

# *Views of albanian literature for children*

---

*PhD. Ermir NIKA<sup>1</sup>*

---

## **Abstract**

**Background:** *After the New Age, a period which many contemporary researchers define as the stage where the first foundations of modernity were laid in the society-wide mentality, we have another relationship with the mythical past, since they were no longer seen as figures with strength and size divine, but as creatures from which the past came through artistic whimsy. Thus, oral traditions and fairy tales had a much greater and direct influence on the literary process. They strengthened it and became a primary source of subjects, a wide gallery of*

<sup>1</sup> His professional activity has extended to several important areas both in terms of artistic creativity and in terms of study and scientific research. In 2016 he earned the title Doctor of Philological Sciences with the topic: "The beginnings of modernity in Albanian novel prose", while in 2005 he completed the postgraduate degree for the title Master at the University of Tirana, Faculty of History - Philology, branch Language - Literature. He completed his graduate in the field of language and literature in 2000 at the University of Tirana at the Faculty of History and Philology. From 2001 to 2019 he had been working in the Ministry of Culture as an expert, Head of Sector and also as Director in the directorates of written culture and arts. Ermir Nika is the author of a series of works of literary and scholarly character, where can be mentioned: "Polyphony" study, "Beginnings of Modernity in Albanian novel prose" study, "Slave of Heights", novel, "Bohemian Quartet", poetry, Net Sinners ", stories, children's novel" Grandfather in the Frame ", publication of the poetic volume" Cold Clouds ", publication of the study work" Çajup's work and its meetings with literary currents", "Notes of a European near Buda and Hiroshima" , "The River of My Dreams" poetry. His literary and research works paper had been translated and published in several foreign languages as in English, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Russian, Japanese, Romanian, Arabic, Serbian, Macedonian, etc. From May 2019 and ongoing Dr. Ermir Nika is the Head of the Department of Applied Arts at the Faculty of Humanities and Liberal Arts at the European University of Tirana.

characters further delineating the various literary genres and genres. Regarding the Albanian literature for children, we can affirm that during the period of the National Renaissance, in the wake of the numerous social, political, and cultural contributions undertaken by the protagonists of this great movement, a very useful work was done for the drafting of texts money for Albanian schools. The renaissance saw the creation of books for the younger generations as a major obligation, and in this way, the number of writings dedicated to children increased significantly. **Purpose:** The purpose of this paper is to document the progress of Albanian children's literature in distinctive styles, forms, and norms through which this literature passed and was consolidated. **Method:** To realize this article, I relied on two basic methods; in the synchronic and diachronic one, with the aim of bringing a more complete and analytical view of the phenomena that appear in this literature. **Conclusion:** Following the tradition and enriching it with works and authors of different periods with consolidated literary styles and physiognomy, is proven through a detailed analysis where the evolutionary process of this literature is verified.

**Key words:** literature, legend, poem, novel, writer, study, children.

The humanity's image of the world, its origin and the predecessors who have possessed it, arises through memory which is liberated and reshaped through narrative. In this approach to the past, the different narrative forms have been able to build an image that has often touched places untrodden by man, creating mythical figures and legends that have been passed down from one generation to another, where in many cases, mainly in pagan peoples have also become a religious ritual.

After the New Age, a period which many contemporary researchers define as the stage where the first foundations of modernity were laid in the society-wide mentality, we have another relationship with the mythical past, since they were no longer seen as figures with strength and size divine, but as creatures from which the past came through artistic whimsy. Thus, oral traditions and fairy tales had a much greater and direct influence on the literary process. They strengthened it and became a primary source of subjects, a wide gallery of characters further delineating the various literary genres and genres.

What should be underlined in all these developments, through the literature path, has to do with the tendency of peoples to create a parallel world, with events and heroes which in many cases, quite naturally, challenge real life, contouring the latter, with the size of the usual and in its uniform rhythm. From time to time, the younger generations have been drawn to objective reality first nourished by the

tales and stories told by their grandparents. Exactly this ritual has influenced the construction of basic principles in different generations and concepts about life and all its complexity.

For this reason, children's literature, if we would try to make a precise definition, will be pushed more and more into eras immersed more and more in the "mist". As result, this literature is traced through stories, lullabies or songs, in oral traditions that adults have created and elaborated over the centuries, passing them on to children before books and publications were conceived.

The evolution of children's literature has the beginning much earlier than the first printing mechanisms appeared in everyday life. According to the research data thanks to the research of historians, children's literature has been present since the 15th century, generally carrying and conveying a message about morality or faith.

This literature was developed and became known to its readers from the past centuries to reach today, in Albania, Kosovo, but also in those countries where there is a concentration of the Albanian diaspora, such as in Montenegro, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Turkey, Italy (mainly in the areas where the Arbëresh people live), Greece, Germany, France, Belgium, Ukraine, United States of America, etc., what can be labeled as, the golden age of Children's Literature lies at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, a period in which many children's books were published.

Regarding the Albanian literature for children, we can affirm that during the period of the National Renaissance, in the wake of the numerous social, political, and cultural contributions undertaken by the protagonists of this great movement, a very useful work was done for the drafting of texts money for Albanian schools. The renaissance saw the creation of books for the younger generations as a major obligation, and in this way, the number of writings dedicated to children increased significantly.

Among the first names that were engaged in this process that lasted at the turn of two centuries was the great renaissance poet Naim Frashëri. In this period, the literary work of Naim Frashëri represents one of the most important poets of Albanian literature and even today he remains the central figure of Albanian Renaissance literature.

In the multitude of works created and published by him, there is also a place for children's creativity, as we can mention the books: Poems for the first teachers, Bucharest 1886, Reading schools for boys, Bucharest 1886, E ngimit çunavet ngonjëtoreja, the second piece, Bucharest 1886. What should be highlighted in all the creativity of this colossus of Albanian Literature, is the fact that he is not only an outstanding poet and Albanian speaker, but also a great scholar and teacher.

