

*View Over the Balkan Peninsula
Поглед над Балканите*

THE COMMON LAW AND THE CANON OF LEKË DUKAGJINI

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Abstract. This paper contains a summary, chronology and analysis of a specific process that Albania has in general, as it is the specificity of blood feud, which is one of the typical and very current problems of the Albanian people. The implication of the second parties and the third parties on these developments in reconciliation of the lynx and the effect of the Canon of Lekë Dukagjini and other socio cultural implications for overcoming the inter human conflicts that find support at customary law, at the same time it is considered as an act to settle down the disputes, a legal and institutional component for the replacement of the courts. Special emphasis is placed on the Canon that Albanian law is an Albanian institution, institutional history, but also a “formulated idea”. It is the mind and spirit of the Albanians, conceived for centuries in the oral tradition, preserved, protected with fanaticism and transmitted as a message, to be understood, disaggregated and absorbed in the way it was formulated and transmitted, without being changed in form and content. The Canons are the product of an ancestral society, when Canon law was the only right to regulate life. Life becomes fierce not only in the sense of confronting nature, but also of people with each other, which is characterized by a constant competition, which one alone can not withstand. One of the challenges that Albanian society and state faces in this decade is the phenomenon of blood feud and revenge, a habit inherited from the ancient past, incompatible with the principles of civilized society and the rule of law.

Keywords: Canon; customary law; reconciliation; blood feud

1. Blood feuds at Albanians

In 1909, Edith Durham claimed that, the most important thing in Northern Albania is blood feud, which, in fact, has to do with the old idea of self-purification ... Everything else is subject to it. In fact, although the rules of blood feud constituted only a small part of customary law, or the Canon of Lekë Dukagjini, as we know it today through the work of Shtjefën Gjeçov, simply a chapter (Chapter 22), they dominated the whole life of Northern Highlanders, because, as Durham wrote,

in the life-style philosophy of mountaineers, everything goes back to the blood. The rest, which had to do with everyday life and was not wrinkled in blood, was inextricably linked to the bloodstream in such a way that, as Ismail Kadare writes, it is difficult to say where one part ended and where the other a part started. According to Kadare: Everything was created in such a way that they sprang up to each other, the non bloody one to give birth to bloody one and bloody one the non-bloody one, and so always, from time to time and from generation to generation. Albanian Canons are more or less simultaneous; their creation can not be linked to a specific date. The Canons are product of an ancestral society, when Canon law was the only right to regulate life. Life becomes fierce not only in the sense of confronting nature, but also of people with each other, which is characterized by a constant competition, which one alone can not withstand. So in this way was born the first the group tribe which was defending together, working together and withstanding the life. In this way they protected their interests. At this time, it starts the existence and the life of a society without state authority, regulating life by applying the tradition, by imposing certain rules and laws that restrict human freedom as an individual because a strong individual would deprive others of freedom (Martini, 2007). "Let's join in order to protect the weak from oppression, to stop and limit the ambitious and to provide anyone the property they are entitled to; let's join forces in a supreme power that can govern us with wise laws, protect all members of society, repel common foes, and maintain eternal harmony between us. A society without state authority is not an archaic society that quickly disappears from the face of the earth, but a society with a set of self-perceived value systems, essentially equivalent but also in opposition to the system of values of a state-owned society. When a state power is formed, with the right authority, capable of imposing judicial decisions and punishing the offender or the perpetrator, then people have the will and are willing to delegate the power of revenge to a power or such authority. Whenever this authority is weakened or faded, people are keen and thirsty to take revenge rights which will lead them to the rebirth of the system of values of a society without state authority (Gjeçovi, 2014). When it is said that the Canon has evolved, we do not mean only the evolution of solutions that enrich the fund of right, but also the continuous creation of new institutions and the perfection of existing ones. Ensuring human life is the first problem with which the Canon is taken. The first Canon institute is blood feud that had to do with life security. Blood feud is the most important part of Canon because we are dealing with human life. Blood feud is a cultural phenomenon, while vengeance is a wild human pulse. A clear example of the getaway from Canon's initial intent to limit blood feuds is the recent inability to distinguish vengeance from blood feud. Blood feud means taking blood and avenging a debt". The Canon says that "blood is not only a fault, so a crime can not be overthrown with blood." Its definition of blood feuds is wrong. "Blood feud

