



Ethnopoetics of Kadare Across Different Media and Periods Case study: "The Ghost Rider", "Broken April"

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Abstract

This paper aims to analyze distinctive ethno-poetical features in two artistic works of Ismail Kadare, focusing specifically on: The Ghost Rider and Broken April, both first published in 1980. They embody the essentiality of the given word ("besa", The Ghost Rider) and blood vengeance (Broken April), along with other codes derived from the Kanun. While folklore, customs, and traditions, as part of national heritage, were methodologically acceptable and even preferable under the system's ideology, the scope of this research goes beyond that. The interest lies in understanding the construction and effect that the poetics of these ethno-folkloric features create for audiences across different eras, viewed in a new dimension and context. The research question is related to how the sanctity of ethical and aesthetic codes (besa and blood vengeance) is preserved from the source through the literary text and later in stage and film adaptations (from the Costandin and Doruntina legend to The Ghost Rider a novella later a novel toward the stage drama; and from the novel Broken April with its Kanun elements into a movie). A semiotic within anthropological interpretation helps to respond to this question. It helps to illuminate the multidimensional value of Kadare's work, written under dictatorship, and to understand the extent of its effect (on the reader/audience) within the national ethnic culture and beyond, revitalizing the enduring relevance of his work across time.

Keywords: Ethnopoetics, Ismail Kadare, literary text, stage, film, etc

1. Introduction

Albania, this rock garden of Southeastern Europe (Konica, 1991), is characterized by a historical dynamic that shapes its identity through the vitality of great contrasts embodied within its community. As part of the Balkans, itself understood as a region of striking contrasts, Albania has often been studied through biased perspectives in world literature and culture, even though great names have left their mark on it, such as Ismail Kadare whose works has been translated into 45 world languages (Kuçuku, 2015:30). Generally, Albanian literature is grounded in historical heritage and anthropological characteristics preserved as universal values. It experimented with forms and structures until 1944, but after the Second World War, Albania fell under a dictatorial regime and all forms of art, could not be communicated broadly only with the consent of the Party policies. According to Kërbizi and Macaj (2020: 6), "Albanian literature suffered from severe consequences of the application of social realism, and the absence of freedom". "Literature was censored and as a result it changed its natural development process" (Kërbizi & Macaj 2019: 126). "Many writers who could not comply with its schematic formula were condemned, imprisoned, and even executed" (Kërbizi, 2025: 105). "The deprivation of freedom in the artistic process created a serious stagnation in the field of literature" (Macaj, 2023: 293). It was impossible to create using the socialist realism method, approved as the only one. Socialist Realism, the official art form promoted in many socialist states, aimed to depict reality in an optimistic and idealized way to inspire the working class and promote socialist values. "Literature and art were used to promote communist ideology, with socialist realism as the dominant aesthetic, controlled by state institutions like the League of Writers and Artists" (Macaj, Kërbizi, 2025: 562). Folk literature, on the other hand, as an organic form of cultural expression deeply rooted in the lives of common people, became integral to this method, as symbolizing authenticity, national identity, and continuity with the past. Thus, one of the most reliable approaches to developing topics and fictional scenarios would be literature crafted within the parameters of an established method that promotes traditional values. Such a combination enhanced national pride, ensuring that literature remained controlled. It was expected that the outcome of such a directed creative process would promote only joy, traditional values, and national pride. As part of this programmed artistic expression, there is a different approach to oral heritage. There is a new artistic elaboration of folklore essence far from socialist realism "joy and happiness", but expressed in a unique sophisticated way, rooted in the dramatic effect of the source subject. Time proved it was acceptable to move in other dimensions, other media, and other times too. This is the case of two fictional scenarios born in the communist era but remaining above their time. It is the case of Kadare narration in artistic transformation.

2. Literature Review

Socialist Realism's appeal lay in its accessibility, a feature amplified through the integration of folklore, which was already familiar to the masses. (Clark 1981; James 1998) Folklore, with its oral traditions, songs, tales, and rituals, was seen as a medium that could bridge pre-socialist cultural forms with Marxist ideology. Scholars like Hobsbawm (1983) and Bendix (1997) have argued that folklore in socialist states was "repurposed" to provide continuity, reinforcing the idea that the values of collectivism, community, and shared labor had historical roots. Socialist Realism in literature, visual arts, and theater often incorporated folklore motifs to emphasize shared struggle and collective heroism. According to Clark (1981) and Lahusen (1997), folklore motifs like the hardworking peasant, the hero of the people, and the collective farm community were frequently depicted to create an idyllic image of life under socialism. On the other hand, while folklore was embraced for its connection to the people, scholars also argue it was strategically employed for ideological control. Fitzpatrick (1992) and Kligman (1988) discuss how socialist states regulated folklore to ensure that it aligned with party ideologies. By controlling the narrative, folklore was transformed into a form of propaganda that idealized the socialist state and condemned capitalist societies. This "managed folklore," as described by Creed (2002), took traditional narratives and restructured them to include elements of class

