

# Mythical Figures of Albanian Heritage

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## Abstract

Mythological figures as fairy tale characters have long attracted the attention not only of European researchers, but also of Albanian researchers. Among the central figures that he takes into analysis are the most beautiful on earth, where our attention is drawn to the wealth of literature that the scholar has used for the Albanian fairy tale written in several European countries. As clearly defined by the authors, in the poetic and subjective world of Albanian fairy tales, mythical beings are present in the terrestrial, underground, cosmic world of which human fantasy has given them gigantic dimensions and images, but sometimes also as invisible beings. One of the goals of our work is to realize the presence of mythical figures in the Albanian fairy tale is the most beautiful on earth. It symbolizes the ideal of beauty and perfection. The intention to reach it means the realization of the wishes and life achievements of the hero of the fairy tale, geographically closest. One of the central figures which has been in our consideration of the mythical figures is The Most Beautiful on Earth in Albanian and Greek fairy tales. The Most Beautiful on Earth is a very complex figure of the Albanian folk tale and mythology. Its feature is its rare, stunning and unattainable beauty. It as a synthesis of ideal beauty and as such is the cause of the desire of the brave to possess it. The purpose of our paper seeks to highlight the function of Albanian mythical figures, which in our fairy tales are part of a process of metamorphosis and appear in different forms, different variants of fairy tales. In order to reach the most beautiful on earth, many obstacles must be overcome, which the hero overcomes through his gender, dexterity, supernatural power or with the help of tools and supporting characters.

## Keywords

Fairy Tale, Mythical Figures, Albanian Folk, Beauty, Characters

## 1. Methodology

The methodology of the paper is to establish a fair relationship between concepts,

theories and the literary subject to which we refer. The geometric method of analysis, as a means of knowledge and artistic and aesthetic pleasure, helps us to study the phenomenon of metamorphosis not only on the Greek “horizontal” plane, but also on the Gothic “vertical” one.

The methodology followed in this paper is based on the comparative method which helps us to see the development of the metamorphosis process of mythological figures by bringing to attention the same fairy tale in different variants and in different peoples.

The results of the myth of metamorphosis have necessarily imposed the need for further deepening of the research and the expansion of the study with theoretical-literary analysis in original form paper with the modest aim of an equally modest contribution to the field of letters. The nature of the myth of metamorphosis, its structure and realization in the literary types of oral literature (narrative prose, lyrical and epic oral singing), in this work is done with the comparative method.

In our study, we have approached the examples, where the metamorphosis is not presented in the form of a model figure in the system, but as a partial manifestation of some element contained in the oral literary myth.

## 2. Introduction

Mythological figures as fairy tale characters have long attracted the attention not only of European scholars, but also of Albanian scholars. Following the prominent scholar Maximilian Lamberts (Vein, 1922) in his collection “Albanian Tales and Other Texts of Albanian Folklore”, where in German translation his study carries a wide treatment of mythical figures of fairy tale and popular beliefs.

Among the central figures that he takes into analysis include: The most beautiful of the earth, The Kuçedra, The Dragon, The Bogey, The Witch, The Shadow, The Victors, The Hour, The Fairy, Divvy, etc. where our attention is drawn to the wealth of literature that the scholar has used for the written Albanian fairy tale in some European countries. The study of prof. Çabej (1936) “On the genesis of Albanian literature” in which he makes many assessments and deductions about the poetic world of the Albanian fairy tale, where he also brings to light its ethnos genesis. In this regard, our distinguished scholar underlines: “In the fairy tale, there are generally human things along with the specific national spirit, foreign influence supporting the country’s mountains, timeless motifs next to historically related motifs... With all these changes of a secondary layer, the Albanian fairy tale has a face of itself which we can say that distinguishes it from fairy tales, both in the figures, motifs and in their content. The tales of the people of the Balkans are united among themselves in a certain unity by means of figures, motifs, subject matter, style and common language. Then we also have the special connection in the tales of the two neighboring peoples between them”.

### 2.1. The Fairy Tale and Its Formative, Meaningful and Poetic World

Confronting the world of the Albanian fairy tale and especially the interweaving of events and the role of the characters, prof. Zihni Sako in his work “Studies for

Folklore”, brings to light another feature; the deep optimization of people, which shines with a special faith in spiritual and physical forces, with the courage and skills to fight in life, with a view of their future (Sako, 1984: pp. 51-52).

But in this background of the development of the typology of our fairy tale, some authors such as J. Panajoti, A. Xhagolli, M. Mustafa also give the link between the epic and the fairy tale, where the common elements of these two genres appear, which we find mainly in a range of elements such as: the thematic and motive world, details, subjects, characters, but also aids where time and space stand out. Supporting the philological opinion of Tatjana Civjan, by analyzing the characters of the fairy tales and their spatial elements through the characters, the spatial semantic vocabulary is also highlighted, where the cosmological, spatial fields and the characters themselves create universal visions and worldviews. Continuing this opinion, Anton Nik Berisha in his work “The fairy tale and its formative, meaningful and poetic world” in an analytical way, he breaks down and argues the closeness between the fairy tale and the myth, between the myth and the dream where apparently three elements (Berisha, Introduction to the poetics of the Albanian fairy tale):

- a) Meaning and structuring
- b) Structuring the poetic language and the artistic message
- c) Specific communication that expresses the meaning of its world

Among the Albanian authors, Dalan Shaplo (Shaplo, 1989: p. 96) with his work “About the ethics and fantasy of the fairy tale” states that, among others, the fairy tale was born as a need for the aesthetic expression of the human world, where balance is created spiritual with nature and with animals, therefore often through the characters and the fantastic environment created, the motives for the afterlife and the relationship with death come to the fore. This concept prof. Alfred Uç (Uç, 1982: p. 72) deals with many issues related to mythical figures and mythical tools as components of the structure of the tale, where a special place is occupied by the role of the protagonist or the hero of the tale.

It is the aesthetic consciousness that in fairy tales is quite different from the mythological thought, but which also makes the difference between man and other natural and imaginary mythological beings. Oftentimes, the narrative conflict arises when the heroes cross the border of the human world, thus building a special seat of mythological beings, that is, of non-human beings.

However, the formation of the heroes of our fairy tale is strongly based on a pure material inherited from ancient primitive mythology. Here, the actions of the protagonists are overlooked and generalized, which are similar to those of the heroes of ancient mythology. According to him, among these figures, monsters often personify the hostile forces that confront man. This is where the transition of themes and motifs from fairy tales to some of the legendary narrative songs and ballads begins.

## 2.2. Poetic and Subjective World of Albanian Fairy Tales

Prof. Enver Mehmeti, reflecting this phenomenon, the transformation of the tales

of the Snake Boy into a ballad or the tales of the Warrior Girl as well as the tales of the Woman's Betrayal in the legendary songs have their source there. It is the fairy tales and legends that have nourished the legendary songs, making a fair determination that: "Mythical tales of the heroic type have connections and relations with the legendary epic song, while many other meeting points of the fairy tales reawaken and nourish the ballads of legendary type" (Mehmet, 1996: p. 151).

Concretizing this issue in the unpublished fairy tales of the Prespas area by researcher Leontina Gega Musa, those collected by Rebi Alikaj that are in the archive of the Institute of Culture in Tirana and those collected by prof. Bardhosh Gace in Himarë and Labëri, in their texts it is found that many songs of the legendary epic communicate with the mythical tale of the heroic type, these phenomena are noticed both in motifs, details, but also in the actions of the characters. In some cases, many themes and motifs make transitions from fairy tales to ballads, such as the Ballad of the bridge of Bogdan, the Song of Dhoqina, the Ballad of the Wall in Ceria Castle (Gaçe, 1982).

