

ALBANIAN COLLECTIVE MEMORY

In Archives in Motion

FROM PREHISTORY TO THE 21st CENTURY



Dr. Shpend Bengu

Lecturer of Printmaking & Multimedia

Tirana European University / UET
Faculty of Social Sciences and Education
Department of Communication and Design



- The tradition of collective memory archiving in Albania presents particular characteristics because of historical reasons. The collective memory archiving of the Albanian Intangible Heritage and Cultural Diversity is different from that of other people.
- The Albanian Intangible Heritage has passed from the most ancient times until today through oral narration.
- According to writing (as Durham notices), Albanians had another concept of time and distances, different from other people. Until the beginnings of 20th century, it was not clear for Albanians that writing and drawing were two different functions. They had the same concept for both functions.

“In the mountains, the people never make a difference between writing and drawing. I am not sure if they reach to understand that these are two different processes”.

- This concept that was based in the image (the figure), shows that in the preservation of the Intangible Heritage and the Cultural Diversity, besides the oral narration, has existed even the narration through figures and symbols, which origin is prehistorical.



- This narration appears in variations in the traditional costumes and the Albanian handicraft, where often the symbol (the sign), loses its narrative function with the passing of time, becoming thus a simple decorative sign.
- The beginnings of collective memory archiving of the Albanian Intangible Heritage and Cultural Diversity, through photography and cinematography, belong to the middle part of 20th century



- In the beginning of 20th century, start their activity as cinematographers and photographers

[Marubi National Museum of Photography](http://www.marubi.gov.al/)

www.marubi.gov.al/





THE TRAUMA OF THE COLLECTIVE MEMORY DURING THE PERIOD OF PROLETARIAT DICTATORSHIP. (1944 – 1990).



The last western reporters in Albania. The allied troops, Yugoslavian, Russian, American and Britanic, during their parade in the victory day, on 28th November 1946

- After the victory, the Albanian communists proclaimed war to the western allies of the second World War, USA and Great Britain, while at the same time they strengthened “a brotherly” friendship with the western countries, particularly with USSR and Yugoslavia.
- The Dictatorship of Proletariat closed the doors to the western media, while turning its whole media apparatus in a copy of the eastern propaganda media model.
- Besides the military personnel and engineers, Albanian movie directors, operators, painters, sculptors, writers, journalists, photographers, dancers, singers, archeologists and etongraphs were sent in Soviet Union, who after their forced return in Albania, brought with them the “Socialist Realism” experience and methods.



- Every kind of experience from western schools was seen as hostile. The tradition of professional schools created by Americans, Italians and French, in the beginning of 20th century, got totally replaced with the western methods, particularly with the Yugoslavian and Russian ones.
- The Albanian society, slowly but steadily, started to become a bad copy of the eastern models.
- The Dictature reached to create a hybrid of the “New Socialist Man”, who was hostile not only to the World Cultural Heritage but even to its own Heritage.

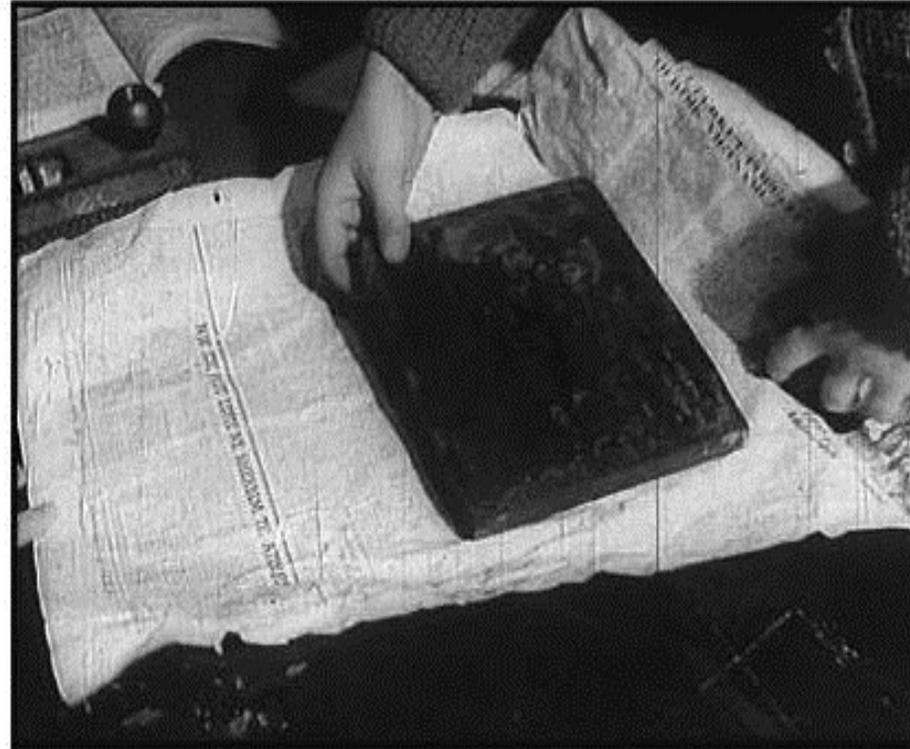


The frontage of a photography shop in the 80s

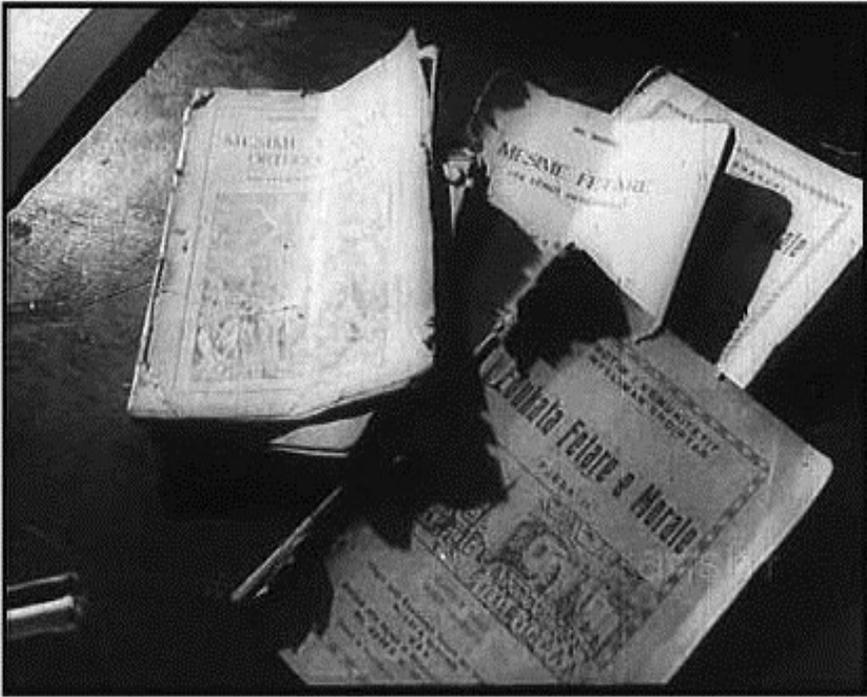
- This war did not have simply ideological and cultural consequences, but even physical ones.
 - From 1944 until 1990, disappeared entire generations of intellectuals and artists with western inclinations, many of them even physically.
 - Among them were the professional photographers and movie makers who, with the passing of time, as a result of the war of classes and the cooperativisation of media, got substituted with amateurs of empirical training.
-
- The method of Socialist Realism dominated violently for decades the Albanian Cultural Heritage, causing heavy traumatic consequences.
 - The Dictatorship of Proletariat, within the frame of class struggle and the war against private property, centralized all the photographic and cinematographic studios that existed in Albania, gathering them in handicraft cooperatives upon which the state exerted total control.



- During the ruling time of this dictatorship in Albania, 1945-1991, the safeguarding and respecting of the Intangible Heritage underwent a trauma, which results can be felt even nowadays.
- With the opening towards East, as a result of subservient politics after the “Big Ones”, under the Marxism Leninism Internationalization farce and the influences of eastern and asian countries, the Albanian government purposely allowed the contamination of this heritage.



Images of the propaganda period and war against clergy in
Albania. 1967. AQSHF



- One of the hardest hits upon the collective cultural memory of this country, as a result of propaganda and state violence, was the phenomenon of self destruction of this memory in the main cell of the society, which was the Albanian family.
- Entire family libraries with western literature were sequestered or self extinguished entirely.
- The same destiny was reserved even for the photographic albums, music discs, collections of paintings and objects bought in west, as well as the family religious relics inherited from generation to generation.