In the above-mentioned books there are 37 poetic creations, that is, a real mosaic of proverbs structured in verses, fairy tales, some taken from the French

fabulist of the 17th century, La Fontaine, and some others created by him. One of Naim Frashër's greatest merits in the field of children's literature lies in the fact that he managed to raise children's literature to a higher artistic level, creating an example and an influential model for his renaissance descendants.

Among other things, cannot overlook a very significant indicator of the weight and change that Naim brought about in terms of Albanian letters. Just like his predecessors Naum Veqilharxhi and Kostandin Kristoforidhi, who devoted themselves with complete conscience and not at all casually to children's literature, with the aim of deeply influencing the consciousness and diverse formation of children, Naim also followed and carried on and enriched even further this writing tradition.

For this reason, in this author's children's prose, some creations convey the mastery of narration, some of fable; however, they are distinguished by the characteristics of the scientific type, by which in the world of children they display and transmit knowledge about nature, society and the universe. Then, this tradition continued with another prominent personality of the National Renaissance such as Andon Zako Çajupi who wrote and published authentic literary works for children, such as "Adapted Fairy Tales" published in 1921 and after him adapted fables are also known of Papa Christo Negovani.

At the beginning of the 20th century, namely during the 30-40s, appropriate steps were taken to create a literature for children, an initiative which was also accompanied by the activity of creating a special press for children, such as the *Heath of Youth* magazines. of Youth directed by Vasil Xhaçka or *the Childhood* by Milto Sotir Gurrë. It cannot be left without mentioning the fact that several writings by the most famous authors of that time had a wide echo and spread even as children's works.

A special place in this period is undoubtedly occupied by the irreplaceable role of Father Donat Kurti, who was a friar and who stands out and is honored even today for the collection of the Kreshnik Cycle and the National Games together with Father Bernardin Palaj and the arrangement of the National Tales, for which the Austrian albanologist Norbert Jokl called him "one of the greatest Albanian prose writers". These summaries were included in the series "Visaret e kombti", consisting of XI volumes, realized in collaboration with Father Bernardin Palaj; 1937. Reprinted in 2005. – 2007.

It is worth noting that with the end of the Second World War and the establishment of state structures, a rhythm and a noticeable progress was felt in the field of children's literature because this literature was considered and functioned as an independent space of literary creativity. It should also be said that the first works for children with a completely new brand and where the themes of the time prevailed were published during the period of the Second World War.

Thanks to the importance and attention paid to children's literature, seeing it among other things as a form of education and even as a propaganda tool, children's literature moved forward at a fast pace to reflect life, the phenomena of the time, and building on in this way, a new physiognomy, where the preservation of the relationship with the past, myths and legends remained a favorite model among the new generation of readers, not being influenced by the schematism that prevailed beyond this literary tradition.

The fate of being included in the spirit of dictation, as was happening in all the Albanian literature of socialist realism, could not escape even the literary creativity for children, which in a considerable number of published or staged works, was supported on a basis new idea, illustrated with the proletarian physiognomy in the Marxist-Leninist worldview of the word. This way of creating meant to involve young readers with the socialist world, where self-sacrifice for the ideal, the duty to protect the homeland against any external or internal law, aroused in them hatred for the society with different social layers or the exploiting classes and their colorful morals. Therefore, with the aim of its massification, world bodies for children, such as the magazines *Pionieri*, *Fatosi*, *Yllkat*, or even *Skena e fëmijëve*, which began to be published during the second half of the 20th century, gave a significant help.

It should not be underestimated the considerable dedication shown in the first steps of our children's literature by such names as Qamil Guranjaku, who after his death under the care of the writer Moisi Zaloshnja, managed to publish two remaining books until that time in manuscript: "Little sparklers" (collection of poems for children) and "Ten days without bread" (collection of stories for children). child. He, with his completely authentic style through the artistic processing of the source material of popular stories, but also through original creation, was thus ranked together with the names of processors of Albanian fairy tales and children's literature.

In 1954, Teufik Gjyli published *Kacimicrri*, the first long novel published in Albania. In 1957, the volume *Golden Rose* was published, which includes 18 fairy tales. In 1959 was published the *North and the snow*. Then in 1961 he published *The Silver Fox*. Also authors such as Zihni Sako, etc., have had an impact and contributed to the consolidation of this creativity because they were committed to writing specifically for children. What should be singled out in these developments has to do with the end of the 50s, where the predominance of poetry and written prose is distinguished, and the beginning of the 60s of the last century, where the roan for children takes a new surge and wide spread.

In this period, several writers for children stood out who successfully produced both poetry and prose, such as: Odjise Grillo, Xhevat Beqaraj, Adelina Mamaqi, Tasim Gjokutaj, Bedri Dedja, Gaqo Bushaka, etc. Following these stages, it should be emphasized that in addition to poetry and prose, in the following years, drama

also began to rise and consolidate, which was taking a permanent and more visible place on the stages of puppet theaters, all over Albania, something which in synchronized with the flow of publications naturally gave a boost and popularity to children's illustrations as well.

Luigj Gurakuqi remains one of the multidimensional personalities of Albanian historiography, but in the rich background of his contributions, his dedication in the field of literary creativity also attracts attention. He is known and his activity has been analyzed as a man of letters, an educator, and a character of Albanian politics during the first decades of the 20th century. In the field of children's literature, Gurakuqi is represented by the collection "Desire", where carefully written writings for children, written in poetry and prose, occupy a special place in the History of Albanian Children's Literature.

In continuation of the tradition created by Luigji, years later, his successor Mark Gurakuqi, a prominent name of Albanian criticism and letters, summarized and adapted for children's stories from the life and work of the National Hero Gjergj Kastrioti which he wrote with an original language and style and published them in the book titled "*Gjergj Kastrioti's last order*". This publication for years has been followed and appreciated by the wide readership, criticism and history of children's literature.