Relying on the opinion of foreign and Albanian researchers, Albanian fairy tales are viewed with a rich wealth of mythical beings, where the actions of the characters take on the functions of the mythical unreal world. As clearly defined by the authors Lambertz, Q. Haxhihasani, Z. Sako, M. Mustafa, J. Panajoti, etc., in the poetic and subjective world of Albanian fairy tales, mythical beings are present in the terrestrial, underground, cosmic world of which Human imagination has given them giant dimensions and images, but sometimes also as invisible beings.

In their artistic and aesthetic radiation, with their mythical abilities, the transformation from one form to another occurs, where the main character, but also the other characters, often metamorphose. These beings sometimes oppose the hero of the fairy tale, but other times they serve as helpers or collaborators to overcome the conflict.

A broad field of study is the transfer of the features of mythical beings, but also mythical tools and their functions, which bring to light the transformation, that is, the metamorphosis of the characters. One of the main mythical beings in fairy tales appears Kuçedra, who in Albanian fairy tales always wants to stop the water, so it has the property of a water demon, and sometimes also of a storm, carrying negative properties.

It happens that in some fairy tale Kuçedra appears in her opposite in the form of a woman in front of her husband and children, pitying the resistance. This also happens with the most beautiful on the earth, who, in addition to her usual beauty, is often opposed to the main character, but her interaction with the other characters is not missing either, realized at the same time its metamorphosis.

In this way, we would like to emphasize that just like: Kuçedra also the most beautiful of the earth and other mythical figures such as: The Hours, Fairies, The Doe, Shota (according to a type of bird), Gërshetëza (icon of the Albanian folk beliefs, depicted as a beautiful girl with long hair, who lived by the rivers and lakes; bride of the waters), Perritë (figure of popular beliefs depicted as a very beautiful

girl), Shtriga (The Witch), Katallani (figure of folk tales, depicted as a wild man, with mammoth stature and one eye; cyclops), Mena, Flocka (figure of Albanian folk beliefs, who was imagined as a beautiful girl with long, braided hair, bride of the waters), (a figure of beliefs and folk tales, depicted as an evil spirit that comes out at night and has supernatural power: it is like a genie in a bottle, it has great power, but cannot use it) always in the Albanian fairy tale, they display various functions, which testifies to the richness of the mythological wealth, but also notices the traces of pagan and religious beliefs, in this way, the features and mythical properties of these mythical beings. They often take on a symbolic character, giving the narratives or stories a special poetic and spiritual world.

In the folkloristic literature and in many other contemporary studies, it is rightly pointed out that extraordinary elements in fairy tales are a must have that are equated with the fantastic element. But delving further, we can admit that the extraordinary in fairy tales should not and can be evaluated with the fantastic.

The criticism here lies in the fact that in some cases, the fantastic has been combined by different researchers with the mythological, magical, religious elements, etc. but in the Albanian fairy tale itself there are such layers, but the fantastic cannot be equated with them. Here we agree with Alfred Uçi's opinion that: "In the Albanian fairy tales, the mythological wealth, searching in the folklore, has been transformed into genuine aesthetic subjects, which means that the subjects and mythological figures in the fairy tales and folklore have turned into artistic figures." (Uçi, 1982: p. 85).

### 2.3. The Most Beautiful of the Earth

One of the most realized and present figures in the Albanian fairy tale is "The most beautiful of the earth". It symbolizes the ideal of beauty and perfection. The intention to reach it means the realization of the wishes and life achievements of the hero of the tale. Her search marks the entry into vicissitudes, difficulties, self-sacrifice, bravery, wisdom, patience and others, while the marriage with the Beauty of the Earth means the integration of the personality of the hero of the tale, the realization of the most ideals. his high.

The most beautiful of the earth, according to E. Çabej, in the Balkan Peninsula, except among the Albanians, it appears only in Greece and the Aromanians (Musata loclui, Romanian Frumoasa pamintului). From Çabej's announcements, we learn that she, like you, is known to Turks and Kurds and as "la bella del mondo" even in Italian fairy tales. Çabej points out that Paul Kretschmeri, for linguistic reasons, from the work that Arabic tale uses the positive gender instead of the superlative, ("E Bukura e Dheut" instead of the most beautiful of the earth) has thought of its source from the Orient.

The spread of the Beauty of the Earth among some oriental peoples, according to Çabej, speaks in favor of this opinion, although it is noticeable that it is not known exactly in Arabia, the linguistic expression that was used is in use. However, as far as the Balkan Peninsula is concerned, according to Çabej, it is likely

that, in addition to oriental relations, there are also some ancient and geographically closer.

The most beautiful of the earth appears in Albanian and Greek fairy tales with some character traits that remind us of the sorceress Circe of the *Odyssey*. Both figures have connections with the lower world (the underworld), in this way, in Kireka scholars find chthonic deities, while the Earthly Beauty lives in a palace, which is guarded by Kuçedra or a three-headed dog of the type of Cerberus. And, just as Circe turns Odysseus' friends into pigs, the Earthly Beauty with the help of a witch discourages the brave who go to her (Çabej, 1975: pp. 160-161).

In the tale *Arap Uzengjia* (which also has many variants), where the most beautiful of the earth sometimes appears in the black skin of the arap, sometimes she undresses it, Maximilian Limber brings out her nature of double as the mother earth has in the myths of other peoples. She is the goddess of the dark underworld and at the same time of the joyous opening of the earth in spring, an Albanian Persephone—Demeter.

According to Lamberts, three sides of the mythical being of the most beautiful of the earth appear: firstly, the sum of beauty, the most beautiful of the world, secondly, importance is often given to the second part of her name, the genitive of the earth, a goddess of the underworld as opposed to the beauty of the sky and the beauty of the sea and thirdly her general character is assimilated to the general type of the powerful goddess, the maiden or the beautiful princess (Lambertz, 1922: pp. 44-45, 183-189).

According to Çabej, the great presence of the most beautiful of the earth in the tales of the Balkans is due to the fact that during her journey from the Orient she found old images that resembled her, with which she was able to merge. This researcher especially emphasizes the similarity with the sorceress Kirke. For the chronic character of the most beautiful of the earth, he quotes the scientist Erih Bete, according to whom she may be the goddess of death, and in this capacity, according to Çabej, she is again close to the most beautiful of the earth, since the clay of the dead has a role important in the tale of the Beauty of the Earth. Çabej also sees the similarities between Kirke and the most beautiful of the earth from the fact that Kirke in Homer is the daughter of Helios (the sun), while in Albanian and modern Greek tales she appears as the daughter of the sun. The daughter of the sun in the new Greek fairy tale appears as the pinnacle of beauty, which is also characteristic of the most beautiful of the earth of the Albanian fairy tale.

From such similarities he thinks that the most beautiful of the earth and the daughter of the Sun are closely related if not identical at all. If this closeness between the daughter of the Sun and the most beautiful of the earth is based and if Eliade Circe and the daughter of the Sun are not the same name, then, for reasons of formal logic, says Çabej, it cannot be denied a closeness in essence of the most beautiful of the earth to Homer's Church (Çabej, 1975: pp. 120-121).