Regarding these processes, it is worthwhile mentioning the work done for the digitalization of the Albanian Cultural Heritage, by some of the most important world institutions like:

- The Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/>
part of which are the archives of the American Red Cross, <http://www.hoover.org/library-archives/about>
- Metropolitan Museum, <http://www.metmuseum.org/>
- Europeana - European Digital Library, <http://www.europeana.eu/portal/>
- The Google Company with the Gutenberg project, <https://www.gutenberg.org/>
- British Museum, <http://www.britishmuseum.org/>
- British Royal Anthropological Institute, <https://www.therai.org.uk>

as well as many other museums and libraries

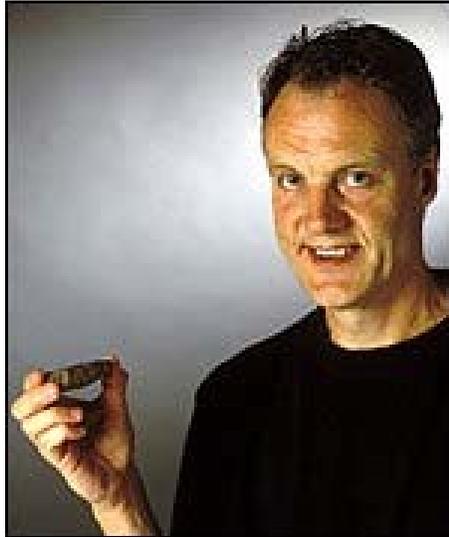
KUNST KANN NICHT MODERN SEIN.
KUNST IST EREWIG.



THE PREHISTORIC MOVIE IMAGE NETWORK

“Arti nuk mund të jetë modern, ai kthehet përjetësisht ne origjinë”

Egon Schiele - Vizatim (detaj) 22 prill 1912



Dr. Christopher S. Henshilwood



- The world's earliest pieces of art come from South Africa: two 77,000-year-old, engraved blocks of red ocher (probably used as crayons) found in the Blombos Cave
- Both the blocks are engraved in an identical way with cross-hatched lines on their sides.
- Archaeologists argue that the similarity of the engraved patterns means these two pieces were intentionally made and decorated following a common pattern.



DECORATED OCHER Petroglyph, From Blombos Cave. Southern Cape coast, South Africa. 77,000 years ago, discovered by **Dr. Christopher S. Henshilwood**, in 2011.



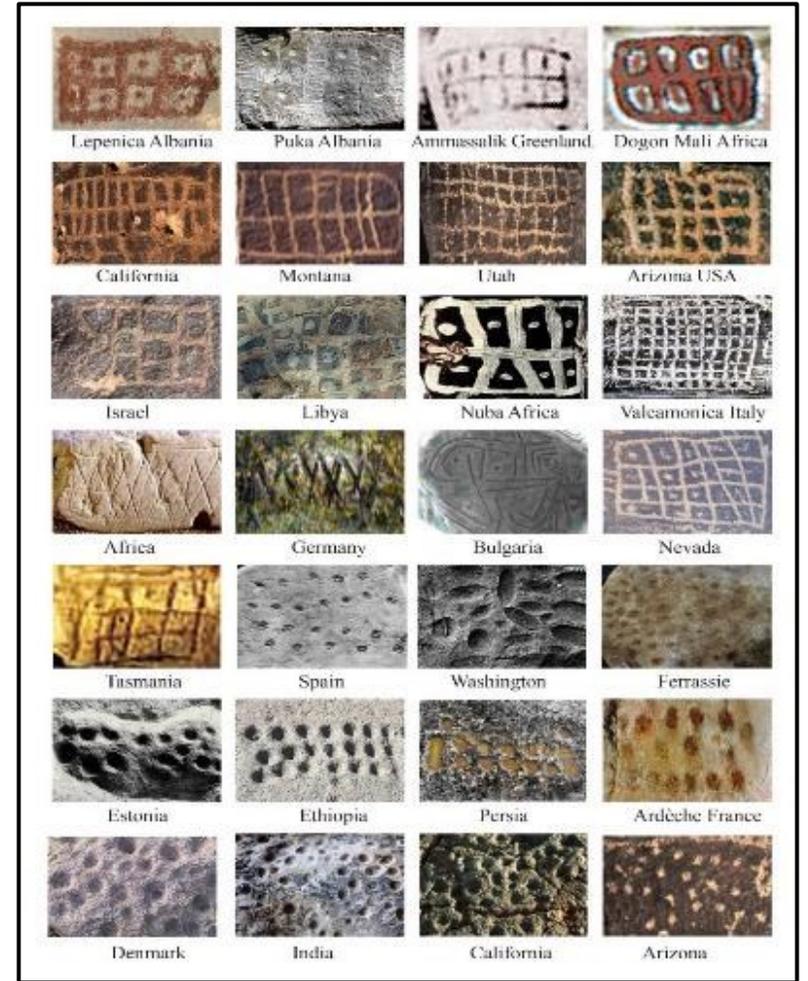
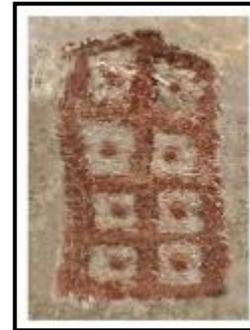
THE WORLD MAP OF PREHISTORIC PICTOGRAMS AND PETROGLYPHS



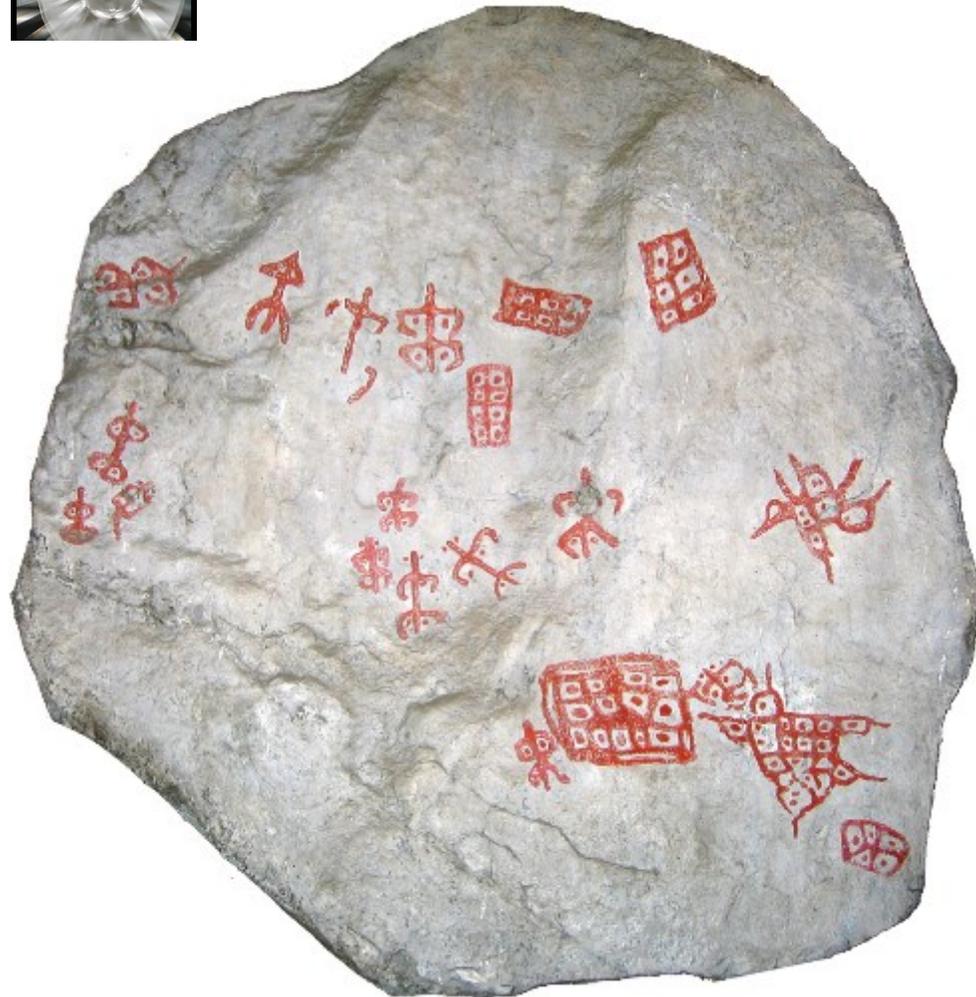
Interactive map of prehistoric pictograms and petroglyphs realized by *Genevieve von Petzinger*



- | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 - Hawaii | 10 - Pecos River | 22 - Spanish Levant | 34 - Tibesti | 47 - Valleys of the Tom and Ienissei |
| 2 - Vancouver Island | 11 - Borbon | 23 - Chauvet | 35 - Ennedi | 48 - Valley of the Angara |
| 3 - Horseshief Lake | 12 - Easter Island | 24 - Mount Bego | 36 - Brandberg | 49 - Valley of Lena |
| 4 - Coso Range, Mutau Flat | 13 - Toro Muerto | 25 - Chermule (Sassari) | 37 - Apollo 11 | 50 - Helan Shan |
| 5 - Sierra de San Francisco | 14 - Pultuma | 26 - Lepenica Cave (Albania) | 38 - Cedarberg | 51 - Hua Shan |
| 6 - Canyon de Chelly | 15 - Atacama | 27 - Bohuslan, Vitigcke | 39 - Lesotho, Drakensberg | 52 - Borneo |
| 7 - Great Gallery | 16 - Cueva de las Manos | 28 - Alta | 40 - Matopos Hills | 53 - Pilbara |
| Monument Valley | 17 - Rio Peruaçu | 29 - Kuusankoski, Finland | 41 - Kondo - Singida | 54 - Kimberlegs |
| Head of Sinbad | 18 - Capivara, Piaui | 30 - Adrar of the Iforas | 42 - Yemen | 55 - Arnheim Land |
| Sego Canyon, Temple | 19 - Foz Coa | 31 - Tassili-n'Ajjer | 43 - Sinai Har Kharkom | Kakadu |
| Mountain Wash | 20 - Altamira | 32 - Air | 44 - Bhimbetka | 56 - Agers Rock |
| 8 - Canyonlands | 21 - Lascaux | 33 - Acacus, Messak | 45 - Kumaon Hills | 57 - Laura |
| 9 - Comanche Gap | | | 46 - Altai | |



Similar Lepenica rock art found around the world



Lepenica Pictograms – South Albania 3.000 B.C.





The American Library of Congress disposes many materials of the period 1919 - 1945, where among others is worth mentioning the Taylor collection.



Burta & Elliot Taylor

**THE MISSION
OF BURTA AND ELLIOT TAYLOR**
in the “American Institute of Kavaja”
sponsored by Near East Foundation in New York
(1929-1935)



- During their travels in Albania (1929-1935), Burta and Elliot realized many film recordings on life and work in the Albanian-American Institute of Kavaja as well as on Albania and Albanians.
- This film footage constitutes today one of the most valuable treasures of the Albanian Intangible Cultural Heritage and Historical Memory



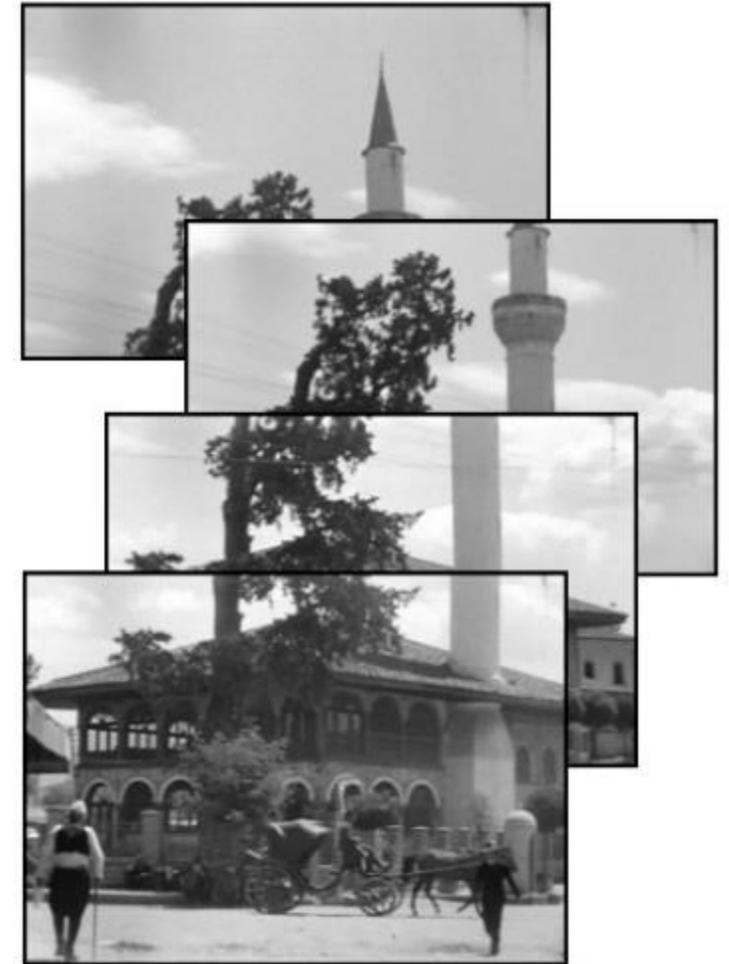
Images from the mission of Burta & Elliot Taylor (Near East Foundation)
Burta & Elliot Taylor Collection, 1932-1935



THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MATERIAL

- This film footage constitutes today one of the most valuable treasures of the Albanian Intangible Cultural Heritage and Historical Memory
- From the digital processing of this material, it was able to extract 1.000 new pictures for the Albanian Intangible Cultural Heritage, that belong to the period in which the documentary was realized.
- Besides classic pictures, through sequence attachment, are created new images that allow a broader perception of the context.

Library of Congress
"Albania (1932-1935)"
Film-to-Tape Transfer of
16mm B&W
CR#s R-1 Sections 1-3, R-2
1080psf 23.98
TRT: 01:41:00



