

The Antitotalitarian Allegories of George Orwell and Ismail Kadare – A Comparative Analysis of the Forms of their Expression

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Abstract

The object of this study is the analytical comparison between the antitotalitarian allegories of George Orwell and Ismail Kadare, with a special focus on the similarities and differences in the forms of their expression. With this overall aim in view, from the rich and varied oeuvre of Kadare we have selected "The Palace of Dreams" and "The Pyramid", as two of his most representative antitotalitarian novels written in a totalitarian environment, and placed them alongside the antitotalitarian classics of Orwell – "Animal Farm" and "1984". As the many stylistic and structural differences between these novels tend to fall into a consistent pattern, in order to make sense of them, we have directed our attention beyond the texts themselves into matters related to the context in which they were conceived, the history of their publication and the type of readership to which they were primarily addressed. Our critical examination shows that the novels of Kadare tend to be more structurally complex than those of Orwell, while the exploration of their deep allegorical meaning is follows a less straightforward route than the allegorical probing of "Animal Farm" and "1984". This difference, far from being a blunt literary fact, which should be taken simply for what it is without any attempt at explanation, follows very logically from the great gap that separates the world of Orwell from the closely monitored totalitarian environment in which Kadare's novels were written and published.

Keywords: allegory, totalitarian, censorship, structure, significance.

1. Orwell and Kadare - significance and method of our comparative approach

One of the most common approaches used by critics to introduce the work of Ismail Kadare to an English speaking audience is by comparing it to the famous antitotalitarian novels of George Orwell. Orwell's "Animal Farm" and "1984" have long earned the status of classics in the tradition of antitotalitarian and dystopian literature, while the author himself has become a more than literary icon, standing in the eyes of the public as the epitome of the intellectual whose only concern is to find out and promulgate the truth, regardless of the cherished myths that a deluded public might hold close to heart. A comparison with Orwell, therefore, could not but be construed as indicative of great critical esteem for any writer, especially when it is the case that its intended significance goes well beyond mere technicalities (matters related to literary form or style) to denote such fundamental questions as the writer's ability to disabuse his readership of the false consciousness that comes from the enforced captivity of a closed mindset.

The comparison of Kadare to Orwell gains added significance if we call to mind the harsh fact that the most representative part of the Albanian writer's *oeuvre* was written and published under one of the most ruthless and despotic regimes in postwar Europe, when a truly Orwellian system of censorship stood in the way of all artistic efforts to say something different from the reigning dogma. Kadare's work has the rare distinction of being antitotalitarian when totalitarianism was the order of the day. As our analysis will show the setting in which Kadare's antitotalitarian work were created is invaluable in helping us to decipher its message and understand the code which the writer used to express it. As for the comparative analysis between Orwell's and Kadare's novels the difference in the respective social and political environments wherein the two writers operated turns out to be very important in helping us make sense of the different ways in which they treated similar or identical themes in their works. The close relationship which such works bear to the social and political context of the

times when they were written and published should not be lost sight of, if we intend to delve into the root causes of their apparent similarities and differences.

In this paper we shall focus on the comparative analysis of Orwell's famous parables, "Animal Farm" and "1984", with two of Kadare's most powerful and representative antitotalitarian works, "The Palace of Dreams" and "The Pyramid". Our main object is to describe and analyse the artistic means and techniques by which each writer has built up his antitotalitarian allegories. In the process and by way of illustration, we shall also make some observations about the internal anatomy and functioning of the totalitarian societies that the two authors describe.