The most beautiful on the earth is a very complex figure of the Albanian folk tale and mythology. Its feature is its rare, stunning and unattainable beauty. It as

a synthesis of ideal beauty and as such is the cause of the desire of the brave to possess it. During the attempts to acquire them, it becomes the cause of the misfortunes of the brave. Due to its rare beauty, it lives protected, so that it can reach any person, but only the one who deserves it (after many sacrifices). Her beauty becomes the cause of disasters. In cases where her beauty is visible, when she has the appearance of a human being, of a very beautiful girl, she is protected in the castle.

When she does not live in a castle or palace, she appears in a zoomorphic form protected by nature as a turtle, a frog, a snake, a beautiful bird, then in a fairy tale we encounter her as a piece of meat divided into four parts, as a scale, then as cockroaches, or even closed in wood cartilage, etc. In the fairy tales where the most beautiful on earth appears in floral form (in the bark of wood), then as an object (a piece of meat), as well as in bird-like form (such as a turtle, a frog, a cockroach, a snake, a snake, etc.) and then in anthropomorphic form (as a very beautiful woman) with properties of the deity of nature, of the underground or of the heavenly deity, we see traces of primitive continuous religions from animism, totemism, polytheism etc.

In the fairy tale, the most beautiful on earth has the properties of a divine creature, like a pantheon of nature, underground and sky deities. We see this through concrete examples in the paper (*Prose III*, 1966: pp. 423-429, 254-261; *Prose I*, 1963: pp. 194-198).

In other tale, the most beautiful on earth has properties of the subterranean deity associated with the cult of ancestors as a form of connection between earthly life and eternal life:

After being discovered and transformed into a beautiful woman, she lives as a human being. The discovery of her beauty will always encourage the greed of others and as a result her husband will have problems which he must solve by performing heavy tasks which are an important element in the structure of the tale. In such cases the most beautiful on earth with her mythical abilities will help the hero (her husband) to carry out the heavy tasks given to him by the opposing figures.

In a fairy tale and in its variants, the most beautiful on the earth has the shirt as a means of protection, which if taken from her causes the loss of her mythical property (*Albanian Folklore I, Popular Prose Vol. III*, 1966).

In addition to her unparalleled beauty, we see that she is wise and cunning as she gives the brave men various tasks to test their skills. She also appears as a brave woman disguised in a man's clothing as an "arapyzenxhia" who fights brave men who want to take her. In some fairy tales she is forced to live by violence, locked in a castle, as a slave of divas and other various creatures, the captivity is against her will, she awaits the achievement of the hero of the tale with pleasure, because she considers him as savior.

The most beautiful on earth who lives in a palace, castle or even at home; different beings guard it, which become an obstacle to its acquisition. We see the

difficulties and dangers faced by the hero in order to take it at all costs in this fragment of this tale:

“Kësaj plake iu lut Kordha që t’i dëftojnë seku ven’ ato udhë, e pasi mori vesh, zuri udhën e së Bukurës Dheut. Atëherë plaka i tha këtij:

Mos, or bir, hump kryet tat, e djalërinë tënde mbë kot, për se mb’atë udhë kanë shkuar mbretër me ushtri të fjorta, edhe s’kanë vatur dot atie, tek kërkon të vesh ti, një filli vetmi.” (Prose I, 1963: p. 135).

Në një përrallë tjetër shohim se ajo jeton në kullën e lartë me shumë kate ku e ruajnë 21 kollukë, që s’e lanë “me pa as dritë as diell” dhe përkundër vërejtjes së vetë të Bukurës së Dheut që të mos afrohet se humb jetën, trimi nuk heq dorë:

“Shkon djali tu kulla e e gjanë të rrethueme me rrashta të dekunish, i hin trishtim i madh (...) trokat në derë e don me hi mbrendë. Kurqe çilet në të pestin kat të kullës një dritare e qet kryet një çikë e bardhë si bora qi kishte në ball një hyll të shndritshëm.

Largou more djalë!—i thotë çika.—a s’shef sa njeri ka mbetë për rreth kësaj kulle. Ktu s’ mund hijnë as zogitë e malit, jo po hin ti biri i njerit.

Mue s’ka shka m’ ban kush—përgjegji djali—pse më ka çue vetë Ora. E m’ato fjalë hini mbrendë. Porsa hini gjet shtatë rroje kah flejnë e kah gërhasin të madhe. la hjek njanit taganin e me te i len të gjithë dekun” (Kurti: 90).

(Kordha begged this old woman to show her the way, and after finding out, she took the path of the most beautiful on earth. Then the old woman said to him:

“Don’t, lose your head, my son and your boyhood in vain, because kings with four armies have gone that way, and they couldn’t stop him, you, a thread of loneliness, are asking you to wear.” (Prose I, 1963: p. 135).

“Your son goes to the tower and it seems to be surrounded by rows of old men, he feels great sadness (...) there is a knock on the door and he wants to come inside. Because there was a window on the fifth floor of the tower, and at the top was a snow-white dot that had a bright halo on its forehead.

Go away, boy!—says the girl.—I don’t know how many people are left around this tower. Not even the mountain birds can fly here, but the son of man.

No one can tell me—answered the boy—why did Ora herself take me? Take those words inside. How did you find seven razors to sleep and to the big snorer? let someone remove the tag and leave the whole deck with him”)

In other tale, the most beautiful on earth has properties of the subterranean deity associated with the cult of ancestors as a form of connection between earthly life and eternal life:

“Pasi u sos në fshat të së Bukurës së Dheut, vate me gjithë luan e tij e drejt në



shtëpi të saj. Atie i doli përpara një plakë e e pyeti:

-Ç’do?

E posa tha ky se do të Bukurën e Dheut, me të parët plaka e bëri gur këtë”  
(Prose I, 1963: pp. 128-129)

(After arriving in the village of the most beautiful on earth, he went straight to her house with all his lions. An old woman came before him and asked him:

“What do you want?

As soon as he said that he wanted the Beauty of the Earth, the old woman was the first to turn this into stone” (Prose I, 1963: pp. 128-129)

The most beautiful on earth protects herself from the many strangers by scaring them, either through mythical means or through the direct influence of her beauty. She had stoned all the braves who had gone to get her, but the hero of the tale comes to the aid of the assistant character, he tells him the secret of the ability of obstinacy:

“A s’e din—vijoi Shejti—se sa vetë kanë shkue me e lypë janë ngri e janë ba gur? Për në daç me pshtue, ven vesh shka po të thamë: Kur të mbërrijsh ne sarajet e saj thirri të inadhe e ajo ka me të namë: “Ngrifto, zana, e bafto gur!” e ti dredhja me dekit: “Gur u ngrifsh ti!”. Tri herë ka me të namë e tri herë ka me ia kthye namën e kështu s’ka me pasë shka me të ba”... Mbandej vijon rrugën e jo fort larg prej andej, gjenë do kopshtije fort të bukura e ne mjedis të tyne shëf sarajet e së bukurës se dheut”

(Don’t you know—continued Shejti—how many of them have gone begging, are frozen and stoned? Go to the dacha with pshtu, listen to what we told you: When you arrive at her palace, she called angrily and she said to her: “Get up, fairy, turn it into a stone!” and I teased you with a dekit: “You froze!”. Three times he left with him and three times he returned his name to me, so he didn’t have to go with him anymore”... He kept following the road not far from there, he found very beautiful gardens in their surroundings head of the most beautiful salons on the earth” (Prose II, 1963: p. 283).