Mitrush Kuteli is regarded as one of the founders of modern Albanian prose. He has a dense arsenal of creativity that touches the field of prose, poetry, journalism, translation and children's literature. Since the first half of the 20th century, Kuteli stood out in the press for his talent in literary creativity but also for his free views. After the establishment of the communist regime in Albania, he was imprisoned and spent three years in the Vloçisht camp in Maliq.

After his arrest in 1947, he lost the novel *People and Wolves* written about the Nazi camp in Pristina. To return the publishing right, he dedicated himself to children's literature, and thus *Pylli i Gështenjave* (1958), *Xinxifillua* (1962) and the retelling of the Kreshnik Cycle in *Tremige te moçme shqiptare* (1965), a collection of stories which even today it is appreciated by local critics as one of the most successful works of Albanian children's literature. On the 100th anniversary of his birth, the year 2007 was declared "The Year of Mitrush Kutel" by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Albania.

An important name in the field of children's literature is undoubtedly Bedri Dedja, who is known and appreciated as one of the prominent Albanian writers, a writer for children and an academic with a series of publications on the psychology and pedagogy of children's literature. In all his creative and academic activity, Bedri Dedja stands out among others as a theorist and critic of children's literature, an academic.

Among the main works as a writer of children's literature, we can mention the novels "Children of my palace" (1972), "Partisan Met" (1981), "Kacamisri around



the globe" (1993), "A dangerous journey" (1962), "City with three castles" (2003), "Republic of one thousand and one hundred wonders" (1997); the poem "School of the Forest" (1967), the volumes "Eleven-story Tales" (1996), "The Captain of the Force" (1970); as a researcher, he published the books "Tradition and Problems of Albanian Children's Literature" (1971), "Writings on Children's Literature" (1978), "Children's Literature" (1961), etc. Many of his works have been translated and published outside Albania, such as in Macedonia, Kosovo, Greece, Romania, China, and Switzerland. He is also the winner of many literary awards, as a laureate of the "Republic Award", "Naim Frashëri Order" and the title "Grand Master". Dedja has also been recognized by the International Center of Biographies in Cambridge, taking a place in Volume XVI of biographies as an outstanding author of the 20th century. For this activity, he received the Order of the International Book Organization for Children and Young People (Zurich, 2000).

If we are going to deal extensively with the continuation of children's literature and the most prominent names that represent this rich corpus, we cannot leave without elaborating the work of Odhise Grillo. This author published his first book of poems in 1954, titled "Seven Colors". Furthermore, throughout his creativity, Grillo wrote and published perhaps more works than any other writer of this literature, so much so that the criticism of the time qualifies him as the writer who had more works than years of life. In his work, he used themes and fields based on folk motifs, especially his birthplace, Vuno. Odhise Grillo in his creative optics always tried to bring something new to the field of children's literature, even enriching it with innovations, elements experiences and new artistic forms. His fellow writers describe him as a powerful and original voice, so passionate that it seemed as if he was born to write children's literature, being a genuine creator of it. he devoted his whole life to the latter with the dedication and creative skills with which he cultivated his literature.

Among his works we can mention: "*Seven colors*", poem, 1954, "*Rifle on the coast*", novel, 1967, "*Childhood voices*", poem, 1979, "*A man becomes a monkey*", humorous poem, 1993, "*Ladybug of childhood*", poem, 2001. Writer Odhise Grillo was awarded the "2000 Millennium" medal by the International Biographical Institute of America. This medal is awarded to people who rank alongside major personalities in the field of literature. Also, Grillo was included in the 16th edition, "International Authors and Writers Who's Who" 1999/2000, published by the biographical center of Cambridge in England (IBC). Among other things, he was awarded the title of Grand Master by the President of the Republic, as well as being the winner of the National Prize for Children's Literature, given by the Ministry of Culture.

Dionis Bubani remains one of the most special personalities of this literature. During his creative work, he worked successfully and stood out for his completely

original style and point of view in journalism, satire, humor and literature for children and adults, translations and comedy writing. Among his children's works we can mention: "The Adventures of Çapaçuli" around the country and the world / book cycle, "Wolf at the dentist", "Cat and the duck", etc. Bubani has also made a significant contribution as the author of children's song lyrics and is a laureate of the National Children's Literature Award, given by the Ministry of Culture.

With the publication of the works of the well-known author Gaqo Bushaka, especially in the novel genre, Albanian children's literature gained a new dimension and a writing innovation. His entire work ranks Bushaka as one of the most successful authors in Albania. According to critics, with his style and the concepts that he masterfully developed, he has influenced the construction of a kind of authentic narrative for children, which makes his prose very interesting and likable. Some of his best known works are: *The Bear Who Was Looking for His Father*, *On the Island of the Swallows*, *The Bequest of the Fox*, and *The Tale Left for Tomorrow*. What distinguished his creative profile from many other authors is the trilogy *Adventures of Chufu*, consisting of the tales *Chufu and the Curly Bubi*, *Chufu's Vacation*, *Chufu in the house of wonders*, to continue with the works *Chufu and the Bird*, *Chufu with Holidays in the mountains*, *Chufu wants Ice Cream*, *Chufu President*, etc. It is worth mentioning the fact that Gaqo Bushaka, for the values he has brought to Albanian literature and animated film, has been awarded a title by the President of the Republic as well as by the Ministry of Culture, which awarded him the National Award "Hours", dedicated to Children's Literature.

