



**Sosyal Bilimler
Enstitüsü**

T.C.

MARMARA ÜNİVERSİTESİ

SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ

RADYO, TELEVİZYON VE SİNEMA BİLİM DALI

KOMÜNİST ARNAVUT SİNEMASINDA KADINLARIN TEMSİLİ

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

SARA TUJANI

İSTANBUL, 2022



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**THE REPRESENTATION OF THE WOMAN IMAGE IN THE COMMUNIST ALBANIAN
CINEMA**

Master Thesis

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TEZ ONAY BELGESİ

....Anabilim Dalı.....Bilim Dalı Yüksek Lisans öğrencisi’nın adlı tez çalışması,
Enstitümüz Yönetim Kurulunun tarih ve sayılı kararıyla oluşturulan jüri tarafından oy birliği
/ oy çokluğu ile Yüksek Lisans Tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

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Öğretim üyesi Adı Soyadı

İmzası

1	Tez Danışmanı		
2	Jüri Üyesi		
3	Jüri Üyesi		
4	Jüri Üyesi		
5	Jüri Üyesi		

ÖZET

KOMÜNİST ARNAVUT SİNEMASINDA KADINLARIN TEMSİLİ

Bu çalışma, kadın karakterlerin bakış açısıyla anlatılan filmlerin politik, sosyal ve kültürel açıdan metinsel bir analizidir. Arnavutluk, dünyadaki tek ateist, izole komünist devlettir. Bir devlet tekeli olarak Arnavut sineması, kitleleri eğitmek için propagandacı bir araç olan sosyalist, realist ideoloji altında yeni bir adam ütopyası oluşturdu. Arnavutluk Komünist sinemasında kadın imajının oluşturulması araştırılması gereken temel meseledir. Kadın, burjuva-ataerkil zihniyete karşı özgürleşmiş ve savaşçı bir karakter olarak sunuldu ve kadına sosyalist toplumun inşasında ana rol verildi. İlk kadın film yapımcılarının amacı, ekrana toplumun yaşadığı çatışmalar hakkında daha gerçekçi bir görüş kazandırmaktı. Argüman, kadın imajının yüzeysel olarak özgürleşmiş olarak gösterildiği, ancak bireysellik, irade ve kişilik oluşumundan yoksun olduğu yönündedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Komünist devlet, Özgürleşmiş kadın, sosyalist toplum, Propagandist sinema, Genel görüş, Yeni adam ütopyası.

ABSTRACT

THE REPRESENTATION OF THE WOMAN IMAGE IN THE COMMUNIST ALBANIAN CINEMA

This work is a textual analysis of films narrated from female characters' points of view in political, social, and cultural terms. Albania was the only atheistic, isolated communist state in the world. Albania was the only atheistic, isolated communist state in the world. The construction of the image of women in Albanian Communist cinema is the key issue to be investigated. The woman was presented as emancipated and as a fighter against the bourgeois-patriarchal mentality and she was given the main role in the construction of a socialist society. The first woman filmmaker's aim was to bring to the screen a more realistic view of the conflicts the society had. I argue that the image of the woman was superficially shown as emancipated but with no lack of individuality, self-willingness, and formation of persona.

Keywords: Communist state, Emancipated woman, Socialist society, Propagandistic cinema, New man utopia.

ÖNSÖZ

My purpose in writing this thesis was to find out what was the identity of women and to reach an understanding of what is the presentation of women in the Albanian cinematic realm. Despite all the academic and personal challenges, I faced while writing this thesis, it is my ultimate joy to witness this body of work manifested in the way it is between your hands. Profound gratitude to my advisor Prof. Dr. F. Neşe Kaplan, who pushed and led this caravan to its destination.

Sara TUJANI

Istanbul, 2022

PREFACE

Bu tezi yazma amacım, kadının kimliğinin ne olduğunu bulmak ve kadının Arnavut sinema dünyasındaki temsilinin ne olduğuna dair bir anlayışa ulaşmaktır. Bu tezi yazarken karşılaştığım tüm akademik ve kişisel zorluklara rağmen, bu çalışmanın ellerinizin arasında tezahür ettiğine tanık olmak benim için en büyük mutluluk. Bu kervanı son varış noktasına iten ve yönlendiren kıymetli danışmanım Prof. Dr. F. Neşe Kaplan'a sonsuz teşekkürler.

Sara TUJANI

Istanbul, 2022

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1. Introduction

Albanian cinema is neither a cinema of the fathers nor a cinema of sons as termed by Ruby Rich when she separated Hollywood from the personal/ experimental cinema (1994, pp.27). However, it does have in common with Hollywood the philosophy of business. It was not a means of entertainment, rather it was a weapon for educating people's minds. The profits for this state-controlled cinema were not in money but in the unification of the minds of people to the Party's ideals. Albanian cinema has come to terms with the dictatorial intervention and subsequent national traumas which resulted in an outpouring of cinematic texts. The topic of my thesis will be a comprehensive view of Albania's approach to women during the communist era which dates from the year 1944 to 1991. I will give a description of Albania's historical identity by contextualizing its political movement which is the key factor in the later formation of national identity. It will be followed by an evaluation of the creation of Albania's National Film Center, which was the home for the movies made during the communist regime. By exploring the identity construction of this domestic realm, I will create room for the main topic, that of reading the image of the woman described on the screen. Taking the lead from the Albanian official archive center, I will analyze the films that offer the narrative point of view of a female character and focus on women's issues also films that were made by women directors.

1.1 Literature

Regarding the Albanian Cinema there are very few works of study. Whereas about the representation of women in Albanian Communist cinema, there is not any study done up to now. However, there are many studies which cover the cinema of the Balkans during different period of times. The group of works which I have collected here in representative purpose of the situation in the Balkans, shows that each cinema is connected to one another as for each cinema is built in relation to the political and historical situation of each country, and every country related to each other, through wars or through political regimes.

Sibel Akova in her work, explains how the Macedonian cinema was built on strong bases with support of the Slavic people and Tito's government, which also used it as a propaganda tool and was confronted with the fact that it couldn't be fully controlled regarding the content. The government's

concern not being able to direct its people in the way it wishes has led to the introduction of censorship and prohibition practices on the art of cinema in forms and processes that did not exist in the past. According to Akova, the Macedonian cinema is a cinema which was treated as art and proved itself successful without giving place to despair, without tiring the audience, without choosing the easy way, without falling into repetition, without losing the element of humor (dark humor) even in the most dramatic cases (2020).

Should we go further, we have Sema Ali's study on the "otherness" in the Macedonian Cinema. She analyzes the Ottoman Turkish image and Turkish identity, which was an inseparable part of the social, political, and historical structure of the Balkans. The framework of the "Turkish" image as the "other" is the research target and the movie scenarios were examined in this direction. On one hand, the Turkish as an identity phenomenon, and the Turkish character is handled with all its psychological dimensions, on the other hand, the concept of an image and a badly stigmatized Ottoman has been put forward. "Turkish" as "other" is presented as a symbol of evil in Macedonian cinema (2007).

As the issue of otherness in Macedonian Cinema, there is also the issue of the term Balkan/Balkanizm. In Mert Güncüer's research, the concept of 'Balkanism' is not only a phenomenon created by the West, but also a phenomenon created from the 'inside' in the Balkans. Because it is seen that there is a 'Further West - More East' distinction in the Balkans. The fact that it is a place with many ethnic origins and beliefs also supports this situation. However, it is also seen that the share of Western Europe in the formation of the image of Balkanism is highly effective. Although this process is quite old, it would not be wrong to say that this view has become more widespread and more riveted with the support of the media in the future. When we look at Emir Kusturica's Cinema, who is a Yugoslav director and also tells about the Balkans and Yugoslavia, it is seen that clichés and stereotypes arising from the East and West duality are used. In his films, he tells the character of the region not only through people, but also through places (2019).

The Balkans for years have been under the Yugoslav regime, and this has affected each country's cinema. Sibel Akova in another study of hers, focuses on the Yugoslav Cinematic language for which she concludes that, it developed as the projection of social and cultural structure and life practices. Yugoslav directors through Film Studios opened in many parts of the country. With the production of their own films, Yugoslav cinema, has given birth to a new interdisciplinary structure, the New Film understanding. The language of the cinema that took shape, was focused on the perception of reality (2016).

Another country under the Yugoslav Federation was Kosovo. In Kremtim Kransiqi's study, we see that Kosovo, as a predominantly Albanian province in Yugoslav Federation did not enjoy the same rights as other republics. 1968 was an important year in Kosovo and in all regions of Yugoslavia during this period. Protests were held for a prosperous and free life. In 1969 Kosovo Film was established, contributing to the strengthening of the ideology of brotherhood-unity. Year 1981 was a great historical transformation for Kosovo and its cinema. On one hand protests were held for the rights and independence of Kosovo, on the other hand, there were made movies to increase national awareness and this situation continued until the 1990s where Kosovo entered its independence war (2019).

As for the case of Serbia, we have Sercan Kule's study. In this research the focus is on the cinematic features in the Yugoslav Cinema History in relation with Serbian Cinema History while the period of Yugoslav Wars in the years '91- '99. The research through the examination of specific films concludes that the construction of national identity after the collapse of Yugoslavia in Serbian Cinema is reflected in the films through the national indicators and codes in Serbian culture. The films are not made to justify one side but to criticize the warring parties and include Western countries in the criticism part. The directors try to present a balanced view of the conflicts (2019).

As I mentioned before, regarding the Albanian cinema, there are few studies. One of them is Onur Sherifi and Serpil Kirel's overview which argues that the cinema culture in Albania existed just as in other countries as well. Since the beginning of the 1900s, movie theaters in Albania, cinema articles in newspapers, cinema magazines, there are many elements that are a part of cinema culture. Albania's political relations with Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China could be indirectly reflected from the number of cinema productions to the content of the films. In addition to this, there is also the cinema part of the control mechanism established by the Communist Party in line with its repressive policies. It is understood that, as in the general situation of communism Albania, cinema also entered a tragic production crisis. Even the "Kinostudio", which was defined as the "Film Factory" of the communist era, succumbed to the new market conditions and was divided into small departments and privatized. However, despite all these negative conditions, the production of cinema in the country did not stop, on the contrary, it started to achieve success in the international arena. The reason for this was the freedom of expression gained (2016).

In the last example we have a previously made research regarding the general view of the Albanian Cinema. However regarding the deeper analysis of films and of the representation of women, is a gap for which this study intends to fill.



2. Target purpose, Research question, Method

This work is a textual analysis of films narrated from female characters' points of view in political, social, and cultural terms. My purpose is to find out what was the identity of woman and to reach to an understanding of what is the presentation of the woman in the Albanian cinematic realm. It is a study which understands all things social in terms of a definitive historical approach.

Through my work I have identified various problematics that have a major effect on the way this thesis is established. Firstly, this is a topic which does not have any pre-existing similar work. Lately there have been studies related to the sufferings of Albanian women during Communism, however the portrayal of women in cinema is a topic which is not elaborated at all. In the Albanian books about communist cinema, which I refer in many cases throughout the thesis elaboration, there are very vague and weak information about the women actresses or about films with women in its focus. The absence of previous studies regarding the issue, leads to the second problem, which is the absence of a settled cinematic theoretical approach on the Albanian cinema. It is a field with no academical, psychological, and social study. This put on me a lot of pressure, since I had to find the right way of adjustment of world cinema theories to an unknown cinema lacking documented information. In addition to this, starting from the most elementary requirements, there is no single adequate review or a full description of the movies. This obliges my study to be formed on what I see when I watch the movies, rather than what I read about them.

The following problematics are related to the inner side of the study. The main problem is the full implementation failure of the Soviet woman profile taken from the Albanian government. Through cinema, the effort was in this direction, but due to social-historical, traditional, and cultural components, the ideal planned woman image could not fully assimilate the Albanian woman. This leads to the last inspected problem which revolves around the core of the purpose of this cinema, which was propaganda. Being not a means of entertainment, but rather of propaganda and message sender, all in the name of art though, affected every single movie done through the 45 years of the regime. The implemented ideology is found easily in every film. The indoctrination of the Socialist-Communist ideology is in every prop, dialogue, location, and plot. Despite watching the films from a study perspective, it was impossible to escape the hyperreality in which this cinema puts its audience. Entering this world makes one question what is the real, the normal, and what is not. Being an Albanian myself with a previously settled nostalgic approach to these films which I used to watch as a child, making it a distressful experience for me, to see the brainwashing myself had before. This

cinema's so-called emancipated woman image fails to prolong the idea at the expense of the categorization as a labor puppet the Albanian Communist state puts the women.



3. Theoretical framework

3.1. Historical framing of Communist Albania

At the first half of the 1940s Albania was in a battlefield trying to win its independency from the fascist Italy and later from the Nazis Germany. Communism planted its first seed while Albania as a monarchy was under attack from Italy during the Mussolini fascist regime. The immediate objectives of the newly created Communist Party CP were three: the eviction of the Italian fascism from Albanian land, the disappearance of the monarchist government and the creation of a Popular Republic (Duka, 2007, p 216). To achieve their objectives, the Albanian communists chose the guerilla war method, which according to them this kind of war was the adequate one considering the rugged mountainous terrain of Albania and the lack of experience in the military field of the countryman. They were self-named as partisan created in the first half of the year 1942. The war was against the Italian invaders. However according to different statistics, the partisans were 70,000 and only 28,000 from them were communists (Duka, 2007, p 231). With the end of the Mussolini regime in Italy on 3 September 1943, its invasion in Albania was destroyed. However, in three weeks the Nazis Germany invaded Albania. Hitler's aim was to create a military base in the Balkans which would be used as a blockage for the interaction between Britain and the Middle East. The war lasted a year and during the 1944's Albania was able to gain its independence from the invaders.

On 28 November 1944 Enver Hoxha, the CP's leader with the government officials took part in a religious ceremony to praise God and thank Him for the liberation and the new start of Albania as an independent country. From here starts the new journey of the solidification of the party and its full control rule in the country. CP was the only political force in the country. Albania would be a socialist country which consequently lead to the setting up of a one-party system in the governance of the country. The communists took shield under the partisan label and as mentioned above were not much in number. Their first strategy involved propaganda through a popular campaign against political pluralism, by loudly declaring that the bourgeois-democratic pluralism was damaging the public interest of the country and that its only beneficiaries were the enemies of Albania. A year after the 1945's elections, the Constitutional Assembly declared Albania as the Popular Republic. All the state bodies were filled with communists to be hired into the administration the one and only criteria were being a loyal and dedicated communist. Consequently, the governmental institutions were filled with uneducated communists. In the first two years of the new Republic, Albania was in a constantly changing relationship with Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union.

On 9 July 1946, the treaty of friendship and collaboration between Yugoslavia and Albania was signed and approved by Stalin. Moscow had a cold and distant stay towards Albania and Albania's destiny was settled in Moscow according to the Yugoslavia scheme and every support from Moscow came through Yugoslavia. During the year 1948, the conflict between Tito and Stalin rose. This was the perfect chance for Enver Hoxha by keeping Stalin's side cleanse the party from the hidden formed pro-Yugoslavia groupings (Duka, 2007, p 240). During the year 1949, the Soviet Union had become the main partner of Albania offering its support in the rise and strengthening of communism. The main purpose of the Albanian Communist Party was to create a communist state in accordance with the Marxists-Leninist ideology which would turn into reality by creating an economy with centralized planification, which could be achieved only through the nationalization of the whole economy. After the breakdown of a good relationship with Yugoslavia, the friendship and collaboration with the Soviet Union lasted for 12 years.