The most beautiful on the earth here has the features of a fairy, who, according to popular belief and also according to Christian songs, freezes the brave if she is saddened by them. In this tale, the true hero and the false hero act, the antihero (gabel) who is presented as the king’s son. The most beautiful on the earth knows about this through her mythical ability. One of the three tasks he gives the hero is to retrieve the water “that raises the dead”.

The boy performed all three difficult tasks with the help of his allies (through the fireflies that had not blocked their way, through the fish that had saved him from death and through the eagle that had saved the birds from the snake). With the water that raises the dead, the Earthly Beauty revives the true hero since his death was caused by the false hero. Although the most beautiful on the earth is

protected by mythical beings, animals, birds, insects, objects, she also uses mythical power. In the following fragment, the most beautiful on the earth is guarded by three Kuçedra, an animal and a dog. It also has its own mythical power which must be recognized in order to be mastered.

“Një të hipur e shpie kali drejt atie, në portë e parë gjen një roje, d.m.th. këto qenë tri Kuçedra, vete në port’ e parë e shikon kuçedr’ e parë, këto Kuçedrat ishin trija motra. E shikon kjo e para këtë djalin me yll në ballë ‘dhe i ardhni keq kësaj. I thotë djali:

- Ku e ka shtëpinë e bukur e dheut?

- Shko—thotë—në motr’ e mesme në port’ e dytë. Vete në ajo; e pa kjo këtë djalë të bukur.

- Shko në port’ e tretë—i thotë—te motr’ e madhe. Vete në motr’ e madhe, i thotë:

- Ku e ka shtëpinë e bukur e dheut?

- E ka në filan vënt—i thotë—ti po të veç atje, ajo ka një qen dhe një manar; ata s’ të lejojnë të rryç, se menjëherë venë e lajmërojnë: qenit ti do t’i hethç tru koke dhe manarit do t’mbledhç bar t’ja hethç, kështu do të lejojnë ata të veç” (Prose III, 1966: p. 111; Berisha: p. 163).

(A rider drives his horse to hell, at the first gate he finds a guard, i.e. these were three Kuçedras, you can see the first Kuçedra in the first port, these “Kuçedra” were three sisters. He sees this boy with a star on his forehead for the first time and feels bad for him. (Prose III, 1966: p. 111; Berisha: p. 163). The boy says:

Where is the beautiful earthen house?

Go—he says—to the middle sister in the second port. Alone in it; saw this beautiful boy.

Go to the third port—he says—to the big sister. To the big sister himself, he says:

Where is the beautiful earthen house?

She is in such and such a place—he says—but you are there, she has a dog and a pet; they don’t allow you to gnaw, because they immediately warn you: you will be head the dog and you will gather grass to pluck it, so they will allow them to separate”

The most beautiful on the earth, namely the road that leads to the most beautiful on the earth is protected by the lubia, the entrance is protected by the aslans, and the other entrance by the vultures, and the ants and bees are the protectors. Inside the palace, the walls also have a protective function, therefore the brave must learn their secret so that they do not prevent him from reaching the most beautiful on the earth. We see this operationalized within the tale, when the hero

is forced to bring the Beauty of the Earth to the false hero. The brave man overcomes the obstacles after heeding the helper's (ally's) advice:

“Mos qa, po kërko nga mbreti njëmijë shtjerra, katër desh, njëqind barrë grurë, njëqind barrë mjaltë, dhjete fshesë, posa që të arrish të therç shtjerat edhe të gjendesh në mes të ditës, se atëherë gërcillat ikën; vetëm asllanët rrinë në derë. Atje janë dy dyer, njërën e ruajnë dy nga asllanët, ata që janë më derë të brëndëshme rrinë të dy të tjerët, shtjerrat t'ua heç (hethç) shkabavet grurët ta heç (hethç) atje tek janë milingonat, mialtën atje tek janë bletët, edhe posa që të arriç në portë të heç katër deshtë asllanëvet, atëherë ryrë pa frikë brenda edhe fshi muret, se pa fshirë gremisen e të vrasën; si të arriç te derë e odës ta fshiç edhe atë. Si të hanë pastaj do të të thonë të gjithë, “ç'të mirë do të të bejmë për të mirën që na bëre?” Ti të kërkosh nga bletët e nga milingonat edhe nga shkabet nga një pendë.

(Don't cry, I'm asking the king for a thousand slats, four rams, a hundred loads of wheat, a hundred loads of honey, ten brooms, as long as you manage to sweep the slats and find yourself in the middle of the day, because then the lizards will run away; only the Aslans stand at the door. There are two doors, one of them is guarded by two of the aslans, those who are inside the door stay the other two, the vultures will take the grain away, the ants are there, the honeybees are there, even as soon as he reached the gate, the four Aslans rams, then entered without fear and swept the walls, without sweeping the ruins and killed them; how to get to the door of the room to hide it too. How do you eat then everyone will say to you, “what good will we do to you for the good you did to us?” You ask the bees and the ants and the vultures for a feather) (*Prose I, 1963: p. 196; Berisha: pp. 174-175*).

Kuçedra often appears as the protector of the Earthly Beauty, who has different functions in the fairy tale. She appears as a being with one head, with three heads (like a cerberus) and with seven heads and more, then with her children and sisters and others. It happens that the Beauty of the Earth is guarded by several Kuçedra or only one, depending on the situation and the number of obstacles that are created in the tale. Here Kuçedra has lost her primary function and features in our mythology, she has features in other mythical beings. The hero sets out to get the most beautiful on the Earth and:

“Vajti pak më tej, e gjeti Kuçedrën me gjashtë klyshëra mb'udhë, e cila iu derth ta hajë, po ay sveshi kordhën edhe e preu me gjithë këlyshërat.”

Më tutje E Bukura e Dheut është e mbrojtur nga Kuçedra tjetër dhe trimi përsëri vazhdon përpjekjen për t'ia arritur qëllimit për përvetësimin e saj dhe:

“Ariu ay ndë derë të pallasit, edhe hyri drejt e brenda, e u tha:

Mirëdita.

Po Kuçedra me të hakëruar i tha atij:

E qysh kuxove ti të vish këtu?”

He went a little further and found Kuçedra with six cubs on the road, which he wanted to eat, but he cut the rope and cut it with all the cubs.

Then the Earthly Beauty is protected by another Kuçedra and the brave again continues the effort to achieve the goal of her acquisition and:

“The bear came to the door of the palace, and went straight inside, and said:

- Good day.

But Kuçedra said to him more angrily:

- How dare you come here?” (Collector II: p. 170).

As protectors of the most beautiful on the earth are also the wolf, the capercaillie and others. That’s how they protect it... “Even kings had five hundred servants in her court, who guarded it, and at the outer door there was a guard, at the door of the day there were chaplains, and at the door where she had the inn, there were asllans” (Prose I, 1963: p. 280). In this tale, in addition to other animals that are guardians of the most beautiful on the earth, we also encounter the wolf, which in the ancient Albanian religion is an animal with totem properties.