means getting blood whereas avenging a debt". The blood feud in Albania went on because of historical, social, economic, educational and psychological reasons. This gave reason to many scholars and writers to deal with this subject, addressing them in various ways openly anti-Albanian, explaining it as "a biological feature of Albanians". The iron rule of the Canon required the protection of the honor and the atonement of the blood shed. This rule was inviolable, especially in those cases where the honor of the family was violated, even the honor of the tribe and the ancients. Such insult, almost always, led to the declaration of a blood feud, because the only way to put the honor in the right place was to kill (Gjeçovi, 2014). Canon sanctioned: "For offending of the honor can not be paid the fine. An honor insult is never forgotten. For a social order like Canon society, blood feud is simply an act of justice necessary for the preservation and functioning of society; but for today's societies where the state exists and a court order works, blood feuds are an ugly, savage and barbarous act." The fact that an offended man was considered dead made the social pressure on the defiled individual to take blood against the one who had offended him and to put his honor and his family on the spot (Popovci, 1987). The honor of the injured party remained violated until he was killed by the person who had dishonored him, or a male member of his family. The blood feud was not the death penalty, but the life sentence imprisonment in the home. At that time, freedom was the most sacred thing, as it is today and as it will always be. The blood feud was never and definitely the death penalty for the killer, perhaps he could have choked all his life. The Canon is very thin; sometimes the action against the Canon was done by these conditions. The Canon was called violated when the following conditions were not respected: The place where the blood was taken was not respected "this place could never be the home of the one who had given me blood." (Popovci, 1987). The weapon used to take blood (rifle and revolver) excluding any other weapon, especially the mass murder weapon, even the use of white weapons such as knives and wicks was not seen as a man-made action. The way of taking blood (killing distance), when the person who is a killer is distinguished well and you are convinced that it is he and he alone. In the blood feud you are not supposed to shot in smoke, in the conditions of limited sight or full obstruction of sight (Martini, 2007). One of these conditions is that we are dealing with murder on the Canon, entering into the ranks of the unheard things. From such an action you can not escape death, but in a normal blood feud, this could be true. The one who did not carry a gun was not killed for blood. These men married, created families, and lived like all other men, but only their man-the status was lower. It was, because they had a silent disapproval in society. They were denied the right to knock on anyone, but in deaths and weddings, they did more work outside than in the places where people were discussing things. They brought wood by horses from the mountain, they dug wood, filled the water, went to open the tomb, they rang the word, telling people about the mortal.

1.1 The blood feud according to the Canon of Lekë Dukagjini

Nice says that human nature is too complex that it is not easy to understand and to easily motivate its behavior because of its human nature “For every human species, he writes, which is firmly held close to nature, love and hatred, gratitude and revenge, goodness and anger, positive action, and negative action are inseparable”. “The inner human spectrum is almost infinite; it is capable of the most abominable crimes and of the highest sacrifices.” According to Islamic philosophy, all wickedness and kindness are within man... To assert that man is a result of external circumstances ... man is degraded by things, into the powerful conductor of external mechanical and unconscious forces.” The Canon has four fundamental principles which are equality and human inequality, hospitality, honor and faith. The Canon of Lek Dukagjini has the basic and fundamental principle regarding human life “The price of man’s life is the same, as for good, as for the bad.” The Canon has six main values, which traverse it from the beginning to the end. They are the given word, honor, hospitality, tribal proximity, mercy, and blood feud. All these points relate to a pagan religion, as they attach importance to the profound human nature, the trees, the lakes, etc., so everything is vital. Regarding tolerance, I said before that Canon does not support war, but tolerance, so it obviously has to do with religious tolerance ... The Canon as mentioned has four basic principles basic principles on which its entire structure is built. These principles are equality and human inequality, hospitality, honor and faith. The Canon had correct rules; the woman should not be touch; the guilty should not be hiding or abolishing his crime, the suicide of male children up to the age of 15 (according to Canon) is neglected. The return of blood feud is accompanied by a denying practice of its charter rules codified in the Albanian Canon of Lek Dukagjini. As a consequence, the only rule that is respected is taking “blood” at all costs, though instead of one person, three can be killed. The Canon had correct rules:

– “The person who committed the murder may leave and hide within 24 hours. The tribe and his family if they have a place of residence near the house of the murdered, after 24 hours from the murder no longer has reason to be protected from blood feud (article 122, line 869 0150 870).