An important role in literary creativity for children is also the work of the well-known writer Xhevat Beqaraj. For several years, he directed the main children's magazines *Pionieri and Fatosi*, in which the creativity chosen by the authors of several generations who wrote this type of literature was published. As we mentioned above, his work represents a wide space in children's literature, which has often attracted the attention of literary critics, the media, and the authorities of the Ministry of Culture, who have awarded him the National Award. From the large corpus of his works, we could single out: *Bubi's house: poems and fairy tales*, *The wind draws - poems*, *Farewell to the stars - poems*, *The little tiger in the teapot - fairy tales*, *Dew beads: poems* etc.

In the literature of any country, names such as Astrit Bishqemi, who has extended his activity in several fields such as: literary creativity for children, translations, studies, critical articles and film scripts, really constitute a specific weight, giving literature a multidimensional contribution. It is worth noting that he holds the title "Professor" in the field of scientific research. In June 2009, from the Ministry of Culture and the Albanian Sector of IBBY (International Board on Books for Young people), he was awarded the "Hours" career award for "dedicated work in the study of Albanian children's literature and as an established creator".



In addition to the national awards in the field of creations for children, in 2010 Albania was nominated for the high world prize “Astrid Lindgren”, which is given in the field of Literature for Children and Young People. Seen in this context, we can affirm that Astrit Bishqemi is the only Albanian who has been nominated so far with this title. From the large and diverse corpus of his work we will mention:

*Gezofi i Tokke (Science Fiction Stories)* - Sh.B. Naim Frashëri, Tirana 1977, *Beyond the solar yard (science fiction)* - Sh.B. Naim Frashëri, Tirana 1978, *Small Carpenter* - Sh.B. Naim Frashëri, Tirana 1978, , *The glass prison* - Sh.B. Onufri, Elbasan 1995; *Dairy cattle* - Sh.B. Sejko, Elbasan 1996, *For a glass of tea* - Sh.B. Sejko, Elbasan 2004, *Fight with the wolf (novels, stories, sketches, funny)* - Sh.B. Rozafa, Pristina 2018, *Teeth of the wolf* - Sh.B. Sejko, Elbasan 1996, *How we threw the computer* - Sh.B. Sejko, Elbasan 2002, *Slippers for Prince Pison* - Sh.B. Sejko, Elbasan 2003, *Maçoku with mobile phone, A palm with fairy tales* - Sh.B. Erik, Tirana 2004, *How a poet grew up* - Sh.B. Rama Graf, Elbasan 2011; *Reissued with the title Dalgët e Këngës* - S.B. Vatra, Skopje 2015, *Girl with geese - screenplay for the film by Kinostudio Shqiperia e Re, Tirana 1975, Authors of Albanian literature for children and young people, 1886-2009 (Encyclopedic dictionary)* - Sh.B. 2 East & 2 West, Tirana 2009.

In Albanian children’s literature, the role and weight of female authors has been and remains present, giving the latter more identity and a variety of styles and profiles. Adelina Mamaqi represents one of the names with a wide range of works in terms of her artistic creativity, as well as in the preparation for publication of many works by other authors of this literature, after finishing higher studies in Albanian Language and Literature, she worked at the “Naim Frashëri” Publishing House, which for nearly four decades has been one of the most important publishing houses in Albania. Mamaqi worked for many years in the editorial office of children’s literature. We would like to place the emphasis on her first work, which is entitled “*Girlhood Dream*”. In 1963, he published the book “*Little Bubi*”. For over 30 years he published poems, stories, fables, fairy tales, among which we will mention: *Orizi i milngonave (poem)*, *Bregu i kalter (poem)*, *Fireworks (poem)*, *Kllochka and kittens (poem)*, *Learn to Adi the letter A*. Mamaqi has been honored with the Republic Award by the highest institutions of the Albanian state.

Another important voice of Albanian children’s literature is undoubtedly Shpresa Vreto, as a well-known author of several children’s books, as well as several scripts for artistic and animated films, where she has placed the figure of children in the face of dramas at her epicenter. and life’s challenges. In 1978, he wrote the script for the cartoon “Mirela”. In 1981, together with Xhanfizë Keko, they realized the script of the film “When a film was shot”. After five years, she comes alone as an author in the production of the film “Hard Start”. With the screenwriter of Kinostudio “Shqiperia e Re”, Petrit Rukën collaborated in the film “A boy and a

girl” in 1990. Some of the books written by Shpresa Vreto are: “Shokë Shkollë”, “Vit i paharruar” etc. After the 1990s, he created “The Little Mermaid” and “My World”. He also ran a children’s library for 12 years in a row. She is a laureate of the National Award “Hours” given by the Ministry of Culture.

If we want to approach Albanian children’s literature in its entirety, we will notice that it is enriched not only by the subjects or fables that build the literary works, but also by the different individualities and directions that have described the end and the end of this literature. In this context, Flamur Topi and the work created by him, has outlined another style and spirit in the large gallery of works and characters that give originality and role to this literature, seen in perspective with the trends in International Children’s Literature. Topi is a well-known doctor in Albania, but also a writer and journalist with extensive experience and appreciation in the eyes of the public and literary critics. He, along with many other colleagues, has been a member of the League of Writers and Artists of Albania since 1970, which proves that he started writing at a young age.

In 1964, Topi published the first science fiction story “Brave Heart”. In 1969, in the volume with the same title, “Braveheart”, he collected all science fiction stories written up to that time. In the following years, the author published the works: “Forgotten sounds”, “The love of robots”, “Illyria and Turi”, “Victory of Good”, “Fight for life”, “Stories for your health”, “A mission of hard”, “Invisible friends”, “Summer Day”, “Race of life”, “Green Peace”, “Stories of Aids - Sida - s”. In addition to his contribution to literature, especially in the sci-fi genre, Flamur Topi has also written screenplays for feature films, such as: “The Brave”, “Tinguj Luftë”, “Me hapin e shokut”, “In the days of holidays”, “Friends of a squad”, “Fight for life”. His works have been honored with prizes in national literature competitions for children, but also for adults. He is a laureate of the “Hours” National Award, dedicated to Children’s Literature, awarded by the Ministry of Culture.