Creation of new images
during the digital elaboration
of the frames



**EXAMPLE 1:
PANORAMIC ALBANIA**





**EXAMPLE 2:
ALBANIAN-AMERICAN
INSTITUTE OF KAVAJA**





**EXAMPLE 3:
KRUJA BAZZAR**



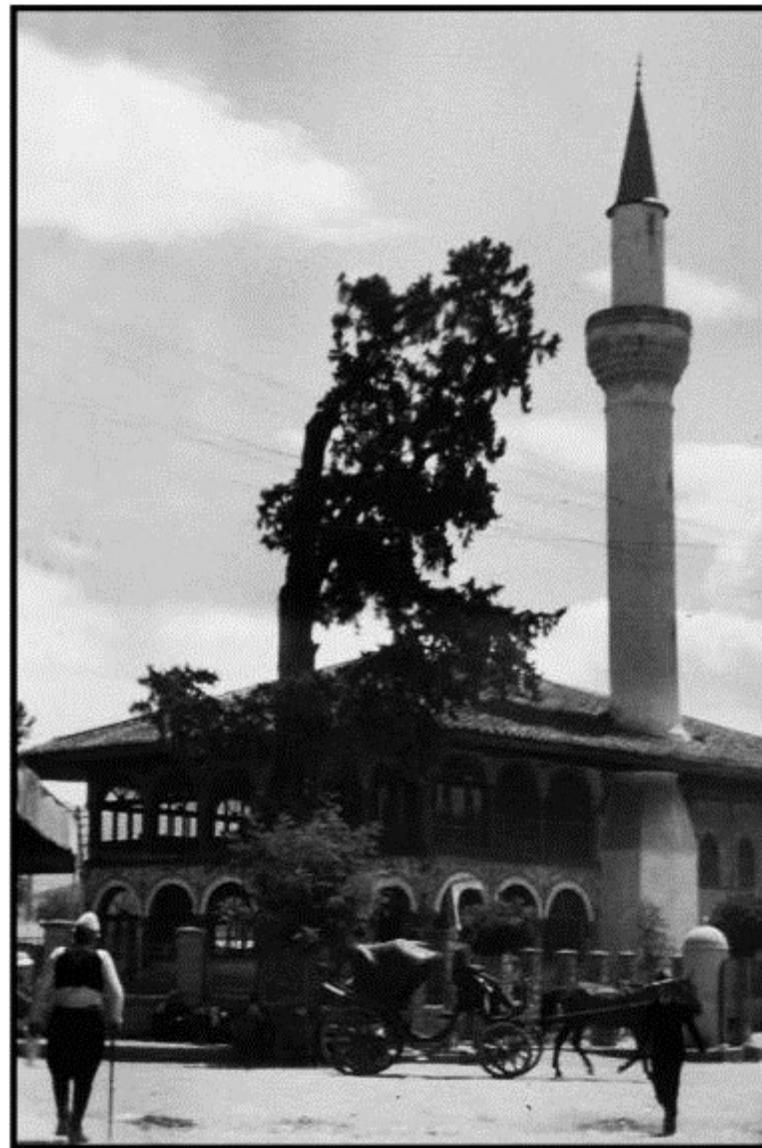


EXAMPLE 4:
TIRANA





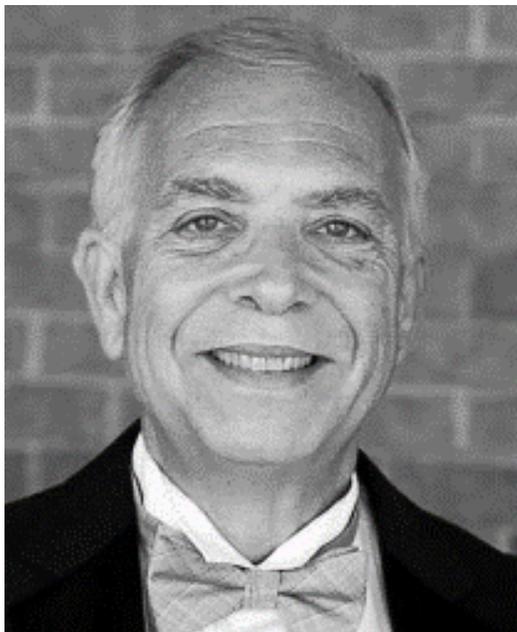
EXAMPLE 5:
TIRANA





EXAMPLE 6:
KAVAJA SUBURB





In this process, I must mention the great contribution of the American specialists, **Ken Weissman** and **Regina Longo**, who in collaboration with the staff of the Central Film Archive in Albania, have carried out the reclamation of the archives belonging to the Albanian Intangible Cultural Heritage.

SOME OF MY EXPERIENCES

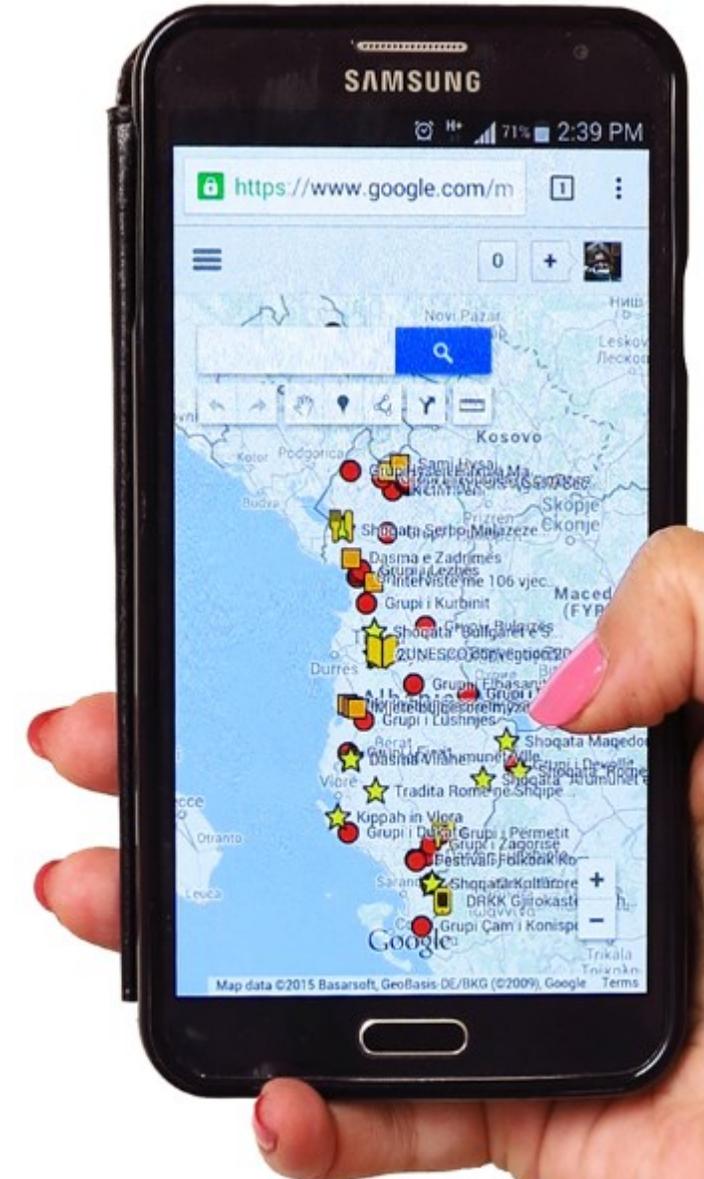


THE INTERACTIVE DIGITAL MAP OF
INTANGIBLE HERITAGE AND CULTURAL
DIVERSITY IN ALBANIA





- The Interactive Digital Map of Intangible Heritage and Cultural Diversity in Albania, through multimedia systems, aims to recover and revive the Albanian collective memory. Based on the two main UNESCO conventions, “The Convention for the Intangible Heritage, 2003” and “The Convention for the Cultural Diversity, 2005”, the map realizes the merging of these two conventions in one context. UNESCO’s goal itself is to reach a fusion of both conventions.
- https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?hl=en&mid=1bcRLg3SneqTfqjg_veF6dULTGyo
- Through its sections, the map aims to a broader inclusion of the multimedial community in Albania, recognition of UNESCO conventions and registration of Intangible Heritage and Cultural Diversity in all Albanian territory.





THE ROLE OF MULTIMEDIA IN SAFEGUARDING THE ALBANIAN INTANGIBLE HERITAGE AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

The re-evaluation and recuperation of collective memory
by the new media

- The quick development of technologies and digital media, their democratization and empowerment from the appearance of the social media, even though virtually, have affected the whole Albanian society in the last decade, reviving in this way the social collaboration.
- The usage of internet and other multimedia platforms in social networks, are now part of the Albanian society. Rarely one can find Albanians that do not dispose mobile device means and that do not have a social platform account.





Pjesëmarrja e komunitetit

Find in table 1-10 of 10

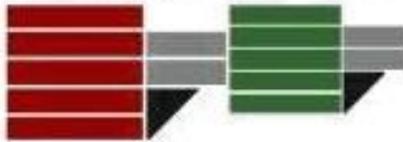
	name	description
		per gjasme ureza te rimbjes ture qyssi para shpentes se pavarisise e deri ne ditet e sotme. Intervistoj Pal Biba ne Skuraj me 25 mars 2003
5	Dasma e Zadrimes	Ministria e Kultures,Drejtoria e Trashegimise Jomateriale dhe Rijetezimit te Gjuhes Shqipehttp://www.kultura.gov.al/
6	Hysen Haxhia	"Trego Kulturën Tënde" Bashkpunues: Hysen Haxhia. Fotografia: Hysen Haxhia. Muzika: Mark Luli
7	Sami Hysaj	"Trego Kulturën Tënde" Bashkëpunues: Sami Hysaj. Fotografia: Sami Hysaj. Muzika: Mark Luli
8	Argjendari Hiqmet Xherri - Elbasan	Video: Erion Kumuria Emri: Hiqmet Xherri Moshë: 70 vjeç Origjina: Librazhd (Cermenike) Profesion: Argjendar. Hiqmeti e ka profesionin trashëgim nga xhaxhai i cili ishte argjendar. Ne vitin 1974 filloi te merrej me argjendari edhe Hiqmeti. Nderkohe ai zhvendoset ne Elbasan ku gjen Bardhyl Papajani, nje tjetër argjendar elbasanas. Ne vitin 1985 ai merr titullin Mjeshter. Punimet e tij mund te gjenden ne te gjithë zonen, por edhe ne muzeun etnografik te Elbasanit. Name: Hiqmet Xherri Age: 70 Origin: Librazhd (Cermenike) Profession: Goldsmith Hiqmet inherited his profession from his father who was a goldsmith. Hiqmet also started to work as a goldsmith in 1974. Meanwhile he moves to Elbasan and meets Bardhyl Papajani, who was also a goldsmith from Elbasan. In 1985, Hiqmet receives the title Master Goldsmith. His artworks can be found everywhere and especially in the Ethnographic museum of Elbasan.

Argjendari Hiqmet Xherri - Elbasan

Video: Erion Kumunia
Emri: Hiqmet Xherri
Moshë: 70 vjeç
Origjina: Librazhd (Cermenike)
Profesion: Argjendar.
Hiqmeti e ka profesionin trashëgim nga xhaxhai i cili ishte argjendar. Ne vitin 1974 filloi te merrej me argjendari edhe Hiqmeti. Nderkohe ai zhvendoset ne Elbasan ku gjen Bardhyl Papajani, nje tjetër argjendar elbasanas. Ne vitin 1985 ai merr titullin Mjeshter. Punimet e tij mund te gjenden ne te gjithë zonen, por edhe ne muzeun etnografik te Elbasanit.