In order to reach the most beautiful on the earth, one must overcome the obstacles that appear in the form of psychological boundaries. These obstacles are overcome by solving the puzzles or by performing the tasks given to the brave. Placing bets or conditions encourages the further development of the event of the tale and motivates the hero’s passage through numerous obstacles. When the hero of the tale, after passing the obstacles, reaches the most beautiful on the earth, she presents him with the performance of heavy tasks, which are usually three and which enter into the phenomenon called the ritual of the tale. The tasks are various, so e.g., in one case, Bukura e Dheut asks the brave to make these bets:

“- Ball’i bastit: to të mbledh një tok grurë, elp, baltë, grurë e t’i ndash me një natë.

Edhe ai i tha:

- I ndaj.

- Bast i dytë: të veç të març në dy male që hapen e mbyllen, ujë të pavdekur.

- Vete—i tha djali.

- Bast i tretë: unë to të fshihem në mes të njëmbëdhjetë çupave, to të mbulonemi me çarçaf edhe në më gjeç, aere të më març.

- Mir-i tha djali.” (The face of the bet: to collect a land of wheat, elp, mud, wheat and divide them in one night.

He also said:

- I share them.

- Second bet: separately marched in two mountains that open and close, un-dead water.
- By yourself—said the boy.
- The third bet: I will hide in the middle of the eleven maids, they will cover me with a sheet even in the middle, the air will kill me.
- Well, the boy said.) (Prose I, 1963: p. 197; Berisha: pp. 175-176)

In the above examples is put in the role of the opposite. In a number of fairy tales, she plays the role of a helper and helps the hero to carry out the difficult tasks imposed by the opponent. Some tasks are accomplished through dexterity and skill, while extraordinary tasks are accomplished through mythic ability. Thus, the saying goes, in the tale “The son of the reptile saves the most beautiful on the earth” the king asks her husband to find the jewel stones to build the palace. Finding them in real circumstances is not possible except with the help of mythical means. She uses her mythical proximity and takes a cup and puts it in front of her and says to the boy:

“Bjermë një bacë mes të syvet, sa forë që ke”. I ra djali, po i ra kadale; i thot ajo, që” të thaçë të bieç me sa fortë, që të keç, mos më kurse”. “Edhe ashtu i ra prapë djali, edhe ju nisë lotë asaj, sa shpuri kusinë njera në mes me lot, dhe i tha djalit, që” “merr këtë kusinë me lot e mi edhe ik prapa malit e të lagëç gurë me këta lot e mi, po të bësh esap që të laksh barabar, sa të bëhet pallati”. “Ashtu vate djali edhe lagu gurët me lot e të Bukurës Dheut, edhe u bënë të gjithë gurëxhevahir, sa që lagu”.

“I’m crying for a tear between your eyes, how strong you are.” The boy fell for her, but she fell for him; she tells him, “I told you to fall as hard as you can, so that you fall, don’t spare me.” “It felt like that too again, the boy, you also started crying, as a woman pierced the box in the middle with tears, and said to the boy, “take this box with my tears and run behind the mountain and wet the stones with these tears of mine, if you do asap to leave you equal, until the palace is built”. “Thus, the boy wet the stones with the tears of the most beautiful on the earth, and they all became jewels, as they were wet” (Collector II: p. 398; Prose I, 1963: p. 286).

In this tale, the mythical ability originates from the being of the Earthly Beauty, with her ability she realizes the action, with which she approaches the realization of the goal.

The mythical, supernatural ability of the Beauty of the Earth is also expressed in other fairy tales, the myth is its component, the tasks given to her are performed without difficulty, as the saying goes, in the case when the hero is asked to find the Beauty of the Earth through the flowers on the mountain in the middle of winter, when they cannot be found. In the Alibadaja tale, the king asks Alibada for “a bowl of flowers from the most beautiful on the earth for twenty-nine days”, if he doesn’t bring it, he threatens to cut off his head. The boy takes the most beautiful on the earth, but forgets to take the flowers, but “the girl of the kuçedra

gilalites the most beautiful on the earth in the waist and she laughs and a flower pot comes out of her mouth” (Prose III, 1966: p. 507; Berisha: p. 78).

This is a rare example, where the most beautiful on the earth emerges as a source, as a being that creates, produces extraordinary things, where it has a wealth and inexhaustible energy. The flowers that burst from her mouth (as well as the tears from her eyes that turn stones into jewels), symbolize the renewal of nature, her divine being as a nature goddess who heralds the season of spring. This element is also in favor of Lambency’s opinion, according to which she is a goddess of nature, an Albanian Persephone Demeter.

#### **2.4. The Most Beautiful on Earth and Its Metamorphosing Ability**

Another feature of the Earthly Beauty is its metamorphosing ability. Through metamorphosis, she transforms from that into the most beautiful of the earth or “in these two she was the skil, in the other duja she was the beautiful of the Earth...”. With her mythical ability she is immortal, heals wounds with her tongue and continues to live. Every time they shot at her with a rifle, she would jump against the stone, leave the grave and die” (Prose IV, 1966: p. 363; Berisha: p. 151).

In addition to the mythic ability, she also has the mythic tools; there is the herb with which they anoint the dead and his body does not decay: “he saw the dead man; he saw that he was dead, he left him with medicine for thirty days so that he would not perish and he wanted to throw himself into the sea from the disease.” (Prose IV, 1966: p. 367; Berisha: p. 154).

In some tales her strength lies in some object she carries with her. In the fairy tale “Boy and Girl with a Star in the aunt”, The most beautiful on earth has the power in the ring. The hero of the tale goes to get the Beauty of the Earth, takes the horse and:

Let’s take the Beauty of the Earth—he says.

- Good says to the horse—let’s go, but she has a great power and all the power is in the ring, you can take the ring from her and, if you take the ring, she has no power and they come after you (Prose III, 1966: pp. 112-113; Berisha: p. 164).

As it was pointed out, the Earthly Beauty according to this tale has the power in the ring, with its loss she would also lose her strength. The ring here can also have the function of the magic circle.

In addition to the mythical protective means, then its mythical power, The Beautiful Earth also has the ability or property of knowing past events, as well as predicting future events, so it has the properties of an oracle. She knows about the hero’s past (until he himself doesn’t know his past) and knows what will happen next. This is how she explains to the boy:

- Mbreti është babai tuaj kur u ka lindur mëma juve ju ka bërë të dyve me yll në ballë, të dy motrat e mbëdha në vëndin tuaj i kanë vënë dy kotele mace

nënës tuaj... (Prose III, 1966: p. 113; Berisha: p. 165) dhe vazhdon të tregojë për çdo gjë që u kishte ndodhur atyre. Për të ardhmen ajo i shpjegon (meqë ai duhet të shkojë te mbreti që është babai i tij): “Ato kanë bërë darkën—i thotë—dhe të gjitha gjellët i kanë bërë me helm që të na helmojnë neve por ti to të mos haç, por vetëm do të marrç na oshafi që ha mbreti”. (Prose III, 1966: p. 116).

(The king is your father when you were born, your mother gave you both a star on your forehead, your two older sisters gave your mother two kittens... (Prose III, 1966: p. 113; Berisha: p. 165) and continues to talk about everything that had happened to them. She explains to him about the future (since he has to go to the king who is his father): “They have made dinner—she says—and all the dishes have made with poison so that they will poison us, but you should not eat them, but only take the food that the king eats”.) (Prose III, 1966: p. 116).

The most beautiful on earth knows, it is said, that the brave man who arrives at her palace will be her future husband, that misfortunes will happen to him and his life will be in danger. Thus, after passing all the obstacles placed by the mythical beings, animals, birds and mythical objects, the hero reaches the most beautiful on earth, she further pushes the union with him through the tasks she sets before him not only to see the skills, but also to save and revive him after the false personage waits for him. Thus, one of the bets I place on him is: “...I am alone in two mountains that open and close, undead water” (Prose I, 1963: p. 197).