The fable in every era or generation through which Albanian Children’s Literature has been cultivated and built, has occupied an important place and exerted an influence on the formation and education of different generations, cultivating the improvement of artistic tastes, obtaining philosophical and social thought. as well as penetrating the morals of the society of the time. In this context, without any hesitation Ferit Lamaj and his entire literary creativity ranks him as one of the most well-known Albanian fabulists. During his creative and publishing career, he has published over 60 books, in which over 3500 fables are listed. Thus we can mention some of the titles of his books such as: “*In summer and in winter*”; “*In the zoo*”; “*Tosi in a dress*”; “*Who ate the honey?*”; “*Gjelkokoshi wakes up the piggy*”; “*The nightingale and the gin*”; “*201 fables*”; “*Customs fox*”; “*Fox of Troy*”; “*Animals talk*”; “*Bubi, beci and calec*”; “*1111 fables*”; “*Parrot penguin*”; “*A camel near the Eiffel*”; “*Three-legged pig*”; “*Erotic fable*”; “*Scratch and scratch*”; “*Microfable*”; “*Naked bat*”; “*Miss Goat*”; “*Dwarf King*”; “*Gici and the policeman*”; etc.

We cannot leave without mentioning a very important indicator regarding the publication in the international arena of Ferit Lamaj's fables, which have been translated and published in several languages such as: English, French, Spanish, Italian, Greek and Romanian. His creativity has been screened in fabulous albums by the Albanian Public Television, under the interpretation of the most prominent Albanian actors. He is the author of the anthological collection of Albanian fables as well as the winner of many national and international awards, where the following stand out: the first prize in the national competition of the 45th anniversary of Liberation (1989); "La Fontaine" award from the French Embassy in Tirana (1995); "The best children's book in the Albanian language" award (Macedonia, 1996); Career Award (1996); silver medal at the international competition "Il faro d'Argento" (Italy, 1998); silver medal from the International Poetry Library (USA, 2002); the "Silver Naim Frashëri" medal awarded by the President of the Republic (2005); IBBY Honor List (China, 2006). He has studied and researched in the field of fiction in Greece, Italy, France, Germany, USA, Bulgaria, Romania, Switzerland, Austria, Egypt, Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Czech Republic, China. Lamaj is a member of the World Association of Fabulists as well as the International Association of Writers for Children and Young People. He has also been awarded titles and medals from the highest authorities of the Albanian State.

In the wake of the established tradition of children's literature, the author Viktor Canosinaj has also stood out in recent decades, creating a high level of readership. Initially, his name appeared in literary circles around the 70s, of the last century, when he started publishing poems and short poems in the literary press of the time. While in the early 80s, he published his first book for children, following with his first publication for adults in 1989, through which he also won a national award.

Some of his best-known and most appreciated works by both the public and the critics are Flight of the Pigeons novel (2000), Farewell to my shell (1999), Meriyll (2001), Monsters of Mimosa Street novel (2002), All the tulips of the world novel (2003), Blue years (2006), Dreams of a sailing ship novel (2004). It should be noted that in 2013, he published one of his most popular books entitled: "Adventures with the Floating Island". Viktor Canosinaj is winner of the National Children's Literature Award, given by the Ministry of Culture and some of his works have also been translated into foreign languages such as Italian and Japanese. Canosinaj is also the author of the well-known essay "From Liza to Harry Potter", financially supported by the Ministry of Culture

In its entirety, Albanian Children's Literature has a wide scope and especially, the periods between the two centuries, namely between the 19th and 20th centuries, as well as later at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, significant developments are observed, with tendency to create a more comprehensive picture of literary

forms, styles and profiles of authors who have tried in every period or system, to create an unlimited and free space for the new generation. Undoubtedly, especially in the totalitarian communist regime, this literature and its authors were censored, monitored, and persecuted, with the aim of keeping under control the entire Albanian literary system, where children's literature could not be an exception.

To make this statement even more concrete, we can bring examples that are well-known and widely treated in critical thinking, but in this paper, we will look at examples and evidence already known to the Albanian public, such as the case of the well-known writer Visar Zhiti. The communist dictatorship was not satisfied only with the condemnation and anathema of writers in the first years of its installation, but also exerted this pressure in the years when it and its structures were strengthened and operated in all areas of social activity.

In this aspect, not coincidental but on the contrary very reflective of the Albanian literary reality of that period, the work "Torn Suitcase" by Visar Zhiti also began to be conceived, a book which saw the light of publication only after the fall of the communist system in Albania. This work contains stories accompanied by drawings by Atjon Zhiti, creating in this way an intertwining of generations, father, and son together, with a collection of narratives drawn with words and colors. The special feature of this book is in its interior, where Atjon's drawings convey their own independent narrative, joining the stories that "draw" parts of life and have a connecting thread between them like the chapters of a novel.

In this work, we manage to discover that two children and two teenagers mutually give and receive in two times, in two genres of art, while it seems as if the future has been overshadowed by the past, excitement has been added to experience, wisdom has been added to the game, with a fantastic waiting horizon and the two authors merge into one, as in their father-son embrace. It was not in vain that we stuck to the case of the work in question, since "Torn Suitcase" carries an unusual story.

The author of this work himself, at the end of his essay that accompanies the publication of the book, recalls that: "I started in Shkodër, a student, I continued in Lushnjë, where I lived, then in the villages of Kukës, where a teacher took me, he took me underground, until I got out of prison, I rewrote it in Tirana, it was published and I rewrote everything once more in Rome. He is the same and young at the same time.... A book that has followed me all my life..."