Name: Hiqmet Xherri
Age: 70

UNIVERSITÀ DELLA CALABRIA



Dipartimento di LINGUISTICA

Sezione di Albanologia

Dega e Albanologjisë





Sezione di Albanologia
Dega e Albanologjisë



An immense work for the digitalization of Albanian and Arbëresh Cultural Heritage is done by the Albanological Sections of Albanian Language Cathedras in the University of Calabria, UNICAL, under the direction of prof. Francesco Altimari <http://www.albanologia.unical.it> and the University of Palermo.



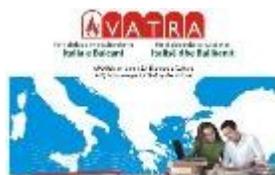
[Biblioteca Elettronica dei Siti Albanologici](#)

The aim of the BESA - Arbëreshë Sites Electronic Library - Bibliotheca Electronica - Sites of Arbëreshë - project is to survey the libraries as well as the library collections of the local (municipal, ecclesiastical, scholastic and private) libraries of Arbëreshë area or specialization within the Province of Cosenza, fostering their association and making their bibliographic resources available online in a computerized library system, the union catalogue Besa OPAC.





- After the first phase dedicated to the Province of Cosenza, BESA will confidently include all the library structures of the various Arbëresh communities settled in other provinces of Calabria, in other regions of Italy and in the Balkan area, gathering the bibliographic records of the different libraries in an online union catalogue.



VATRA Per il dialogo interculturale tra Italia e Balcani

<http://www.albanologia.unical.it/Vatra/default.htm>



- During the first phase, the following materials have been catalogued: printed books, both early and modern, in Arbëresh or of Arbëreshë or albanological concern.
- Other resources, such as periodicals, minor printed materials, potential archive documents, as well as audiovisual materials and electronic resources will be subsequently surveyed and catalogued.



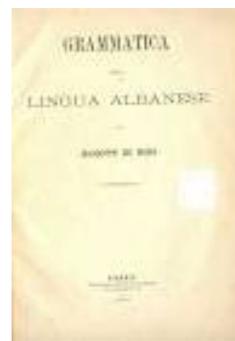
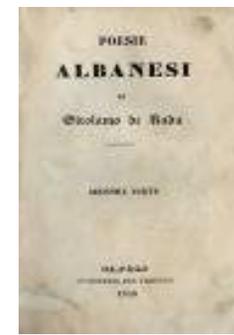


DERADIANA LIBRARY

http://www.albanologia.unical.it/GirolamoDeRada/biblioteca_deradiana.html



GIROLAMO DE RADA





- The biggest part of the Albanian collective memory, which is recorded by analog means during 20th century, is still in grave problematic existential conditions.
- In order to safeguard this collective memory from irreparable damages of time factor, is urgently needed an awareness raising and engagement of the whole Albanian society, in every level, to digitalize this heritage.



Basin with lid. Made of metal, carved with floral motifs, the teapot with a handle with lid worked with floral patterns. City of Tirana.

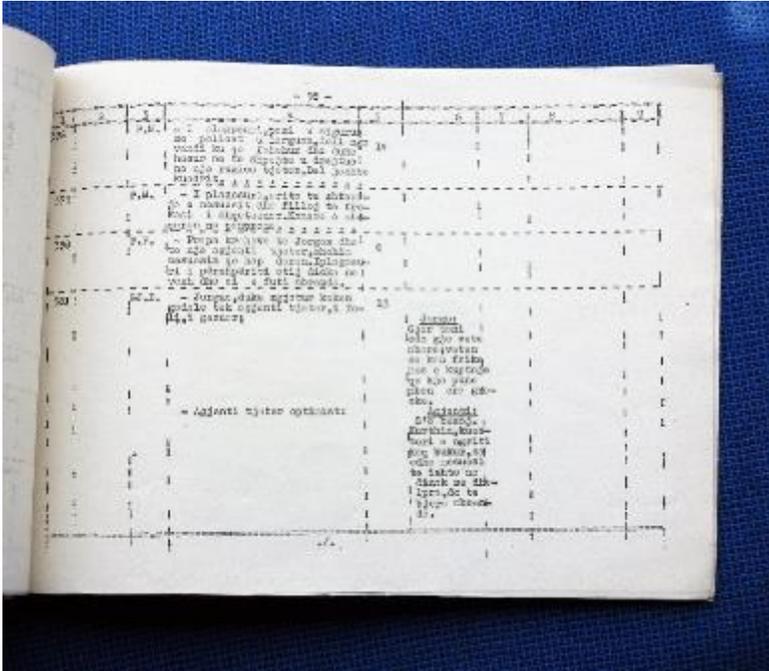


**DIGITALIZATION IN ONE DAY
IN AQSHF**

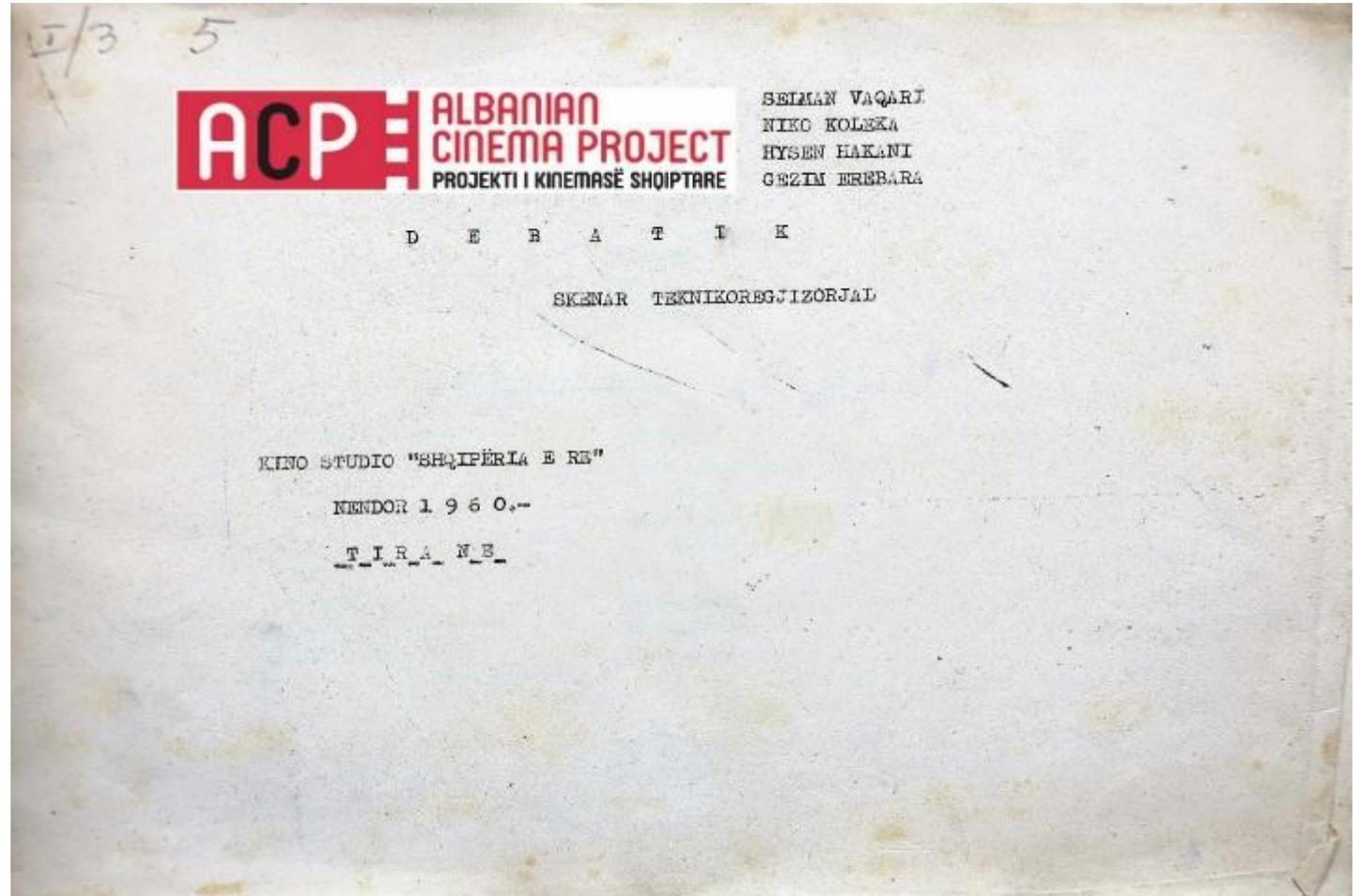


Debatik is a 1961 [Albanian](#) drama movie directed by [Hysen Hakani](#).
It was produced as a fictional work for the creation of the [Debatik](#) organization in [Albania](#) in 1942.