As the story unfolds, when the hero takes the Earthly Beauty and takes her to the king to give to the false hero as his wife, the false hero stabs her and he dies. The Earthly Beauty had foreseen this disaster beforehand and “opened his mouth and poured undead water on him and the boy came to life” (Prose I, 1963: p. 198). The chthonic character (as the goddess of the underground world) of the Earthly Beauty, in addition to the examples where she lives in the underground kingdom protected by various beings, we also see in the tale, “The king’s daughter and the dead man’s head” (Prose I, 1963: pp. 389-392). The most beautiful in this tale has a chthonic character. In this tale, the third daughter of the king, according to her previously determined fate (first the older sister marries the dead man’s head, she does not stay and returns to her father, then the second one marries she does not stay and returns home), marries the dead man’s head.

Her husband, the lord of the head, had been enslaved by the Earthly Beauty in the underworld. In the world of the living, he was a dead man’s head, while in the underworld he lived enslaved by the Earthly Beauty. The world he lives in is the world of immortals. After the girl arrives in the world of the Earthly Beauty and does her service by untangling her hair that was caught in a thorn and covers her child’s face to protect him from the sun, she takes pity and frees her husband from the underworld.

In this tale, the most beautiful on the Earth has properties of the deity of the underworld, who had held the boy captive, and only her mercy and will make her free the king’s daughter. The underground world, from the description, is nothing

different from the earthly world, except that we see this through the explanation that the narrator makes, when he says that the girl ran after a cat, while it pierced her through a hole in the world of Beauty of the Earth. The personality of the Earthly Beauty, her complete and complex knowledge is completed and refined when her external appearance, the beauty, which emerges through the hero's bleeding to have her, is treated and described. features of physical and mythical power, mode of protection, forms of manifestation, demonic character.

In the fairy tale, her beauty is not described in detail, the body or parts of the body are rarely or not at all described, as is the case in the Kreshnik songs when the beauty of Ajkuna or Tanusha is described. It is treated in general lines, or indirectly. It is said for example "She was so beautiful that even the sun marveled at her beauty" or "there was no more beautiful thing in the world". The oral creator sometimes makes some descriptions of her beauty or her actions, as well as the consequences of that in some examples we see that she is always forced to live out of sight, so as not to cloud people's minds and provoke various misfortunes: "They approached the daughter of Chilci and the king saw the girl, he fainted from her beauty and took her to the doctor" (Prose III, 1966: p. 475):

"The boy looked for her for many years and could not find her. When the years were over, he took the road towards the king's towers and saw in the distance the entrance of the most beautiful on earth who had put her head in the furnace and now he sees them dancing" (Kurti: p. 93).

Its beauty and brilliance surpass even the brilliance of the sun.

"Oh—he says—what am I seeing in the two doors!

- No more—the people tell him—but it is the illumination of the most beautiful on earth" (Prose III, 1966: p. 446).

The most beautiful on earth is so graceful that many brave men spend all their wealth out of desire, even to see her. Her beauty is enchanting; at first, she does not expose herself to the brave to see the whole, but once she shows her finger, then her arm, later her arm, and so on. Seeing the parts of the hero of the fairy tale's body ignites his desire to have the whole, and for this he spends his fortune. Having spent the wealth, he looks for other means to reach it and appropriate it. But besides being beautiful, she is also cunning and seeks and discovers the secret and the source of the power of the hero of the tale. When the secret is revealed, the hero often suffers. But he also looks for other means, finds the way, adopts it and lives happily with it. All this shows that the most beautiful on earth is not unattainable, but to have it requires sacrifice.

We encounter its property of stoning the brave in some tales, such as in the fairy tale "The little boy of the devil and the most beautiful on the earth who is cunning". The son of Padishaj wanted to see the most beautiful on the earth and says to the mother of her:

- My mind was filled with going, I saw the Beauty of the Earth.



The old woman says to the boy:

- Three hundred people have stoned him to this day, don't be the thirtieth one, because you are well and we are sick.

Ki, tells him that I decided and did not give up. Then the mother of the Beautiful Earth says:

- Go to the market, you have a blacksmith, make a knife with a blade, three long blades, take it and go. Do you see that palace by the sea? That's my daughter in the middle of nowhere. The walls and the ceiling are gold, but it is stronger than gold. The sun went down on you with ashes and dust, in case you weren't surprised by the beauty, the people themselves are surprised by her beauty to this day and there are many stones, you may be stronger than they are not surprised. He approached close, stuck the knife in the heart and continued to do not hurt, because it does not come; I didn't even take the knife from the jockey, he can do whatever he wants, until he swears "because of my brother, I put him in prison for two and a half years, I won't take him for granted" (Prose IV, 1966: p. 365).

Her beauty is fatal to those who cannot bear the hardships and to endure; it can only be acquired by learning its secrets and the source of mythical power. After acquiring and losing any of the mythical properties, she lives the life of an ordinary woman, sweeps the floor and does other work, but always keeps her supernatural abilities (for a day she makes a tapestry or glues a horse's tail that breaks off and he comes out with gold): "When he comes out of the mountain, the mountain grinds and tears the horse's tail... The most Beautiful on Earth sits down and gives the tail of the horse and makes it to gold" (Prose III, 1966: p. 506).

The most beautiful on earth appears in zoomorphic form, as a very beautiful bird (which the hero of the tale encounters while hunting): When he approaches each branch of the forest, he sees a very beautiful bird.

"- Ah—he says—if he kills that man and don't kill him, you don't want the other god, come on—he says—I'll shoot him once. He kills him and doesn't injure him, the bird in his hand does it alive. (Prose III, 1966: p. 472).

The transformation of the bird into the most beautiful on the earth does not take place in the presence of people or the hero of the tale, but only in cases where he is alone. The boy discovers that the bird is the Earthly Beauty, after investigating that it is eating his food, making his bed, cleaning his room, etc. While he pretends to be asleep, she transforms into a beautiful girl:

"- This bird remembers the coffee, sits down from there, took a girl and brought those dishes and eats the bread that was too much for him and wants to jump back to where he was, but this one does not let go and grabs him by the claws.

- How about you here?

- Yes, you killed me.

- Why are you going in there?

- Yes, I'm a bird.

- Are you sitting like this?

- Yes, he says.

Summer crown and take this as a wife" (Prose III, 1966: p. 473).

## 2.5. Some Forms of Metamorphosis of the Most Beautiful on the Earth

The most beautiful on earth in the form of a turtle and a frog is quite often encountered in our fairy tales. Both the turtle and the frog that turn into the most beautiful on earth are found by the hero through the search for the destiny of marriage. Usually in the fairy tale the three brothers, sons of the king or some other man, set out to seek their marriage destiny by throwing some object, be it an arrow or something else. Where the thrown object falls, there is their fate: the two elder brothers have the arrow fall in the family of the girls that coincides with the rank of their family, while the third one falls in some ravine, mudflat, near the sea, or in some forest distant etc. The object is thrown three times and it lands in the same place three times. The hero goes and there he finds the turtle or the frog.