Another work built with a very special structure and concept is Zhiti's other children's book "To grow up from love", which contains the creations of his son Atjon, an essay by Edlira Zhiti, Atjon's mother and his wife, the writer. This book was awarded the "Olive Branch" literary prize at the XIX Book Fair in Ulcinj. As we mentioned, this work is a special trend in children's literature because it has three authors in a book for all ages, which can be browsed with pleasure by adults as well

as children and teenagers, having inside and one as a little guide to a mother's first relations with her child, how it may be brought up, devotedly by a holy parental love. Visar Zhiti has been honored with the title of "Grand Master" by the President of the Republic, as well as with the Grand Prize for Literature" and several national awards granted by the Ministry of Culture.

Different literary periods have been represented and have highlighted names and works that have contoured and given the physiognomy of a literature that does not create dependence on translated literature, but has outlined its authentic model, as an integrated part of literature international. In these completely normal flows and continuities for a literature in consolidation, the literary corpus of the writer Xhahid Bushati creates its own corner in Albanian children's literature. Xhahid Bushati is present with his publications in all children's magazines, not only in Albania, but also in Kosovo, Macedonia and Ulcinj. Before and after 1990, he was honored with national prizes in the literary-artistic competitions that were organized by the Ministry of Education and Culture, by the independent Association of Writers of literature for children and young people, as well as by various literary-artistic bodies.

His work is represented by a rich creativity in prose and poetry, parts for dolls. He has also stood out for his style in journalism and in works with studies on literature for adults and children, etc., but mainly and specifically he has devoted himself to the sphere of children's literature. Some of his most important works are: "The first day of snow", sketches and stories, 1976, "Enter my tent", poem, 1978, "Secret of broken glass", part for puppets, 1985, "Help the little bear!", picture story for kindergarten children, 1986, "Bear's Birthday", piece for towers, 1993, "A Twice Foolish Cat", fairy tale, 2012.

The gallery of writers for children, the characters and the literary corpus that they have created has culmination points, as well as recognized flows of publications whose central purpose was propaganda and schematism, as features that testify to the limitations and the compelling spirit in the creative process. The names that would aspire to build a literature where the motives and compositional tools constitute the interior and messages of a real literary creation is without any hesitation Hamdi Meça and his literary work.

Meça published the first poetry book for children in 1976, entitled "Ben, Ben, captain". Then he also published these poetic collections "Foxes and bees" (tale in verse, 1976), "Krutane eagle flowers" (poem, 1976), "Brave squirrel" (poem-tale, 1977), "I grew up with my mother" (poem, 1977), "Mother language", poem, 1978), "Mother with a heart as free as freedom" (triptych of poems, 1980), "Rainbow over the school" (poem, 1980), "Besa e flagurim" (poem and poem, 1984), "Bird on a string" (poem, 1986), "A basket with spring" (poem, 1986). Unlike the poetic creations, which were conceived and written for children, the fables and fairy tales

that the author has written and published so far are dedicated to children and their parents. It is worth noting that in the field of fable Hamdi Meçaj has published the collections: "Pishtar' i xixellonjë" (1988) and "Laraska pa bisht" (1991). In the field of prose for children, he published the novella "The beauty of the earth" (1994). The author continues to have a dense activity and continuity in the field of publications and their promotion to the reader.

The reliance on popular myths and legends constitutes a special postcard in Albanian children's literature. This phenomenon takes place in the creativity of many well-known names of this literature such as: Ismail Kadare, Mitrush Kuteli, Odhise Grillo, Hamdi Meçaj, etc. The work of the well-known writer Naum Prifti is also part of this consolidated and identity physiognomy of Albanian literature for children. His literary creativity is diverse and spans several genres: stories, dramas, comedies, novels, film scripts, pieces for puppet theater, scripts for cartoons, biographies, critical articles, journalism, where a rich language is noted. fused into motifs from folk folklore, folk rites and legends. There are almost 100 literary works, more than years of life and twice half a century of creativity. In this context, children's literary creativity occupies a special and by no means accidental place in the entire literary corpus created by him. In 2001, he was honored by the Ministry of Culture and the League of Writers with the award: "Silver Feather", for the volume with the legend "Mother of the Sun".

In the field of poetry for children, Shkëlzen Zalli will remain one of the most beloved names for the reader. He left behind a rich fund of works which are continuously read and appreciated by the Albanian reader. He worked at Radio Tirana in Albanian literature programs for children. During his career, he became very popular for children's shows such as "Microphone of cherries", "Afternoon Kolovajsa" and "In the dance of our growth". Some of his most popular works are: *Beyond the Face: Poems – 1998*, *Ben's Lessons: Poems – 2001*, *Donkey Without One Ear: Fables and Humorous Stories for Children – 2013*, *Do Birds Have Teachers: Poems – 2014*, *Banana wreath: fable - 2015*, *Cat's diary - 2015*, *Bell card: children's poem - 2019*. Shkëlzen Zalli is a laureate of the National Award for Children, awarded by the Ministry of Culture

Dealing with Albanian children's literature on a historical but also a scientific level, you can never stop at the personality and literary and scientific and academic contribution of the writer Tasim Gjokutaj. Thanks to his work, children's literature has inherited nearly 30 books of rhymes and humorous poems for children, with which he has become one of the most prominent representatives of children's literature in this field, and one of the most beloved and sought-after names. for children. In his creativity, Tasim Gjokutaj has addressed the children's scene, for which he has written many pieces for puppets, several pop books for children and adults, but also song texts that have been composed and received prizes at



various festivals. He has done particularly commendable work during the many years that he worked as the director of the children's library in the city, where he developed many different activities for the promotion and reading of books and for the development of new talents in the field of literature. Then Tasim Djokutaj gave lectures on children's literature at "Eqerem Çabej" University, where he also helped to discover and advance talents in the field of literature for children and adults, some of whom are now well-known writers.