2. The social and political context behind the antitotalitarian allegories of Orwell and Kadare

"The Palace of Dreams" and "The Pyramid" were written decades after "Animal Farm" and "1984". More importantly, the social context in which Kadare conceived, wrote and published his masterpieces could not have been more different from that of Orwell. Yet, the differences in the respective contexts of the novels, great though they were, seem to have had a bearing only on their formal and stylistic features. Confronted with a censorship always on the alert, the allegorical facade of Kadare is more opaque than that of Orwell, the subversive message it conceals more difficult to fathom. On the other hand, the totalitarian world that emerges behind the necessary allegorical camouflage in the pages of Kadare is no less crushing and inhuman than the nightmarish dystopias of Orwell. The works of both authors, different as they are formally and structurally, share the common aim of tearing away from the face of reality the veil of illusion that keeps people from seeing things as they truly are. By unweaving the various threads and layers that make up the overall pattern of their meaning, we, as readers, are led into the heart of darkness that is modern totalitarianism. In the case of Kadare the morbid world of totalitarian politics comes alive not only in the texts themselves, but also when we follow the tortuous paths through which they came into being. Conversely, these paths remain mysterious and incomprehensible unless we include within our purview the underlying social and political terrain through which the writer had to move in order to speak to his readers.

"Animal Farm", the allegory that made the name of Orwell world famous, was written in 1944 and published in 1945, but it was conceived much earlier, when, in the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War, Orwell returned to England only to witness that public opinion in his home country was being kept in the dark about the severe persecution that the Stalinist authorities were inflicting on the various leftist factions, even though they were all supposed to be comrades-in-arms fighting the evil of fascism. Not only that, but the selfsame potion of lies which the Stalinists had concocted in Spain to justify the elimination of all imagined rivals (chiefly the Anarchists and the Trotskyists) was being served as propaganda fodder to a gullible English public by leftist intellectuals that had deserted the cause of truth and justice for that of political partisanship. It was with the express purpose of combating the Soviet myth and restoring the old ideal of a humane and just Socialist society that Orwell set out to write a book which would serve the public as an antidote to the venom of well-crafted misrepresentations and fabrications that had long been instilled into its mind.

Publishing *Animal Farm* was not an easy thing for Orwell, as the politics of the time - the late stages of WW2 when the war effort of the Grand Alliance was at its peak - were such that anything smacking of anti-Soviet sentiments was considered as inopportune or even downright treacherous. In the process Orwell alienated not a few of his Socialist friends, including his publisher Victor Gollancz, who refused to have anything to do with a book which, in his view, went against the whole history of his career as a promoter of left-wing causes. These obstacles, however, though by no means to be taken lightly, were mainly of a practical nature (*Animal Farm* was eventually published to great critical acclaim and commercial success) and can't stand comparison with the oppressive climate of fear in which writers from totalitarian countries had to produce their works. Living and working in a society like the British, in which the tradition of political debate and enlightened thinking was taken almost for granted by everyone, Orwell felt no need to encode his thoughts in such a way as to bypass censors. Many of his ideas on politics, moreover, had already been forcefully expressed in his essays and other writings. Orwell's allegory, therefore, is almost transparent, its fable form being no more than a literary convention intended to make the book attractive to the widest readership possible. The genre of the beast fable so far from proving an impediment to the reader who wants to get at the core message helps him concentrate his attention on the moral of the story and the ideas and characters behind the conventional animal masks. Anyone even remotely familiar with the history of Stalinist Russia can see through the allegorical facade into the historical personages and inner workings of the Soviet system at its worst.

Orwell's other famous book, the dystopian novel "1984", was likewise intended to ring alarm bells about the totalitarian threat, at a time when the Cold War was just beginning to take shape and many in the West were still under the spell of the Soviet Myth. The apocalyptic experience of WW2 also looms large in the background of "1984", where it serves as an

especially important reminder that gives weight and credibility to Orwell's warning about the catastrophic consequences that might befall mankind if the juggernaut of totalitarianism, aided by the immense power of modern technology, is not stopped in its tracks by the concerted efforts of all civilised people. It is thus no wonder that Orwell's totalitarian society in "1984" is painted in particularly harsh colours. Its vivid gruesomeness is the shock treatment to which the author subjects an apathetic public that needs to be shaken into prompt action if the world should stand any chance of avoiding the gloomy scenario prophesied in Orwell's story. The blunt directness of 1984 is a necessary corollary of Orwell's conviction that if people do not take necessary precautions, the drift of historical inertia is bound to lead them into the global cage of world totalitarianism.

