

## Ismail Kadare: Albanian Novelist and Poet Died at 88 Years

Ismail Kadare, the Albanian novelist and poet who wrote only his native Balkan homeland on the map of world literature, creating often obscure and allegorical works that criticized the state of the totalitarian country, died on Monday in Tirana, Albania. He was 88 years old.

His death was confirmed by Bujar Hudhri, the director of the Onufri House of Editors, his editor and publisher in Albania, who said he suffered a heart attack at home and died in a hospital in Tirana, the Albanian capital.

In a literary career that spanned half a century, Mr. Kadare (pronounced kah-dah-RAY) wrote dozens of books, including novels and collections of poems, stories and essays. He rose to international fame in 1970 when his first novel, "The General of the Dead Army", was translated into French. European critics praised it as a masterpiece.

The name of Mr. Kadare was mentioned several times for the Nobel Prize, but the honor escaped him. In 2005, he won the inaugural International Booker Prize (now the International Booker Prize), awarded to a living writer of any nationality for general achievements in fiction. The finalists included literary titans such as Gabriel García Márquez and Philip Roth.

When awarding the prize, John Carey, a British critic and panel president, called Mr. Kadare "a universal writer in a tradition of storytelling that goes back to Homer."

Critics often compared Mr. Kadare to Kafka, Kundera and Orwell, among others. During the first three decades of his career, he lived and wrote in Albania, at that time under the rule of one of the most brutal and eccentric dictators of the Eastern Bloc, Enver Hoxha.

To escape persecution in a country where more than 6,000 dissidents were executed and some 168,000 Albanians were sent to prisons or labor camps, Mr. Kadare walked a tightrope of politics. He served 12 years as a deputy in the People's Assembly of Albania, and was a member of the Union of Writers of the Regime. One of his novels, "The Great Winter", was a favorable representation of the dictator. Mr. Kadare later said he wrote it to please.

In contrast, several of his more brilliant works, including "The Palace of Dreams" (1981), subversively attacked the dictatorship, evading censorship through allegory, satire, mythology and legend.

Sr. Kadare "is the supreme interpreter of the psychology and the face of oppression", wrote Richard Eder in The New York Times in 2002.

Ismail Kadare was born on January 28, 1936, in the Albanian town of Gjirokaster. His father, Halit Kadare, was a public official; his mother, Hatixhe Dobi, was a homemaker of a wealthy family.

When the communists of Hoxha took power in Albania in 1944, Ismail was 8 years old and already immersed in world literature. "At 11 years old I had read Macbeth, which hit me like a lightning bolt, and the Greek classics, after which I had no power over my spirit", he recalled in a 1998 interview with The Paris Review.

Nevertheless, as a teenager, he felt attracted to communism. "There was an idealist side to him", he said. "You thought that perhaps certain aspects of communism were good in theory, but you could see that the practice was terrible."

After studies at the University of Tirana, in the Albanian capital, Mr. Kadare was sent

para estudios de posgrado al Instituto Gorky para la Literatura Mundial en Moscú, que más tarde describió como "una fábrica para fabricar hackers dogmáticos de la escuela del realismo socialista."

En 1963, aproximadamente dos años después de su regreso de Moscú, "El General del Ejército Muerto" fue publicado en Albania. En la novela, un general italiano regresa a las montañas de Albania 20 años después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial para desenterrar y repatriar los cuerpos de sus soldados; es una historia de Occidente avanzado que irrump

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