struggle, communal success, and disdain for bourgeois values, all hallmarks of Marxist ideology. The literature based on folklore in Socialist Realism reveals a dual role: folklore served *both as an authentic connection to the people and as an ideological conduit*. This ambivalence underscores the complexities of using folklore within Marxist ideology. While it reinforced a collective identity and connected the present with a storied past, it also demonstrated the ways in which states could manipulate cultural forms for ideological purposes. Through Socialist Realism, folklore was both preserved and transformed, reflecting the broader dynamics of culture under socialism. In Eastern Bloc countries, Bošković and Hann (2013) examine how political, economic, and social transformations—such as the collapse of socialism, European integration, and globalization—have reshaped the identities and experiences of these regions, as well as the frameworks used to study them. They reflect on the historical development of anthropology in these areas, shaped by unique regional dynamics and often overlooked in broader disciplinary narratives (Bošković, 2023). On the other hand, it testifies that ethnographic research and the study of folklore were central to socialist-era anthropology and were seen as tools for preserving cultural heritage and fostering national pride.

The literature developed in Albania after the establishment of the dictatorial regime avoided experimenting with the new forms and techniques emerging in Europe, instead confining itself to the reality produced by the party-state. Albanian literature in its relationship with power was characterized by phenomena such as: the use of literature primarily as propaganda through methodical and prescriptive directives; the reflection of class struggle; a popular character; the fight against foreign influences, and opposition to both conservatism and liberalism; a crisis of realism in literary writing and the depiction of a partisan institutionalized reality; the imposition of a militant character and a combative spirit (Asllani, et. al, 2024: 13). Statistically, during this period and until its end, Albanian literature was dominated by poetry, which consistently glorified the party and celebrated the joys of socialist life. At the same time, it outlined the path and methods, through which prose was expected to evolve. The literature of the time was strictly controlled through a series of mechanisms to ensure that it never deviated and to prevent any form of divergence. It was overseen by the Writers' Union, which implemented the Party's directives and orders on how literature should be developed, and by contemporary criticism, which was elaborated in the periodicals of the era, particularly the newspaper *Drita*. Even the socialist realism promoted in Albanian literature differed from that model in the Easter-Bloc countries. Albanian literature developed a *sui generis* social realism. Within this framework of vigilance, Kadare's case experienced its own ups and downs. He emerged as one of the most prominent prose writers of the era. Superficially, his works fulfilled the general requirements of socialist realism, but he occasionally drew on folklore and mythology as a source to elaborate his new aesthetic vision. In this context, during the darkest days of the dictatorship in the 1980s, Kadare published two works that appeared to meet the criteria necessary to avoid criticism while simultaneously re- aestheticizing some of the dramatic wounds rooted in this folkloric and mythological source material. Julia Kristeva (1980) coined the term "intertextuality" to describe the relationship between texts and the ways texts influence each other. Scholars like Bakhtin (1981) and Barthes (1977) have also contributed to the understanding of intertextuality as a dialogic process that resituates folklore within contemporary literary canons, endowing traditional narratives with renewed cultural relevance. Meletinsky (2000) explores how mythic archetypes recur in modern literature, showing that legendary characters and themes not only offer cultural continuity but also function as malleable sources that writers adapt to explore contemporary issues. These recurring elements highlight a constant dialogue between folklore and modern literature, where legends are reactivated in fiction to convey symbolic, ethical, or existential themes. Folklore in Kadare's novels serves not only as a backdrop but also as a narrative device that informs the plot, reinforces themes, and comments on contemporary political and social issues. Scholars such as Elsie (2001) and Schwandner-Sievers (2004) have highlighted Kadare's unique use of Albanian legends and myths to illuminate the country's complex relationship with tradition and modernity, especially during Albania's socialist era. Scholars like Fischer (1999) have argued that Kadare's retelling employs intertextuality to emphasize the tension between fate and free will. The Ghost Rider interrogates the boundaries between the living and the dead, reflecting Kadare's broader critique of the often rigid and unyielding aspects of Albanian

social customs. Here, the intertextual presence of the legend not only enriches the narrative but also serves as a metaphor for Albania's inescapable past, with Kadare using folklore to question the nature of cultural and moral obligations.