When it comes to the novels of Kadare we find ourselves in a totally different context. The Albanian novelist wrote his most powerful antitotalitarian allegories while living in the most strictly totalitarian of all European postwar societies. Having been written in communist Albania, the novels of Kadare bear the unmistakable mark of totalitarianism not only in their final form as finished products, but also in the remarkable history of how they came into being through successive editions intended to hoodwink the censors. Kadare's complex and almost paradoxical situation in creating and publishing antitotalitarian novels under a totalitarian government that had bestowed on him the highest honours as a writer finds its artistic expression in multi-layered allegorical structures which yield different patterns of meaning to different observers. It is our contention that the intricate complexity of the texts of Kadare, which bear multiple readings, is not to be explained away by such misty categories as the genius of the writer, but, to a great extent, should be seen as a function of the social and political environment in which the Albanian writer had to work and publish.

The story of how "The Palace of Dreams" was published by Kadare in communist Albania is a remarkable example of the complex strategy and tactics that a writer in a totalitarian milieu needs to resort to in order to fool the authorities and communicate with his readers. The "Palace of Dreams" was first published in 1980 as part of a collection of short novels that the author had recently written. The version of the story contained in this collection was not, in fact, a full novel. Though containing the basic structure and many of the ideas and themes that "The Palace of Dreams" has become famous for, it was much shorter and certainly less dangerous than the full novel which superseded it. The intricacies of the allegorical text and the "innocent" historical setting (the novel is set in 19th century Ottoman Istanbul), together with the fact that it was not published by itself, but included in a much bigger volume, lulled the censors into careless inattention, and so the way was paved for the next stage in the publishing operation. By 1981 Kadare had added new chapters to his original work and was now determined to publish the whole thing. To do this he inserted it within the protective covering of another collection of miscellaneous writings (short stories, short novels and even newspaper reports), which was being reissued in a second edition. This well-calculated manoeuvre achieved its purpose of fooling the publishing authorities. It would not be long before Kadare found himself the victim of vicious criticism and downright threats coming from the upper echelons of the Party-State. That most painful chapter in the writer's biography, however, has left no trace in the novel as such, which had already been sold out when the heavy machinery of oppression was set in motion.

The publication story of "The Pyramid", though more straightforward and less interesting than that of "The Palace of Dreams", is no less indicative of external hindrances and lurking threats. Kadare wrote the first sketch of this novel in 1984-1986, but did not dare publish it, as the dictatorship, though without its dictator-god (Enver Hoxha died in 1985), was still vigorous enough to crush any perceived threats to its ideological hegemony. It was only in 1991 that Kadare's text first saw the light of publication, but then the times were different, as the decrepit one-party totalitarian system was giving way to a new pluralistic society.

The above presentation should serve us to form an idea of the great gulf that separates the world of Orwell from that of Kadare. The English writer, living in a free and open society, could proclaim his thoughts out loud, without fearing for anything more serious than the loss of political friendships or publishers' royalties. Kadare, on the other hand, could not but follow a more allusive communicative approach, if he intended to work as a writer rather than as a prisoner in a forced labour camp. In Kadare's work the presence of totalitarianism is not simply to be looked for semantically in what the novels signify behind their seemingly historical facade. It permeates the whole structure of the texts which is built up in such a way as to withstand the stormy winds of totalitarianism.

3. Differences in style and structure between the antitotalitarian allegories of Orwell and Kadare

As we have already had occasion to observe, the great subject of totalitarianism is presented in substantially different ways in the novels of our two writers. It is true that the antitotalitarian novels of Orwell and Kadare fall within the broad category

of allegorical writings, which is to say that they are structured as extended metaphors whose depth of signification goes well beyond the surface level of the text. In all the four novels which we have chosen to examine the text functions like a multi-layered structure whose constituent levels of signification are interrelated systematically by the means of symbolism. This is where the similarities between them end, however, for in the novels of Orwell the transition from the surface narrative and the characters as such to what they allegorically stand for is much more straightforward than in those of Kadare, where the reader finds no easy passageway through which to move back and forth between the various levels of the text. Such levels in the novels of Kadare have also a greater degree of independence, which, in other words, means that the works of the Albanian writer, depending on the background and the perceptiveness of the readers who interpret them, have the potential to generate more alternative readings than those Orwell.

