha [Yellow spoons]*, cit., pp. 7-8.

artificial lives as in previous periods, they are free from religious, national, and communist concepts, therefore they move spontaneously²²⁸ and find themselves in different adventures where they experience different difficulties, challenges, thrills, getting an educational message from each adventure they experience. The characters of contemporary literature do not only have vices as in Critical Realism, just as they do not only have virtues like the communist characters in Socialist Realism: the characters of this period, being more humane, have both vices and virtues, so there are who sometimes are brave²²⁹, sometimes they are cowards²³⁰, sometimes they are loyal characters²³¹, but sometimes they are disloyal²³², characters that sometimes they behave well²³³, but sometimes they behave badly²³⁴.

The characters of contemporary literature have their complex inner world: inside them encounter meditation, dilemmas, and emotions²³⁵. Being such, the characters of this period, even though they may have the same names as the characters of other periods, such as father, mother, grandfather, and grandmother, they differ a lot from them, because of the inner world, which is specific to each one character. Even the inner world of the characters becomes more complex in accordance with the age of the children to whom the literary text is addressed. Authors of contemporary literature distinguish between different ages of children, and literary books addressed to children in the first grade have simple characters, have children who have fun with letters, and play with syllables²³⁶, in addition to literary works that are aimed at older children and have more complex characters who are concerned with the lives of older children. So, from class to class, the characters of contemporary Albanian literature become more complex, gradually informing child readers with topics that are suitable for each age.

Contemporary literature is the literature of authors who are different literary individuals among themselves, who build literary art each in their own way. Each of the contemporary authors builds the characters in a special way, not like the previous authors who built the same religious, national, social, and communist characters: the ideas of the works of this period change from author to author, from work to work and together with them change also the characters and their formation.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*

²²⁹ Kikaj, *Gurra* [Founts], cit., p. 10.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

²³² *Ibid.*, p. 17.

²³³ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

²³⁵ Hoxha, *Lugjet e verdha* [Yellow spoons], cit., p. 16.

²³⁶ A. Mamaqi, *Mësoi Adi shkronjën A* [Adi learned the letter A], Tiranë, Naim Frashëri, 1987.

In contemporary literature, there is also the uniqueness of characters in fables. If in other periods in fables, the animal characters talked among themselves, now the conversation is between animals and children, who are interested in the beauty of certain animals, their melodious voice, and their journeys during the wintertime²³⁷. The child's conversation with animals is more adapted to the world of child readers, it is more pleasant for them, more attractive, and arouses children's interest more. Children in fables also talk with plant characters²³⁸. Through talking with children, flora and fauna are offered more to the children's world, and children's care and love for flora and fauna is increased.

Conclusion

Medieval Albanian literature in artistic form recounted biblical and Quranic events. The characters of this literature were religious characters found in the Bible and the Koran which have an educational character for the child readers, showing them the religious behavior they must follow in order to be saved. Each subsequent period of Albanian literature brings new characters, increasing the number of characters and their types in Albanian literature. Thus, the characters of Romantic literature no longer have a religious character, but they have an Albanian national character. The children's literature of this literary period set itself the task of educating Albanian children: the child characters of this literature educate the readers towards good actions, education, professionalization, towards good behavior in the family and society and call for moving away from evil, lies, betrayal, prejudice. Critical Realism introduces a new character who is preoccupied with Albanian social issues. The characters of this literature underline the Albanian defects during communication with different social layers, from the low level of society to the state leaders. The literature of symbolism brought characters with universal characteristics to shift the attention from the Albanian man to the man in general. The characters of this literature summarize the general characteristics of the parent, the hero, and the conqueror. Meanwhile, the literature of Socialist Realism brought for the first time in Albanian literature the communist character hyperbolized to the point of worship. In this literature, communists are confronted with all other characters, dividing the world into positive characters (communists) and negative characters (non-communists). While every previous literary period-built characters in one form, such as religious, national, social, symbolist, and communist characters, this does not happen in contemporary literature,

²³⁷ Kikaj, *Gurrat [Founts]*, cit., p. 96.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

which has a heterogeneity of authors and characters. This literature presents the world of children, their demands, and desires in a more faithful form.

Albanian children's literature has thus passed through different literary periods, changing both on an ideological and an artistic level. Along with other units, the character of this literature has also changed, which has the characteristics of each period within it. What has characterized the character of Albanian children's literature is the frequent appearance of an ideologically charged character who has tried to influence children, their ideas, their beliefs, and emotions. The reasons for the impact on the child reader have been different and are related either to religion, to the nation, or to communist ideology, but the attempt to influence children has been preserved in a large part of the history of Albanian literature. Literary periods that did not aim to influence child readers have had marginal power in Albanian literature.