In 1954 the relationship was about to decrease and here starts a new friendship with China followed by a signed treaty in October of that year for scientific, cultural, and technical collaboration. In February 1966 Enver Hoxha undertook what was called "the Albanian cultural revolution" which was a copy of the Chinese cultural revolution (Duka, 2007, p 282). One of the most fundamental changes which affected the social and cultural heritage happened in February 1967. Taking as an example Mao Ce Dun who destroyed the temples and monasteries in Tibet, Enver Hoxha started the second wave of the so-called revolution. It reached its peak with the prohibition of religious practice and declaring Albania as the only atheist state in the world. The religious buildings were turned into secular cultural institutions or into worker's canteens. In the year 1969 after the hold of the cultural revolution in China, Albania followed the same steps which lead to more individual freedom. This was to change during 1973-75 when the cultural and ideological revolution was reborn. Its first attack was on culture under the name of the fight against liberalism. In 1972, the 12th song festival was held and broadcasted by the National Albanian Television. In this festival, the party saw the first signs of the "humility towards the Western culture" from the people (Duka, 2007, p 284). In the plenum held in June 1973, Enver Hoxha unmasked the "bourgeois-revisionist and liberalist influence" shows in art, literature, radio tv and at the youth overall. The alliance China had with Albania had its psychological value for China since Mao Ce Dun used it for propagandistic purposes to his people by emphasizing the fact that the political activity of the Chinese Communist Party's support was found even in Europe. Little did the Chinese people know on the fact that Albania was such a small country with no force and stability. The relationship with China was doomed to fail when the American President, Richard Nixon visited China in February 1971. The reason for the breakdown of friendship between two countries was the approval of communist China of "the American imperialism". This was an almost desired breakdown

since different from the Soviet Union or the middle-west countries' culture which attracted the Albanians because they were European, China and its culture always seem dystopic for the Albanian people (Duka, 2007, p 287). On 28 December 1976 Albania was reformed and called as "Albanian Popular Socialist Republic". It was openly declared as a state of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The new constitution prohibited practicing religion, declaring Albania as an atheist state. The prohibition was valid also for pluralism and private property. This anti-democratic political system lasted for 45 years.

The main issue we are interested in, is the position the Albanian women took in this dictatorial system. An issue which remains vaguely documented as every negative encounter the state took towards women, were destroyed before the fall of communism. We are left with the writings of the dictator Enver Hoxha, which were published as 70 books explaining the rules and reforms throughout the 45-year period of communism. Very few documents, and most stories told by the survivors or their families, presents us with the real actions taken towards women. There were great reforms on the dislocation of the status quo position of women in society. Albanian society was a very patriarchal one. As Enver Hoxha tells: The issue of women is a major issue of worldview, which requires a constant ideological war, against the old behaviors and concepts that have enslaved the masses of women for centuries. The communists are given the task to be an example in their relations with their wives who should go out to work freely and not to be covered with hijab or stay closed in the house (1972, p 266).

The reforms followed with instructions for the men on re-educating their concepts about the position of their wives. They give the clear message that the previous treatment of women is no longer embraced by the Party.

An important problem is an equality between men and women in the family. The party gives instructions for women to participate in the production and be appreciated for the work they do. We should follow the misconception that the husband is the one who gives the rights to the wife. But from the principle that the woman must gain these rights herself, with her fight and with the help of the Party. A communist who continues to treat women as in the time of feudalism must answer to the Party if he uses his wife or children as his servants. (Hoxha, 1972, p 267).

The presentation of the new role of women slowly starts the disgrace of the covering of women according to their Muslim identity. In this step, the first attacks towards the Muslim leaders and treatment of them as enemies start to fade in. In a meeting Enver Hoxha had with women of a city with most of the Muslim beliefs he speaks as:

Our woman in this war has done incredible work. She is more active than the women of some states who deprive themselves of being civilized. She has fought to work in every job sector in our country. The woman must learn to write and read, get to work wherever she can and eliminate fanaticism. This way she will be no burden at home. The woman must work the same as the man because work eradicates all rusty fanaticism. Those who open banners, whether dressed in civil or religious clothes and who say that "a woman should not leave the house because it is a sin and her honor is ruined", are the enemies of the progress of women and our homeland. A capable lady does all the work and can preserve her honor and make her respected by others (1970, p 139).

This type of propaganda continues in the reforms of the following years with instructions about counterattacking the previous belief with the new ideology about the representation of women.

The party must be vigilant and fight against elements that use religion to prevent women from moving forward. When a man says that a woman should not come out without a veil, the Party should try to clarify it and, if necessary, expose the area that encourages these movements. We will be confronted with the propaganda of the Muslim religion according to which "a Muslim woman should not be uncovered", therefore we should strike it with the argument that those who are not veiled are honest women (Hoxha, 1972, p 266-7).

Once the ideology of embracing women in every part of society and giving her the space to gain their own rights among men, the reforms continue with the education of women in every aspect and the focus comes back to her role in the family as well:

The anti-fascist front of Albanian women must be formed through workshops. Through them and the organs of the Party, hatred against the enemy will be aroused in women. In these meetings, we should talk about hygiene, the upbringing of the child, the way of working, and the various tasks of a good housewife. All the women of the village and the city, who have in mind the fight against the enemy of any political tendency must participate (Hoxha, 1983, p 353-4).

Overall, the reforms were about the emancipation of women, the fight against fascist characteristics, and about the equality among men and women. The way these reforms were put into action was quite different from what would be expected. Women did start working in every field sharing the same space as men, but this was all in the name of productivity subjectivism of women. The real face of the lives of women was much different. I will give only two brief examples of the case. The first one is Musine Kokalari whose work is considered as the first literary work written by a female in the history of the Albanian Nation. She was a defender of democratic and patriotic ideals. Against intellectuals who did not share the communist's view of proper governing were used coercive force followed with massacres carried out towards them. Musine Kokalari is one of those intellectuals. She created the

Albanian Social Democratic Party and was arrested in 1946 and had to endure prolonged tortures without giving up on her convictions in favor of a multi-party system and free society. She was regarded as a threat to the dictatorship and was sentenced with 35 years of imprisonment and lifetime prosecution.

The second example is that of Sabiha Kasimati, the first female researcher and the only one specialized in ichthyology. She openly challenged the regime and mentality of the time. In a letter addressed to Enver Hoxha who was her classmate in high school, she writes: *“Enver, you are killing all the intellectuals. With whom do you intend to build Albania, with shoemakers and tinsmiths?”* (Sinojmeri, 2017). After this, she was accused of being against the regime and of having links to enemy elements. She was executed without trial which was against the rules this Party had made in its Constitution.

The figure of these two women represents the first Albanian women dissidents. The removal from the public and intellectual life of such educated women as Kasimati or Kokalari also eliminated another model of emancipation for Albanian women. The emancipated woman that the regime propagated had to be revolutionary and molded with Marxist-Leninist ideology. As a process mainly imposed from above, the emancipation of Albanian women, more than real emancipation and awareness of the rights and values it carries, is aimed at providing a significant workforce and productive entity. In a masculine and emancipated society, this model placed the woman in a double burden. She had to work and achieve work norms, while when she returned home, she would have to fulfill the role of mother, and wife, without having the time and opportunity to think for herself. This emancipation was submission and non-raising of voice to the injustices done to her. The regime, through its treatment of Kasimati or Kokalari, had given them the message of how open-minded, courageous, and defiant male and state authority ended up.

To finish the treatment of the history of communism in Albanian society I will conclude with the statistics revealed in a recent study. In the internment political camps, 46,790 women have been imprisoned. 5118 women and 320 children have died due to hunger or sickness (Meta. Frasheri., 2018).

3.2. Historical framing of Albanian Communist Cinema

Albania is a small country with a language not like any other. As with other countries as well, the 19th century was always in a survival mode, trying to gain its independence, later trying to establish its government, suffering from a rough regime and with the entrance of the 20th century, its goal was the

healthy establishment of democracy which is still an ongoing mission. A country struggling can barely find space to help culture grow. Only in the last few years, there have been new steps in making the Albanian culture and cinema accessible to everyone across the borders. However, the translation into international languages of the movie subtitles and of academic work is still at an unsatisfactory level. Its cost is that Albanian cinema and its art are still unknown outside the border. Due to this gap in translation, I am obliged to also give a brief explanation of the history of movies and cinema in Albania.

Films in Albania made their entrance at the beginning of the 20th century. In its beginnings, it was shown in house rooms with closed doors. Cinema halls as public institutions were built after World War I, respectively; in the city of Vlora in 1920, in Korçe in 1921, and in Tirane, Shkoder, and Berat in 1929. In the year 1939, the number of cinema halls would vary from 15 to 20, from which 5-6 were functioning actively. This is the year that Albania was invaded by fascist Italy. Therefore, the cinematographic network became the property of the invaders and turned into the monopoly of ENIC (*Ente Nazionale de la Industria Cinematografica*) society (Myftiu, 2003, p 23). The year 1945 found Albania independent with its own new government. At the end of that year, the Assembly decided governmental monopoly over the cinematographic movies and over the administration of the existing governmental cinemas. All cinema halls were passed to the state by the decree-law of the Presidium of the People's Assembly no 422, in 16 April 1947. The agency was transformed into the Albanian State Cinematographic Enterprise. Since 1948 it has been operating as an enterprise of the Arts and Culture Committee (Myftiu, 2003, p 25).

Till the beginning of the '50s, the cinema network tripled. A quite considerable amount of moving apparatus for film projections. At the beginning of the 1960s, there were almost 150 apparatus. In the '70s this number tripled. In these three decades, the network expanded in villages following the policy of free shows or shows with very cheap ticket prices. Till the '90s cinema was never a commercial means for monetary profit. The state would subsidy as in the other cultural fields (Myftiu, 2003, p 26). There are two main reasons why the film was the greatest followed art in Albania. Firstly, the population was mostly of peasants, therefore scenic music, theater, and figurative arts objectively couldn't be spread. Secondly, the domination of the films coming from East Europe such as Italy and France were the only window to the world for a totally isolated country.

As mentioned before, the cultural and ideological revolution that happened during the end of the '60 and the beginning of the '70s condemned bourgeois revisionism and consequently brought the limitation of the importation of foreign movies containing such ideologies. Another reason for the

decrease in foreign movie-going was the entrance of television in Albania, which made the audience search for another form of entertainment.

Albania co-produced its first artistic movie “*Skanderbeg*” with the Moscow studio (*Mosfilm*), in 1954. The movie directed by Sergej Jutkevič was about the Albanian national hero Skanderbeg. There is an ongoing debate on which is the first native movie as they go between two movies. The first one is *Tana* (Tana) made in 1954 and directed by Kristaq Dhamo. The second one is the movie *Her Children* (Femijet e Saj) directed by Hysni Hakani. The debate is on its production year, which some say was 1953, some say was 1957. However, according to my understanding, the first declared movie produced by the National Center of Cinematography (*Kinostudio*) was “Tana”. The movie “Her Children” was a school graduation project of director Hakani, who indeed may have created it in 1953, but it was officially shown in 1957.

In the ‘60s the movie production was in slow motion, however, in the ‘70s and ‘80s the movie production expanded with an average of 10 movies a year (Myftiu, 2003, p 28). Its quality improved and as consequence, its audience would get larger. During the ‘80 the importation of foreign movies started again but it was in small proportion with strict rules on the ideological pre-selection.

In the West, film production was mostly based on the used budget and the gaining from ticket sales. Nevertheless, in Albania happened quite differently. The film was evaluated from its “ideological-educative” values and from the role it played in the inveteracy of the outlook of the Albanian Popular Party’s vision as well as one-party state’s propaganda. As expected from this, cinema was subsidized by the government since it was the state’s monopoly and consequently, it was prohibited to be run as a private enterprise.

As explained by Myftiu (2003, p 29), there were four main reasons for the growth of national film production. Firstly, the growth of the demand for native movies by the audience was due to the prohibition on the imported films. Secondly, the growth coincides with the duty of state party to make film a stronger weapon in the education of the masses with party’s ideologies, as well as a counter fight against the foreign shows with bourgeois-revisionist impacts. Thirdly, during the ‘70s, and ‘80s, the National Center of Cinematography had given professional education to each profile of a film production team. In the ‘80s there were three generations of creators; the first ones (trained internationally during ‘the 50s), the second ones (taught in-home), and a younger generation (who started their first works in the late ‘80s. Lastly, in the absence of foreign film imports, the whole budget would go to the production of Albanian film and the maintenance of the National Center of Cinematography.

Overall, the history of Albanian cinema can be shown in two periods, the one till the mid '70s and the one till the '90s which coincides with the end of the communism era and the start of democracy seeking. Till the mid '70s, which is approximately almost 30 years since its creation, keeping aside the state agenda, the Albanian feature film was in a period of learning from scratch. Albania had no background experience in this field or some like it. The first filmmakers were sent to the Soviet Union to get educated, and we will later see how fundamental the method was in creating Albania's own identity in style. With their return home, the National Film Center was created, and the missions were to share the experience with a new generation of filmmakers, as well as to try and create its own artistical identity. In the second period, after the mid '70s the mission swiped to the consolidation of the Albanian feature film, and its then expertized filmmakers started being distinguished from each other in style. To what extent, this will be open to debate later since it will be impossible to ignore the monopoly party-state had on Albanian film production.

The second half of the '70s was dedicated to creating artistic work which would describe the nation's history, including here the war period which due to political reasons was the current topic of the time. Whereas in the '80s, there is a smooth swift to more contemporary issues such as the relation of the individual with morals, work, education, and family. Even though the political framework never left the screen, still the film started giving more space to the humanistic approach to life. That was symbolized by exposing the good man, the right man living a rightful life. Individualism was a newly opened topic that was treated in its correlation with the personal attempts in exploring human psychology and with its attempts to picture the future and the world ahead. Altogether the operating mechanism of Albanian cinematography in the complexity of the art industry from its inception till the '90s followed the East and more specifically Soviet cinematography model. This model called the literary scenario a central factor, and its approval system took precedence. Its literary scenario was treated as dramaturgical prose, not only in the dialogues but also in the treatment of the theme, problematics, and ideological purity of the film. This had its advantage as the values were cleared and the image of the film would take the wanted direction. However, its defect was the dominance of the verbal expressions and exaggerated punctuation on what the character would say in its literal meaning, instead of what in complex the audio-visual figure would say.

Thus, the focus instead of being at the cinematographic behavior, was at the verbal one. That going hand in hand with cinema's primary mission to be in purpose of state agenda, made it impossible to go to the core of any problematic. Characters would speak weakly with dialogues lacking filmic function, artificial with no excitement of aliveness. For any served problematic only two solving scenarios were provided. No entrance to the real problem, staying always at the surface of the situation. Or giving a "pink" solution to much contradictory issues. The "black sheep" character would never reach a higher

status than the one allowed by the premises of the state ideology, and the higher status character would never lower his status enough to put at risk the glory nourished by the ideology he/she follows. In terms of coherent technology, the total isolation the country had with unstable relationships with its only few friends (each in different periods) caused the Albanian Film Center the cost of not being able to get new apparatus which was obvious in the quality of the footages.

3.2.1. The zeitgeist of Albanian isolationism

Albanian filmmaking highlights socialism as a mode of interaction with three main themes Albania gained its independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1912. But then was occupied by Italy before World War II, followed by a short occupation by Germany. After 1945 it became a communist state ruled by Enver Hoxha until his death in 1985. Being in total isolation, Albania as represented in the filmmaking defined the spirit and mood of this period of history shown by the ideas and beliefs that dominated at the time. It became an isolated country led by paranoia, that had to create and define a national way of being a country in Southern Europe. Albania as a country that was economically excluded and considering the lack of interaction with the outside, also culturally independent, was eager to affirm the national concept in its identity. As Richard Sennett says: “*Western culture is at its very roots, about experiences of spiritual dislocation and homelessness*” (1992, p 6). I believe that the same is valid for the Albanian case as well. Throughout the decades Albania was in fight for its independence, to protect its home and take out of it its intruders.

