



# The Albanian in Front of and Inside the Canon

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**Abstract:** *During XX-th century, Albania is known to be governed by a double law: the institutional one and the territorial one. With the territorial law, it means a law made and applied by people not by the government. One of these, has been Lek Dukagjini's Canon, which has been mainly used in Northern Albania, within the area in the same name, Dukagjin. It is also shown in one part of Kosovo too, principally, the zones nearby Albania's administrative boulder. This paper is going to go through this experience trying to set out the possibly origin of Lek Dukagjini's Canon, the grounds in where it has been applied, the way in which it has acted, the necessity to live under Canon and the consequences if there is no desire to live inside it. We, also, are going to face the main figures of the period we are speaking, who acted for Canon or were against its implementation and existence. We are going to have in consideration their opinions and judgements looking for the power it has, even nowadays, in Albania.*

**Keywords:** *Lek Dukagjini Canon, Albanian, Ethical Discussion, Gjergj Fishta, Prist, Nowadays.*

## INTRODUCTION

The Canon is called the set of principles, institutions, and norms that it has acted in Albania independently of the state's jurisdiction, both the Turkish and the later governments. Its name was thought to have appeared around the fifteenth century, when Sultan the second had codified for the entire Ottoman Empire Turkish legislation called the Canon, thus making this term later, ascend to his name and be called Sultan Suleiman al-Canon, Suleiman Lawgiver.

This legislation, however, must have been accepted in several different provinces of the Empire, especially in some of the Sandzak of Albania, serving them for the protection of local rights, thus being called the canon of the nation and another province (for example Dukagjin's Canon meant that of the Sandzak that included the old possessions of Dukagjin's dynasty). Lek Dukagjini's Canon has acted, lived, governed and coexisted in Dukagjin's Plain, Scutari's highland, Kosovo, mainly in populations with Catholic faith.

For Albanian Academic Shaban Sinani, this Canon is a monumental work of Albanian mentality and psychology. (Sinani, 2011) Lek Dukagjini's Canon, was gathered by Father Shtjefen Gjecovi<sup>1</sup> mainly in

<sup>1</sup> Shtjefën Konstantin Gjeçovi, whose name is closely related to the Kanun of Lekë Dukagjini, was born in Janjevo on July 12, 1874. He completed elementary classes in his homeland, and on August 15, 1888, with the Franciscan order, entered Fojnica's Bosnia. He continued lectures and philosophical lessons at the Franciscan conventions of Dvor and Banja Luka, while the theological ones in Kresevo. He served as vicar in Peja, Rubrik, Lac of Kurbin, Gomsiqe, Durres, Vlora, Shkodër, Zym, etc. Priest Gjecovi of the Franciscan Order, had the support of the church of Rome. He lived among the northern highlands and was in contact with the action of canon law on relations in society. The Canon has in powered over not only secular authorities but also on the church, however partial. Gjecovi had a philological, theological, archaeological sound and legal culture. In addition, he was also a teacher, was also the tireless study of various scientific issues. He collected and studied ethnographic, historical, linguistic and archaeological material.

Dukagjini's Plain. It was first published partly in *Albania*, the journal of Faik Konica, and later in *Hylli i Drites* starting in 1913 till 1924. Only after Gjecovi's death the entire work, would be published in Scutari, in 1933.

This paper is going to try to delineate Albanian's relationship in front in and inside Lek Dukagjini's Canon. The main material making the best of the paper is abstracted from the Franciscan's fathers, who used the Geg dialect of the territory they used to live and to preach, so, it has been (it always is) difficult to translate and transliterate the materials.

### **Ethnographic work of Shtjefen Gjecov in tracking Lek Dukagjini's Canon**

Gjecov's work, in tracing the country's spiritual and material traditions, is typically Franciscans. Gjecov, following the traces of the great fathers of Albania, gathered the traditional North code known in the national and nationwide arenas such as the Lek Dukagjini's Canon. He is also the author of various published and unpublished studies and essays of Albanian history, ethnography and archeology.