During the years that lecturer Tasim Gjokutaj worked, he was also engaged in scientific work, the fruit of which are two books with lectures and studies: "Girokastrite wedding lyrics" and "Children's literature 1", for which he also received the title "Doctor of philological sciences." Even after his death, Tasim Gjokutaj and his literary creativity always remains appreciated and in the attention of critics and scientific works.

In Contemporary Albanian Literature, children's creativity has been seen and appreciated by well-known names of this literature. One of the most important authors is undoubtedly Ismail Kadare, for whom children's literature has been since the first years of his creativity, a space where he has carefully cultivated his written art. Thus, we can mention the publication in 1958 of the poem *Princess Argjiro*, then in 1967 the publication of the poem *The Stonemasons*, to continue with the poem in the *Museum of Arms*, published in 1978.

Taking into consideration the critic's opinion, she dedicated a special place to the well-known poem *Princess Argjiro*, in which Kadare described the sacrifice of an Albanian princess who, in order not to fall alive into the hands of the Turks, is thrown from the walls of the Castle. According to the legend and the masterful construction of this mythical figure by Kadare, Princess Argjiro is thought to have been the ruler of the city of Gjirokastra during the 14th century. She was married to the prince of this city. During the confrontations with the Ottoman armies, Princess Argjiro fought when they surrounded the fortress of Gjirokastra. However, the Ottomans managed to take Gjirokastra, so Princess Argjiro, in order not to fall alive into the hands of the Turks, jumped from the highest tower of the castle together with her infant son. She fell straight on a rock and was crushed but her son survived, and to bless him she began to drip milk. According to legend, the baby survived from the stone dripping with milk. The legend says that the name of Gjirokastra comes from the name of the princess.

This creation remains one of the most representative achievements of Albanian literature for children, which through the symbol of this figure, has built a literary myth that has taken place in the consciousness of local readers, who reflect the existence of this ancient city and its continuity. and generations after the sublime act of the princess with the self-sacrifice of a woman who sacrificed herself in the name of life. Meanwhile, another great name of Albanian literature is, without

any hesitation, Petro Marko, the host of modernity in the Albanian novel and the representative of the Literature of the Lost Generation in this literature.

In terms of creativity for children. Marko stands out with the novels *Pirate's cave and Fantazma and plan 3 + 4*. What distinguishes the novel *Pirate's cave* as one of the most successful novels in Albanian children's literature is the fact that this novel has been dramatized and staged in several variants and although the book was published for the first time in 1964, by the publishing house "Naim Frashëri". The content of the novel is divided into five parts. The first part has two titles "The Story of Niko Dabo" and "Fight with the Shark". While the second part carries the titles "Discovering a centuries-old secret", "Gjonbaba! Gjonbaba!" and "Lolua - Gjonbaba! The third part presents the titles "Preparation", "On the attack to enter the cave", "In the sea of the cave" and "The year 999!". The fourth part begins with the title "The name of Rusman el Namsurit" continues with "Gjonbiri" and ends with the title "Gjonipi". The fifth and last part, has five titles. It starts with the title "Return of loss", continues with "Shipbreaker in hell!", "Other discoveries", "Voice of life" and ends with "On top, the Dolphin of pioneers!". While the novel "Ghost and plan 3 + 4" tells the adventures of a boy, Besim, and some of his friends in the village where Besim's father was born.

The boy is very attracted to the dark ruins of the ominous castle, where it is said in the village that a ghost lived. There is more demand for the latter during the summer season. Meanwhile, other names and personalities of Albanian literature have left their mark in this genre, such as Moikom Zeqo, who has written and published important works such as: "Dardan knights", or "Copernicus's professor" or even "Book of mini-fables", which was published after the death of the author, in which fables collected over 40 years published in the literary press of the time take place.

A prominent place is also occupied by literary works dedicated to children, left by the prominent Albanian poet and prose writer Frederik Rreshpja with his book "Trouta hutaqe". Regarding this work, the well-known writer and critic Xhahid Bushati expresses his appreciation and lists the book "Trofta hutaqe" as an achievement in the field of children's literature, for which he says: "Frederik Rreshpja writes with fantasy and lyricism". A work which aroused the interest of children and critics but also of the filmmakers of the animated film is "Oni sëšte me mojoli" by the author Vath Koreshi, published in 1987. This work admired in those years by the reader and the public, has at its center a boy who, growing up, tries to let his relatives know, especially his father, that with the years he is growing and with him his personality. This novel was dramatized by Radio Tirana and based on it, an animated film with the same title was made.

Always remaining in the elaboration of the works which have played a non-accidental role in the consolidation and enrichment of children's literature, we

will unequivocally stop at the work of the writer Riza Lahi, who has extended his literary creativity as in prose, as well as in poetry and his literary work, in addition to receiving various literary prizes won in nationwide competitions in 1994, winning the first prize for children's literature, we can highlight that some of his works have been published in USA, Greece, Romania, Macedonia, Kosovo, Iran, and finally in India. Riza Lahi has served as a pilot in the Air Force for 30 years, the subjects and characters built by him stand out in addition to the original style and skill and compositional spirit for the fantasy and phantasmagoric circumstances where he places and moves the events and heroes of his works. the author. Among his children's works we can mention: "*The Legend of Zerdelija*" 1985, "*Ledia on a moonlit night*" 1995, or "*Saturday at noon on a star*", a novella for which he was also awarded the National Literature Award for children.

The numerous currents in children's literature in the second half of the 20th century and the first half of the 21st century, which cover and deal with various topics, starting from the ancient, medieval past, but also continuing to the elaboration of contemporary subjects are represented by a considerable number of writers among whom we would single out Moisi Zaloshnje, Nasho Jorgaq, Skënder Haskon, Bardhyl Xhamaj, Mustafa Tukaj, Pandeli Koçi, Vilhelme Vranari, Virgjil Muçi, Alma Zenellari, etc., for whom we can express that with their work, they have managed to enrich the so-called Library of Albanian Literature for Children.