Albanians lived in their homes always with an outside master. So, nationality was always the desired affirmation. As Benedict Anderson explains, the origin of true nationalism requires two sets of circumstances: an absence and a presence. The absence is the relative decline of the great cultural systems of the religious community and the dynastic realms. The nation even though does not exactly replace these two, does put those in retreat for true nationalism to come into being (1991). Communist Albania as an atheist country provided all the necessary space for nationalism to be spread, especially with the paranoia of danger coming everywhere across the nation's borders. Lenin is said to have considered cinema particularly the Soviet one as the most important art because he considered it to have the power to construct public opinion. This is obviously shown in the propaganda films, and it cannot be ignored the fact that propaganda film has always a connection with nationalism. Cinema being a cultural weapon has been defended as a concept by Crofts who gives the example of France,

demonstrating cinema as a state-supported weapon of cultural nationalism which promotes national values (2002, p 6). This is an assessment that I believe can be associated with Albanian cinema but only partly. Indeed, Albanian film being a state monopoly promoted the onset of ideological values under the implication that are the national values. But Croft does mention this concept in correlation with the international politics of culture as well. In the case of Albania, except for the exportation of a very limited number of movies very few times in the Soviet Union and China, it was generally a filmography addressed to its own people. This was both the desired objective but also the very own limitation in intercultural exchange Albania did to itself with the isolation.

3.2.2. National Cinema

About national cinema, there is not any universally accepted discourse. However, it is generally accepted the fact that amongst other features, films can serve as projections of the nation. A term firstly mentioned by Frodon who argues that fiction film can serve as a “projection of the nation” but only in a positive way. He defends the fact that even the most effectively nationalistic cinema is barely successful at inciting racial ethnic or national enmity. He does give an exception of the demonizing of wartime enemies but only partly (1998, 33-38). In the Albanian case, his theory, to my understanding is successful only partially. Because, yes, Albanian films have projected the nation and the hidden messages despite the problematics served in the scenarios, with the good the bad and the evil characters, has always had in its best interest the solution would with no exception coincide with the state-party’s socialist ideology in the end. However, repeatably this mission was preserved by using racial ethnic and national enmity. In some movies the enemy was German or Italian army. In other, the enemy was the traitor of the country who for personal profits again being influenced by the foreign powers was a threat to the security and prosperity of this “happy, healthy nation”.

National cinemas are not all homogenous, as there are many varieties of them. Croft has made a list of 7 varieties of national cinema:

- 1. Cinemas that differ from Hollywood but do not compete directly.*
- 2. Those that differ, and critique Hollywood.*
- 3. European and Third World entertainment cinemas that struggle against Hollywood with limited success.*
- 4. Cinemas that ignore Hollywood,*

5. Anglophone cinemas that try to beat Hollywood at its own game.

6. Regional or national cinemas whose culture or language take their distance from the nation states which enclose them.

7. Cinemas that work within a wholly state-controlled and often substantially state-subsidized industry (2002, p27).

Albania's national cinema finds its place at the 7th variety because it was indeed state-controlled but the slight detail differentiating itself from it is the fact that not substantially but always was fully state-subsidized industry. Since it never dealt with Hollywood it is fair to say that it is also a cinema of the 4th variety.

In terms of identifying the quality of being logical and consistent national cinema two methods have been provided by Higson. He explained that there are two approaches that establish the imaginary coherence, the quality of belonging, of a national cinema. First one is the method of comparing one cinema to another, therefore emphasizing the notion of otherness. The second one is maybe the more self-absorbed one, which explores the cinema of a nation regarding pre-existing other cultures of that nation (2002 p54). Albania's national cinema does not find itself in the first one since it always took as a leading example the Soviet cinema, never attempting to compare with it. However, it does stand with the second method. The first-ever made Albanian feature film was about the national hero which was the face of the cultural and historical identity of Albanians. But I cannot generalize this method in Albania's case. As working with pre-existing cultures was the main strategy in the rise of the cinema.

3.2.3. New Man Utopia

Yet after the mid-'70s and ongoing with the ideological revolution provided by the state, the old values were put aside, giving space to the "new man utopia" serving the purpose of transforming social reality and the human condition. The party-state had a machine and that was propaganda. The new use was to diffuse the notion of the socialist new man. This was not an idea emerging firstly from the Albanian state. It is part of the Marxist theory and within the logic of the communist regime, which Albania had as a guidebook. Failing to predict the future, the focus was switched to transforming the social reality and redefining human behavior. In Albania this was first shown with the treatment it was given to religion and religious figures which Giakoumis, Lockwood, and Anderson (2016), perfectly explained by introducing us to the new term "religious isomorpheme". According to them, Albanian communist cinematography manifested Christianity through its ideological weapon of two communist

myths. The first one is the portrayal of Christian dignitaries as agents of foreign states coveting Albania's territorial integrity. This is obviously shown in the movie *Mesonjetorja* made in 1979. The second one is the representation of Christianity as a relic of backwardness and Christian functionaries as reactionary elements who impede the development of "new man socialism".

Regarding religion, the leader Enver Hoxha, combined the Marxist-Leninist ideology with the radical Maoist approaches (1982, p94-113). In the Articles 37 and 55 of the 1976 Albanian Constitution, Albania has declared an atheist state and all the religious activities were banned, categorizing any kind of religious customs and monuments as backwardness, and a threat to the integration of the new man in the socialist society (Hoxha, 1982, pp103-13). Under his leadership, the communist arts were mobilized in a totally conscious, endeavor to disrepute religion and assemble a communist methodology of religion. It was created a "new normal" through its social conditioning. By introducing the idea and repeating it as normal. The strategy for the religious buildings was on destroying those. As for religious functionaries, in real life, hundreds of them were either imprisoned or killed. Whereas in cinema the rituals were simulated with the socialist norm. For the religious figures, they attempted on replacing their reverence. The Christian saints or Bektashi Muslim's *babas* were reinstated with the "newly-made heroes of socialist labor". This new normal was utopic and talking about its presence in cinema is crucial in understanding how seductive it was in its use for political purposes. Robnik (2009, p 48), clearly deciphers what the film theorist Siegfried Kracauer notes about cinema's utopia when he associates it with "an aesthetic of what does not fit in". According to Robnik, Kracauer here meant of the thing, which is unfamiliar but at the same time, the viewer can empathize through their imagination. Cinema in its own tends to present a whole, but never being a whole. This goes the same for the utopia model. Its presence in cinema created a coherent but never truly achievable place. The enchantment of the desired but never achievable idea in the imagination of the audience was a powerful seductive weapon for the state.

The early mentioned "new man" and "new hero of socialist labor" share many features however are not the same concept. New Man utopia was a concept which none of the Marxist theories could give a definition. The communist country failed to explain it; however, the communist cinema was able to show its characteristics. Maybe it was not clear, how it was created but the audience was able to seize what a "new man" is like (Peshkopia, Imami, Kristensen, 2016). The embracement of the "new man utopia" happened when the country was in the upbeat years of national communism, a part of not only the state's preference but also of society's enthusiasm during the '50s, '60s, and '70s. The enthusiasm of people and the glory of the state started fading late '70s continuing through the '80s. The moral image of the "new man" was in service to impact the construction of social reality. Overall, from the beginning of the communist era till the '85s, Albanian cinema firstly borrowed the Soviet stereotypes

for its homegrown characters. Here we have the example of the first movies like *Her Children* (Hakani 1957), *Tana* (Dhamo 1958), and *Our Land* (Hakani 1963), which is another chapter I shall focus in detail on issues they represent regarding my case. In these kinds of movies, the directors brought imported heroes from the film traditions of the places they studied. The package of the hero character contained the typical story of fighting evil, in the end gifting victory to the good. It was a continuous cause of the relationship between the progressive future and the digressive past. The hero wouldn't let the digressive past make ground in the present, and at the same, time all his efforts in the present were in service of that progressive future, which was a perfect reincarnation of the Marxist teleology. Slowly through the years we see the shifting to its own Albanian-style communist concept of the new man" with folkloric characters. But it was followed the fade of enthusiasm and hope in the people. The Albanian cinema at the end of '70s and early '80s started representing the heroes of the past who were mainly partisans fighting the guerilla was against Italians and Germans during World War II. The "new man" and the communist hero would cross their paths only if they lived in the socialist society. Them being different from each other becomes visible during the '80s when the economy was in hardship, and it was reflected in the communist ethos. For example, in the comedy *City Lady* (Milkani, 1976), the party secretary character Sala did not need to be heroic and take a gun in his hands, to bring to the screen, the features of the "new man". In a scene where he works at night in the rain to save the dam, he is more heroic than a character who would fight in the war. Since the "new man's" heroism is transcendental, is all the time, in every situation, able to reflect the moral fortitude of the socialist society.

3.2.4. Neorealism

Every small system needs a bigger system to follow and use as a guideline. The closest ones which share features and lead examples to the Albanian cinematic experience would be Italian neorealism and Socialist Realism. To the surface, neorealism and Albanian communist cinema would share the same promises however at the core, all the essence is different. Italian neorealism promised the nation, which was recovering from a bombastic dictatorship, a new self-image is once humble and ostensibly uncorrupted.

Italian Neorealism implements honest portrayals of life on the big screen. With an emphasis on holding up a mirror of society, the neorealist movement strived to portray real-world struggles in the

aftermath of WWII. The neorealist style does not have an inherent political message. The most common attribute of neorealism is the location shooting and the dubbing of dialogue. It is aimed at giving a psychological analysis and ultimate description of feelings. A good deal of Italian neorealism's perceived authenticity lies in the relative asceticism with which its examples were undertaken such as shoestring budgets and non-professional actors whose lived proximity to the stories in question lent the films a degree of raw truth. The protagonists oscillate between passivity and agency. It had a desire to uncover the truth about the widespread suffering in Italy and to identify sympathetically with the plight of the victims. A social phenomenon and an aesthetic force. By affectionately identifying with the victims of social injustice, it hoped to instill in its viewers a positive response and desire to reform. It was able to seek such a response without turning its films into propagandistic documentaries. The chief theorist of what came to be known as Italian neorealism in the early '50s, screenwriter Cesare Zavattini argues that "The cinema has always felt the 'natural' and practically inevitable necessity of inserting a story into reality, in order to make it thrilling and spectacular" (Overby, 1978, p 67).

Life was to be shown as it is. In his reflection on neorealism's global resonance, the film scholar Karl Schoonover argues that it was able to mobilize spectators outside Italy's borders as extranational eyewitnesses" to the country's tragic postwar plight. The cinematic afterlives suggest that the form compels us to keep our collective eyes trained on "the real" in moments of crisis (2012).

Vaguely some attributes are shared between two cinemas. Both countries were doing the aftermath of the war. Both had limited budgets, and both used non-professional actors. However, in the neorealism era, the shot on location style was made due to the burning and seizure of the Cinecittà. As for the Albanian case, it was yet to be build the first National Center of Cinematography. Italy used non-professional actors to resemble at best the raw truth. While for Albania, the first students were yet to be sent to Soviet Union to get professional education. That is why Albanian cinema was dominated by either non-professional or theater actors. Neorealism provided a strong sense of plot and psychological analysis. In the Albanian case we shall see that these are two of the most fundamental absences. Both desired the reformation of the respective countries, but neorealism did not provide much of a solution to the problems. Albanian cinema in its own method did provide the solution and always gave a happy ending. Neorealism gave space to the aesthetic matter and let its cinema perform its own art. But Albanian cinema focused so much on the propagandistic political message delivery and lack of experience and knowledge, had not much room to share with aestheticism.

3.2.5. Socialist Realism

Unlike Neorealism, Socialist Realism provided authors and filmmakers with a small group of themes and areas to work with. Of the arts, cinema was chosen for emphasis as a major mass art form that reveals the distinctive characteristics of socialist realism in the clearest outline (Leong, 1984, p 157).

The industrial worker was glorified for his productivity; aristocrats had to be portrayed in a bad light; the individual had to subordinate him/herself willingly and happily to the collective; the woman had to be shown as key elements of the revolution and eventually all narrative problems needed to be resolved by socialist means. Socialist Realism was famous for suppressing specialized advancement for effortlessness and didacticism. Any style that created uncertainty of significance was dismissed. the montage techniques needed to clear a path for less complex more settled methods of delineation, so the planned propagandistic message did not go over the heads of the crowd. The melodic score and cinematography were intended to elevate. It was true to life in a visual style that could be easily comprehended by the masses. It had to be cheerful in spirit, realistic in style, and supportive of the socialist cause. Works had to be made in a way that would revere an individual hero of the new state, whether that meant a member of the working class or a state figurehead. The stylistic and thematic parameters were narrow. Socialist Realists would report the forced requisition of land, livestock, and crops, starvation, and psychological trauma. Whereas Socialist Realist Cinema would airbrush all these realities from the scene. Socialism was mainly focused on the mass collectivization of farming. So, the Realist Cinema was required to abandon reality and instead extol the virtues and successful implementation of collectivization. There were a set of rigid guidelines for artists to stick to. These rules aimed to furnish the spirit of socialism among people and to leave no space in the minds of people for any anti-revolutionary activity. Though the standard of “anti-revolutionary” varied from one ideology to another.

The historicity of Albanian cinema I would like to conclude with a reflection on Albanian Socialist Realism. Cinema was an incarnation of the Socialist reality. Cinema was not a mirror of society, as in the case of Italian neorealism. But it was a breathing human being, given birth by the communist ideology. In his article Bejko (2016), argues that Albanian cinema since the late ‘70s was insufficient in its ability to meet head-on the changes happening in the society. A challenge during the ‘80s the confrontation was inevitable, considering the massive social, economic, and political transformation. From 1980 onwards, Albanian cinema enters a minimalist phase-oriented more on a micro-

sociological examination of everyday life, combined with a psychological perspective; removed from any idea of ideological reform or the reconstruction of society (Bejko, 2016).

One last situation on this matter in the absence of the physical presence of Enver Hoxha in most of the socialist films. This did not happen out of neglect. Every line is written, and every frame shot was firstly approved by the party representative in pre-production, who was present in present in every process of the production. The absence was deliberately decided as it served the ideology. The physical absence put Enver Hoxha in the position of an omnipotent being. Deleting God as the most omnipotent from people's minds was to be reinforced with a new image of omnipotence in people's consciousnesses. At the same time, it would let the characters have essential roles. The tactic in socialist movies was for every character no matter their rank, to have their say. The development of the characters was not purely for cinematic purposes. It was an advertisement of how the characters worked to develop independently as faithful comrades of the Albanian state. This shows the dependency the state had on the collusion of the people to nurture power.

4. Film analysis

The main part of the study is the analyzation of the films made in that era. In accordance with this thesis' purpose, I have separated this chapter into two sections: Films made about women (which are all made by male directors) and Films made by female directors. Throughout my research, I have noticed that every single movie's editing director has been a woman, whereas the other positions mostly are dominated by men. That is why, in each movie introduction I will mention beside the directors' name, the editing directors as well. Besides, I believe that to have a better understanding since Albanian films due to translation deficiency have not met a broad international audience, I will give brief explanations of the films' plots.