– The law on blood feuds is clearly stated, claiming that all males of the family who committed the killing, even if they are too young, relatives, nephews, relatives risk to be killed within the first 24 hours after the killing. After spending 24 hours, the family of the murdered must give the ceasefire guarantee.

The family of the murdered can not take blood on the murderer’s family’s wives” (Gjeçovi, 2014).

If we analyze the Canon of Lek Dukagjini, if we examine all the articles with seldom, we can understand that in essence the Canon does not promote the blood feud, on the contrary, while it also presents a chapter on reconciliation, the rules of reconciliation, and above all when the latter in Canon itself is considered the

most noble act of a man, meaning that the importance of blood feud is shifted. Also, Canon's articles make it very difficult to get blood, which means that the act of killing on its behalf may also be impossible. This is for several reasons: First, only the man, the person who committed the murder, should be killed. No family can be affected after 24 hours, neither children nor women. Second if the hand is accompanied by a woman and a child, he can not be killed. Third, the killer can not be killed within the courtyard of his home. All these rules, provided in the articles of the Canon, make it very difficult to get blood. It may take up to 100 years and the murderer couldn't be killed. The Canon has been very effective in the days when it was created and implemented many years ago without distorting its articles in personal interest.

1.2. Blood feud as a phenomenon

Blood feud is not just a harmful phenomenon for society, but it is also a phenomenon with extraordinary social consequences, high moral, psychological and financial costs. A blood feud to Albanians is not a new social phenomenon, but since these years, due to socio-economic problems, has emerged. From a social and cultural point of view, as a customary phenomenon is related to tradition, which, unfortunately, is considered sacred and inherited by our ancestors.

In analyzing the causes and social consequences, it is worth to evaluate the fact that in the current density of blood feud phenomenon there is little impact on the transition of a complex period of transition to traditional causes added to property-related issues family morals, such as treatment for prostitution purposes, land division, property etc.

It is not difficult to mention a number of social consequences deriving from blood feuds, as a primitive social phenomenon that marginalizes the family, isolates it, interrupts social ties, traumatizes the personality of women and children, cultivates a family culture of crime, hatred, despair, and contempt for the society that makes the family economically vulnerable by bunkering the closed family in the face of social and cultural interference that exacerbates the social situation of people seeking special care. There are phenomena, which in society often paradoxically bring their associates with licensed consequences to each other. Such is the link between the social and social phenomenon, social problems and social problems, and of course the problems of marginalization of the social deformation of the family environment, especially the deformed development of the personality of other members of the family, children, the elderly, the women and especially family members, for example the sick or children with mental or physical development problems. Instead of a former canonical society, today we have some relatively large social groups that have descended from canonical areas in search of a better life, have fallen into rural towns or in the suburbs of big cities etc. In the new settlements most of these residents maintained the portrait of the honest man

who would live with the sweat of his forehead as he had and many who appeared as “invaders and muggers”. (Martini, 2007). Their common point lies in the fact that these people, pulled out of their own country, have remained naked without the environment surrounding them without the morality they protected, without the society they understood, without those dreams and hopes they were trying to build and related to the dreams and hopes of many generations who had lived in those lands. These people are looking for a new identity that was difficult to create. These people need to know, be loved, be accepted and welcomed. None of these has happened. These people try to create micro community by the places they came from. Often they have achieved it, though this micro community is fragile and easily dissipated. Today there is no traditional friend, no covenant, no broker, no honor, and no oath. There is no institution of the Elderly. So there is no basis on which blood feuds arise. We figuratively say that the boat can not sail to the ground, it wants water. The blood feud can not operate without the institutions mentioned above. How can there be canon blood feuds without the action of these institutions? Then how do we call them all these killings that get people’s lives every day? It’s a crime. The Canon has been very thin in action. He also measured the wounds. A blood drop from the other’s body was called a wound. Therefore, go with one hand to give the rifle, with the other hand to keep it from pulling the trigger. The Canon rules had put him on the murder of men from the age of eighteen and over. Nor could it be thought of killing women and children. In the Canon there is one such event: “H. H. had to take his dad’s blood. Yes, the house where the blood was to be taken remained in women and children. The only man in that house was a boy five years old. The enemy had to wait until he was in the age of arms. The boy knew they would kill him. He could escape revenge if he did not shoot rifle, but, by pride, he could not remain without arms. But the enemy still has no rush to get the blood. One day he goes to one of his own and says: “You have been waiting for many years until the boy grew up and put his weapon in his arm. Now why do not you take your dad’s blood? – That house owes me a blood and not a whitewash. To kill her son now, that house is deserted. I will give time to get married and give birth to a boy, so I can take the blood. “How noble has this attitude! But the above case shows that the man could not be killed even when he did not put a rifle on his shoulder. This was a way to stay out of blood feud. And the killing of a male child would be an innovation (something unheard of), as the people say. That is why it is absurd today when you hear that children are locked for blood feud, but it is also absurd to agree with this reality. With this reality you agree somehow when teaching those children to non-school, education and education institutions, but in other settings. These children experience severe physical trauma, low levels of health care, many children interrupt education, poor family hygiene, and consequently families under blood feud syndrome, plunged into extreme levels of poverty, minority, lack of civic culture, etc. The most widespread concerns are: psychological

harm (such as depressive symptoms, neurosis, alcoholism, etc., often returning to domestic violence) created from the context of closure, fear, death and violence in it which individuals involved live and grow; physical harm caused by the lack of freedom of movement and again from the inability to have medical care. From the heart of security and warmth the family becomes a place of fear, horror, insecurity, covered with negative emotions that have negative impacts, the perception of situations and the social and psychological consequences of blood feud will leave indelible traces to their personality. Every child has the constitution guaranteed the right to attend school. The state must guarantee the life and health of each of them. To describe the character of the Albanian people there are also taken into consideration a set of desirable social and moral values, such as developed democratic consciousness (a man for one, a home, equal income division), a faith, hospitality and a number of patriarchal values (manhood, bravery, faith) (Pichler, 2010). A majority of the norms and institutes of Albanian doctrinal law, among the best-known and oldest local ones, have firstly legal nature, binding force, but in the meantime they are also phenomena of moral functions: some of them are related to certain beliefs generally rooted in the complex of pagan beliefs. The institute of faith and oath has a good legal nature and who breaks the norms involved in punishing it will be punished. Meanwhile, the norms of this institute have a strong moral character. From the measure of respecting the norms of the faith, the values of a certain social group or community were defined, the wicked were despised and separated from the rural or provincial communities; people were called without a vice. It was believed that a culprit was not punished by the doctrine law; he would certainly suffer disaster in the family. It was said, "Swear has a meaning that figuratively means". Someone who does falsehood will strike hardly the calamities "sent by divine forces. The antiquity of the word faith and the spread of this term in other languages is a sure certainty to understand its significance (Tirta, 2010: 160, 161). In all cases, we have a semantic value that finds an explanation only in the authority of the social and historical meaning that faith has taken over the centuries in the Balkan peoples and of course within the Albanian society. On the faith, there is extensive documentation both oral and written that confirms not only the existence – at least beginning in the middle Ages – but also the strict adherence of the Albanian people. These substantive conditions of the circle of words of "Jus albanicae", which dictated that the connection in question (for words), constituted for the canon the highest authority. All relationships: gender, tribe, parish, tycoon and ethnic community, even inter-ethnic relations, were kept in mind. Thus the scholars came to the conclusion that faith is the moral testament of Albanians since mythological periods, despite the fact that faith was not born with Albanians, it is not their exclusive virtue and can be deployed in today's sense not earlier than the Ottoman period: in epos faith has meaning for peace, in statute means a testimony and only in Canon means the moral and legal regulator of the system of living in tribe,

fraternity and banner. (Sh.Sinani, 2012). Not having a central state body, they were divided between different “flags”, the Albanian people sought a legal code of interrelation between individuals and between different tribal communities in order to compensate for the lack of rules and laws. In particular, a kind of law was made by the population, which based on the social and moral principles that existed, so that it could have values in the various fields where it was applied, from public and private to criminal, from the rights family up to individual rights. Even though they were inherited for centuries, until gathered in Gjeçov’s work, this complex of laws and principles led the Albanian society for centuries, with changes in the provinces of Albania. The Canon of the Mountains, and all over the Canon of Labia, which differs from the above mentioned canons because they are canons of the northern area, this canon belongs to the area of South Tosks. The differences between these doctrinal “corpuscles” are numerous, even in their base there are segments that unite them, for example, faith. What we said confirms the fact that in canonical origin only some basic rules were regulated, while other rules were modified from time to time and adapted according to the needs of different provinces. The faith can only be made before the authorities known to the community (article 165), i.e. before the “trial of elders”, making a solemn oath. Three are the main rituals (Chapter IV, Articles 169 – 172) through which the word is given: on the stone, on the cross and the Vangjel, and on the head of the boys. The Declaration (Chapter V, article 173) is done according to a predetermined rule: first of all is the day of the meeting of the elders’ trial and before them will come whoever wants to give the faith and then follow the statements of the judges and their relatives. The right to trust falls on those who have suffered an insult, but not everyone can declare it, because it is up to the elders to choose those who have the right, i.e. honor and respect (Chapter VI, article 175) to protect this right. Nor is it permissible to swear those who have been witnesses of the crime, for whom the faith and the women and priests are excluded from this oath (Chapter VII, Articles 181 – 182). However, there are some kinds of insults that do not require the oath to be made before the elders’ trial with the ways we have so far described. Particularly, when it comes to restoring honorable honor for the killing of a relative, faith automatically becomes the moral duty of the victim’s family. In this case, vengeance or blood feud is a natural obligation and belongs to the victim’s family, and if this obligation is not done according to the custom (ie murder of the killer), not only does the victim’s family lose its prestige and honor, but indirectly the assassin is known to be a prestige and a bigger honor than he deserves. Revenge, which is considered a “barbarian” by the oldest in the Albanian customary code, is closely related to the covenant, even when the murderer sought a truce to the victim’s family. If the latter gave her a covenant, the killer could freely move and deal with his economic activities. This special extension of the covenant, which is also permitted by the canon, is a sign of the victim’s family’s manhood, and has links with other ethno-social institutions such as friendship and

hospitality. The first provides that the pact between the two “friends” is based on the mutual respect of the roles that are defined in the specific rules of the Canon. Particularly recognizable is the rule that provides for the guarantee of a friend’s request to accompany him in places where he wants to go, especially when it comes to places within your mustache: “Friend is handed hand by hand. In my faith I escorted my where he wanted to go. “Hospitality also envisions respect for the guest who needs to open the door of the house, even if – as we have seen – it may be the killer of your son. The sanctity of friendship and hospitality, as well as duty is also a sign to avenge the insults made, is justified by Albanians with the sanctity of the covenant, on the basis of which these two foundations are founded (friendship and hospitality.” (Martini, 2007). Of course, if there is a lack of respect for these vows, then it is seriously compromised by honor and prestige, and it draws upon itself the unpunished punishment of the community. And this explains the reasons why faith constitutes the most important moral and social function for the Albanian, virtue that historically had the opportunity to express himself in the very important moments of Albania’s civil and political history. Friend – friend of God, hospitality – bread, heart and blood the blood feud had strong stops and constraints from other institutes such as: Guest, Faith. The blood feud was in close connection with these institutes; she entered the system and acted unrelated, not isolated because she had no independence or isolation. The institutions we mentioned had great and strong influence over each other. It is important to emphasize the respect for the friend and the protection of the friend, is the influence of each of these institutes in the discipline and limitation of the blood feud to understand what actually the canonical blood feud was. It is worth mentioning that the meaning of the word “Friend” is coming to an end. Everyone in a certain circumstance is called “Friend”. Albanian customary law has created the cult of friend and culture of hospitality. The guesthouse in the Albanian house is a friend, whether a native, coming from villages and other provinces, or a foreign traveler. In the Canon of Lekë Dukagjini are devoted 64 paragraphs of the friend of welcome. Likewise, in other canons, regardless of the number of paragraphs, in all the Albanian Canons there are unique sentiments, among which we list some of the most typical, contained in Book 8, Chapter 18, and article 96 in the following paragraphs of the Canon of Lekë Dukagjini:

- 608. A friend can be honored with bread and cake and heart.
- 613. To a real friend the house is realized.
- 615. Holding a friend’s weapon is honor.
- 616. The friend is sent to the head of the room.
- 620. If you have a friend in your house even if he owns blood, you will say, “Welcome.

So for the Albanian, the friend is holy, which is “clearly expressed in the canon.” The House that awaits him it is the friend ‘s house and the Lord’s house

“, not only that, but the friend equates to God, so in all Canons sanctioned friend – God. This hospitality and respect are indeed so divine and humane, so foreign scholars have called the unique miracles of Albanian culture, and even foreign scholars have compared Albanian hospitality to the festivals and banquets used by the gods of Olympus (epic of ancient Greek). The cult of the friend and the culture of hospitality are regulated by laws and ethical norms, formulated in ancient times and transmitted orally and unchanged from the peoples’ traditional, as recommendations-laws that respect the fundamental law of all Albanian canons: “Thus says the Canon, the law of ours ancestors. “ The cult of the friend is sanctioned in several paragraphs of the 96th, 97th, 98th, 8th Book, of which we distinguish two of the types: “The Albanian’s home is a Lord’s home and the friend’s home”. “The door of the house is opened to anyone who knocks, whether that friend or beggar.” Analyzing only these two laws that are sacred to Albanians, it is revealed that they express a mentality and an ancient culture, do not overdo them when they say Bible and pre-Christian origin, so they originate in the ancient antiquity when prophets and saints appeared in front of the doors believers, dressed as a poor traveler, or as a beggar.” (Gjeçovi, 2014). This ancient custom and respect for the prophets and saints was preserved incarnated in the sanctification of the friend, the traveler knocking on the door as a friend, expected as a friend, as sanctioned in canon law. In another divine law, “The friend will be honored with bread and heart,” meaning that the owner of the house, whether a bourgeois or poor, to find a friend and why he may be unknown, will offer everything his home will even put before the bakery, the crap, and the ferociousness of noble hospitality. These ethical and cultural virtues are well-known and generalized in the proverbial stories of Albanian friendship, evidencing spiritual warmth, sincerity, warm and festive behavior created by the mountaineer, welcoming and guaranteeing comfort and security for the guest’s life. Hospitality is a canonical category in the rank of trust, so the friend code is written and in the dimensions of reciprocity in the relations of the householder with the friend and vice versa. The lack of this reciprocity would put into crisis the entire organizational system of the mountain family, the tribe, the ward, the village, the province and the Albanian mountain society. The Canon principle of hospitality is dressed in strong ethical and moral standards, which elevate and sanctify this Albanian habit, and the opposite, when the friend is not well received, or when to the friend is closed the door, then the head of the family is cuddled, the house, his house is ashamed, or more precisely according to the canon, loses honor. Not only that, but with this abnormal behavior violated the sanctioned laws of chastity sanctioned in canons, consequently jeopardizing social cohesion, so this unjustified attitude is punished. According to the Albanian culture, the friend who knocks the gateway must be accepted and expected with the entire honor that deserves and “to be treated in the same way as the beggar, as the rich,

both prophet and saint”. According to Albanian folk tradition, a friend should not be praised in the dress, because under the garment of a beggar may be a prophet or a saint. Once they enter the house, the friend is placed at the head of the room and is honored according to a well-mannered hospitality ritual, as set forth in Book 8, 18, article 96th of the Canon of Lekë Dukagjini:

- 602. The Albanian’s home is God’s home and friend’s home.
- 604. When someone calls in front of the door, Lord of the house or someone from the house responds and appears in front of him.
- 605. The Lord greets the friend and takes his arm and leads him inside home.
- 606. Takes his arm hangs on crocuses, and leads him to the top of the room.
- 608. To the friend is given: “Bread and salt heartedly”.
- 609. The bread, the salt and the heart, the fire and the trunk, will be found for a friend at any time of the night and the day.
- 610. The friend is treated well and with an honor.
- 611. For every friend, the cooking is the same as for himself.
- 613. To good friend is offered tobacco, coffee, alcohol, bread and meat. - “To the close friend it is released the whole house.”
- 617. The friend is sent to the top of the room, and in the assembly of men, The friend’s wife stands in the head of the room, between the women.
- 619. Coming in of the friend in the house, it means he is your guest.
- 620. Even if your guest is an enemy of yours, you should say to him “welcome”
- 621. If your friend asks you to accompany him you should do it.
- 622. Although your friend is sitting on the top of your room, you are the person to lead him.

– 634. Bread honors you but it also gives you a hard time sometimes. (Gjeçovi, 2014)

The hospitality of the highlander is as magnificent as it is exciting when you think that the master of the house and while he may be poor behaves like a true gentleman, dividing the last bread of the bread with the friend, awaits him and honors it with bread, heart, and even protects it. As long as the guest is in the shade of his home, and when he goes to the village streets accompanied with his lord, a woman, a boy, or a family girl, he is in defense and trust of the householder, is protected from any eventual danger, such as by laughter, insult, or blood feud, as sanctioned in article 97, in the following paragraphs:

- 623. Friend is escorted from home by someone from that house, be it a boy or a girl.
- 626. If your friend is in a trouble with someone, it’s your responsibility to take care of him
- 628. It is the commandment that the friend of mine should not find the bad thing, and do not do anything with the bread.
- 632. Canon says that, you have to lead your friend because it is supposed that he doesn’t know the road and in this way he can bump into enemy or friend.