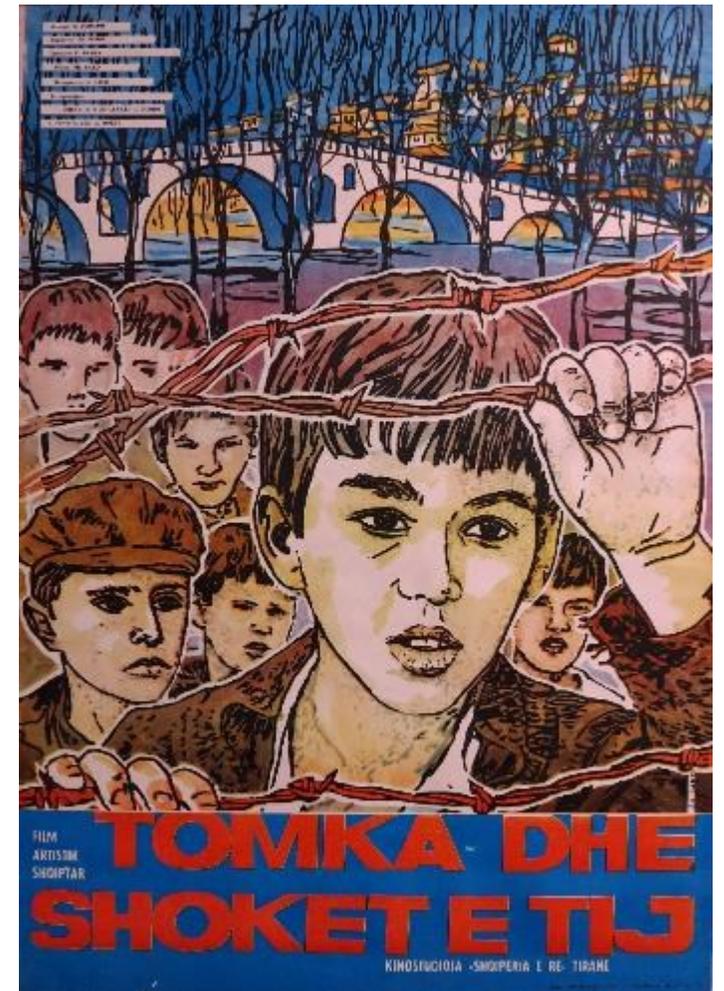
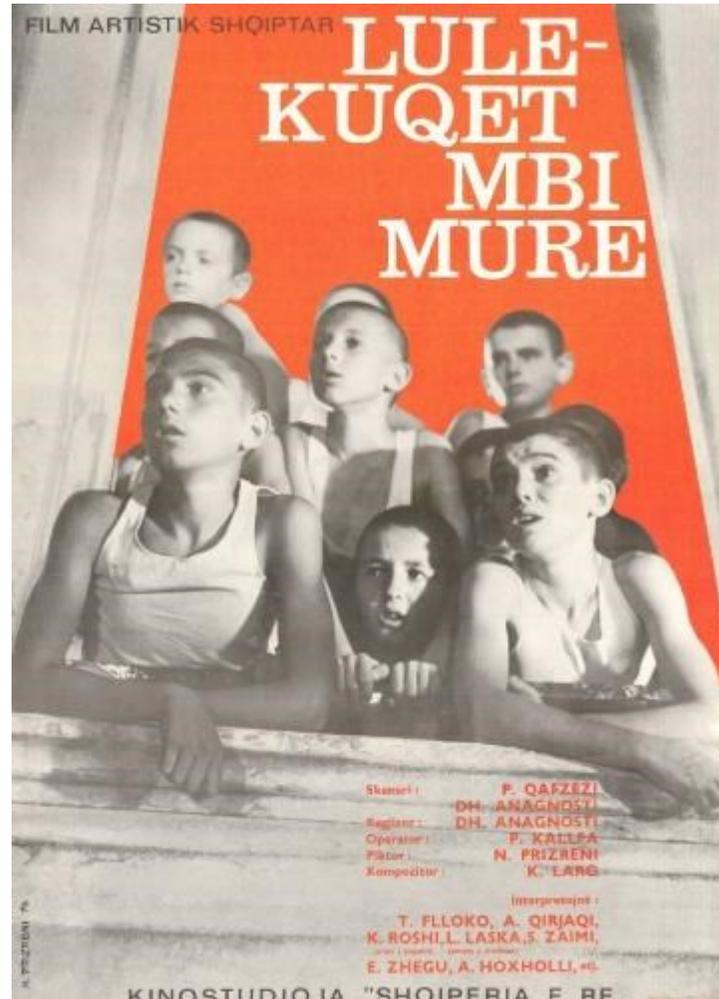
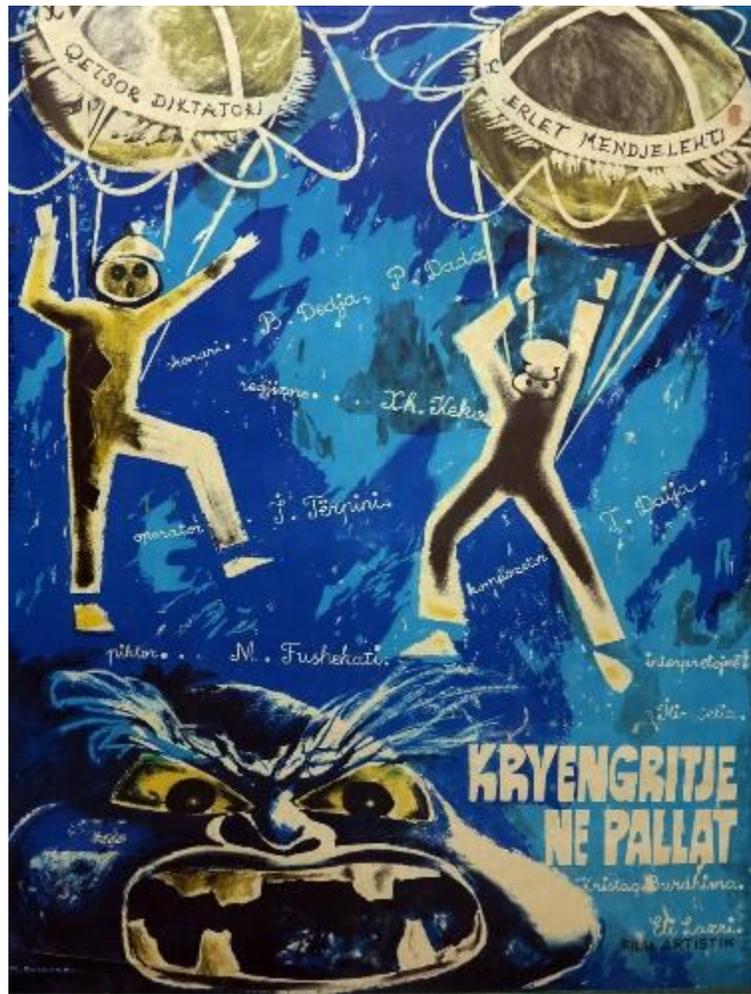
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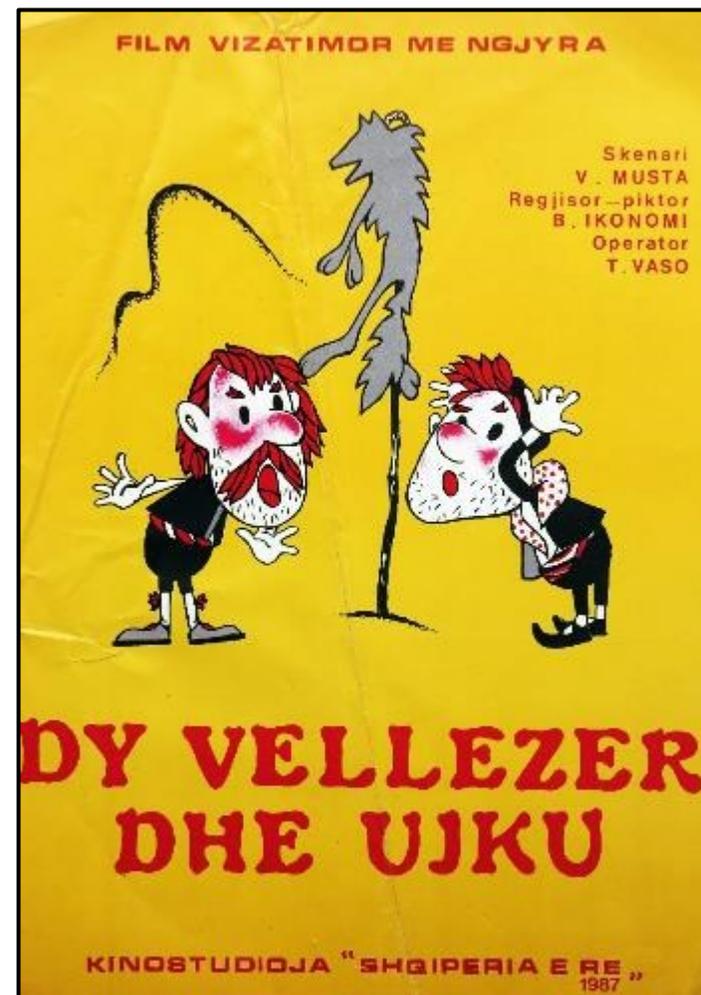
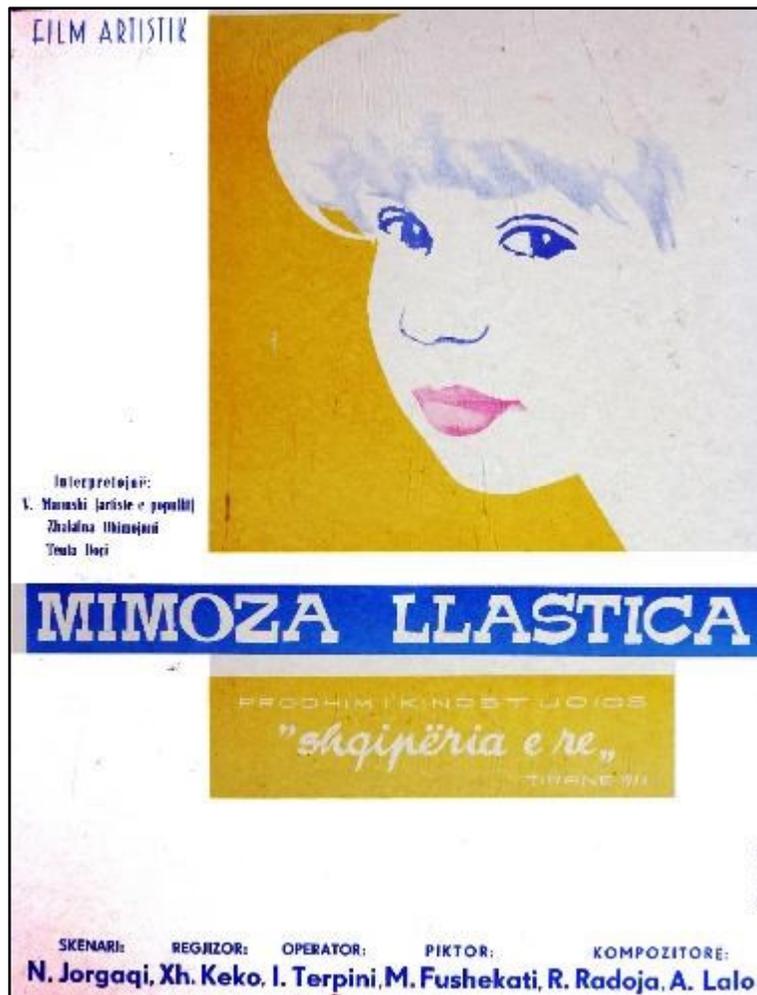
Original picture taken with free hand