4.1. Films about women

Going through the Albanian Film Archive, I saw it fit to give space to analyzing a specific number of films that in one way or another have in the center the image of women. In this categorization, to have a clear map of this construction of the image, I have made a classification of films that show women in different periods and different social problems. I emphasize the fact that this is not a sharp categorization that isolates the woman image in only one group as the social situations and the portrayal of women in those can easily pass from one group to another.

4.1.1. Pre-Independence War Heroines

The first categorization I have made is that of the pre/post-independence war heroine as one of the most highlighted topics in the Albanian cinema. The women in this topic take the role of the war heroines who in some cases take part in the war as partisans in guerilla battles, or as the ones aiding other partisans. In some cases, they are the ones confronting the foreign enemy assimilation tentative through more social behaviors let it be tentative to open Albanian teaching schools or to demask

dangerous plans of the antagonist characters. Mainly in the examples which I am about to unfold we will see the creation of the image of a woman who either raises brave sons and daughters who will fight for the independence or will be the ones in the front line of the battle, let it be physical or socio-psychological one.

The first movie is “***Toka Jone***” (**Our Land**), directed in 1964 by Hysni Hakani. The editing director is Irena Harito. The film settles in mountainous village under the circumstances of the transition the agrarian reform brought in 1946. It represents the drama of a poor peasant family, suffering from war between the ruling class that is almost disappearing, and which is considered as a toxic remain of the pre-independence governance, and the peasant class that with the reforms of the Party is becoming the owner of the land distributed equally. The drama of the film switches from that of the family to the one of the lands.

The plot revolves around a woman named Lokja, who years back with the death of her husband, was separated from her children and was kicked out of the village. This was the heinous plan of Tuç, a bey sharing traits of the toxic governance whose aim was to collect as much land as he can by stealing it from people. He spreads rumors of fidelity about her, and the village believing him kicked her out. She has three children, two boys Leka and Murrash, and a girl Filja. Leka, a poor and honest peasant was deceived by Tuç, whose character is treated as the enemy. When Loke, years later comes to the village to be reunited with her children, she is rejected by Leka. The daughter Filja wants to embrace her mother but cannot go against the decision of her brother. The story continues with Leka falling prey to the trap set by Tuç who makes him sign false documents about the requisition of land, in the office of a fraud lawyer named Simon. Lokja attempts to approach her son, in a scene where she encounters him in the bazaar, she tries to gift him a golden necklace she has kept for him to give to his wife, but she is coldly rejected by Leka. The older son, Murrash, comes to the village after he has studied in the city and has embraced all the ideals of the Party, in search of the truth about his mother. In the village, the peasants during the feudal system were frightened, to tell the truth, that’s why for years no one could ask for their rights. Murrash’s arrival changes the turn of actions. He helps Leka on reevaluating his beliefs and stops the wedding of their sister Filja with Vata, a negative person whose actions were not in accordance with the Party’s rules. Murrash and others bring justice to the family and in the village. The Party, represented by educated emancipated men, brings justice to Loke, and prevents a young girl from the wrong marriage. Filja does not fight against the decision, despite her love for Vata, and obeys her brother’s decision as this marriage was not approved by the Party. To emphasize the idea that the Party does not make wrong decisions, the murder of Murrash by Vata takes place in the movie. This was as if to give the message that someone who does not behave according to the Party’s teachings,

sooner or later will bring damage to the ordinary people as well. The movie ends with the solution to the problems, the arrest of Tuç, Vata and Simon, and the reunion of Loke with her children.

In this film, the role of women, such as Filja and Loke is generally passive, with little dialog or interaction with other characters. It is the Party that comes to the rescue of these obedient passive women. The movie tried hard to be fully comprehensive. The actress Marie Logoreci who plays Lokja, gives high emotional notes in her performance. The character of Lokja, is that of a woman full of pain and with no concrete power in changing the curse of the situation. However, strong traits of her personality were shown especially in the death scene of her son Murrash. When Filja desperately cries over the dead body of her brother, Lokja shows up, holds her tears, and orders her daughter to control her emotions, as she has the responsibility to honor the codes of the culture that the village maintains. Here we are presented with a woman who in her most emotionally weakest moment, stays strong and is affirmed on honoring the codes she respects and self-identifies. Not only for Lokja, but for the other characters as well, their strength does not stay in their aesthetic beauty, but in the dynamics they bring. In an article revealed in a local newspaper at the time, there is an interview with the actress Maria Logoreci who when asked about her impressions on the character of Lokja (which she plays) speaks as: “The role of Lokja is put in a secondary place comparing to the prime role she has in the novel from where it was taken. I played this role in theatre as well many times and have grown fond of it. That is why it hurts that the Lokja of the film is much different. However, I will do my best to bring the best out of her figure” (Dibra, 1964, pp 2).

One of the critiques made on the movie, adding here that its rhythm is quite slow, was that on the representation of the life in the villages. Zalleme (1964, pp 4), argues that the representation of the village life was accurate to that in the real life. However, the life there was totally expelled from the cities near it. Life in that village was not only those couple of streets shown in the movie. Nevertheless, there was a delicate touch with the footage always in harmony with the nature surrounding. It was as if nature was living the same as the people. It would give melancholic and almost sad feelings, giving the sense that it was holding the same worries as the people.

The next film called “*Ngadhenjim mbi vdekjen*” (**Triumph over death**) directed by Gezime Erebara and Piro Milkani was made in 1967. The editing director was Vitore Çeli. Overall, the plot revolves around the communist group made of some young men and some high school girls who take various actions against the Nazi occupation of their city during the National Independence War period. The main characters, two high school young girls Mira and Aferdita get imprisoned due to their patriotic actions, and they get executed in the end of the movie. If we were to go into detail on specific scenes, we will be able to see the formation of the characters and give meaning to the message the

movie presents. About the year the plot takes place, there is a film reference shown in the first scenes. It starts with the projection of the streets of the city. The footage presents the fascist propaganda on the walls of the surrounding buildings, and the contrast between the emancipated woman in European clothing and the man wearing a headscarf while walking through the streets. A couple of times there is shown the footage of the "National Cinema" of the city and hanging on its door, the poster of the upcoming Western movie "Texas Buddies", a premiere of the year 1932. The plot revolves around the partisan group with main characters such as the high school girls Mira and Aferdita and group men leaders such as Fatos and Perlat. Their mission is to fight the German troops who had occupied the city. They are represented as communists. In one of the attacks against the Germans, Aferdita is wounded, and it is Mira who takes care of her. There is a scene that cannot be passed without being mentioned. While Mira cures Aferdita's wound, they imitate the doctor-patient roles and make fun of the assuming words a doctor would say in those areas: *"You will get better and get married"*. The girls make fun of these words as for these high school young ladies, their dream was not marriage but the independence of the country against the Nazi's occupation. The plot continues with Mira's arrest due to her actions against the Germans. This was done with the help of an Albanian man who works as a spy for the Germans. Her mother tears in emotions when she is arrested but Mira affirmingly tells her: *"Keep it inside yourself, we must not make it easy for the enemy"*. In the film the flashbacks dominate and are used with the purpose of explaining the cause and effect of the current actions. In one of these flashbacks Mira speaks to Perlat who is about to go to the mountain to fight and tells her: *"Do not forget, that we no longer belong to ourselves. First and foremost, we are soldiers of the Party"*. Mira embraces this idea as her own. When Mira and Aferdita are arrested, both in the cell keep looking at the past. One of these flashbacks is of Aferdita remembering the entrance of the German troops in the city and killing children in the street. The film starts with the scene in which Aferdita is wounded, while in the last scenes, it is shown the moment when while she was fighting heroically against the Nazis in the mountains, she gets hit. Near the end of the movie, the spy gets killed by the communists and right immediately the camera shows a slogan on a wall. The silence of those seconds gives space to the reading the audience does to those words: *"Death of fascism, the liberation of the nation. This is the end of all nation's traitors"*. This is one of the cases in which the director through the movement of the camera commands and leads the audience to the main idea. In the last scenes, a letter is sneaked into the cell from the comrades who write to them these words: *"You have stayed loyal to your role in this fight. This is what an Albanian girl must and should do"*. Again, another moment in which the girl is taught how she should think, believe, and behave. The last scene shows the walk of the girls to the execution place and is accompanied by cheerful patriotic music leading the audience to not leave the

cinema theater with sorrow about the girls' destiny, but rather to raise their patriotic feelings full of hope for the future.

We see the character of Mira who is among the most well-structured ones. She reflects a great artistic force that represents the emotionally colorful image of the "new man" raised and educated by the Party. Her character and that of her comrade Aferdita were praised in the newspapers of the time, however, there were critiques of the way the youth of the society is represented in the film. Gjonaj (1977, pp. 3), argues that even though film provides us with a great diversity of youth, still their characters are imperceptible since there lacked work on their characterization and individualism. This can be expected considering all the scenes in which the girls are being taught how to think and behave. The female youth took a great part in the National Independence War (right before the communist state was created), and they had an active role in the construction of the "new man" in society. In terms of this role, the movie "**Triumph over death**", has given the female character an artistic dignity. Nevertheless, it was not perfect, as the figure of the partisan girl who takes part in the independence war, was occasionally shown as shy, not talking much. It almost became a routine to see her sitting in boarding meetings but not taking part in the decisions. Females being significant in the development of the "new man society", were embraced by the film directors and the Party as well. In the society, the distinction was not between gender, but among classes, education, and achievements in the development of the "new man". The same case goes for Mira and her female comrade Aferdita, in the film analysis, the director Milkani (1967, pp 6) provides. He argues that the Albanian woman has always proved that she was worthy to stand side by side with man in any kind of situation, able to perform any role she can/must in the service of the ideology of the Party. Milkani gives the example of the National Independence War, in which the number of female partisans could not be counted, as they were thousands of them who heroically fought side by side, equally as men did. In the film, Mira the main character was a modest educated girl who immediately embraces the socialist movement and slowly starts taking an active part in it. Her heroism stands in the determination she shows in facing the physical and psychological tortures the Nazi Germans were performing on her. She stays strong, and the ideal the Party has offered to her is big enough to survive. The city in the film was mostly shot, is Gjirokastra, a city made of stones, and was often generously explored through the lenses of the camera. This was done deliberately to show that the women heroines had to be firm and strong as this city made of stone. The term heroine in accordance with this film is given in the spectrum of artistic generalization of the Albanian woman during the War.

The next movie is "**Malet me blerim mbuluar**" (**Mountains clad in green**) directed by Dhimiter Anagnosti in 1971. The editing director is Irena Spahiu. The plot is about a group of fighter's journeys while they try to send their comrade, a young woman named Lilo to the nearest hospital after she gets

shot in one battle they had with Germans. The way due to the bad weather conditions they must stop in a village and stay for the night at the house of an old man named Safa, who that night had all the men of the village to celebrate the wedding of his son. Clashes between the wedding guests and Safa increase scene by scene as the villagers from the fear of Germans do not welcome the communist fighters in the house. Through the end of the movie the soldiers can send Lilo to the hospital, she heals and gets reunited with the battalion who welcome her as a heroine. I will mention some scenes which build the idea of the film and that of the characters. In the first scenes, in the way to the hospital the soldiers encounter with an Italian deserter whose only words are: *"I want to die, please kill me"*. One of the soldiers who speak with him is also an Italian named Bartolomeo, who has decided to fight among Albanians. He gives to the deserter the message: *"We have no right to die as we must take our revenge against the Germans. Come fight with us, the road of war will take us home. If you do not want to fight, at least work, do not ask for pettiness from anyone."* Here the director brings the message that first and foremost, is the fight against the occupier and that only through war we can come back home.

In the scene where Lilo is resting at the house of the old man Safa, his wife asks: *"Are you Turk or catholic?"*. The word Muslim is substituted with that of a nation which to the Albanian history in the cinematic experience represented the Islamic religion. The answer to that question is: *"I am a fighter of the Party"*. Here we are presented with the substitution of religion with that of the Party. Safa rejects the idea that girls are sent to fight in the war. One of the soldiers responds to him: *"Even Lilo has been proposed to marry but she married the bullet"*. On the contrary to her decision, there is Safa who prohibited his son to join the war and instead married him.

In other scenes, the wedding guests keep complaining about war as it is the one that kills their sons. In response to this thought, there is Lilo a woman who chose war instead of marriage. A brave woman who does not complain even though she is in pain due to her severe injury comes to the house where men are gathered and complain about war and politics. They chose to drink instead of fighting. But Safa's son, impressed by the soldier's patriotism, confronts his father, and joins the soldiers on their way. Lilo does not have an active role in the film. She has very few dialogues and almost no actions. But her decisions are the main purpose of the film itself. She is the message. With the resolve of the conflict at the end of the movie, she is rewarded for her sacrifice and is welcomed as a heroine from her battalion, and even starts the first glimpse of love with a soldier named Jaho. But this is shortly and quickly shown with the looks they give to each other.

In this movie, we see the case of the heroine in the front line. It is a film about courage. The plot is quite simple. This is another film that spreads patriotic emotions over the Independence War. It does

differ from other films dedicated to the war. We are used to seeing war in the first line. As for this film, it stays there indirectly. On the focus are the virtues of the hero during the war. His/her, unity feelings, the self-sacrifice, and love for the comrades. Overall, it is about a small group of partisans who try to send their comrade to a hospital after she was injured in a battle with the German enemy. Lilo, has a passive role, as she is hurt, and cannot fight. But that does not weaken her importance. Despite being in great pain and in danger of life, this woman holds herself and does not show any glimpse of worry. In the wedding scene, Safa, who has his own doubts about the war and does not see appropriate the participation of women in war, looks at Lilo with pettiness. Lilo rejects the pettiness as if to show that she does not need mercy and is proud of her decision. One of the few critiques addressed to this film, is that of Papagjoni (1971, pp, 7), who argues that there were exaggerated scenes of long walks, especially in the rain, the delay of action in the bridge scene, or the slow wedding. The long pauses happening often put the film at the risk of monotony. Overall is a movie in which the woman chooses the Party, and the Party protects and rewards her in the end for her sacrifice.

The movie “*Dimri I fundit*” (**Last Winter**) is the work of Ibrahim Muça and Kristaq Mitro in 1976. The editing director is Krisanthi Kotmilo. The plot is quite simple. Some partisans are hiding in the mountain and get all the aid and food from a village nearby. The German soldiers surround the village and try to take information from the villagers, but they do not speak. They kill the men of the village and only the women remain alive, but they still do not speak. The Germans leave them in the snowy cold night outside at the center of the village and yet the women do not surrender. So, the Germans decide to sneakily follow the women’s actions. The women must send aid, food, and clothes to the partisans at the mountain and must do this without being caught by the Germans. The movie revolves around the journey in the frosty snowy winter of these simple ordinary women of the village who go to help the partisans. The conflict is left in the hands of the women to solve and gives the message that the Party which is represented by the partisan soldiers have put their trust in the women and by the end of the movie we see that these women sacrifice everything and achieve their mission with success.

Compared to the previous movie, here the heroines have a more active role. In this film the figure of woman stands in primary place. We are presented with the heroism of Albanian woman during the Independence War. Instead of concentrating in one single character and her individualism, in this film we see the collective portrait of the woman in a mountainous village. The women in this film are in the center of the conflict as they want to help the partisan hospital, but the German Nazi forces try to stop them. These women do not need to speak or act according to their feeling, as they show where their beliefs stand in this situation only by showing the hatred in their eyes towards these soldiers. It is clearly obvious the separation of two different causes, two different wishes and two different groups who fight against each other in their own way and typically as we see in Albanian cinema, we witness

the victory of the side who is loyal to progressiveness, which in this world, that meant communism and its socialist ideology. In this film the audience clearly sees, the heroism of these woman who not necessarily with guns but with their pride and courage, are able to confront the Hitlerian regime, in the name of the high ideal of independence.