3. Research: The Ghost Rider and Broken April

The Ghost Rider and *Broken April*, Kadare's intertextual references to folklore create layers of meaning that reflect contemporary Albanian society and governance. By drawing from legends and the "Kanun", he presents a society trapped in cycles of repetition, where historical memory and rigid traditions dictate the lives of individuals. This allegorical quality of Kadare's folklore intertextuality resonates with themes of surveillance, control, and loss of autonomy under authoritarian rule, thus transforming folklore into a potent tool for sociopolitical reflection. *Broken April* and *The Ghost Rider* were written in the late 70 and were first published in a collection of short stories and novellas titled *Gjakftohtësia*¹, in 1980 (Tirana, Prishtina). *Broken April* saw the light of publication as a standalone book many years later, after the fall of communism. The first reception of these works during their initial publications in the 1980s, in the darkest years of communism, was highly successful due to several fundamental characteristics these two works possess.

The Ghost Rider is about the reactivation of an Albanian legend. The legend fundamentally revolves around keeping one's given word—a word that, within the communicative codes of Albanians, must absolutely be kept and never broken. Not even death can prevent the fulfilment of a promise if the word has been given. In *The Ghost Rider*, Kadare reimagines the medieval Albanian ballad of "Constantine and Doruntine,"² a story in which a brother keeps his promise to his sister, Doruntine, even after his death by returning from the grave to bring her back home. This legend is deeply ingrained in Albanian oral tradition, where it represents themes of loyalty, family duty, and the supernatural. Kadare's adaptation of the legend examines these themes in a modern light, focusing on the haunting persistence of societal expectations and the supernatural as a form of retributive justice. The novelle was elaborated and later published as a novel. Kadare transforms the story into an investigation: Captain Stres must determine who brought Doruntine home in the night from a distant land, following the deaths of all her brothers, including Constantine, who had given his besa to ensure her return. This tension — between the investigator's rationalism and the logic of myth and folklore — reproduces what Claude Lévi-Strauss (1966) described as the opposition between empirical thought and mythopoetic thought. On a cultural level, the novel analyzes honour as a mechanism of social control in traditional Albanian society, where the individual acts according to collective kinship norms rather than personal will. The figure of Constantine returning from the grave simultaneously activates two historically overlapping belief systems in the Albanian world: the pre-Christian pagan tradition, in which the spirits of the dead may still act among the living, and Orthodox Christianity with its notion of resurrection. Anthropologically, this threshold between two worlds corresponds to what Victor Turner (1969) conceptualized as *liminality* — an intermediate and irreducible state of being. The novel argues, at its core, that Albanian cultural identity is preserved not by institutions, but by the living memory of the people — kept alive precisely through myths such as that of Doruntine.

¹ Plenum of the Union of Writers (18 March - 19 March 1982); the discussions of the members of Albanian Union of Writers for "Gjakftohtësia" by I. Kadare in 1983.

² The legend tells the story of the marriage of the youngest daughter in a family, a daughter born after 12 brothers, to a distant land. Unlike the others, it is only the youngest brother, the youngest son, who approves of his sister's marriage, promising his mother that whenever she wished to see her daughter, he would bring her back at all costs. The wedding took place. War claimed all her sons, and in her despair, the mother calls upon her youngest son, now dead, to fulfill the promise he had made to bring her daughter back. Kostandin, the son, rises from his grave, mounts his horse, and, dead and silent, fulfills his promise. Despite his sister speaking to him throughout the journey, he does not respond. He returns the daughter to her mother, and upon their reunion, "they shatter like glass filled with wine." This is one version of the legend.