Though it would be formally coherent to read Orwell's "Animal Farm" in a naive way as a fairy story (in fact, children tend to find it a pleasant read), this is not what happens when it falls into the hands of an adult audience. The tale's seemingly trivial surface level, which speaks of pigs and sheep and all the various animal species that one finds in a farm, is simply the conventional framework wherein the writer has chosen to allegorically represent his very serious ideas. The outer coating of the beast fable is in no way intended to camouflage the author's meaning. If anything, it focuses the reader's attention on the ideas and characters below the almost transparent surface, which, as anyone who knows his history can tell, stands in a very close relationship to the well-known historical narrative of the Bolshevik Revolution and the later dictatorship. To take but one example, the resemblance between such characters in the story as Napoleon and Snowball to their real life prototypes – Stalin and Trotsky, respectively – could not be missed by anyone familiar with the political history of communism. Conditioned by such an unmistakable identification, the whole reading of the cutthroat conflict between the two characters, is, then, almost automatically translated into the analogous terms of the vicious struggle for power between Stalin and Trotsky, which remained the prototype for all the internecine conflicts and bloody purges of later Soviet history.

Though first and foremost a satire of the Russian Revolution, "Animal Farm", like almost all allegories, can be interpreted in a more fundamental and generalized manner. Orwell's representation of the Russian Revolution and Stalin's dictatorship by means of his animal story does not necessarily stand as the last station in the reader's interpretative journey. Beyond the concrete historical events which the fable undoubtedly points to, it could be taken to refer in a more timeless way to totalitarianism as such, irrespective of temporal and spatial specifications. Seen from this perspective the world of Animal Farm is not confined within the historical and geographical limits that are suggested by an exclusively nominalistic reading of the text. Situated as it is in the East, if people do not take heed and learn from bitter experience, it has all the potential of metastasizing westward and futurewise. This reading of Animal Farm as a paradigmatic model for totalitarian societies is supported by more than a few passages in the text, which cannot be accounted for if we adhere too closely to the Soviet frame of reference. Thus, to take but two simple examples, Boxer's motto "Napoleon is always right" is a verbatim copy of the Fascist slogan about Mussolini, while Napoleon's disingenuous maxim that "The truest happiness... lay in working hard and living frugally" is reminiscent of the infamous Nazi exhortation, "Arbeit macht frei" (Works makes you free), placed over the gate to Auschwitz. In fact, the text abounds in clues that make for a generalized interpretation, which, especially to a philosophically minded reader, should not be too difficult to fathom.

In the reading of 1984, likewise, we can discern more than one level of signification. Whereas at face value the story seems to prophesy a dystopian future where totalitarianism has been pushed to its logical extreme, it is first of all a satire on present political trends, which, if left to follow their course are bound to end up in the grim world-prison that Orwell imagines as the universal abode of a humanity unable to resist the mighty force of historical inertia. Many of the early readers of the novel, published as it was at a time when the danger of a nuclear Armageddon was becoming ever more alarming, thought of it in plainly literal terms as a dire warning or, even worse, a sinister prediction of the world to come. This popular reading of the novel, however much in tune with the *zeitgeist* of the Cold War, was not generally the one favoured by professional critics, who tended to focus more on the satirical underpinning of the allegory than on its overtly apocalyptic surface. As satire Orwell's novel is very broad indeed, holding up to its remorseless scrutiny not only the usual suspects – in the first place the Soviet Union and its ruthless dictator, which yet again provide Orwell with the blueprint for the totalitarian nightmare he envisions – but also such diverse actors on the world stage as the Catholic Church or the British Government. Also, many of the phenomena that were becoming characteristic of the postwar world, from major political ones like the ubiquitous trend toward bureaucratic centralization to seemingly unpolitical social vices like gambling, become the butt of Orwell's satirical representation in "1984".