Father Zef Pllumi, remembers *Gjecov as a long, slightly thin man, with a pair of eyes where his mind and goodness were brightly reflected. He remembers that his words were scarce, but where they should be. Only when at a congregation meeting met any point on which he had special knowledge, such as Lek Dukagjini's Canon or the Greco-Roman old people, Father Shtjefen Gjecovi, broke off longer and then it was a joy to hear the man.* (Pllumi, 2009)

Shtjefen Gjecovi collected the traditional code of the North, Lek Dukagjini's Canon, under the steps of his religion fathers. In it, he shows his hand marks in the choice of the subject and in its structuring. (My emphases - A. Dema). Gjecov's hand mostly is strongly noticed to be the first pillar, *the Church*.

The author treats the Church as a knot of the Albanian tradition, with a traditional, connected and adult authority with the lives of Albanians.

With the highway work that Gjecovi performed in the area of Albanian customary law, he brought as evidence a number of canonical norms applied to Albanian Catholic parishes, which were in contravention of the evangelical norms of the Christian faith. Even in few cases the priests of these parishes accepted, not to say, blessed them, even within the church dome.

Thus, for example, the Albanian Catholic church acknowledged coexistence within their blood feudal parishes in the style of the ongoing cycle, though in itself the blood feud contradicted Christ's repeated message of forgiving the adversary.

For Father Zef Pllumi, Lek Dukagjini's Canon, was the Albanian identity card. *Albanians*, - according to him, - *were barbaric, but independent*. Only the canon was imposed - a law of blood-buzzing in the airship, where his anger fluttered as a banner of warfare in warring war with honor and freedom. His own honor and freedom such as tribe's honor and freedom. Thus, through the cruelest catastrophic disasters may prevent a nation from walking on the paths of history, the Albanian (...) knew and could keep intact their original properties. (Pllumi, 2001)

Gjecov's work in following the course towards spiritual and material traditions of our country, as mentioned above, is typically Franciscans. In the language plan, Geg' idiomatic is the rare language of Gjecov, which with features and unique elements, faces considerably only in his works. The canon is treated as an unwritten epoch-making work, which preserves language, culture, tradition, religion from conquering invaders throughout the history of our people. In the language plan, Gjecov's rare genius deepens at *Agimi i Gjytetnis*. (The citizenship daybreak).

Ernest Koliqi, following this line, adds that Gjecovi is a classic who writes in Highland's idioms. No one like him, knew Geg as he did! (Koliqi, 1998)

In northern Albania of early twentieth century, ethnographers and foreign visitors were deeply impressed by the patriarchal and tribal structure of society; a social circle formed by tribal customs inherited, which were transmitted through generations, thanks to Lek Dukagjini's Canon.

The burial costumes, beliefs, generosity, hospitality, blood feud, a perceptible perception of male honor, faith, and absolute loyalty to the word, remain the most important issues of Gjecovi's work.

### **The hypothesis of the origin of Lek Dukagjini's Canon**

Not only Shtjefen Gjecovi was taken to track Canon, as an inherent part of Albanian identity in the 19th century. Different scholars, inquisitors, characters of political and legal life, profane, even cultural tourists, have shown interest in Canon, nature and its impact.

Among them are De Grand, Miss Durham, Hahn, Hecquard, Barcata, Hasluck, Nopcsa, Father Zef Valenini, Ernest Koliqi, Father Bernardin Palaj, Monsignor Ernesto Koci, Father Fulvio Cordero, Father Gjergj Fishta and others, which to their common studies, it was the canon's morale.

For them, the Canon remained the moral code of Albanians. They hypothesizes it may have been sourced by Greek-Roman laws, and since its fundamental content embodies the whole democratic and constitutional form, and as such, the only sovereign is the men.

The canon was conveyed to ages with the same mechanism as it is inherited language and folklore, as an oral tradition, in multiple oral circulations, memorized as a great cultural heritage, just as rhapsodies, legends and narratives were taught. It was the education and legal conscience of the highlanders, the common choice of way of life. On his basis, morality was changed and changed. (Sinani, Sh, op cit)

Throughout the whole line canon, is described by the word given and the word sought, which, in other words, is disbanded in the 12 main pillars, pillars that built the life and activity of the mountains (*mainly northern*) of Albania, in the early of the twentieth century.

Father Zef Valentini finds this regulatory code before the medieval arena. What is puzzling to the coherence of the code is the great spread of the Canon, even beyond the limits of Dukagjin's possessions. The practice of the canon laws may date from the time of bronze, such as albanologies Edit Durham, supporting this thesis, alluding to the fact that these laws could come from the time of bronze.