We have said that cinema in Albania was controlled by the Party, and it was built under socialist beliefs and ideology. Staying loyal to this spectrum, the Albanian directors still managed to shape their individuality respectively in the films they made. Ibrahim Muça and Kristaq Mitro are dedicated to the continuity and keeping up the tempo of the scenes. They escape from the danger of creating a weak inside world of the characters by continuously passing from one activity to another. As Lako (1983, pp. 25) observes, the camera does not focus on creating special personas, on the contrary, they focus on creating the collective image of women as heroines. The movie has successfully managed to decode the non-antagonist contradicts the society, and has given a hand to the main characters, by inspiring them to keep going in the fight for the cause they have set themselves. This is the journey of some simple women of a village who in frosty snowy winter, go to help the partisans hiding in the mountains. The image of snow and winter has become an artistic figure. The visual image of women in that situation is not only the winter of nature but also the winter of their lives. Winter is not just a season, but it is the plight of these women, and snow is not only the element of the season but the whiteness of their spirit of sacrifice, humanism, and stoicism to solve the problems that arose.

The fate of the heroine in the war through its most dramatical notes we see in the case of the film “*Yjet e neteve te gjata*” (**Stars of long nights**). A film directed by Viktor Gjika in 1973. The editing director is Krisanthi Kotmillo. It tells the story of a mother, Pashako, and her three boys who live in Gurre village. They work in the land that Pashako’s deceased husband left for them. Their calm life is disrupted when the fascist forces invade Albania. One of her boys, Tafili joins the partisans in the guerilla war, where he loses his life. Right after, the Nazi’s forces occupy Albanian territory, in which Pashako’s other two boys join in the Independence War.

Mother Pashako gifted to the freedom, to the war, her son. The story of mother Pashako, is the epic-dramatic story of thousands of other mothers and children who did not think twice, to fight for their freedom. The film is treated in heroic and dramatic tones. The main figure, that of mother Pashako, is one of the few cases in the Albanian cinema of the time, where the figure of a woman takes the most attention in the story plot. She is a heroine, which does not bow down no matter the difficulty standing in front of her. Her heart is full of motherly love and compassion, but she never shows weakness. She courageously confronts the pain without shedding a tear in front of the German army. As Koreshi (1973, pp. 7), says, she is the emblem of the Party’s philosophy which claims that you should never

give up, no matter the difficulty. If not today, tomorrow you shall win. He also praises, the actress Tinka Kurti for her portrayal of the image of mother Pashako. As she was able to transmit the enriched world of mother Pashako with all the complexities the character had. However, this is one of the movies which was mostly critiqued. The movie's central idea is that of presenting the cruelty of war, together with the sacrifices the people made against the enemy which in the end gets defeated. But in the article from Hoxha and Shehu (1972, pp. 3-4), it is widely treated the fact that art is not history. But in its essence, it artistically reflects history. The main point according to them is to reflect vital phenomena without being lost in the artistical desires, which risk overdramatizing a situation and losing the authenticity of facts. As for the Albanian people, they are realistic and they may feel alienated if to increase the vitality of the art, they forget to look at the contradicts as ideological means. This happened during the construction of mother Pashako which is totally separated from that of other women in the village. The director successfully managed to raise her figure from the people but could not manage to keep her inside the people. She is put in a pedestal, an extraordinary woman, whose two sons are killed, another one badly injured. Repeatedly we see over-dramatic scenes such as when the Germans burn her house and line her with other family members in front of the house ready to execute. In the end, as it is obvious in the Albanian communist cinema, the partisans arrive in time to rescue them and defeat the enemy. However, this kind of scene, give discomfort to the viewer according to Hoxha and Shehu (1972, pp. 3). When the Independence National War is treated in a film, it is a must to reflect it under optimist tones.

The heroine image of a woman from the battlefield jumps to the city in the educational system fighting assimilation as in the film *“Vajzat me kordele te kuqe” (Girls in red ribbons)*. A film directed by Gezim Erebara in 1978. The editing director is Neriman Furxhi. This film is a synthesis of the war, efforts, heroism, and sacrifices of the girls of the Tirana Women's Institute, who bravely and courageously oppose the demagoguery, violence and fascist terror that demanded the Italianization of the school and the assimilation of the Albanian nation. The antagonist is represented by the school board member Signorina Manchini. In support of the construction of an evil character from this woman, considering her brutal behavior towards the girls, there are scenes in which she prays to the Christ in Latin language. In this movie, the negative characters are resembled by the catholic religion. The young students remain in the image of the spectator as a collective figure that stands in the image fused with the environment, giving it vivid colors. We can say that the director Erebara has been helped by the influence of Italian neorealism or French cinema for the authenticity of the atmosphere in the cities and their streets. This film is one of the first ones that has in focus the Albanian young girl. The main character is Jeta (a name which means life in Albanian), and the story surrounds her and her girlfriends' actions. The antagonists in this film are the Italians and their fascist demagogies.

Each of these heroines' character is well-formed since the beginning of the movie, however, we still see their growth under the impact of the great popular revolution which again in this movie as well gives them victory. These girls, fought for the independence of the country, they rejected the fascist assimilation and their lead give the first glimpses of the emancipation of Albanian women. The main heroine, Jeta is executed at the end of the film, however, her role is martyred, as her ideas will live. Intentionally they gave her the name Jeta (Life), as to show that life nourished with those beliefs will always go on. In an analysis made by Gjonaj and Petrela (1979, pp. 7), we see that the movie critiques of that time graciously welcomed the arrival of the female figure in important roles in Albanian films. According to them, this should have happened long before, as it is crucial to reflect on the image of the Albanian woman since she has a crucial role in the development of Albanian society under socialist ideology.

A similar case is that of the movie “**Mesonjetorja**” (**The school**), a movie made by Muharrem Fejzo in 1979. The editing director is Krisanthi Kotmilo. This film through its ideo-emotional strength expresses the truth declared in the history of the nation: the struggle for knowledge as an important factor in gaining freedom. The film has a poetic conception, with strong lyrical notes and in most cases creates exciting situations. In the film we find the open and secret war to spread the Albanian language, the central figure of a girl who must face not only the Greek occupier but also the mentality of the time. This has required a more lyrical and psychological perspective which was totally justifiable according to Hoxha (1981, pp. 5), as the war is waged for such a great necessity of man as the mother tongue. On the other side, one of the critiques done of this film is by Abazi (1981, pp.6), who warns that this kind of thematic profile, should not be given the role of substitution of the real war the countryman has fought to win independence. Nevertheless, he does give credit to the “war” shown in the movie with respect to the fight for protecting the Albanian language against assimilation from foreign forces. Since it was correlated with the social forces of the time such as partisan groups of people in the guerilla war. The film starts with the arrival to the country of the protagonist, Dafina a well-educated woman, who intends to open the first Albanian school. She has the support of patriotic Albanian people who help her find the elementary tools for the school. But she must confront the representatives of outsider forces as well as with mentality of the time. The brave teacher achieves to open the school and teach Albanian to young children. The film is constructed by some specific scenes which form the message it aims to give. As such in the first scene, once Dafina passes the border, she bows and touches with her hand, her homeland. She is accompanied by the leader of the mission, Stefan. In the first dialogues, the Ottoman Empire is considered as a sinking ship, whereas the world – in this case, Europe -, is considered as an invader who tries to kidnap Albania. Dafina's outlook is quite moderated compared to the woman of the village. Her looks are Parisian and emancipated in

respect to the Party's understanding of emancipation. We recall the teachings of Enver about the removal of the veil, and in this film, the village women who are illiterate are veiled, whereas Dafina the educated woman is unveiled. In the following scene, the priest forces a beggar to kneel in front of him and kiss his hand in the middle of the street. It is rainy and the beggar is barefoot. The priest commands him to follow the church. In there, through dialogue, it is revealed that the beggar used to work for the priest but had left his side. The priest gives him shoes and commands him to spy on Stefan to later kill him at the first chance he gets. The movie is full of religious motives and hostile tendencies towards both Muslim and Catholic religions. There is a scene of the city from a bird's view in which both the cathedral bell and adhan from the mosque are loudly heard in a noisy enharmonically way. Dafina plans to open a school, so she goes to meet with the mayor of the village, a Turk resident who rules under the jurisdiction of the Ottoman Empire. The mayor's character is quite supercilious, and he tells Dafina that the Albanian language is doomed to vanish. He is not supportive of the opening of the school, but Dafina shows him the verdict she has brought from the Sultan himself, giving permission to open an Albanian school.

Throughout the film, the priest keeps having meetings with the mayor who is also an identifier of the Muslim religion. They conspire the murder of Stefan, a man who left his own little daughter staying with some family friends and went on his mission to teach and open schools in every city of Albania. In a meeting with his daughter, he corrects her choice of words as she would use the word "akşam" instead of the evening in the Albanian language. This scene is followed by the visit of the beggar at Stefan's house, who welcomes him warmly and even tries to teach him to write letters so the beggar can send them to his loved ones. The beggar is touched by Stefan's compassion and generosity as he invites us to eat together at the same table even though the beggar is uncleaned and has a hostile appearance. So, the beggar repents of his intention, asks for forgiveness, and tells Stefan about the priest's heinous plan. The plot goes on with the opening of the school, for which all the people help with what they can. Angered by this altruism, the priest during a mass at a church where many people were attending, curses the Albanian language and says that theist does not give his blessing on the protection of this language. He curses Stefan and even his little daughter. Most of the people get scared. In another scene, Dafina walks through the streets and hears from the windows of the buildings, on one side the Muslim imam's teaching Quran in Arabic to young boys, and on the other side the priest teaching the Bible in Latin to other boys. The voices crush each other creating a disturbing sound both for Dafina as well as for the audience as well. Frightened from the curse the villagers stopped sending their young girls to the school and Dafina is left only with Stefan's little daughter to teach. The mayor sends his army commander to put pressure on Dafina. Intrusively he loudly says the Ottoman alphabet and objectifies Dafina as a woman by saying: "*I came only to see your beautiful face*". Dafina stays

affirm and kicks him out. Stefan shows up again and makes a speech at the center of the village about the sanctity of the nation and mother tongue. Impressed by his speech the people start sending their daughters to school again. The peak moment is the burn of the school which makes Dafina revolt. Both the priest and the Turkish commander try to kick Dafina out of the village. But Stefan with his battalion compiled of partisans comes to the rescue. They kill the priest and threaten the major who gets scared and loses his power. In the last scene, when Stefan visits the school, he says: *“Today we brought the Albanian school, the next time we come, we will bring the freedom.”*. The role of Dafina has an immense power which is done intentionally to say that this nation gives birth to this kind of woman. She is the embodiment of Albanian language and culture, which stands as a monument against the foreign destructive invader. As Gjika says (1981, pp. 5), the compositions, and the fake glow at the church create a beautiful contrast with the life-giving warmth in the houses of the people, or in the schoolroom where Dafina teaches her first class. The actress Roza Anagnosti has embodied all the features of the patriotic teacher, who does not bow down against difficulties, who is compassionate and ready to dedicate her life to a big cause. She builds the persona of the renaissance teacher; whose eyes show hatred towards the enemy and love towards the people. She comes prepared and educated by the Party’s ideals. She stays affirmed in her mission despite the difficulties and it is the Party that protects and helps her achieve the big mission.

The philosophy of Albanian cinema-making included that sound artistic fabrication relies on the real truths of the time, on those political, ideological, social, and psychological factors that determine the class and individual relationships and actions. It is precisely where artistic truth begins to rise without the solid foundations of realistic truth, that realism and the ideo-emotional force of action are lost.

The last case for this categorization is the movie *“Koncert ne vitin ’36”*, (*Concert in ’36*) made by Saimir Kumbaro in 1978. The editing director is Nazmie Sula. It is a film that reflects on the previously mentioned case of heroines who through their actions demask the ignorance and misleading of foreign forces. This is a film of color that starts with the shot of a gramophone playing and as the plate whirls, the scene shifts to another time through the image of a cart transporting a piano. This film revolves around the story which has in the center two women. The main character is Donika, a young woman raised by a patriotic family, and the supportive character is Eleni, a middle-aged pianist. Both these women want to share their art with the simple people and to do that they decide to go on a tour through Albania which was in the post-monarchial period; a system that according to socialism had left the people in full ignorance. These two women go to the city of Lushnja, and the repertoire they choose were all songs that are beloved by the community, which helped to create an immediate connection and acceptance from the people. The conflict stands with the law representatives as antagonists, people full of ignorance, carrying toxic philosophy remained from the monarchial regime.

The plot has at its center the life of an artist during a socio-historical period, being confronted by the feudal-bourgeois conservative regime. The story revolves around the organization of the concert for which the mayor and the imam come against. But none confronts the women. The mentality of the people is shown in detail hidden inside the scenes. For example, the artists go to have lunch in a cafeteria filled with men who have never seen uncovered women go out in the streets, let alone sit in their cafeterias. The veil is presented as the symbol of ignorance whereas the uncovered women in this case the artists, as the symbol of education and emancipation. In the cafeteria Donika and Eleni make fun of the awkwardness of the place by saying that let alone in the city center, they will also sing at the top of the minaret of the mosque. The imam revolted by this goes to the mayor and tries to stop the concert by saying that these women are “dishonest prostitutes”. The mayor is an Italian catholic who sees himself higher than the common people and is delusional in his belief that he is the one fighting the “occidental culture” among people. The concert eventually is held, and the people’s spirits are cheered. Through their art, Donika and Eleni can unite the people, show their wish to change from the status quo, and highlight the ignorance and corruption in the city hall whose leaders end up being ridiculed by the people.

We are now familiar with this typical scenario where a hero/heroine representing the good moral of socialism fights against evil remains of bourgeois previous regimes. This film stays loyal to this. What took my attention however was the way it was treated from the movie critiques of the time. Hoxha, (1979, pp. 3), speaks highly of the good performance of the actors, also praises the scenario which according to him, managed well in expressing each idea it had in plan by reflecting those on the actions of main characters. However, every mission performed by the main characters or that of the people of Lushnja in general, are translated as the fight in the name of democracy which is supported and approved by the critique. This is not a single case, in most of the articles I have checked, for most of the films done, we are presented with the notion of democracy which served till the rescue from previous regimes, later switching to freedom but this goes hand in hand with what the Party decided as freedom for the individual. According to the system of the communism era, Albania did have democracy and it was manifested by characters carrying the best moral and ideological values in films. One of the artistic values is that the priority of the dialogue stems from the very idea of the film. It is no coincidence that the two artists who are the protagonists of the film speak very little. They just sing, and that is the basic action in the film. The correct relationship between the qualitative predominance of the singer and the frugal word of the people creates that artistic unity of the specific cinematic language in this film. The two protagonists do not have much dramatic weight in the film, for their "transitional" position. They are guests, they come in a very backward environment, even after a failure in another city where they could not give a concert. Their problem of the opportunity to give

the concert or not is seen mainly from the outside. They just play the artist who will give the concert. Their attributes as characters have not been touched. If such a thing were to happen, then their role would be not only that of the artist but also of the intellectual man of the time, who, after studying art from Europe, collided with the medieval reality of the country, a collision that would bring a real drama.

The reason why this topic is repeatedly highlighted was for the Party-state to create a collective memory of a dangerous era as a threat to individual and national freedom, which thanks to the Party-state, - as mentioned earlier introduced itself as the main force that fought the invaders-, it is no longer a threat. It implies the gratitude each one should feel for the system they live in which was always declared as glorious and no other country could come close to it.