In addition to all of the above, 1984 can also be read as a general political anatomy of totalitarianism in the abstract. Like "Animal Farm", the range of its allusions cannot be accommodated within an exclusively Soviet frame of reference. The inhuman system that is dissected in Orwell's pages is a hybrid monster that, in addition to its communist backbone, has many features, like the organisation of youngsters in a Youth League devoted to a quasi-pagan cult of nature or the Goebbelsian use of television as a major instrument for brainwashing propaganda, that are more readily associated with Nazi Germany. In fact, the composite make-up of Ingsoc shows that the Party in Oceania has selectively chosen from what was worst in past totalitarianisms in order to build up an almost perfect machinery of repression, which, like a *perpetuum mobile*, is designed to work forever. The Oceanic system, therefore, can be looked upon as the final stage in the development of totalitarianism, which stands to the previous historical incarnations of the system like a Platonic idea to its less perfect earthly copies.

The recognition of all these different levels of reference, however, dependent as it is on the background and expectations of the reader, is not intended by Orwell to prove a challenging exercise on one's critical acumen. On the contrary, for each of the various readings potentially contained in the allegory the author provides the reader with all the requisite clues and even, at times, with an almost explicit guide on how to get at them. Thus, Communism, Nazism and even the Catholic Inquisition – the targets of Orwell's withering satire – are mentioned more than once by their proper names in the story. Even when things are not called by their true names, their resemblance to what they allegorically stand for is such that it would be very difficult to miss. A typical case in point is the many-faceted resemblance of Goldstein to Trotsky. Orwell's character not only plays the same role of archvillain in Oceania as Trotsky's in Stalin's Russia, but the two even have the same looks (like Trotsky, Goldstein has the distinctive Jewish face and small goatee beard) and similarly sounding names (the real last name of "Trotsky" was Bronstein).

In Orwell's novel totalitarianism is represented not only as the backdrop to the fictional narrative, but it is also analytically examined in long parts of the text, which, though formally integrated within the overall fictional framework, are written in the discursive style of theoretical treatises. Both Goldstein's "Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism" and the Appendix on the totalitarian corruption of language ("The Principles of Newspeak") could stand as separate pieces and, if we discount the necessarily fictional elements through which they retain a formal coherence to the rest of the text, be counted as serious contributions to the academic study of totalitarianism. As for the superficial futurological reading of the novel, Orwell went so far in his determination to make things crystal clear to his readers as to personally dictate a press release disavowing any intention to play the prophet on what the future will actually be like, but adding, however, that "...allowing for the book being after all a parody, something like *Nineteen Eighty Four* could happen... The moral to be drawn from this dangerous nightmare situation is: *Don't let it happen. It depends on you.*" (Crick, 1980, p. 395)

If the multi-layered semantic structure of Orwell's novels can be thought of as a necessary by-product of the author's choice to present his message in allegorical garb, in Kadare's novels the complexity of the text is much more the product of intentional thinking. Though by no means uncongenial to the natural artistic genius of the Albanian writer, the complexity of Kadare's allegorical discourse, was to a great extent conditioned by the need to circumvent the censorship. It served, thus, as a fake passport without which Kadare's antitotalitarian novels would never have reached the public.

"The Palace of Dreams" has an intricate semantic structure, which can be broken down to at least three levels of meaning that, whether mainly concrete or abstract, are all completely coherent in themselves and more substantially autonomous than the corresponding levels in Orwell. Thus, whereas the superficial reading of "1984" as a literal prophecy about the future, and even more that of "Animal Farm" as a simple beast fable, can be described as naive or even rather crude, the same description could by no means be applied to the Ottoman reading of "The Palace of Dreams". Its Ottoman mask is carefully prepared by the author in such a way as not to be recognized for what it actually is – a mere mask hiding layer upon layer of hidden meanings – even by experienced censors. As such, it has neither the transparency of the childish mask of Animal Farm, nor the crudeness and roughness of the seemingly prophetic surface of 1984, but is deep and sophisticated enough even for cultivated readers, especially when they are not familiar with the Albanian clues stealthily inserted by the author between the lines of the ostensibly historical text.