Other authors hypothesize that the canon comes from several Illyrian tribal tribes. Others suggest that the canonical edifice contains elements of prehistoric Indo-European ages.

Other thoughts parallel similarities between Canon and Manusmirtri as a tradition of Hinduism.

If meditations were considered to give the canon such an ancient origin, we must acknowledge that a population who succeed in creating a co-habited code must have previously mastered a culturally embedded ethnicity. This is because a co-habitation unconditionally accepted by all requires centuries to be governed by unified norms. If we accept this origin, we would draw the conclusion that Lek Dukagjini's Canon expresses the existence of urban life and of an early community consciousness for the Albanian.

Father Zef Pllumi appears to be one of the contemporaries of ancient canon origins, while telling who knows our highlanders assemblies, knows where their goddess arrives, with the prefixes of an opponent with the tongue that cuts them. (Pllimi, Z, op cit)

The canon of the highland, related to the name of Lek Dukagjini, may be even older than this famous figure of history. Thus, the attestation phrases do not occupy the gods by name.

The oaths, *the bounty for heaven and the ground, for this stone, for this weight, for this bread*, expressed the mythological beliefs and imperatives of the Catholic faith. In fact, Albanian is remarkable for a conceptual duality, between its spiritual beliefs and the practices that are related to it or not.

Only one really valuable thing may overcome centuries to come to our days. The oath for bread or bread in your hand remembers the Jewish cult for "manna", the divine holy food. Even Millosh Gjergj Nikolla, the modern Albanian writer of the thirties of the twentieth century, keeping this very important line for the highland, raises the force of his curse on the cult of bread: *Do not break the corn of the corn ... you may be coursed by fairies!* (Migjeni, 2011)

The Canon was not only the right to regulate coexistence, but also the right to family, civil law, right to work and procedure, a true righteous ensemble, where the most human-family relations, family, tribe, friendship,

flag and homeland. Discussing for Albanians, it may be said there is not found any reference to the sacred books approaching as a form of execution or reflection, whether it is the Bible.

*The fundamental categories of ethics of Albanians remain honor, dignity, respect, courtesy, hospitality, etc., norms determined by the inheritance and the supreme will of the forefathers, which, in most cases, do not correspond either to the teachings of the religion or to the instructions of the canon.*

Albanian customary law can be considered as a parallel social and juridical system to that of the state, though, this was more of a moral right than a criminal one. Ismail Kadare called it “jus albanicae”.

Eqerem Cabej, in *Elements of Literature and Albanian Language* (Cabej, 1935), treats canon as a didactic need for schools. Apparently, the linguist is of the opinion of embracing the canon, as in his suggestion he sees pedagogic educational elements in the psychology of the existence and non-existence that he dictates. Or, he considers it necessary to combine it with the curriculum for the purpose of knowledge, acknowledge and emancipation.

Returning once again to the discussion, Sinani, would say that in the conversation in the chamber of friends/pals, we trace the autochthon way of expressing through the determined spirit of the procedure and its internal rules, witnessing the civilization of our people, protects the attacked history of it, thus defending the right of its existence and of its free development. (Sinani, Sh. Op.cit).

### **The Canon of Today; to be applied or not?**

Even nowadays, there are dilemmas about the authorship or the “fatherhood” of the canon. Many scholars cast the hypothesis that it did not have a title to be summed up. It is strange that it is attributed to an only person, because the Canon, like all the oral creativity, is the work of an entire population. There is some doubt that one of the “authors” of the canon, whose thoughts we listed above, would be Gjecov, who arranged the oral ancient Albanians custom, except in writing.

Shtjefen Gjecovi, seeking to give value to the research and archive usefulness of the canon, focusing mostly on the institution of the given word, (beses) as a tie of all canon activity, raises questions of pure anthropological character according to him, should know how to answer each teacher and every student. Questions have been cut off from his correspondence with friends:

- ✓ What kind of nature an Albanian is?
- ✓ What are the principles to characterize him?
- ✓ What does he benefit from the world and life?