In the fairy tale "One plumb man, three plumbs beard" the king's son is hit by an arrow three times in the mud. The boy goes and finds the frog there, picks it up and takes it home. At night she sheds her skin and becomes the most beautiful on earth, this she does not do in the presence of other people, as she is aware that the discovery of her beauty will bring consequences to her and her husband. To keep her safe, her husband burns her skin and she lives like ordinary people.

Her beauty increases the greed of the king to have her as a wife, therefore he puts heavy duties on his son so that he cannot perform them and then take the most beautiful on the earth. He performs heavy tasks with her help. She teaches him to go to the place where he found her and call her sister who is also the most beautiful on the earth. But the king always makes requests, the third request is to bring the man one plum, a man three plums tall. He was the uncle of the most beautiful on the earth. The son goes and calls him, he comes, destroys the king and puts his son on the throne).

Even the Tortoise Land Beauty, the hero of the tale finds through fortune-telling, by throwing an arrow or any other object (or even by chance) and the object usually falls near an oak tree, a bush, a stone, etc. The Beauty of the Earth, hidden under the shell of the tortoise is usually a beautiful woman; she shows her beauty when no one is present (the boy investigates and eavesdrops on her after investigating that someone is doing her housework, but there are times when she transforms into the Beauty of the Earth in the fairy tale without hiding from her husband at all The Earth Beauty turtle, the hero of the tale finds it through fortune-telling, throwing an arrow or any other object (or even by chance) and the object usually falls near an oak tree, a bush, a stone, etc. The most beautiful on the earth, hidden under the shell of the turtle is usually a beautiful woman; she shows her

beauty when no one is present (the boy investigates and eavesdrops on her after investigating that someone is doing her housework, but there are times when she turns into a fairy tale in the most beautiful on earth without hiding at all from her husband).

We also encounter the most beautiful on earth as a little bird locked in a box, the king's third son finds her by throwing a quirk, with which he seeks the fate of marriage. The circus falls into the sea. The boy goes there and finds a box, which he takes and takes home. The most Beautiful on Earth comes out of the box, removes the skin of the bird and becomes a very beautiful woman (even the walls of the room are lit up by her beauty) and does the housework.

In this tale, we come across the well-known motif of Maro Përhitura, when Maroja wants to go to Principai, her witch aunt transforms the mice into horses, the locusts into carriages, the pumpkin into a carriage, gives her "elegant clothes" etc. Here the most beautiful on earth, invited to go to the king at the wedding, has nothing to wear and leads her husband to go to the sea, where he had found it in the box, and calls out:

"Rystem Lala, Rystem Lala, I am the one who took your master's daughter".

A man comes out of the sea, he was the father of the Most Beautiful on Earth and was "three cubits tall, three cubits beardless and toothless". He enters the sea again, he comes out and gives the boy "ten hazelnuts and four hazelnuts"; with the hatching of the man's clothes, the man's clothes were golden, the father toasted the cart and the braves, they also tore a handful of fish. outside the gate..." (Prose III, 1966: pp. 146-149).

We also find him locked in a wooden crate carved in the river (where a shoemaker finds him and takes him home). From him comes "a girl, the most beautiful on the earth, a maid who was not in the earth" (Prose III, 1966: p. 164). That then marries with the miller:

"- What kind of person are you with such great beauty?

- I am the most Beautiful on Earth who was separated from my mother's breast and my brothers, but my fate brought me here and here I hope that I will live well with this man" (Prose III, 1966: p. 165).

In this tale I think an ancient relic of the transition from the matrilineal to the patrilineal line has been preserved.

We saw that Earthly Beauty turtle and frog are often encountered in our fairy tales, as well as the snake groom or the snake boy who transforms into the Most Beautiful on Earth or Handsome Boy. However, we also encounter the snake Beauty of the Earth (Prose III, 1966: pp. 87-89), which has elements in common with the Most Beautiful on Earth—a turtle, a frog, a bird, a thrush, etc. The hero of the tale also finds this Earthly Beauty by searching for the fate of marriage, in this case by throwing the apple, where it falls next to a dandelion thorn.

In the presence of people, the most beautiful on earth lives in the form of a

snake, while at night, when she is with her husband (but also during the day when no one sees her), she is the most beautiful on earth. The others discover him secretly and from that moment he no longer turns into a snake. The Snake Earth Beauty has her own mythical power and in the presence of others she creates the dishes according to her wishes, she finishes the dishes from the parts of her body, removes her own breast and puts it in the dish and the other one comes out again, puts her hands in the pan with fat and they don't burn, he holds two doves in his bosom, which when he is dancing, come out and fly to the king's lap.

In addition to the Most beautiful on the earth, the Three Earthly Beauties are also known in fairy tales, who are three beautiful sisters, but the youngest is always the most beautiful. In the tales with the Three Beauties of the Earth; usually there are three brothers who, for various reasons, set off on a long journey, either to find the cause of the damage (Kuçedra, llamien, etc.), or to seek their fate.

In such tales, the youngest brother comes into contact with the Three Beauties of the Earth, in the underworld, in some well or cave, which also mean entering the underworld. They willingly agree to leave that world, but always they know that the brothers will let the little brother in, since they will cut the rope with which he entered. For this reason, as a sign of recognition, they give each of them their own clothes, which are embedded in a walnut, an almond and a hazelnut. Those clothes are "not cut with scissors, without onions with needles that stick to the legs" (Prose III, 1966: p. 272). Until the younger brother returns, they refuse to marry.

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In a variant of this tale (Prose III, 1966: pp. 177-182) the youngest sister who has three Beauties of the Earth, gives the boy the medicine box, which acts according to his wishes and requests.

From the examination and from the examples brought, it can be said that the most beautiful on the earth is one of the most complex and important figures of the Albanian fairy tale and mythology. Her rare and stunning beauty becomes the target of many brave men. Such beauty is protected by nature itself or by various beings belonging to the mythological world or the real world. She lives protected. Mythical beings create special relationships with her, with her claimants, and as such take on an important function within the tale. In addition to the many beings that serve as her protectors, she possesses mythical power and other features. The most beautiful on earth has an ancient character, which can be seen in many

elements. In many fairy tales we have come across that she lives in the underground world, as the goddess of that world, but also in the earthly, heavenly world, in the sea and beyond the seas (Prose III, 1966: pp. 225-227).

We then see him as a deity of nature. The possession or use of immortal water or the herb of immortality can be said to be a very ancient Babylonian Assyrian element known since the Epic of Gilgamesh (nearly two thousand years before our era).

The turning of the brave into stone, either by her guardians, or by the Beauty of the Earth herself by mythical means or by the influence of beauty, speaks of her divine and fairy quality, which is well known in our folk mythology. and especially in Christian songs. We see her divine quality in the cases when she has the divine shirt, after receiving which she loses her divine properties (by finding the Earthly Beauty's shirt, her divine property returns, she turns into a dove, leaves the window and goes to the sky for lived with the deities.) Her predictive ability can also be linked to her divine quality.

The fact that Kuçedra appears with one head, three heads, seven heads and more heads, testifies to the connection with the ancient folk mythology where it was born, the world view about it has been transmitted for centuries and continues to live on. Her way of life in distant places beyond the mountains, seas, in isolated castles, where the human eye does not see her, proves her divine quality, since it is known that in popular mythology the deities are imagined as advanced creatures who live far from man.