Broken April is one of Kadare's most notable works for its intertextual engagement with the *Kanun* of Lekë Dukagjini, a traditional Albanian code of law. The *Kanun*, which includes codes on blood feuds, honor, and revenge, dictates much of the social structure in the mountainous regions of Albania. In *Broken April*, Kadare situates the plot within this cultural framework, intertextually referencing the *Kanun* to explore themes of fate, cyclical violence, and individual suffering under the weight of tradition. Scholars such as Vickers (2008) and Morgan (2003) observe that Kadare's intertextual use of the *Kanun* serves as both a literal and symbolic structure within the novel. The protagonist, Gjorg, is entrapped by the *Kanun*'s demands for blood revenge, which dictate his life and fate, showing how these ancient codes still shape Albanian life. Kadare's intertextual invocation of the *Kanun* allows him to critique the destructiveness of rigid traditions that continue to control individuals, even in a modernizing world. This use of folklore prose material as an intertextual element highlights how ancient customs conflict with personal freedom and autonomy. Kadare's reactivation of folklore serves not only as cultural commentary but also as a subtle critique of authoritarian control. As an author who wrote under an oppressive regime, Kadare often used folklore intertextually to bypass censorship, embedding political critiques within narratives that ostensibly explore traditional themes. Scholars such as Misha (2006) have suggested that Kadare's reliance on folklore allowed him to use familiar cultural narratives as vehicles for resistance, providing a nuanced critique of authoritarianism while avoiding direct political confrontation. Both works, beyond their values tied to customs and their sanctity transcend the boundaries of communication within literature alone. They are revitalized by amplifying the drama and tragedy of human existence in upholding honor and keeping one's word, pushing the limits of the surreal.

Kadare creates a complex interplay between past and present, challenging readers to consider the enduring influence of folklore on Albanian identity and social structures. His work exemplifies the power of folklore as a literary device that can simultaneously honor and critique tradition, making it a dynamic force within his exploration of Albanian culture and history. Adaptation is a transformative process that reimagines literary works in new mediums, often altering or emphasizing certain themes to suit the conventions of theater, film, or other forms. According to Linda Hutcheon (2006), adaptation is not simply a "copy" of an original text but an intertextual dialogue, where the new work brings unique perspectives to the source material. Kadare's novels, with their rich symbolism, intricate exploration of history, and strong visual elements, have attracted adaptations in theater and film, where directors and playwrights interpret his themes of fate, power, and tradition in innovative ways.

On the other hand, *Broken April* addresses the theme of blood feuds within a strong political context. The events take place in Albania in 1939 and focus on two main storylines: a couple on their honeymoon in the northern part of the country, and the final days of freedom for a 26-year-old highlander who has avenged his brother's murder according to the *Kanun*. It was adapted into the 1985 film *"The Uninvited"*, produced by the only national film studio in communist Albania: "Kinostudioja: Shqipëria e Re", based on Kadare's script. It depicts a couple (the writer Besian Vorpsi and his wife Diana) on a trip in the mountainous north of the country during their honeymoon and the last days of freedom of a 26-year-old highlander, who has taken revenge for his brother's death, in respect of the traditional law of the region, the *Kanun* and now is waiting his lasting days of "Short truce" (*Besa e vogël*) 24 hours, and "long truce" (*Besa e madhe*) - 30 days. The resonance of this type of drama has transcended boundaries and continues to echo to the present day. It was recreated in 1987 as *Avril brisé*, a new version of the novel directed by Liria Bégéja, co-scripted by Kadare himself; after that, another movie was in the scene, the Brazilian film *Behind the Sun* (2001), *Abril Despedaçado*, directed by Walter Salles. Although set in rural Brazil, the film retains Kadare's central themes of tradition, violence, and the constraints of social codes on personal freedom. By transposing Kadare's Albanian setting to Brazil, Salles universalizes the story, emphasizing how the destructive cycle of vengeance is a global, rather than uniquely Albanian, phenomenon. In her analysis, Hutcheon (2006) observes that this type of adaptation exemplifies the "transcultural" potential of literature, where a story rooted in one culture's folklore can resonate with universal themes when translated into a different cultural context. By focusing on the symbolic and psychological impact of the feud on individuals and families, *Behind the Sun* captures the oppressive weight of tradition that Kadare portrayed in *Broken April*. This

adaptation highlights how Kadare's narrative lends itself to a range of settings and mediums, where the core themes retain their potency even when separated from their original cultural context. The political footprint had to ensure that the book passed without issues. In the meantime, a character who does not appear in the literary work *Broken April* in the film adaptation is Martin Alushi. His figure serves as a key element in defining the political reframing through a Marxist lens, as a counterpoint to the political atmosphere of the late 1930s, by making this interpolated character a premature hero.

Broken April, adapted for film, focuses on the universality of the blood feud motif, presenting it as a universal tragedy rather than a culturally specific custom. This demonstrates that adaptations are not only translations of text to stage or screen but also reinterpretations that reflect the adapters' perspectives and the socio-cultural context in which the adaptation takes place. *Broken April* delves into the Albanian blood-feud tradition dictated by the Kanun, where vendettas perpetuate cycles of violence, often with tragic implications for individual freedom. The ethno-poetic elements in *Broken April* underscore themes of fate, duty, and justice, casting the concept of revenge as a binding force within Albanian society. Vickers (2008) and Morgan (2003) note that Kadare's portrayal of the Kanun is both a tribute to and critique of Albanian traditions, showing how these customs sustain a rigid social structure even as they constrain individual autonomy.