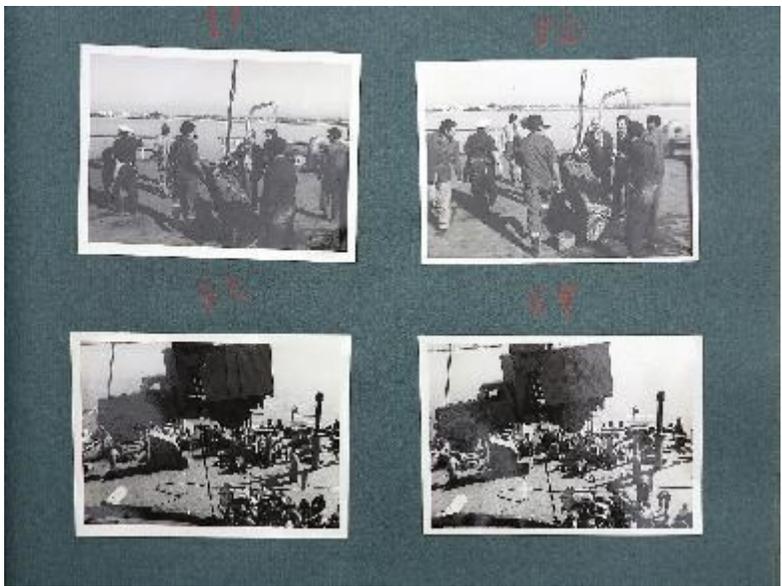
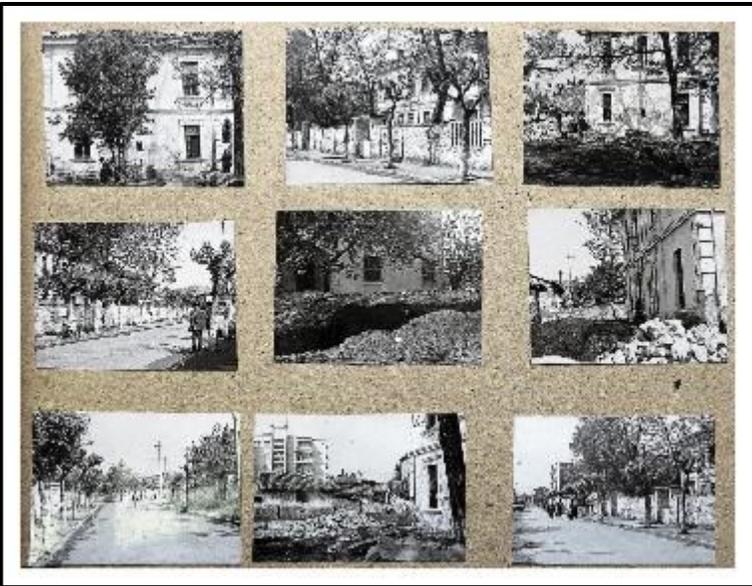
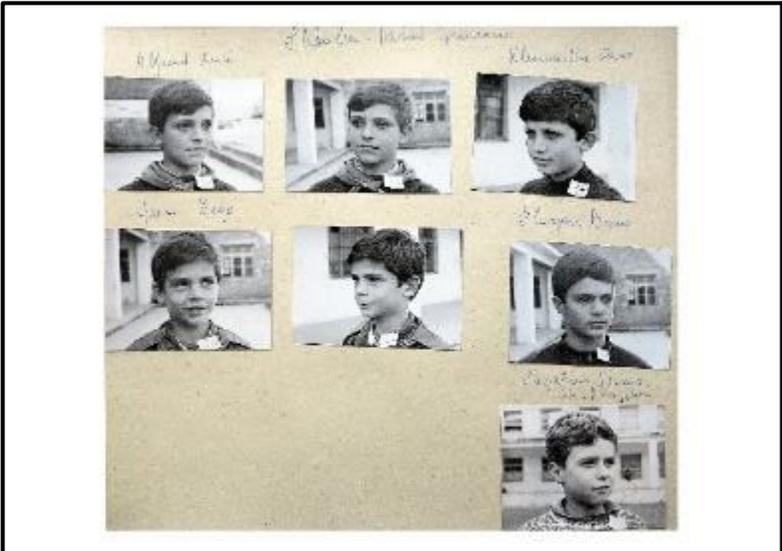
The same document elaborated with Photoshop