Its appearance in an animal form, such as a frog, turtle, toad, snake, etc., in addition to the protective character, which was emphasized above, is also related to the remains of ancient totemic beliefs. The case when the most beautiful on earth appears as a snake (as well as the example when the most beautiful on earth has snakes in her belly) can be related to the snake cult, known since the Illyrians, who believed that they were descended from the snake as well as other phenomena of the snake cult among Albanians. The different forms of the appearance of the most beautiful on earth in a codified form can be considered as archetypal elements of the Albanian fairy tale.

The importance of the Beauty of the Earth also lies in the fact that it becomes the trigger for the realization of the action, the functions of the main character and the occurrence of the tale. In order to reach the Beauty of the Earth, many obstacles must be overcome, which the hero overcomes through his gender, dexterity, supernatural power or with the help of tools and supporting characters. Even after achieving the goal (his union with the Beauty of the Earth) difficulties arise for the hero again, which are also connected with the Beauty of the Earth, but now he has to perform the heavy tasks (which are usually three). He performs those tasks himself, with the help of the Beauty of the Earth, or various mythical tools and helpers associated with the most beautiful on the earth. The way of their realization (overcoming obstacles and performing difficult tasks) also determines the compositional structure of the tale. The most beautiful on earth is a figure

through whom the action in the tale is initiated, dynamized and developed.

### 3. Conclusion

A special issue in our paper is the presence and action of mythical beings in the Albanian folk tale, which in our analysis lead us to an unreal mythical world, where the characters are often transformed from one being to another. Opposing the textual structure of Albanian fairy tales, a series of properties and functions are revealed that these mythical figures carry, such as: The most beautiful of the earth, The Kulshedra, The Dragon, The Bogey, The Witch, The Shadow, The Vitors, The Hour, The Fary, Divy and many others, which display a rare wealth of imagination and artistry, beautiful and extraordinary appearance, as well as metamorphosing abilities.

In the study, we have made of Albanian folk tales, we have also noticed the great role it has in human society, since the discourse and psychology of its narration carry expressions of a deep spiritual world, giving a particular help on the listener or reader, but on the other hand, just as ethnology and literature make a clearer definition of the tale within the types of oral prose.

One of the most debatable scientific problems by ethnologists, literary critics and esthetes, as well as other researchers is the question of the genesis and the different features that are obtained in the tale. In this direction, there are many points of view from ethnologists about its function, from psychologists about the spiritual world that it manifests, and for writers, writers and other creators, it is seen as a literary and artistic creation.

Relying on the opinion of foreign and Albanian researchers, Albanian fairy tales are viewed with a rich wealth of mythical beings, where the actions of the characters take on the functions of the mythical unreal world. As clearly defined by the authors Lambertz, Q. Haxhihasani, Z. Sako, M. Mustafa, J. Panajoti, in the poetic and subjective world of Albanian fairy tales, mythical beings are present in the terrestrial, underground, cosmic world of which human fantasy has given them giant dimensions and images, but sometimes also as invisible beings.

One of the most realized and present figures in the Albanian fairy tale is the Most Beautiful on the Earth. It embodies the ideal of beauty and excellence. The intention to reach it means the realization of the wishes and life achievements of the hero of the tale. Her search marks the entry into difficulties, self-denial, bravery, wisdom, patience and others, while the marriage with the Most Beautiful on the Earth means the integration of the personality of the hero of the tale, the realization of his highest ideals.

The Most Beautiful on the Earth, according E. Çabej, in the Balkan Peninsula, except among the Albanians, it appears only in Greece and the Aromanians (Musaata loclui, Romanian Frumoasa pamintului). From Çabej's announcements, we learn that she likes you, is known to Turks and Kurds and as "la bella del mondo" even in Italian fairy tales. Çabej points out that Paul Kretschmeri, for linguistic reasons, from the work that Arabic uses the positive gender instead of the

superlative, (“E Bukura e Dheut” instead of the most beautiful of the earth) thought of its source from the Orient.

The great presence of the Beauty of the Earth in the tales of the Balkans, according to Çabej, is caused by the fact that during her journey from the Orient, she found old images that resembled her, with which she was able to merge. This researcher especially emphasizes the similarity with the sorceress Kirke. For the chronic character of the Beauty of the Earth, he quotes the scientist Erih Bete, according to whom she may be the goddess of death, and in this capacity, according to Çabej, she is again close to the Beauty of the Earth, since the clay of the dead has a role important in the tale of the Beauty of the Earth. Çabej also sees the similarities between Kirke and Bukura e Deu from the fact that Kirke in Homer is the daughter of Helios (the sun), while in Albanian and modern Greek tales she appears as the daughter of the sun. The daughter of the sun in the new Greek fairy tale appears as the pinnacle of beauty, which is also characteristic of E Bukura e Dheu of the Albanian fairy tale.

From such resemblances he thinks that the Most Beautiful on Earth and the daughter of the Sun are closely related if not identical at all. If this closeness between the daughter of the Sun and the Beauty of the Earth is based and if Heliada Circe and the daughter of the Sun are not the same names, then, for reasons of formal logic, says Çabej, it cannot be denied a closeness in essence of the Earthly Beauty to Homer’s Kirke.

The most beautiful on earth is a very complex figure of the Albanian folk tale and mythology. Its feature is its rare, stunning and unattainable beauty. It as a synthesis of ideal beauty and as such is the cause of the desire of the brave to possess it. During the attempts to acquire them, it becomes the cause of the misfortunes of the brave. Due to its rare beauty, it lives protected, so that it can reach any person, but only the one who deserves it (after many sacrifices). Her beauty becomes the cause of disasters. In cases where her charm is clearly seen, when she has the appearance of a human being, of a very beautiful girl, she is protected in the castle.

From the examination and from the examples brought, it can be said that the most beautiful on earth is one of the most complex and important figures of the Albanian fairy tale and mythology. Her rare and stunning beauty becomes the target of many brave men. Such beauty is protected by nature itself or by various beings belonging to the mythological world or the real world. She lives protected. Mythical beings create special relationships with her, with her claimants, and as such take on an important function within the tale. In addition to the many beings that serve as her protectors, she possesses mythical power and other features. The most beautiful on earth has an ancient character, which can be seen in many elements. In many fairy tales we have come across that she lives in the underground world, as the goddess of that world, but also in the earthly, heavenly world, in the sea and beyond the seas (Prose III, 1966: pp. 225-227). We then see him as a deity of nature. The possession or use of immortal water or the herb of immortality can

be said to be a very ancient Babylonian Assyrian element known since the Epic of Gilgamesh (nearly two thousand years before our era).

The turning of the brave into stone, either by her guardians, or by the most Beautiful on the Earth herself by mythical means or by the influence of beauty, speaks of her divine and fairy quality, which is well known in mythology our folk genre, especially in Christian songs. We see her divine quality in the cases when she has the divine shirt, after receiving which she loses her divine properties (by finding the Earthly Beauty's shirt, her divine property returns, she turns into a dove, leaves the window and goes to the sky for lived with the deities.) Her predictive ability can also Her appearance in animal form, such as frog, turtle, frog, snake, etc., in addition to the protective character, which was emphasized above, is also associated with remnants of ancient totemic beliefs. The case when the most Beautiful on the Earth appears as a snake (as well as the example when the most Beautiful on the Earth has snakes in her belly) can be related to the snake cult, known since the Illyrians, who believed that they were descended from the snake as well as other phenomena of the snake cult among Albanians. The various forms of the manifestation of the most Beautiful on the Earth in a codified form can be considered archetypal elements of the Albanian fairy tale in relation to its divine quality.

### Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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