4. Semiotic Transfer

The concept of ethno-poetics explores how cultural values and traditions shape literature, imbuing it with codes and symbols rooted in national identity. Kadare's use of Albanian folklore, particularly concepts like "*besa*" (the sacred pledge) and blood vengeance, reflects his focus on Albanian ethical and aesthetic codes derived from cultural traditions and historical texts like the *Kanun of Lekë Dukagjini*. Scholars such as Elsie (2001) and Schwandner-Sievers (2004) have examined how Kadare uses folklore to critique and reflect Albanian identity, with his work serving as both a preservation of and commentary on these values within an oppressive political context. *The Ghost Rider* revisits the legend of Constantine and Doruntine, a legend deeply embedded in Albanian oral tradition, where the concept of *besa* compels the dead brother, Constantine, to honor his word even beyond death. Kadare's adaptation of this legend emphasizes the power of promises, duty, and supernatural justice, themes that resonate strongly with the Albanian cultural code of honor. The mother, along with her eight sons, rejected the request due to the distance. However, the youngest of the nine brothers (in some variations, the number of brothers ranges from 7, 9, to 12, while in Kadare's novella they are specifically described as nine brothers) plays a significant role in the narrative. This ballad in Albanian folklore is known in several variations: *Halil Garria*, which belongs to the northern variant; *Konstandini e Dhoqina*, associated with the southern Cham variant; and *Konstandini e Garentina*, the Arbëresh variant from Italy. The first is considered the oldest among them. On the other hand, after Kadare reimaged and ensured the success of this legend in the 1980s, its popularity continued through various theatrical adaptations: *Kush e solli Doruntinë* (Who Brought Doriuntina?) dramatized by Pirro Mani and Edmond Budina, performed at the National Theatre (Albanian National Theater) in 1983, reperformed in 1989. The theatrical staging directed by Fatos Haxhiraj in 1990 draws on Kadare's narrative, seeks to reactivate the work artistically through performance; *Kush e solli Doruntinë: Konstandini*, scripted by Llaz Sërbo. This short film entitled *Konstandini* produced in 1989, directed by Llaz Sërbo on the eve of the regime's collapse, preserves the dramatic atmosphere — the mother's anguish and her powerful cry — but artistically displaces the conflict onto the interrogation of Doruntine herself, aimed at unsettling her credibility regarding the figure who accompanied her, and casting doubt upon the story of incest. *Kush e solli Doruntinë: Gjak i Arbrit*, was an artistic product dramatized by Gaspër Shllaku and performed at the "Migjeni" Theatre in Shkodër. *Kush e solli Doruntinë*, staged at the "Migjeni" Theatre in Shkodër under the direction of Bruno Shllaku. *Konstandini Doruntina: Fluturimi i Kobshëm* (*The Fateful Flight*), directed by Luigi Scarpelli in 1995. *Kush e solli Doruntinë*, staged at the "Aleksandër Moisiu" Theatre in Durrës with dramatization and direction by Laert Vasili, December 2015. This restaging uncensored the interpretive weight of the incest reading. *The Ghost Rider* is also reactivated in numerous movies. These and other adaptations