In Kadare's novels the exploration of those hidden layers of the text that refer to contemporary society or to totalitarianism as a timeless idea is no easy feat, but requires the deciphering of a code that is meant to function as such in the literal sense of the word. Scholars like Bashkim Kuçuku (2005) have identified many of the building blocks and general architecture of Kadare's intricate novelistic edifice. Both "The Palace of Dreams" and "The Pyramid" are set in a historical past (the late Ottoman Empire and Ancient Egypt respectively), but are primarily allegories of contemporary Communist

Albania. The historical past is, thus, superimposed on the Communist present, which the implied reader of the texts is beckoned to unearth by using the tools put within his reach by the writer.

While Kadare's plot follows in a deceptively realistic fashion, after the manner of historical novels, the excruciating toil of Egyptian slaves to raise the Great Pyramid or the Machiavellian political scheming of Ottoman potentates, the informed and perceptive reader, by following the author's lead between the lines of the text, will translate the historical past into the present of Communist Albania. This latter frame of reference can be seen to break through the thick outer coating of the allegory in words and phrases like *file*, *conspiracy against the state*, *the fundamental principles of Tabir Saray* and many other such similar examples that typically belong to contemporary Communist discourse but have been anachronistically inserted into a past context. Even more substantially, if one learns to look for hidden analogies between the Ottoman Empire or Egypt and Communist Albania, Kadare's allegories will provide him with many instances of social and political phenomena, like the ubiquity of spies and the recurrent purges, which, though dressed up in Ottoman or Egyptian costumes, are still recognizably Communist in their essence. Contemporary Albania can also be discerned in the architectural and functional resemblance between the Pyramid and Palace of Dreams and such landmarks of Albanian Communism as the museum-pyramid of Enver Hoxha and the gloomy Soviet-style headquarters of the Party's Central Committee in Tirana.

The Albanian frame of reference, however, does not exhaust the great potential of Kadare's antitotalitarian novels to speak to readers coming from very different backgrounds and having widely divergent expectations regarding their significance. While the immediate Albanian readership of Kadare's novels, living as it was in a closely monitored social environment and thrilled by the rare encounter with forbidden thoughts on print, was bound to search between the lines for anything suggestive of modern Albania, the same could not be said of the books' foreign audience, who far from being primarily interested in the minutiae of Albanian politics might even be completely ignorant of the Albanian dictatorship. Yet, it is the case that Kadare's novels have enjoyed great international success, even in far off countries where the name of Albania arouses no particular interest. Surely this is a sign that the significance of novels like "The Palace of Dreams" and "The Pyramid" goes deeper and wider than the politics of a particular time and place. In fact, the most important dimension of such many-tiered structures is precisely that which cannot be contained within any particular referential context, but speaks of totalitarianism as an essentially immutable transhistorical phenomenon that underlies the seemingly ever-changing flux of historical appearances.

Unlike Orwell's "1984", though, where the generic tableau of totalitarianism is presented in the language of theoretical analysis, the novels of Kadare follow a subtler approach in their handling of the universal theme of political despotism. The analogy between different historical realities (past despotisms and contemporary Albania), temporal ellipsis which by immediately juxtaposing the distant (or not so distant) past to the present creates the illusion of time standing still, and the cyclical recurrence of phenomena and events (the building of Pyramids does not stop with that of Cheops, but continues along the centuries), all add up to suggest the abstract nature of the ultimate time dimension in Kadare's narratives. In this ultimate time frame the chronological sequence of the surface narrative is relegated to insignificance, as what is important is not the temporal order in which things happen, but their basic transhistorical identity.