4.1.2. Emancipation of women during the weakening of the influence of the Kanuni Law

The Party-state loudly spoke of the emancipation of women considering her the main figure in the construction of a healthy socialist society. Albania was a patriarchal society for centuries and one of the main cells of the DNA of Albanian folkloric tradition is the Kanuni Law. The written law from the monarchy period and so on is not legalized however it is inherited and applied in most families and the society still is under its influence. It is a constitution especially applied in the mountainous area with very rough limitations on individual freedoms for women.

A second categorization in the formation of the woman image during the communist cinema, is that of the overthrown Kanuni law, the change of mentality of men, and the first steps of the emancipation of women going hand in hand with the early developments of the socialist society. In this case, as well, the Party-state's ideology is in implying what kind of risks the state is saving the Albanian women which for centuries fates were decided by other men. To my understanding and as I will widely analyze further on, we will at least see with a doubt notion the fact that women's fate decided by men is a situation which went on even in the communist era but with the different notions put on it.

The first example to give regarding this issue is that of the movie "**Nusja**", (**The bride**), made by Gezim Erebara in 1980. The editing director is Atalenta Pasko. The journey of the character is the main issue in Albanian cinema. If it is a usual person with no perspective, even a walk he/she makes on the street does not intrigue the audience. For every step, a person is holding an ideal and a mission

carries emotional and psychological elements. The “movement” on-screen is always related to the expressive mission it holds. The film “**The bride**” does not pass this test according to Abazi (1981, pp. 11), who considers the walk the bride has with Bali, a walk with only decorative purposes. As if the film is trying to hide the lack of “movement” in the inside world of the characters. This film according to him, which carries a deep thought in its center, does not reveal that to the viewer through movements or usual actions. They do not express the ideo-emotional inside or the social and individual drama the heroes have. We can see this in the scene where the bride, tells the groom that “she belongs to another”. According to the Kanuni law and order, (which socialist ideology tries to erase from human behavior), this means moral and spiritual war. The audience having this knowledge, naturally expects war to happen, the human rights, the Kanuni force suppression to clash with each other. The film chooses suspense and adventure instead of confrontation. Another critique done is again related to the decomposition of the central idea from the artistical figurative point of view. As Gjika (1981, pp. 6) argues, the camera is fixated and did not interpret what happened in screen. The lack of optimal natural light, or the lack of a creative work in the construction of the portraits of the characters, the undressing of dramaturgical action from the necessary dramatic atmosphere of waiting, anxiety and the discovery of truth have faded the emotions and the artistical level of the film. However, I would not consider the film a failure in this spectrum. I shall mention three scenes which I consider are enough to bring voice to the development of the characters. Firstly, when the bride is getting ready to marry, her facial expressions obviously show her unwillingness as she is in love with another man. Her mother understanding the situation, and totally obeying to the Kanuni law which condemns with death a hidden love and the destiny of a girl is decided by the old wise man, says to her that this is the destiny of a woman. Here we see the first glimpse of de-stratification women have to the Kanuni law, but also the lack of power the mother, and the woman, in general, have in changing it. The second scene starts in the marital room on the first night of the marriage between the bride and Bali, when she says to him that she is under her guardian, but she is not hers as she is in love with another man, Sokol. Here is the second glimpse and the starting point of changes, as it is unexpected for a woman to show this courage knowing that according to Kanuni law this means her death. After this, the spectator, familiar with the tradition expects the murder of the bride by the groom Bali. The third scene is about the journey these two have, and the suspense keeps growing as the dialogue between them is very little and the destination is unknown. There are three climax moments from here till the end of the movie. Firstly, the groom sends her to the grave of her deceased brother and tells her to give him her farewell. The murder is expected but does not happen. Later, near the river, he imagines killing her and sees the reflection of this image in the river. He brings out the revolver and instead of shooting at the bride, she shoots at this reflection. This is the turning point and I believe that this road was not only for

decorative purposes, as in each step we see the evolution of the character Bali, and his inner fight with the Kanuni law. The film ends with Bali sending the bride to the house of Sokol and leaving her there, which let us believe that the fight Bali had with the old traditions, he won. Overall, the film is focused on the male character's journey, but it is all about the fate of the girl. The bride does not have too many actions to show, however, her courage in confronting the law and speaking out her feelings, is enough to put her in the figure of a courageous woman. The film shows how the destiny of women was chosen by men during Kanuni law, and with the new era of socialism, these new men and women fight with the outside and inner world in changing this.

An improvement of the mentality of mountainous man and the start of moderation is given in the film **“Cuca e maleve” (The girl of the mountains)**, directed by Dhimiter Anagnosti in 1974. The editing director is Marika Vila. This film has a simple language yet is expressive. The party gave the people freedom, and the people protect it as the most important thing in their lives. The sons and daughters of the Party, carrying the ideals of the Party in their hearts, are ready to sacrifice everything when it comes to nation or socialism. This idea is materialized through the character of Cuca (the girl), which is a typical representative of the revolutionary girl. The film from the beginning till the end is described through a revolutionary pathos with optimist tones dominating. As argued by Minga (1974, pp.6), the film and the build of characters especially of the heroine, is so successful that the spectator leaves the cinema hall full of legitime pride of meeting with a heroine such as Cuca. According to Minga, the audience no matter the gender or age is inspired to walk through the shoes of Cuca because only like that the socialist nation can grow more powerful. In a scene, we see a panorama of a mountain and the sun and right after that, the image of Cuca comes. It is a symbolization of Cuca, the girl of the mountains, fighting and protecting the shiny sun, the sun of the Party. Our heroine is fierce and does not stop, no matter the difficulty coming in front of her. Through Cuca we see the emancipation of the socialist woman, who can be an artist and can fight for her country if she is nourished by the ideals of the Socialist Party. Her ideas triumph as she can tear off the mask of the priest and despite her falling, she still is able to rise, almost giving her an immortal image since through her the ideals of the Party are immortal. Cuca besides the conflict she has with the enemy also must deal with the obstacles coming from her brother who does not support her and even tries to stop her. But the audience does not antagonize this character as he is a son of the Party and his heart is clean, he just needs to be shown the true way, which eventually in the film it happens.

In the film, we see two different worlds that do not match each other. The world is full of light and optimism reflected in Cuca, and the dark one is reflected by the enemies led by the priest, who is destined to be destroyed by the greatness of the Party. The film was mostly praised by the critics except for some short remarks made by Kaceli (1974, pp. 6), who defends the domination of the ballet

atmosphere as it is how the story unfolds. That is why he finds unnecessary the many shots of nature since according to him, it disrupts the logical development of events. If the scenes would keep happening in the atelier, the stylistic unity of the film would have been preserved.

As a continuity in the progress, but in this case with also help from the city, we have the case of the film "*Thirrja*" (**The call**), directed by Fehmi Hoshafi in 1976. The editing director is Krisanthi Kotmilo. The film "**The call**" has generally achieved its goal of reflecting and bringing to the viewer the period when the edge of the Party and People's War was directed against the religious worldview and patriarchal worldview that hindered the emancipation of women. The movie tells the story of a young communist vet, who decides to go life in a village. He wants to spread there the sound spirit of the Party's teachings. He will fight against the religious prejudice and conservative views on the introduction of scientific methods in livestock. In this film we find the most realist presentation of the socialist village under construction. The village is shown as moderated since the villagers have started sending their daughters to school. The mountain woman, who for centuries have been under the control of the Kanun laws which held the most patriarchal values, have managed to come out on top of it and has started to activate herself in the social life in the village. She even started working in ruling positions. The female character named Zoga portraying the Party secretary has an effective role even though she often appears detached from the continuity of other scenes. She stands by with the vet who comes to the village, and they combine their powers in the war to build socialism and to make fundamental changes in the village. As Feshti (1976, pp. 6), explains, even though the role of the secretary is secondary, which sometimes goes down to the level of simply being a debutant in the film, there was still nicely managed to portray to the audience as a secretary of the Party that persistently and wisely fights to save the simple villagers from the patriarchal prejudices by firstly starting with the members of her family, later continuing with the whole village. These messages are shown through the details in some specific scenes which I am about to list. The film starts with the footage of the village and focuses on a propaganda message written on the wall saying: "*My place/home, is where my nation needs me to be.*" It is followed by the arrival of the vet named Kujtim from the city. As he enters the village accompanied by Zoga, he sees the church located in a picturesque area and says: "*It would be perfect if instead of this, there was an art/culture house.*" The villagers start complaining about livestock's low number and about productivity in agriculture blaming the rocky terrain. Zoga answers them saying: "*If necessary, we will make bread even from the stones. Let us not forget that we are better today compared to the past when everyone was looking for himself only. Together we shall resolve every problem we have*". As an emphasis on Zoga's message about progress, we see the propaganda written in the walls of the clinic nearby saying: "Fire to all the regressive traditions and religious toxic garbage".

It follows with a scene in which Kujtim is invited for dinner at Zoga's house which she lives with her parents. The father says: "*She is a woman, despite that, she is chosen as Party representative in our community*". Zoga's mother calls them to gather around the table by saying: "*Welcome, come and eat from what God provided us with*". Immediately, Zoga corrects her by saying: "*You should better say; with what we provided ourselves, as God does not give us anything. He is angry at us, but we are angry at him as well*". The father speaks of the difficulties of not having a son, as in the tradition of these mountains, not having a son means death for the future of the household. But the vet says that: "*Zoga, is better and more capable than any man in every aspect*". The father agrees with him. The conflict arises with the priest as the antagonist who brainwashes the minds of a few peasants yet to be educated that private property is in damage the collective wellbeing. The priests' house is full of crystals and maids. Whereas the peasant's houses are very modest. Gives an implication that he steals through church funds given by the people. Ndue, the man who oversees the livestock, goes to dinner at the priest's house, during the working hours as he is assigned to the night shift. In the meantime, a fire starts, which could have been prevented if Ndue would fulfil his duty, but he gives no value to the cooperative possessions. The village gathers and together saves what they can from the fire. Another character with regressive thoughts but a good in heart is Vata. He does not allow his daughter to go to work as other girls do. The people who by believing the Party's ideals, are the embodiment of the Party itself, talk to him and teach him what is good and what is wrong. Another problem the movie treats is that of divorce and second marriage. As the priest has cursed the family of a man named Sala for getting divorced and marrying again with Maria. It is implied that Sala divorced the first wife due to her infidelity. This film is propaganda about abandoning church and religion and abandoning private property and investing in public property as for the public one is the peoples. It also supports the marriage out of love or after a previous divorce. An old man named Pala who is sick, is also cursed by the priest. The people used to believe on the validity of the curses made by the church, therefore they are frightened. So, in the plot, in order to not connect his sickness with religion curses, it is the Party which brings a helicopter from the capital to take Pala at the hospital. His quick recovery gives the message that even if God curses you, the Party comes even in the rustiest territory to save you.

The regressive thoughts, such as women working, or women having leading roles, or women's marriage to be decided by others and not themselves, are embodied in the antagonist characters who as well are enemies of the reforms the Party aims to apply. The resolution of any conflict, let it be agriculture or property of woman's destiny, are in this case as well solved by the Party. The main idea in the film is that of building and presenting the village as socialist that works to create the new life with the help of "new man" communists, let them be from the village or coming from the city, because this way the difference between city and village can be evaporated faster and in an easier way.

The last example of this category treats the case where the Kanuni law still hides in the mentality of men. The film “*Plage te vjetra*” (**Old wounds**), through the direction of Dhimiter Anagnosti, treats this issue among other ones. The editing director is Xhanfise Keko. This film is made in 1969, which also coincides with the 25th anniversary of Independence War. The greatest success in those times is the emergence of the revolutionary new man with high moral qualities. But the ideology of the former exploiting classes still exerted its influence on uninformed people, which is expressed in all the attitudes they display in life. The fight against them was one of the main tasks of Albanian art. This is where the central idea of the film comes from. The theme of the film is taken from current life; it addresses social problems, problems related to the struggle to temper the revolutionary consciousness of the people. The characters in the film are people of the present day; mountaineer from Mirdita city Gjini, Doctor Vera, her husband engineer Naimi etc. The film takes place on two main lines that naturally intertwine with each other and make the central idea unfold. Through the events, the film aims to reveal to the audience the spiritual world of people without fuss but with truth. The subject of the film is simple. The event begins in a village in Kurbnesh, where an incident occurs. There we meet one of the main characters Gjini, who goes to the hospital in the capital to take out a bullet of his body which he has kept for 27 years. This bullet is symbolic of the prejudged man hold up for years and years in those areas. There he sees that the surgeon is a woman. Here are the two main lines of the film: the line of Gjini and Vera. After that, events begin to unfold with intensity. The field of action of the heroes is wide: the new village on the verge of electrification, the mine, the hospital where it breaks the wrong concepts, the family, etc. Engineer Naimi wants to return to work in the mine, which means the beginning of a new life in the village. But it contradicts Vera, for whom live outside of surgery is meaningless and if she were to go to the village, she would no longer perform surgery. This was the second line of the film. In this film, we are dealing mainly with conceptual conflicts. Naim's act appears in the film as an organic part of the heroism of the day, as a characterization of the high moral qualities of the people to be where they feel they are for the benefit of society. The spiritual drama that Vera lives on is believable. She was raised by a family with sound ideas. But in her mind have taken place the concepts that are not right for work according to Party's principles. The author of the film must put Vera in such circumstances which convincingly reveal these bourgeois concepts that prevent Vera from realizing that the doctor's job is not to make a career but to serve wherever the homeland demands. The specialty of surgery has pleased her ego, so she finds it difficult to part. In Vera, there are concepts of a different kind from those of Gjini, but both types of concepts are detrimental to the revolutionary worldview of life. The film presents this social reality that opposes Vera and rejects her misconception. When her father sees the prejudice in Vera's thoughts about the village and villagers, he angrily orders her: *“Since you are so ungrateful to this nation which*

educated you and gave you the chance to be a doctor, it is a must for you to go and payback the honor wherever the nation needs.”. At work, her mentor speaks as: *“Medicine is not a science in which we can have a career. Our duty as doctors is to send back safe and sound at the great front line of work all our comrades”*. It leaves space for the interpretation that the job is not in principle about saving lives but saving the body needed for labor. Family and work conversations affect Vera until she expresses her willingness to go to work in the village. In a monologue, she says: *“There are some concepts which you are not even aware that exists in you. They show up one day and will not let you move forward. Winning over yourself is greatly difficult”*. These kinds of propaganda put pressure on women and force them to change their identities.

For Gjini, a mountaineer with a pure soul, it is still incomprehensible how a female surgeon will operate on her. Gjini's attitude in this film is condemned but not despised. Gjini is a man who loves the Party and the new Albania that is being built but still maintains many old concepts that need to be uprooted. His distrust of surgeon Vera has to do with the centuries-old underestimation of the woman who was said to have "long hair and mind shorted". The influence of the Kanuni law still works. Gjini changes his mind, and in the end both Gjini and Vera "recover". In a sign of gratitude, he gifts her some handmade socks which Vera firstly rejects on accepting as she does not expect a reward for doing her duty. But Gjini replies such as: *“Your work cannot be repaid with a couple of socks, but I will repay it to the Party by working even harder in the cooperative. Vera gifts him back a pen which Gjini says that he will give to his niece, which implicated his change of thought and beginning of supportiveness on the girl's education case in mountainous villages.*

It would have been to the benefit of the film if the spiritual connections, the love between Vera and Naim, and their worries had been deepened. The film would be dramatic and create more emotion for the viewer, argues Siliqi, Ll. (1969, pp. 4). Naim insists that he is forgetting his profession away from the mine, while Vera insists that she will forget her profession away from the operating room. This begs the question: why should Vera go and keep her husband? In the scene in front of the furniture shop, she tells her husband, when he complains that he has lost the joys that engineering gives him, that he will take the joys for himself by taking away her joys. The motive of practicing the profession is underlined in the framework of other motives and does not prevail. If it prevailed, we would have a conservative essence of the film in favor of the man, who can make any decision, and to the detriment of the woman who must automatically go after the man, which is not on the agenda of the Party. The film militates for husband and wife to always walk one step, with the working-class step. The new social family becomes powerful when the husband-and-wife fight as revolutionaries for the same purpose. This problem in the film arises against the background of the efforts of all workers to

eradicate the stains of the past and to advance themselves by following the Marxist-Leninist teachings of the Party.