Likewise, in the series of publications in children's literature, the literary corpus of the writer Thanas Jorgji cannot be left without mentioning. This author remains one of the most well-known names and one of the most productive in this literature, creating a whole series of works with subjects and characters that bring a great variety to the development of this literature. Thanas Jorgji, after graduating in Language - Literature, was appointed to the editorial office of the Literary-Artistic Magazine *Nëntori*, an organ of the League of Writers and Artists of Albania, where he worked as an editor for prose until 1992.

Since this year he lives in Munich, Germany. Among his many books, we can mention: *Big Dreams* - novel, *How I Became Robinson* - novel, *Magic Theater* - novel, *Forbidden Hunting* - novel, *Mystery of the Cave* - novel, *Wolf's Mouth* - novel, etc. Jorgji has been awarded the National Children's Literature Award for his literary creativity. His literary work has been translated and published in Greece, Austria, Germany, and Italy in addition to his native language.

It must be admitted that in recent years there has been a decrease in the number of publications for children's literature, mainly by professional writers and mostly teachers and researchers have been included in this genre, who can be said to have not made genuine contributions to this literature, both in terms of creating new characters and authentic fables on which works of children's literature are generally based. In the same way, even in the next generation of the most prominent writers

of Albanian literature, no lasting commitment to children's literature is noticed.

In this aspect, another work by the author Ermir Nika entitled "Grandfather in the frame" has been added to the book collection of children's literature. In this book, the author brings with emotion a culminating event from the life of a grandfather and his grandson. The child faces natural difficulties, which are multiplied by the accidental loss of the grandfather. Coping with the situation, with the help of random people, and the strength and vitality of the grandfather, remain indelible in the child's memory. The descriptions of the situations, given with great art, will remain in the reader's memory for a long time, together with the picture of the grandfather in the frame. Ermir Nika is also the author of a series of children's song texts, a participant in the annual editions of regional and national song festivals, where he is a two-time winner of the first place in the 49th and 50th editions of the National Children's Song Festival.

In order to be as objective as possible in the judgment and evaluation of this process, we must point out that despite the consolidated tradition, valuable streams and contemporary creativity which in these last decades has known continuous peaks, preserving the reader but also being represented in different languages and cultures, Albanian literature for children is still not studied in Albanian universities and even in the last ten years, a decline in academic studies on this literature is noticed as well as an ever-increasing reduction in space and of the engagement of young researchers in the various scientific gatherings that are organized in Albania.

Based on the latest data that we collected to make this process as accurate and detailed as possible, it turns out that a scientific work by Prof. Nor. Dr. Ramazan Çadri with the title "Albanian Literary Tale", the fruit of several years of work which sheds light and analyzes in an analytical way, the relationship between the narration and the construction of the literary structure of the tale. This work will highlight the source values and enrichment of literature through the fairy tale as a fundamental value of memory and written art.

However, seeing this stage as one of the indicators of the transitive process that undoubtedly also affects art or literature, we adhere to the opinion that the created subject and the potential created throughout its history, will not a little affect the awareness of academics to throw view, analyzed and treated with due attention, this precious arsenal of Children's Literature.

## **Bibliography**

Bedri Dedja: Tradita dhe probleme të letërsisë shqipe për fëmijë (1971)

Bedri Dedja: Burimet e letërsisë shqipe për fëmijë (1978)

Bedri Dedja: Shkrime mbi letërsinë për fëmijë (1978)

- Astrit Bishqemi: Autorë të letërsisë shqiptare për fëmijë e të rinj, 1886-2009 (Fjalor enciklopedik) - Sh.B. 2 Lindje & 2 Perëndime, Tiranë 2009
- Astrit Bishqemi & Migena Arllati: Autorë të letërsisë shqipe për fëmijë e të rinj, 1886-2017 [Botimi i dytë i leksikonit të vitit 2009, por i zgjeruar: i rishikuar e i plotësuar]- Shoqata e intelektualëve “Jakova”, Prishtinë 2017
- Astrit Bishqemi: Bibliografi e kritikës letrare për fëmijë – Albtipografia, Tiranë 2017
- Letërsia për fëmijë (pjesa I: Teoria) - Sh.B. Sejko, Elbasan 1997
- Letërsia për fëmijë (pjesa III: Njëpër botë) - Sh.B. Sejko, Elbasan 1999
- Historia e Letërsisë shqiptare për fëmijë - Sh.B. Sejko, Elbasan 2001
- Hyrje në teorinë e letërsisë për fëmijë [Botimi i dytë i tekstit të 1997-s, por i zgjeruar: i rishikuar e i plotësuar] - Sh.B. Sejko, Elbasan 2004
- Histori e letërsisë botërore për fëmijë [Botimi i dytë i tekstit të 1999-s, por i zgjeruar: i rishikuar e i plotësuar] - Sh.B. Sejko, Elbasan 2006
- Historia e Letërsisë shqiptare për fëmijë [Botimi i dytë i tekstit të 2001-shit, me pak ndryshime] - Sh.B. Sejko, Elbasan 2004
- Histori e letërsisë shqiptare për fëmijë e të rinj [Botimi i tretë i tekstit të 2001-shit, por i zgjeruar: i rishikuar e i plotësuar]- DY LINDJE DHE DY PERËNDIME, Tiranë 2008
- Histori e letërsisë shqipe për fëmijë e të rinj [Botimi i katërt i tekstit të 2001-shit, por i zgjeruar: i rishikuar e i pasuruar rishtazi]- ShBLSH e RE, Tiranë 2014
- Fotaq Andrea: Arbëreshët e Italisë, 1413 – 2007, botues Via Egnatia 2012