The questions asked by him, he answers rhetorically, even though the meaning the sentence receives is more affirmative than the questioning: *Does the Albanian tribe contain such characteristics as it deserves to be called a nation distinguished among other nations?*

Gjecov, tempting to let us know he may be the author of the canon, continues his judgment like this: *“I was convinced that the statement I am an Albanian is left unattended when it is not fundamentally based on the vitality of the vital doings. If we do not relate to the Albanian name with faith, honor, manhood, hospitality, (My emphases, A. Dema) it means with ancestral inheritance, we have to accept, whatever we are listed on the heels of the European nations.”* (Gjecovi, 2003)

His obedience is even stronger when he says: “We wrote a chapter in the history of European civilization. Perhaps short and fussy, but regardless, it is worth. We reached it thanks to those tradition/ traditional years” (Gjecovi, 2003)

Gjecov, with “traditional years”, means years of canonical gathering, but not only them. This way of expression resembles a kind of oath that orality materialized in the book is authentic and true resembles a kind of “ego” by him as a professional, as to justify a “blunder” of self-asked by the character of the work.

Gjecov, being aware that canon, its laws, practices, and pursuit were not the best side of presenting his tribe to the world, and showing that he knows it better than anyone else, he explains that, *when I said Canon, I meant the nucleus of it, not the majority of the archaic norms (my emphases A. Dema), some of which today*

*do not live. Where may it be found a reverence for human (being) as in Albanian doctrines? Where is the woman defended more than by the Canon?*

With this rhetorical way of arguing, the ethnographer makes it easier to understand his subordination than the reality that faces in dealing with women, because only referring to Anton Harapi (and not only), we bring a completely different reality, and yet, Gjecov, underlines that: "The Albanian Mountains Canon does not distinguish the man from the man. *We accept the body as it is, the soul must be cleaned.* (Gjecovi, 1998) (We prefer to allow even the Albanian - *Shpirt per shpirt se duken e fale Zoti*).

Passing in this verse, how to find refuge in his analysis concludes by saying that neither Lahuta e Malcis (*The Highland's Lute*) of Gjergj Fishta nor Besa of Sami Frasherri would be as good as they are if they had not been written and created on the canonical gist.

Other laconic hypotheses for various canonical authors also sparked Eqerem Cabej, orienting the source or "fatherhood" of the canon somewhere else. With his hypothesis, he linked Franz Nopcsa.

The deceased baron Nopcsa has also left a manuscript on Canon. Second this scholar; the canon source must be sought in the Langbardian German laws, which came to Albania by the side of Venice. However, we are of the opinion that the existence of the strong canon footprints of Laberia gives us a new nucleus of this law in southern Albania. With this, it is believed that a very old and Albanian source of this canon. In addition, this canon must be compared, we believe, not only with the German laws of Italy, but also with the laws of the peoples of the Balkans. (Cabej, 2009)

Another feature within the style and theme of the creations, writings, sermons, and approaches of the Franciscans it was the ideal against blood feud, which the Canon does not skip, nourishing it. The message of all the Franciscan order against blood feud, gives at Donat Kurti, in the story: who does well, finds good!

His fable is all action, surprise and suddenness. So, the third child, the youngest, of an old man makes friendship with an unknown deceased, and as a reward for the good that he does, he helps him. Finally, when they say goodbye to each-other, the deceased invites the living man to pay him a visit underground. The boy finds his grave...

*"... He knocked three times with his foot. After that, there was a door opened. After being opened the door, he could distinguish a very beautiful place; never seen such e beauty! The dead man, accompanied the friend everywhere, in that beautiful place. In a certain point he brought the living man nearby a place, where he could glimpse a bright red sign. The sign shone brighter than the sun, giving the place a very wonderful view.*

- *What's that red sign? – asked the living man*
- *That sign,- answered the dead man,- is my blood, put by God, after being assassinated. If my blood is forgiven by my parentals (My Emphases – A. Dema), this beauty will be perserved; but if they do not forgive the one, who assassinated me, this beauty will be riuned and never seen again.*

*On the other side the red sign it was lightening a candle. Meanwhile the men were speaking, the candle was swept dhe the sign bleed.*

- *Hej! – cried the dead man, - they took my blood. In that moment everything was destroyed. No more beauty could the eyes see. The living man, left the grave. There he had been three years; he thought there were only three days*"<sup>2</sup>

So the message is clear: the one assassinated by the enemy's gun does not want blood feuds. It is not difficult to conclude that Donat Kurti introduced this tale with full awareness.

With this tale emerges the emancipation from the mind of the collector. As a simple man on the earth, it seems like he opposes the law of the time, the Canon, calls in a humanistic way, ethically strong civilized for

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<sup>2</sup> "collecting these fairytales, [...] I meant to demonstrate and feed the albanian morality, allowing teachers to access into good materials... – expressed Kurti into the Introduction of the Second Volume.

the time and place; he was against blood feud. He does not even want to kill him, especially where he eternally falls...

Though we have a clergyman, a man of deep religious conviction, a Franciscan Father, placing the tale on the latter pages of the second volume can be taken as a strong message of civilization, peace and goodness, proving many times more his religious mission.

If we refer to Ferdinand Buisson, (Buisson, 2010) we would say that theology is no longer the same as religion; one must leave to remain the other. Father Donat Kurti goes beyond these findings, acts and thinks of a formed humanist and intellectual, because the collectors of traditions, under the example of popular song collectors, have the eyes towards the future and the goodness of the nation. The invention of traditions while improving inheritance and being carried out under the inspiration of the nation's genius is perfectly legitimate. (Dorson, Dorson, 1969)

It is a message that, although articulated many decades ago, remains so current nowadays. The same opinion seems, to have had Marcel Mauss, when he stated: "The nation is the one who does the tradition, so it must be re-established through tradition." (Maus, 1969)

It was the Canon to outline the fundamental norms of the amity through local community, State or Church, defining the superiority and the rights of these superior entities, but external in the life of the Albanian, coming sometimes primary thing in the affiliations that he had and in the same time suspecting to their interventions; but if you found yourself involved in peaceful discussions with the people of the Canon, you would see that they did not exclude or hinder them. In principle, the requirements of state or ecclesiastical law denied that they were the same as those of the Canon.

While, the most prominent albanologist of the 20th century, the Jesuit father Zef Valentini, among other things, would like to add that the Albanian juridical mindset is embedded in the radiant nucleus of the Canon, unique, authentic and incomparable. (Valentini, 2007)

Summarizing, the Canon, with its character, has maintained the national mental identity of the Albanians. (Dedaj, 2001)

The basic principles of the Canon were moral principles. They felt their respect as a command of consciousness and were sometimes puzzled between social and religious consciousness. According to the prejudices, highlanders, from childhood, together with rakia<sup>3</sup> "drink" the concept of "Honor of equal spirit" - the honor and the spirit are equal. The first is honor. This principle is incarnated in their hearts, and there is no excuse to overthrow them.

And some priest's opposite reasoning answers: It is true what the priest says, who is obliged to say so, but people do not let us do otherwise. For this, a lot of blood is shed, seldom was killed for hatred, and mostly was killed for honor and for manhood. It is unexplained for what honor and respect is spoken of the highlanders, when each one is, however, the victim of retaliation for blood feud. (Giacomo J. S. J, Official Letters of the Province of Venice, 1-st Series).

Father Zef Valentini, as a conduit of humanism, shows a state of duplication, even suspicious, accompanying the canon-follower individual. He puts his finger in the wound that causes canon, either as a subject or as an object.

Thus, the Canon remains the set of principles and basic legal institutions, with modes of implementation conditioned by particular time and local circumstances. Lack of precise definitions of principles incorporates extreme logical, as well as distorting, contradictory and incidental attitudes. On the other side, the field of affiliations on which the Canon is held very strongly, compared to those areas where it is unsafe: so many doctrines and customs that are attached to the Canon (*norm or freedom of law marital*) should not be considered as its contents, or look like it, from the silence that canon holds around them.

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<sup>3</sup> A traditional drink made principally by the grapes

Taking the historian's position, Father Zef Valentini, hypothesizes the usefulness of canon as an inclusive ethnicity or marginal local unit. Here is how he argues: "If the Canon was distinct and different from the state laws, it was distinct and different in every banner<sup>4</sup> or tribe, but the special laws that any community could adopt should not be against the Canon, but according to Canon, as its deepening or adaptation; as saying that it is a Canon and there are also some other canons, so special laws and customs that ask for the circumstances of each community." (Valentini, Z, op cit)

Father Zef Valentini is critical to putting into practice the canon, emphasizing that not every custom born of necessity or obligation is good, pleasurable.