demonstrate the enduring appeal and versatility of the legend across various forms of artistic expression. The transfer of Kadare's work into theatre and film multiplies its aesthetic and anthropological readings, deepening the sense of wonder and the essential quality of the impossible made possible. The folkloric intertext has now been transformed into a story of investigation, in which power seeks — at any cost — the outcome it has already determined for itself, thereby acquiring further layers of meaning. According to Fischer (1999), Kadare's interpretation of *besa* functions as an allegory for the inescapable moral and ethical demands imposed on individuals by their culture. Kadare revitalizes this tale by embedding it within a modern narrative, enabling a semiotic reading that contrasts individual agency against collective cultural demands. This ethno-poetic reactivation of *besa* highlights the idea that folklore functions not only as a storytelling device but as an ethical system shaping identity and interpersonal obligations. Such interpretations provide insight into the symbolic relevance of Kadare's work across different historical contexts, reflecting the universal struggle between individual will and societal expectations. Kadare's works have also been adapted for the stage, where theater practitioners have used minimalist staging, symbolic lighting, and focused dialogue to capture the essence of Albanian ethno-poetic elements. Marinós (2008) notes that theatrical adaptations of *The Ghost Rider* and *The Palace of Dreams* emphasize the symbolic and allegorical dimensions of Kadare's narratives, making the audience acutely aware of the cultural and moral pressures embodied by the Kanun and *besa*. Adaptations offer a semiotic reactivation of Kadare's ethno-poetic symbols, translating them from textual to performative signs. In a theatrical setting, these symbols take on additional layers of meaning as they engage directly with the audience, immersing them in the moral and cultural constraints that characterize Kadare's fictional world. According to Hutcheon (2006), this kind of intertextual adaptation enables a "dialogic" reading, where new meanings emerge from the interplay between source text, adaptation, and audience perception. Kadare's reactivation of folklore through intertextuality is also a means of negotiating identity and modernity in Albania. As Trencsényi (2011) observes, Kadare's works frequently engage with questions of national identity, using folklore to address the struggle between cultural preservation and progress. In *The Ghost Rider*, the legend of siblings *Constantine and Doruntine* represents the weight of cultural expectations, where individual desires and agency are often secondary to communal obligations. Kadare uses folklore to create a dialogic space that critically examines Albanian identity, rooted in tradition but also shaped by the need for modern expression. The reactivation of Kadare's novels in film and theater underscores how directors and playwrights become interpreters of his work, often accentuating or reshaping themes to resonate with contemporary audiences.

From a semiotic standpoint, the transition from Kadare's novel to its theatrical and cinematic adaptations constitutes a process of intersemiotic translation, as theorized by Roman Jakobson in "*On Linguistic Aspects of Translation*" (1959: 232–239.), whereby a message is transferred not between two verbal codes but between entirely distinct sign systems. Each adaptation does not merely reproduce the source narrative but re-encodes it according to the specific conventions, constraints, and expressive possibilities of its medium. Roland Barthes's concept of the writerly text (*texte scriptible*), developed in *S/Z* (1970), is productive here: Kadare's novel already operates as an open structure that invites multiple readings — folkloric, political, anthropological — and each successive adaptation activates a different configuration of that latent plurality. The 1989 short film, for instance, displaces the conflict toward the interrogation of Doruntine, effectively foregrounding what Barthes would call the hermeneutic code — the narrative mechanism that poses a question and withholds its resolution. The theatrical stagings of 1990 and 2015, in turn, restore the performative body as a sign, reintroducing the physical presence of the actor as a signifying layer absent from both the novel and the film. Yuri Lotman's notion of the semiosphere, elaborated in *Universe of the Mind* (1990), further illuminates this process: each adaptation does not simply translate the text but repositions it within a broader cultural space, where new boundaries are drawn between what is speakable and what must remain silent — boundaries that, in the Albanian context, are never merely aesthetic but always already political. The result is a chain of semiotic transformations in which the impossibility at the heart of the myth — the dead keeping his word — is perpetually re-signified, accumulating interpretive density with each new medium it inhabits.

5. Conclusion

The reactivation of Kadare's novels in theater and film illustrates the adaptability of his themes, characters, and allegorical style across different artistic forms and cultural contexts. Whether in the form of a minimalist stage production or a cinematic reimagining, Kadare's narratives find new life and meaning in each medium, highlighting universal questions of power, tradition, and humanity. These adaptations underscore Kadare's work as a dynamic body of literature that transcends its original form and setting, engaging audiences worldwide through the interpretive lenses of diverse artistic creators. By employing ethno-poetic elements that carry deep cultural significance, Kadare creates a layered and complex portrayal of Albanian identity. His use of cultural codes as a literary device enhances the multidimensionality of his work, enabling it to resonate with audiences across different historical and socio-political contexts. These codes invite interpretation at a point where readers and audiences can engage with the symbolic power of Kadare's narratives, recognizing their relevance beyond the confines of Albanian national identity. Kadare's ethno-poetics, grounded in Albanian cultural codes like *besa* and the *Kanun*, illustrates the power of folklore developed as a literary and semiotic tool. His work, transcending the page to stage and screen, demonstrates how the values embedded in folklore continue to resonate with audiences across time. Through adaptations that reimagine his stories in new contexts, Kadare's themes of loyalty, honor, and the moral weight of tradition are continually revitalized, highlighting their universal appeal and cultural depth. This multidimensional value, sustained through semiotic interpretations in various media, underscores Kadare's unique contribution to literature and his lasting impact on Albanian and world literature.

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