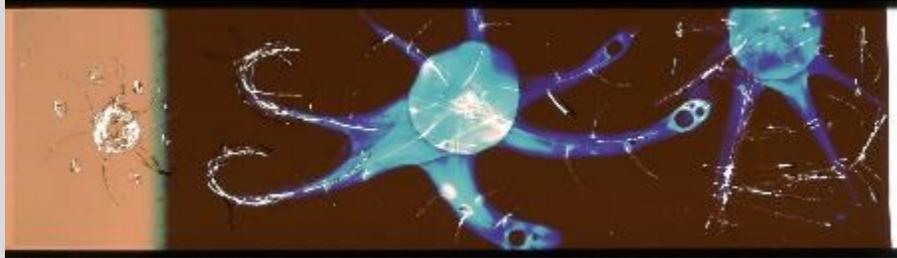


FILM POSTERS
OF AQSHF



PICTURES FROM ALBUMS AND CHARACTERS OF AQSHF





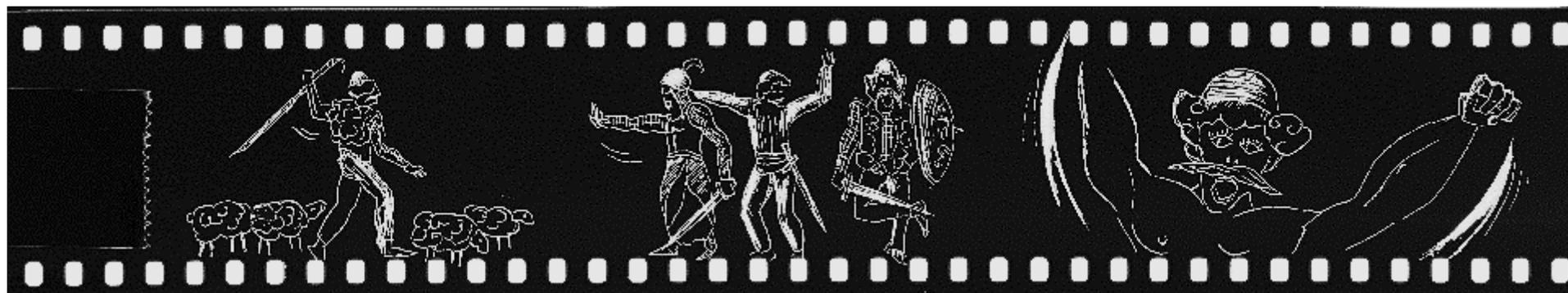
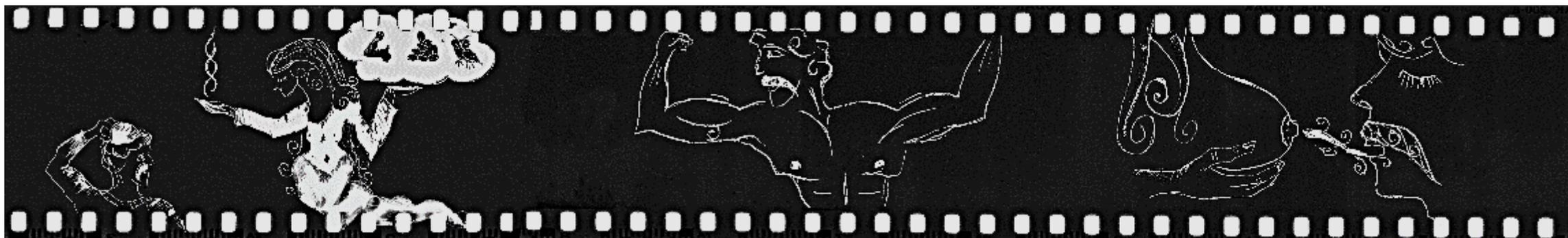
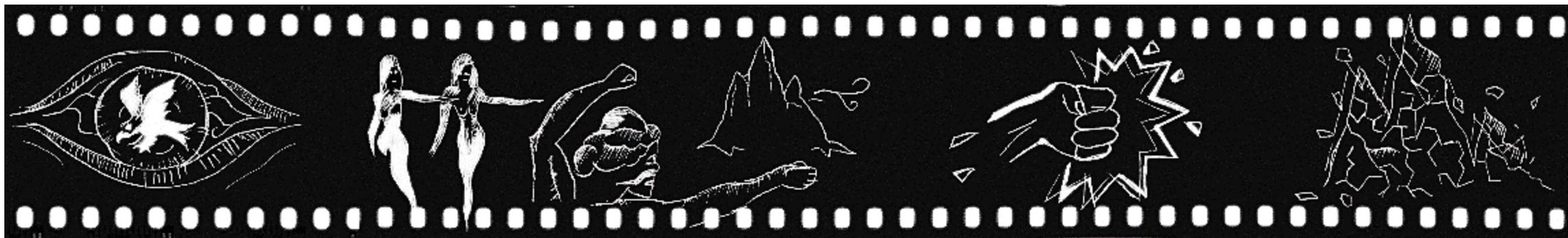
“NOTHING IS TO BE THROWN AWAY”

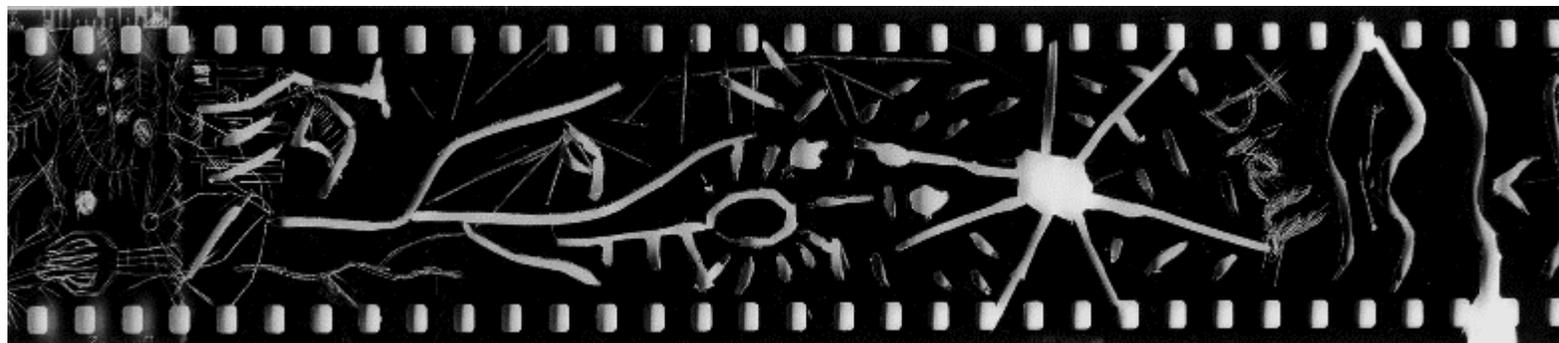


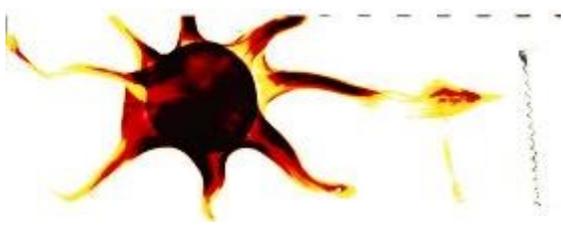
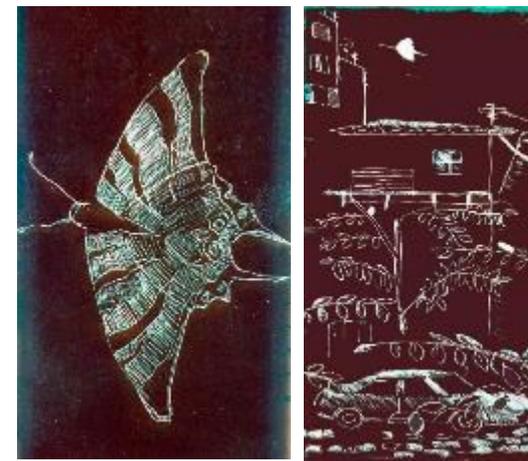
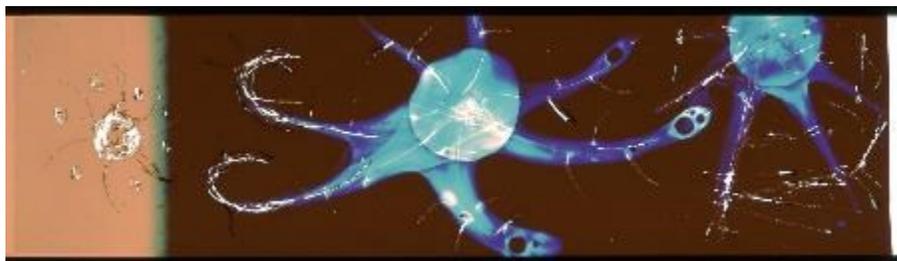
from *celluloid* to printmaking,
(scratches on film)

Film format is a medium that inspires other kinds of creations as in this case where an Albanian legend is made a graphic novel on film emulsion.











Nothing is to be thrown away:
scratching and painting on 120mm photographic film



The development of digital technology enables the process of digitalization, making use of various equipment from the most expensive ones to the cheapest ones where the strategies are clear.





Besides the dedicated and professional work of serious institutions, there are many cases of poor amateur work, aiming a quick and careless product without applying the elementary rules of document digitalization.

In certain cases, the work done for years in various institutions or universities, has resulted in vain (in small useless formats that can be used only in online presentations), wasting in this way energy and money.



JPEG quality 10% - 3,2 KB



JPEG quality 100% - 87,7 KB

Such low quality images, that most of the time are low resolution JPG images, cannot be used for publishing or prints, which instead need higher quality formats as for example: TIFF, PSD, etc.

For more information let's review the practice laboratory



THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME