

## DERVISH SHAQA - TREASURE OF THE ALBANIAN FOLKLORISTIC CULTURE

In July 2002, Mr. Jetish Kadishani from Kosova, who worked at the Library of Kosova in Prishtina, came and visited me at my office. As he told me, he was gathering different materials about the distinguished figure of Dervish Shaqa, who passed away on 11 April 1985. D. Shaqa fled from Kosovo in the '55-ies of the last century and lived in Rrashbull village of Durres. He became famous as a folkloric rhapsodist, especially as a singer of the Kosovar folkloristic group of Rrashbull. Along with the rhapsodist Demush Neziri, they became the nucleus of that group, which was to draw the attention and admiration of the whole country, mainly on the stages of the National Folkloristic festivals organized in Gjirokastra in 1968, 1973, 1978 and 1986.

On the other hand, D. Shaqa was an interesting subject, mostly evaluated by the Institute of the Folkloristic Culture and especially by the distinguished researcher Qemal Haxhihasani.

J. Kadishani asked me to give him an interview (recorded one) for D. Shaqa, an interview that was published in two issues of "24 ore" newspaper, Prishtina, Kosova on August 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> 2002.

With the extraordinary quality of a talented rhapsodist, his manly voice, his epic stature and equipped with the best knowledge of songs and events happened in Kosova, Dervish Shaqa was distinguished as one of the best singers of Plateau of Dukagjin. Along with Demush Neziri, they sang in villages in the suburbs of Gjakova, Peja, Prizreni, Prishtina and all over Kosova.

I have had the chance to visit Kosova time after time. I have been in different families in towns and villages and I noticed that it rarely happens that a house does not possess a single cassette with records of songs of Dervish Shaqa. As I have seen, they preserve that as a relic a precious treasure of their fund. And, through that song of Dervish Shaqa, it seems that they experience, share a

deep pain that Baca could not reach that white day that he waited longingly, a day for which he did not only made efforts to reach, but he indeed fought with the full meaning of the word. And he did so, but in Albania, because it was not the case that he had to fight with weapons, but he fought with the song of his soul so that Kosova may see a white light. Kosova and Albania, Albania and Kosova, he always loved them and said:

**“For me they are one, cannot split up! ...**