However, I must say that in this rehabilitation of Vera, I did not see any cause-effect scene, rather it was a simple reflection of the words people told her. It can easily be translated as Vera who is an emancipated well-educated and independent woman, making her decisions in accordance with the impose of the people around her, which clashes with the image of an independent woman. But I must emphasize the fact that a fully emancipated intellectual woman is always formed under the socialist manners.

4.1.3. **Women's' fight against the blizzards of patriarchal mentality**

Following the overthrow of Kanuni law interpretation, the Albanian cinema pays attention to the blizzards of the “previous patriarchal system” which is an ongoing change that through the guide of socialist ideology every character learns to heal. The cases I shall mention we will see the use of humor in this comedy sub-genre movies, which in some cases as pure humor and in others as harsh satire tend to show the absurdity of still having old mentality. This is a lesson which is not only given to men but also to women characters who have yet to realize the new life. This patriarchal mentality which is empowered by harmful prejudices gets overthrown with the presentation of emancipated women in cities and villages. This is shown by prevailing educated women in work and women of villages who start raising their voices and start taking their life under their control. The Party-state's ideological implication, in this case, is that of the Party is the one who gives women their voices and supports them in teaching” the world the lesson they need to learn.

The first example to give is that of the comedy film “*Zonja nga qyteti*” (**A lady from the town**), directed by Piro Milkani in 1976. The editing director is Androniqi Vangjeli. This is a film with cheerful notes. The conflict starts with the role of a worried mother, Ollga, who tries her best to stop her daughter from going to work as a doctor in a village. Ollga has the wrong concept of village life and according to her, emancipation and moderation are impossible to be found in a village, and it is a waste for a well-educated girl like her daughter Meli, to waste her life and career in the village. The villagers welcome these two women warm-heartedly, and through humoristic scenes, they do their best to heal Ollga from these old wrong beliefs. Uncle Bako is one of them, an old man who despite being retired, still works to serve his village. He shows Ollga the real face, a good face of life in the village

with compassion and from an emotional perspective. On the other side, there is the secretary of state Sala, whose help is shown in convincing and educative ways. Traboini (1977, pp. 3), finds acceptable and quite normal the punishment given to Ollga which was through humoristic and soft tones. Ollga was a character who despite her prejudices, every action hers was self-revolved. But even if her “wrongful prejudice” does harm only to herself, the new socialist society has the moral duty to fix her, which in some cases happened to be by lowering her persona and putting her in ridiculous situations, which were translated as innocent humor. The character of mother Ollga, goes through positive spiritual transformation. Her daughter Meli, a sincere friendly educated girl, works with enthusiasm in the collective initiatives of the youth in the village. Different from other films in which we may see the development of life in a village, here we see that progress is finished. This was not preferable to the movie critiques of the time, like Gurashi (1977, pp. 6), as it would have been better to show the progress itself how it happened rather than seeing the villagers having fun most of the time. During the events of the film, Olga evolves, and the relationship between the mother and the love for her daughter and the woman with micro-bourgeois and patriarchal waste changes. This movie goes as a franchise with a follow-up movie called “*Nje shoqe nga fshati*”, (**A comrade woman from the village**). The director is Piro Milkani in 1980 and the editing director is Krisanthi Kotmilo. It starts with the entrance of a truck that transports theatrical instruments and objects and posters from the previous movie “**A lady from the city**”. Uncanny for the Albanian cinema, here we have the case of intertextuality. The film “**A lady from the city**” is prepared as a theatrical play, and all the actors, from the previous film, go and see themselves portrayed by new actors. The film has the intention of being a follow-up to show the continuity of the progressivity reforms have done in that village and to those people. Ollga is not that satisfied with the theatrical play, as she is embarrassed to see that old version of herself full of prejudices and regressive thoughts on life in the village. Through reflection, she separates herself from that version of herself by saying: “*That is the old Ollga, I am the new better one*”. The reforms the Party imposes on people -which come with a relative understanding of its benefits- require people to delete any trait in their character which does not go fit to the larger agenda. The film’s one purpose is the publicity of the progress, as is it quite generous with footage of new machinery, and great productivity in agriculture. The village has all the equipment needed to have a prosperous life and to be in contact with the cities as well. In the previous film, it is Olga who is being trained and taught all the new beliefs. In this one, it is Ollga who is given the mission to teach others what she has learned. We see Ollga reading magazines on cinema topics, while she prepares for the study program of a class, she plans to teach at the school named: “*The educative plan on economy, on how to be a good housewife, and on how to learn embroidery*”. The committee of the Party sends Ollga a mail-in which it is written: “*You have given a great example by going to the village. Your*

experience will help us on our common fight against the wrong concepts some parents hold by prohibiting their children to go work wherever the nation needs". The letter comes directly from the committee leader, a woman named Merita Jovani. This character shows up only with this letter, but the position she holds and the absence of her presence, adds an omnipotent feature to her character, since she is the representative of the Party and of the leader Enver Hoxha as well. In another scene, Meli's (Ollga's daughter) husband is applying to be part of the Party. Ollga waits outside the meeting room anxiously with her friends. In their dialogues we understand that the biography of the person applying and of his family are well checked to see if they have any remains of regressive toxic ideas. His acceptance is welcomed as a great victory, and it is the first time that Ollga considers the groom as her own son by saying: "*You are mama's communist son*". In this scene, we see Ollga making another reflection on her wrong past and by showing gratitude towards the villagers she says: "*I came full of rubbish, but you gave me a communist family*". As the plot goes by, there is shown that a few of the village girls are preparing to go to university, but this matter is treated so normally as if to say that this is no longer news in the country they are living in now. The movie does not have major conflicts, but rather small ones which are treated with humor and compassion towards the persons who have regressive traits yet remained in their identity. For example, the mailman wants to marry his daughter with a man in the city, but his daughter Lule is in love with a young man who came from the city to live and work in the village. The issue is resolved, Lule stays affirm in her decision and with the help of the villagers, she changes the mind of her father. In the last scene, in addition to the messages given throughout the film, another one is brought quickly to the attention of the audience. Ollga goes for a visit to the city where she meets her old friends. One of them asks her about the groom: "*I have heard that he is Muslim. Is that true?*". Ollga's answer is: "*He is a teacher*". We see that religion has been substituted with the profession. Overall, the film is treated on cheerful optimistic notes, and there is an equal share of decision-making among men and women. Farer to say is that the character of Ollga has much more space than anyone, and that this story as well revolves around her. A decision quite expected if we are to consider that her role is in service of the messages the Party wants to give to the people.

Similar in messages but with more direct messages toward men, is the film "**Kapedani**" (**The captain**), directed by Fehmi Oshafi and Muharrem Fejzo in 1971. The editing director is Marika Vila. It is a realist comedy with tones of seriousness, which calls out important social issues. It is not a comedy based on grotesque, as in this case humor is in the service of the drama in the film. It is a movie with a male character being in the protagonist role, which is also one of the critiques made by Gjonaj (1971, pp. 33-34), who gives his remarks on the fact that the other actors stay in shadow more than it should be compared to the screen time given to the main character uncle Sulo. It should not be

left unmentioned the fact that the secondary characters are played by amatory actors, as the main ones are played by professional ones. The film is about a patriotic old man called uncle Sulo, who has regressive thoughts on the topic of women. The movie first takes place in the southern village, where the cooperative leader is a woman. In the Albanian socio-cultural beliefs, an old man with mustaches represents wisdom, and experience and must be treated with dignity. In a scene, the cooperative leader gives to uncle Sulo the duty to watch the chickens. This makes uncle Sulo furious, as for him is imperceptible for a woman to give orders, especially of such low rank to an old man with a mustache. So, uncle Sulo decides to go to his friend Rapi who used to be a commissar and now works in the capital. Here starts the confrontation with the conflict. What identifies this film besides being one of the first comedies made, is also the way the conflict is built. This film represents the contradicts raising in the Albanian society, as it tries to leave behind the toxicity of foreign bourgeoisie impact, and fully embrace the socialist understanding, but with no antagonist character. Uncle Sulo is a good old man who even fought in the Independence War and has embraced the socialist ideology. However, due to the traits the pressure of revisionism still uncleared from his subconsciousness, he is unable in the beginning to comprehend the new emancipation of women. Him going to the capital will serve as a lesson that he tries to reject until the very end. In the capital, women were bus/taxi drivers, and police officers would work in barbershops, or were artists performing in the National Opera of the city. Even his friend Rapi who was a commissar, the last hope of uncle Sulo, was working under the command of a woman. There are a couple of examples I want to mention. For example, when he goes to the capital, he sees a mosque in the city square. By that time, most mosques were destroyed but that one survived due to the architectural values but no longer functioned as a religious place. Uncle Sulo tells a pedestrian crossing by: *"You people in the capital are much regressed from what I expected, as we in the village have got rid of these long times ago"*. The main purpose of the film is the comprehension of the emancipation of women yet finds space to put the other ideas of the greater agenda of the Party, such as the vanishing of any religious beliefs. The second example is that of Uncle Sulo's son who lives in the city. In uncle Sulo's visit to his house, he sees him cooking and cleaning as his wife is working and comes home late. A performance unacceptable and incomprehensible at the time for him. The director of the film decides to give examples of progressivity of thought in the closest people of Uncle Sulo, as to show that moderation has entered even in his household, and he is alone in this delusive fight against progress.

The role of woman characters in this film looks secondary as they do not talk much and do not play decisive roles in the continuity of the film. But indirectly, each one of them portrays an emancipated woman in the socialist society, who are firm very capable in performing any kind of work. Being continuously presented with this image embraced by men and woman in the capital, uncle Sulo in the

end is convinced on the great force of woman, their great contribution in the construction of the socialist society. As he turns to the village reeducated, he says to his old fellas: "*Women are a great force, we the old men have to leave the wheel to the women to direct from now on*". Woman can work, think, and create just as well as men. It was in the Party's agenda to dive into the reflections of the socialist society through the contradicts of the time. Overall, the film gives the impression that the most valuable capital of Albanian society was its man, and it was everyone's combined fight to achieve his moral rescue.

The case where humor is combined with satire is that of the film "***Perralle nga e kaluara***" (**A tale from the past**), directed by Dhimiter Anagnosti in 1987. The editing director is Shpresa Papavilo. This comedy tells the story of 14-year-old Gjino, whose elderly parents decide to marry Marigone, who is much older, to have someone to serve him for every need at home. Marigo is in love with Trimi but the family forces her to marry Gjino. Marigo takes revenge on everyone and finally manages to get married to Trimi. The film is oriented towards folklore creativity by absorbing its motifs to a high degree as if they were in legend. The first premise of the unity of the artistic figure of this film is the unity of the dramatic idea which stems from a strong event such as the surprise of how a young girl is forced to marry a boy still a child. Birth, marriage, and death are extreme moments in human life. The drama of the film takes marriage as a starting point. The birth is presented in Marigo's intrigue about the fake pregnancy that takes up a lot of space when Marigo's revenge on the evil world is given. Death is present in the episode of poison-filled cups when Marigo and her father-in-law decided to wash away the shame of death as this fake pregnancy, since Gjino is still a child, creates suspicions and rumors about an extramarital affair of Marigo with her father-in-law. What permeates the unity of the idea is the unique life action and the intrigue of the heroine which is opposed all over the world.

The unique idea of individual freedom, of its liberation from the chains of backward mentality, finds harmonious support with the unity of the "world", against which the heroine protests, and in the unity of the subjective action built entirely in the form of jokes and satire. This unity is expressed in the unique method of intrigue that makes you laugh and in the dramaturgy of the subject. The revenge of the heroine begins with Gjino, with a bitter joke which does not last long. She ties him to the cradle and slams him to the floor and then stops as he feels sorry for her. Both she and Gjino were "guilty" without guilt and at the same time victims. Their relationship continues as sister and brother. The plot of her action rises above the mother-in-law, the intrigue and jealousy created which this character fully deserves, as it is shown that at the beginning of the film Tana, the mother-in-law is the one who insists on marrying the two. Man, and family are the cells of society. With the marriage of the son, Tana did not act simply as an individual but as a social individual with the mindset of society in backward bandages. Even the intrigue with the fake pregnancy by putting pillows under the dress goes outside

the walls of the family and is chosen in public, among the women gathered in an engagement of the village. The subjective action of the film with jokes against the mother-in-law and the village occupies a very wide place, responding to the relations that man has with the family and the social environment in this case with the inhabitants of the village. The essence of the dramatic idea of the film, which is a joke with the regime's authorities, is the culmination of the subject. If the pregnancy pillow and poisonous cups are jokes that end in laughter, the "hanging of the mayor and priest" who approved of this absurd marriage and even flirted with Marigo secretly, showing their true face in front of the village, it was a stern satire that follows the joy of "establishing justice" by Marigo marrying Trim who she loved. If the women of the village said: "We are women, we have no luck in our hands", Marigo says: *"I will shout so the world hears what you are doing to me"*. She is a realistic positive heroine and wants to shout against the world because it is the pressure of the world's opinion and the mentality that depersonalizes the individual, that forces her to rise in protest. This movie is a protest. It is made through jokes which gives the opportunity to discover the tragic essence of the absurdity that surrounds the individual.

4.1.4. Women's role in the construction of Socialist society

We shall continue with the types of films that during the socialist society when the socialist behavior has been implemented to its people, show the risk of some characters both antagonists and "good people with bad beliefs" who choose personal interest over the collective one. The Party's ideological implication in these films is that of the vigilance of the state which in some cases is shown by state representatives and in others by the common people, who are the voice of the Party, and in unity teach others to choose the collective interest over the personal one.