In typical modern fashion Kadare's antitotalitarian novels attain universal significance through the symbolical character of the narrative. It is not simply that the author makes extensive use of symbols in order to present his case against totalitarianism – totalitarianism itself is represented symbolically rather than mimetically or analytically. Nowhere in the novels of Kadare will the reader find any direct reference to the anatomy and physiology of totalitarianism. Yet, if he manages to probe into the ultimate significance of their symbols, he will find himself right at the centre of the totalitarian hell. In fact, the hell of totalitarianism is never described as such by Kadare. It can, however, be recognized for what it is if one extends the symbolical mode of interpretation beyond the characters and the events to such inanimate structures like the Palace of Dreams, whose Dantesque architecture stands in perfect harmony to the infernal nature of its function. Likewise, the Pyramid is not only symbolical of the despotic pharaoh, but represents, in its very architecture, the whole totalitarian system which is structured precisely like a Pyramid, from the Pharaoh standing alone at the top down to the broad base of nameless slaves who bear its immense weight on their shoulders.

In Kadare's novels the symbolical representation of totalitarianism through shapes and forms goes hand in hand with other symbolical procedures among which the employment of archetypal characters is especially important in universalising the author's vision. Thus, both the Egyptian pharaoh Cheops and the Ottoman Sultan, beyond their meagre individual features, can be viewed as timeless icons of the despotic tyrant. As such, they stand symbolically not only for the Albanian dictator, but for any ruthless tyrant in any time or place.

Turning back to Orwell, we might note that his novels are very rich in symbols. Their interpretation, however, is relatively simple, while the function which they play in Orwell's texts is ornamental rather than substantial. To take but one typical example: that the telescreens in 1984 symbolize the ever watchful eye of the totalitarian state is pretty obvious, if only because of the very close, almost mimetic resemblance that relates the symbolic signifier to what it signifies. In fact, such a symbol for the system of universal surveillance serves more as an illustration for what is elsewhere very fully described in non-symbolic language, than as an autonomous structural element, whose interpretation is a necessary key to unlocking the deeper meaning of the text. It is, perhaps, because of this secondary external relationship in which the symbols and other "formal" features of Orwell's novels stand to their ideological contents, that they have been conventionally classified as "political novels", a term, which, we think, would be inappropriate to describe the more complex and less explicitly argumentative literary texts of Kadare.

4. Conclusion

The object of this study was the comparative analysis of the antitotalitarian allegories of Orwell and those of Kadare. Our analysis has focused on the way the two writers build their literary structures as a means of communicating their antitotalitarian vision to the public. With the aforementioned aim in view we submitted the texts of the two writers' most representative antitotalitarian novels to close critical scrutiny. Beyond simply finding out the similarities and differences between Orwell's "Animal Farm" and "1984" on one side, and Kadare's "The Palace of Dreams" and "The Pyramid" on the other, our study has pursued the more ambitious object of trying to account for them by putting the novels in their respective social and political contexts. In order to explain the results obtained by the stylistic examination of the four texts we have also relied on what we deem as relevant biographical facts and information. In our view, the reliance on these miscellaneous extraliterary sources, though perhaps somewhat too eclectic for the taste of methodological purists, is indispensable for a study which does not simply aim at the mere identification of similarities and differences, but seeks to understand them by delving into their causes.

Our investigation has shown that the huge gulf between the social and political context in which the two writers lived and worked was bound to leave its mark on the way their allegories were structured and on the manner that their antitotalitarian message was communicated. Granted that all allegorical writings are by definition multi-layered in their significance, those of Kadare, as our comparative analysis clearly indicates, are much more complex in their semantic structure than those of Orwell and, consequently, less transparent with regards to their deep levels of meaning. While the correct interpretation of Orwell's allegories depends primarily on the reader's range of encyclopaedic knowledge (the amount of information he has on the Bolshevik Revolution, Stalin's dictatorship, etc), Kadare's novels are organized in such a way as to hide their implied significance from anyone without the necessary insight and determination to break the writer's carefully built literary code. That the major differences between the novels of our two writers should concern the relative accessibility of their antitotalitarian message, is, in fact, only but logical, given that Kadare had to work and publish under a totalitarian regime, while Orwell in a country where liberal democracy was taken almost for granted.

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