*Let us express it with his lecture: "We cannot say that the custom is a necessity, created by the exigency or special circumstances of the country. If it were like this the features of e population its ideas and opinions, they would always be profitable for it, but we often find out they are harmful. We are therefore obliged to accept another theory; we will say that habits are born suddenly, sometimes without any logic; one thing makes a man prominent, and it seems to us beautiful, and supposed to be imitated, to do it as well. Here's how a manner was born, a new habit. His criticism comes to irony when his thoughts grips to him after a prominent Albanian folk saying: "One stupid man throws a stone in the sea and one thousand wise do not draw it out". (Ibid)*

Already, the Canon was clearly accepted, as the Albanian world law for the Albanian world. This law of revenge has become so deep in the lives of these people that, more than the death of their relatives, it is important the life of the murderer still alive. (ibid)

This can be treated as the culmination of Valentine's existential philosophy. Speaking with Sartre's language, existential philosophy is humanism, because it is the consciousness philosophy, about the potential of man for himself. Existence precedes the essence, which at first there is no substance, but it is created by actions, the acts that the individual chooses himself. He chooses to create his own essence. (Sartre, 1997)

So the Albanian chose to create his own canon, to put him into life and to identify with him most of the time. The actions and actions of the canon did not only precede the essence of the Albanian, but they turned it into essence, essence, and meaning.

### **Fishta and his contradictory attitude**

Father Gjergj Fishta is in no way in agreement with Valentine and his existential philosophy, because for him, the man has three good things on the ground:

1. The life,
2. The personal things
3. The honor and all the Canon's laws and the all humanity laws too serve to preserve these three gods.

A population, with its laws and Canon, preserves these three gods, which are to derive to the people, that populatin, may not be called barbaric, because its powers are used for its own life and friendship. So, we should pay attention to these, because these laws are taken, to perserve the life, the personal things (*home, mandries, fields, forests*) and the honor of a man who lives in a comunity and, having these in consideration, I am sure to say Albanian people is not e barbaric race in Europe.

Apparently Fishta agrees with these extreme measures, because he maintains the same persistence of judgment and faith.

If there is any kind of violence toward the life, personal things and honor Albanian Mountain's Canon it is for the consequence of a very big fault and against the killers, thieves and robbers etc., against dirty affairs. For all these kind of matters there are extreme punishments well – deteremined in the Canon. (Gjecovi, 1933)

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<sup>4</sup> In the meaning of a place, building.

Fishta deepens his conviction, a conviction that goes even ahead of the karma he represented in the people: he firstly was a priest. He totally agreed that the punishment would be eye-to-eye and tooth-to-tooth, without taking into account the existence of the state or its regulatory laws:

Even Canaan says to burn the house of the culpable, who may be dangerous to the community, tribe. There may be military forces and it may ask to act by the laws they have determined, but if you want reorganize everyday life and to do well, you have to burn the culpable's house and excommunicate him. The Albanian spirit has built the laws and Canons determining the penalties aiming to preserve the life, the personal possessions and the honor. If there are men who kill, rob and do filthy matters, it does not mean there are bad people in Albania, but it does not intend it may be found kinds of men in other countries and areas too. (Fishta, 2000)

To get the blood back from the people (*relatives, brothers*) it is not a barbaric action and the law itself which gives the right to Albanian to take the blood back (*so, to kill the killer*), it is not a barbaric law. This, if we understand by the way Albanians had decided.

In fact, Albanian ruling in Albania's Canon, it is composed in such way that the ruling power of a bajrak<sup>5</sup> would be formed totally within itself. It would be separated from the other bajrak, so, in this context, the one who had killed someone else, to escape from his overlord punishment, left from his to be hidden into friends shadow. (Ibid) For Canon all the males who are capable to carry guns, are meant as soldiers. (Gjecovi, Sh. 1933)

Fishta is aware that the practice of canon is not seen as a value in the international arena, so he defends himself by saying that *perhaps the enemies of our nation have said that the Canon law, relating with the blood matter, is barbaric because this law gives the possibility to kill not only the one who killed before but even other relative's killer, who he may find straightway to seek the real killer.*

*Even in this point Albanians are seen barbaric, when he is not doing any bad thing, except defending his family honor. They would like to admit that the punishment of the culpable is not found in other European countries.*

Albanian intellectuals, considered as the most important figures of culture and art in the early twentieth century are not seem to be in synchrony with Fishta, his concepts and his almost imposing judgments.

Here is what Mithat Frasheri says about this: Just walking and not falling on the nose, we can eliminate the gathered and accumulated malformations to date, bring those qualities that make the wild man a nation gentle, that make the barbarian tribe a civilized people, to gain the virtues that fall into unity, cooperation, solidarity, between parts of a body, to know the law, to voluntarily obey the norms, to put on some kind of bondage (i.e. knowing the state and its legal existence), which saves us from harsh life. (Kulla, 2007)

Mehdi Frasheri goes deeper into the canon, blood feud, or retaliation problem, extending his discussion to the Illyrians where, according to him, is the social, economic and moral phenomenon of the Albanian people. For him, the origin of canon is ancient as Illyrian tribes. He thought that the Illyrians living apart from each other and lacking love feelings to each other, because of the limit of the waste of water, with which they dabbled the lands or for women's matters, among them resembling endless murders and so the taking of blood had become a habit rooted in the Illyrian tribe. (Frasheri, 1944)

The judgment and the example brought by Mehdi Frasheri, list the Albanian people among the most uncivilized, with non-social and cultural behavior, but virtually, wild. They are killed and kill for a watercourse...

Let us also bring an illustration from (Andrra e Pretashit) *Pretash's dream* of Anton Harapi about the power and the abolition of the virtues of the Albanian:

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<sup>5</sup> From Turkish, flag, but in fact, it was a building where there lived the tribe chairman, the most intelligent man of a tribe.



... Over Gruda church Prela Luca from Nikmarash of Triepsi was found killed, while a few days later, Triepsi's blood feud kills Pretash Zefin of Llovka. The murders stir up two halting places and disrupt and diminish the balance of life and at once enable Gruda's priest, Harapit, to observe and experience them unceasingly. Virtues: virtuousness, wisdom, hospitality, covenant, and unparalleled courtesy and magnificent majestic activity of highlander when he takes into consideration both his judgment and his actions with discretion and special esteem but together expresses vices as blood-heat, severity, deception, betrayal. (Harapi, 2003)

Implementing the Canon's principles and guidelines in broad lines meant preserving the honor of living in honor. When it was blemished or touched the honor, it had to be put in place. The commitment to replace started/starts with vengeance and ending with the bloodthirsty, antipode claimed to limit engagement, but in general simply opened / opens a new chapter...

Following the fictional principle of honor, there are two other principles, the fundamental equality between physical and moral persons, and the freedom to behave as the honor and civic consciousness are dictated by law, without anybody having personal authority to command others.

In such equality and freedom, for the security, the well-being and the honor of everyone and everyone, it is necessary to have a high level of support of the right society people, and besides, a high level of commitment and credibility for fulfilling commitments in everyday relationships between the person and the community, supported and ensured by moral fondament of *besa* and the pact of men, through the institution of the word or promise given.

The Canon ensured / ensures the continuity of this worldview of social life supporting the basic institutions in which this worldview found / finds its realization entirely and in particularly.

## Conclusions

In the end of this journey, through Albanian Canon of Leke Dukagjini, we catch ourselves thinking and meditating.

Has it been so succesful and important as the centuries bring it to us? Or Lek Dukagjini's Canon, is a historical face of Albania? And the most basic question: How is it possible to be useful even nowadays?

Clearly and rightly, we may answer that one of the Canons (Lek Dukagjini's Canon) acting in Albania more than five centuries is active even these days.

It has played a realy important and decisive role into the political, administrative and cultural life of Albanians.

There are too many jugdments and ideas around the Canon's source. They date back to the Illyrian time coming closer to nowadays and still not agreeing the date, the promoter or the patriarch and the area it may have been acting.

There are opinions and thoughts contradicting and opposing each - other, discussing more the implementation than the ethical judgement of using it.

It is not so much, but it is true, that Leke Dukagjini's Canon, is still taking Albanians lives.

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