– 633. You have to lead him because you are considered his protection and you should try to avoid him from unexpected evil things.

– 637. If your friend is honored or violated from someone, you should share and be on his side.

– 639. As you are looking for a good friend, you are also in charge of avoiding him from trouble and stop him to get involved in evil things because he was treated and hospitalized from you. .

– 641. Even if someone asks you for a fir to light a cigarette and is been followed by someone you have to consider him as a friend.

– 642. If someone falls into your hands and pronounces the words: “I am your friend” you have to consider him as a friend otherwise you will be humiliated.

– 643. If someone wants to make a fool of your friend or play a game with him or insult him, you have to be on your friend side although he had never met you before.

– 644. If something happened badly to your friend the Canon has released two possibilities: either be humiliated or be destroyed.

– 645. If to someone whose friend was done damage and was not helped by the master, anything would be handed to him by left hand under the knee until he pays his friend the damage that was caused to him (Gjeçovi, 2014).

According to Canon, the friend becomes an inseparable member of the host family. This privilege, it is expressed by saying “I am under the trust of the master of the house” (pronouncing the name of the owner of the home of the house), which means that he is under his protection and can not be any revenge blood feuds by anyone. If a friend falls in the grip of a bloodbath, his enemy can not be retaliated, as soon as he hears “That’s the trust of that one ...” and this action saves life. In all Albanian canons, the foreign word, foreign friend, foreign traveler is never used, so there is no stranger or native friend, rather the friend’s figure is unique, regardless of nationality, ethnicity and social belonging, religious belief, whether it is poor or wealthy, worker, rustic, clerical, or functionary. Who refuses to bother the traveler – a friend who knocks on the door, commits a serious and punishable crime, is foretold in Book 8, article 97, even this blame is severe and is not forgiven, as stated in the two following paragraphs, everything is forgiven but never is forgiven the insult of your friend:

649 According to Canon: father, brother or cousin has to resist up to the end but never let their friend be insulted.

650 For the friend that has been betrayed never can be given a trust. The friend is considered as and ambassador and inseparable part of the family. If two families are in a blood feud conflict and by chance the killer entered the house of the slain and asks for shelter (regardless of whether he knows or does not know the house of the murdered), he does not risk, but is under defense of this family, even attending the funeral of the one who had killed and the next day, accompanied by the “shadow of the house” and going to the road leading to his home (node 97).

Conclusions

One of the challenges facing Albanian society and state in this decade is the phenomenon of blood feud and revenge, a habit inherited from the ancient past, incompatible with the principles of civilized society and the rule of law. It brings serious social consequences, by taking people's lives, by isolating many families, by demolishing them economically and by disconnecting them from political-social life, and by leaving children without school. The Canon is an Albanian encyclopedia that relates to human life before it is born and perhaps he has died and there is no scientific science and discipline to tackle a whole set of problems like the Canon. Canon is Albanian law, is an Albanian institution, institutional history, but a "formulated idea". It is the mind and spirit of Albanians, conceived in centuries in oral tradition, preserved, fanatically protected and transmitted as a message, which should be understood, disaggregated and appropriated in the way it is formulated and transmitted, without being changed in form and content. The Canon is a legal tradition closely related to the history of Albania, the identity of our people, the pride of being Albanian and of our ancient Pelasgian-Illyrian origin. The Lekë Dukagjini Canon is not only the set of norms of customary law, but rather a work that contains the "Ethnic Rock of the Albanian Nation and its Culture" and "Its quality has caused its ethnic Albanian population to grow ". The Canon can be marked as a continuation of the traditional monumentalism of the ethnic values of the Albanian people. The Canon of Lekë Dukagjini or Canon of the Mountains, its action and its implementation was in the mountains of the North. The mountains have closely tied their lives to the Canon of the Mountaineers. The mountaineers maintained every weight of the norms and the articles of its action. Mountains are the spirit of the Canon, since no one more than the mountains of the north have kept so much secret and mysteries, no one more than the mountains have seen dead from the throat of the rifle to take blood, no one more than these mountains the north did not see mummies being killed under the Canon articles.

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