The first example is that of the film *"Ne pyjet me bore ka jete"* (**In the snow-clad forests there is life**), directed by Rikard Ljarla in 1978. The editing director is Marika Vila. This is a film of clear and simple thematic. It does not include intrigues or rough conflicts, rather it the story is treated in a poetic way. The dialogues are of realist style, and it is an example of providing truthiness in its atmosphere and more importantly, reveals the enriched spiritual world of the communist people. The agenda of the time the movie was produced is about the beauty of socialist life, and the ability to overcome any difficulty while building this life. The main idea speaks of the ideal that everywhere in the country, let it be in the city, or in a lost village hidden in the mountains, life is beautiful. The formula for this ideal

life, is when everyone chooses the common interest instead of the personal gain in service of the ideals, socialism conveys. The village where the story unfolds is in the mountains covered in snow. Even though the nature does not make living there most welcoming, it is the hospitality of the people that makes it likable. As explained by Pepo (1978, pp. 7), the movie gives the message that the socialist life has been able to enter even in the farthest village of the country. This is shown with electricity towers being built, the espresso machine or tv found in the work offices. The film does not have any antagonist characters however few conflicts in service of the main idea exist. The main characters are Luke an economist and his wife Donika who are transferred to a mountainous village. Luke is a hardworking man who has intellectual beliefs over work and life. For the time being, intellectual ideas such as the pursue of a career led by personal gain are unacceptable. In this film as well, through small details with no pressure, Luke comes to his “senses”. Luke is not guilty of the charge, he is only “uninformed” on the broader aspect of life in the country. His wife Donika is the embodiment of the young woman, optimistic about life, and kind to everyone. She is the first to comprehend and adapt to the new life and finds no difficulty in willingly accepting that life is beautiful everywhere if the people in it are beautiful. Just as her character is simple with no ups and downs, beautiful and fulfilled, the film implies that the socialist life in Albania at that time is like that. However, Donika being the embodiment of the socialist ideology in this film with no big conflicts disturbs me. Even though Donika is one of the main reasons that Luke reflects, I see her as a totally passive character or even as a good, obeyed soldier of the Party’s ideals. Rather than seeing her as a person who adjusts everywhere from the beginning when they jump on the road to the village, considering she has had no interaction that brings her the satisfaction of living in a lost village with very difficult living conditions, she shows an absurd excitement to my comprehension which makes me portray her character as a character with no self-realization, a puppet obeying to the master, the Party. The central idea of the film is a change of thought of Luke about the perspectives of life, and the realization that the pursuit of knowledge and self-improvement can happen even in a small village where no big scenarios happen. Maybe that is the reason for the vague activity of the role of the main woman Donika. But even in this vagueness, her character is that of someone who accepts things as they are and feels no need in going deeper into any thought or issue. That is the main reason I consider, for the lack of communication between the couple. Donika wants to be closer to her husband, but he is always busy reading working, or thinking. His behavior is quite cold compared to the romantic approach Donika has towards him and towards their life. Yet she is given the function to be the one who listens to Luke in his long process of thinking and finding out where he belongs. In a way, in addition to the spirit the villagers transmit to Luke, Donika is the example of the happy self that Luke is in search of. In a way, she is a reflective mirror whose purpose is to give the simple answer the depressed husband

searches for, however, the lack of depth in the introduction of her character, puts her in the position of a puppet of the Party who takes what is given without doubt and full of satisfaction. It is a movie whose propaganda is the overcoming of the self. This overcoming means reprogramming the self-identity with the means of the Party's ideals.

A much more active portrayal of women is seen in the movie "**Kercenimi**" (**The threat**), directed by Mark Topallaj in 1982. The editing director is Marika Vila. The topic of vigilance against external and internal enemies has been the focus of Albanian filmmakers. The film shows in detail the tools that the enemy uses to gain materials of military importance. The film deals with the issue of vigilance of the people, the youth, and the State Security organs, against the hostile activity of the espionage of foreign agents against the country. The film emphasizes that this activity aims at the youth to include it in their networks. The film makes it a fact that this activity fails. The film aims to educate young people about the feelings of revolutionary vigilance and patriotism towards the capitalist-revisionist world. It advertises that the victories achieved in socialist Albania are defended by all the people as a united body around the Party.

The story starts with Mariana, a foreign agent, divorced with a daughter called Ema. Mariana was an activated agent for a long time and when she decides to ask for repatriation, her bosses give her one last mission to provide intelligence information for them. Mariana involves her daughter Ema a university student, who influenced by her mother enters the world of espionage. Ema reaches out to Arben a navy engineer and even fakes her love for him to get the information she needs. In the construction of this relationship, there have been critiques such as that of Bakiu, who argues that pure love is one of the domain traits of the spiritual world of the youth of Albanian society. It goes against its ethics, for a relationship to be easily formed and so easily destroyed. According to him, Arbeni, as a soldier he is, should not so easily reveal military information while he speaks to Ema. It is not coherent for the ideology of the time, that a military man carrying important responsibilities towards his country, to keep his guard down in front of a girl who is the daughter of a foreign woman (1983, pp.5). whereas for Ema, she is shown as a capable girl who can get what she wants but the problem is that she is misled. Her turning point is when the foreign agency asks from her to kill one of her friends as he starts suspecting on her. This is when Ema starts reflecting on her actions and "comes to her senses" by deciding to come clean and changes sides. The secret service welcomes Ema and gives her a chance as they say: *"She is young, and she is raised under the protection and care of our country. It is her mother-a foreigner- who has had evil impact on her. That's why we should give her a chance"*. This decision gives the message that even if a person does such wrong acts of treason, the reason must always be because of bad foreign influence. As for the performance of Raimonda Bulku of the character Ema, it has been praised by all the critiques of the time. Gjonaj (1982, pp. 3), says that the

actress has successfully managed to portray the image of the unformed girl, which finds the force to get out of that “evil” world, and finds the right way. Overall, this film gives the message that the Albanian comrades with wisdom and vigilance, not only know how to discover the intentions of the enemies but also manage to anticipate their intentions. Enemies everywhere clash with the unity of the people around the Party. The enemies are given the watchful eye of the security organs that unite in a single eye with every ordinary citizen. The film is considered a gift for the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Party.

The last example for this group will be that of the movie “*Pranvera s’erdhi vetem*” (**Spring did not come alone**), which is more focused on the common interest in the service of socialism. The movie “**Spring did not come alone**”, is directed by Piro Milkani in 1988. The editing director is Miranda Ohri. It has in focus a female character, Irena. This movie has on center the theme of life. Irene is a new scientist and a professor of physics at the National University. She discovers she has a terminal illness. Irena accepts this news with the philosophy of living each day fully. Her emotional performance is realistic with no trait of melodramatic tone. The film has combined, the scientific work in the university, medicine, health, life in general, and love. Irena’s partner Ilir, a new scientist as well, is a character totally in the service of bringing to the attention her character. She does not let the sickness control her life. On the contrary, she keeps focusing on the scientific work she does which is for the benefit of the development of the socialist society. Even in the hospital bed, she keeps working on her studies. Her advanced education level is also shown when she reads articles in French about her sickness. This is a film that portrays with dignity the figure of the emancipated, educated, cultured Albanian girl. Adding to this, it also through details give the aspect of the bravery, intelligence, and thirst for knowledge she has that are bigger than her fear of death, which underneath implies that of the Albanian young girl as well.

The construction of her character goes like this: she is a modern girl, whose only focus is her job which is of high importance for the country’s development is scientific projects. When she got sick, the refusal of being weak and separated from her work, put Irena in a depressive mood. She is angry and does not consider it fair. Throughout the plot, the support of other characters eventually gives her the strength to rethink the situation. She understands that her fear is not of dying, but of leaving behind unfinished work. So, she decides to not die in a hospital bed but to go work and live each day to the fullest she can. As she says to Ilir: “*Death is the law of nature. But it is in our hands to live or to die.*” The film implies in the end that she died, but she was able to finish her science project. She died, but she chose to live, and her work is the one that keeps her name alive. Irena, the good soldier of the Party’s fight puts the Party’s agenda first, and even though death comes, it is the Party that puts her on a pedestal of immortality through the work she sacrifices her life for.

4.1.5. **Confronting women with men's personal interests under the bourgeois influence**

One last categorization is the one that focuses on the coup-conflicts created because of the traces left by the bourgeois ideology in characters with still patriarchal mentality. This is combined with a tendency of choosing personal interests by these characters who have yet to learn and is the women's role, who in the fight to ascend the patriarchal mentality's bad influence on their lives, also give the lesson of choosing the unity's interest.

The first example has in the focus the fight between the old and the new. The film "*Tana*" (**Tana**) is directed by Kristaq Dhamo in 1958. The editing director is Vitore Çeli. This film was meant to show part of the real people were already living in. The main character, Tana, was a young peasant girl, who rises with dignity over the judgments of the past. She is in love with Stefan who loves her back but still has not found a way to adjust their lives together. Lefter on the other side is in love with Tana but she has been honest with him. Tana's grandfather is also one of the characters who come against the love of Tana and Stefan. The climax reaches near the end of the movie when Lefter decides to kill Stefan as he cannot accept Tana to choose another man. After this act, Lefter feels remorse over his actions and decides to surrender, Stefan survives, and the movie ends with a happy union between Tana and Stefan. The script was taken from an Albanian novel that was about a true story. The director stayed true to the prime story however did add a revolver shot scene. That was not so to make the movie have more spectacular pigment. The aim was to highlight the danger of the patriarchal waste by giving space to two ideas. Firstly, Lefter, did not surrender out of fear of disclosure, but out of remorse stemmed from the new communist ideas. Secondly, this was a love story between two young people. As explained by Rama (1936, pp. 12), the newness had to fight the old. The figure of the female character was emotional and was given reason to embrace her emancipation but also, she had to fight and maybe suffer even more than others to embrace the newness. Tana was a young peasant girl, who shows the characteristics of the "new man" of the new Albania, who fights for her own dignity despite the prejudices of the time. However, she does not escape the objectification of men. As in a scene where Lefter speaks to another man about the situation and desperately wanting to have her says: "That apple is my share to have". This objectification and treatment as a property of men, is done by a character whose traits had already been shown as negative and non-supportive by the society. It does not leave much space to focus on this criticism, as the solution to Tana's problem is given, and she is shown as the woman who fights and gets what she wants. Any character with regressive behaviors is punished by the Party. In a way, it implies the thought the new ideology the Party presents and

demands the people to embody, is no different from the right values a human ask to have in his/her life.

For Tinka Kurti (who plays Tana) and other actors as well, coming from a long experience in theater, this was the first encounter with a camera. There was a great risk of not being able to detach from the theatrical play, as the mission was to bring the most realistic style to the performance. In an article written in the year 1982, the director of the movie Kristaq Dhamo, shares his experience in the making of the first feature movie, “*Tana*”. Among others, he was aware of the lack of experience and proper equipment as well. To be fully prepared they would have to wait until the years 61-62 when the first operators and sound techniques would graduate from the schools they were studying abroad and come back to the country. However, the production team had the support of the party leader Enver Hoxha who, as Dhamo recalls the dialogue exchanged between them both, had said: “*I heard you are about to make a feature movie, and this gives me great joy. The film is one of the most lovable and understandable arts for the people. Don’t worry, you are not without any experience, since the documentary film has already created the path for you*” (1982, pp 22).

In the rise of the previously mentioned conflicts, we have the second case, that of the film “*Fejesa e Blertes*” (**Blerta’s engagement**), directed by Besim Kurti and Ismail Zhabjaku in 1984. The editing director is Elda Budina. This film is a musical comedy in color. The theme of this film is about the day’s socialist reality in the village of Myzeqe. The film focuses on work, sports, and the social life of a young girl named Blerta. This young girl distinguished as a livestock farmer, is also a talented volleyball player, the captain of the team which together with her friends represents the city in the first league. From the beginning, the film gives us the achievements of the village of Myzeqe, reborn in the Party era particularly, the emancipation of the girl, who in addition to work and school, is also interested in sports. The growth of Blerta's figure as an athlete is further led in this comedy by the love and respect that the village has for her, who closely follows her sports activity. Blerta falls in love with Miri, a cooperative driver. Among them is the villager Uan Suka, a person with personal interests influenced by bourgeois ideas, who, to achieve his goal of leaving the village, tries to use the figure of Blerta. Through her, he tries to get closer to the leader of the cooperative, who has deep respect and love for Blerta. Uan Suka wants Blerta to get engaged to the leader’s nephew in the capital and creates the situation as if Blerta is the one expressing this desire. The same situation is presented to Blerta's father, Themiu, as if it is the leader who has this desire. Themiu is an accomplished figure of an honest peasant. With the episodes that continue, the solution to the conflict reaches, and the climax is at the point when the young people, with sound ideas, explain the traps set up by Uan Suka. They teach a lesson to the bearer of bourgeois waste and concepts. The team where Blerta plays wins, and then the events end with the wedding of the young couple, a socialist wedding which is enjoyed by her father

after he had managed to reflect. The father's opposition to Blerta does not go unnoticed in the reviews of this film. Since anyone who creates a conflict with a character representing the Party's ideology is always criticized. However, the father figure is justified because as Mita (1983, pp. 3) explains, the people in this village have a great love for their children. Even Blerta's father, when he overdoes it with his care for her, quickly reflects on the opinion expressed by his daughter, and approves of her decisions. This film was made with the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Party in mind. The aim was to advertise the all-around activity of the new socialist village. It aims to show that the peasant, who loves work, loves children, supports their emancipation, and is characterized by a unity that holds a stance against anyone who has bourgeois intentions.

Following this idea, the film "**Brazdat**" (**The furrows**), pays attention to the couple's conflicts as well. This film is directed by Kristaq Dhamo in 1973. The editing director is Krisanthi Kotmilo. It revolves around issues that were on the agenda of the same period in the nation. Its main characters are a young couple, Marta and Adem who both work as tractor drivers. The heroine, Marta is an energetical young girl, enthusiastic, kind to people, and altruistic. Her mission is to serve society, that is why she decides to become a tractor driver. This girl with high moral standards, and a broad understanding of politics, see everything under the prism of common interest. To defend what is right, and to follow the policies and laws of the society – which embrace the common interest over the personal one-, fights whoever is wrong, even if that person is the man she loves. Adem is a capable driver who has wrong views on the emancipation of women and is also drawn by the idea of self-interest and material profit. However, everyone in the working place shares the convincing truth to Adem and later he realizes his mistakes. He leaves behind the bourgeois-revisionist ideology and embraces the healthy ideology of the socialist society. This film reflects the conservative views on women from the perspective of the relationship between a couple. The conflicts are raised by Adem who as described, is yet to be "educated" with sound ideology. There are some scenes in defense to this idea. In the beginning of the film, it is Adem who suggests to Marta to work as a tractor driver, since her working as a tailor does not give profit. This was her longed desire, so this is not the case of undesired impose. However, I cannot keep out of focus the fact that despite being a movie that embraces women's emancipation, it also makes a hidden categorization of what she does. Being a tailor does not directly serve the Party since it's mostly a personal gain but being a tractor driver directly serves the Party as she will have to contribute to the construction of new villages. Secondly, because of jealousy since Marta is the only female working as a tractor driver in the cooperative among men, he tells her not to work anymore as he gains enough for both. Marta, decisive about what she wants, revolts, and leaves the house. He even tries to fire her, but she confronts the manager and changes his mind. Her character is portrayed widely. Even though she is hurt by Adem, when he does not give the asked performance at work, she works to fill even his

norm. Marta keeps going her life as she had planned in service of the Party, Adem is set to reeducation in another institute where he must work as a mere worker and starts reflecting. The film ends with Adem, fixing Marta's tractor when it broke in the middle of the street. Overall, this film conveys the message that a good man with wrong ideologies must be educated and eventually will reflect and be "reborn". On the other side, it conveys the idea that a woman, if she is in the service of the Party, can be whoever she wants, even if closest one does not support her, she has the Party which takes care of her. Usually, we have seen in most of the films, that the Party supports love and marriage out of love. In this case, Marta who is the role model of a communist, chooses the Party and its mission, over her husband. To make this the right call, Adem's character is full of wrong traits, especially in his behavior towards Marta, which leaves the audience no place to suspect what the Party decides is good for them. Adem's rebellion is brutally expressed over Marta, as he accuses her of fidelity just because she has a good collaboration with the other men workers. He sees her as a threat to his position in the household, even though Marta, delivers to him all her salary. He uses violence against her, in the moment that she stands for what she believes and does not allow him to put on her name, actions she has not done. The Party, and its soldier Marta, gives love, gives second chances, but do not let anyone oppress the principles set which are always for the common wellbeing.

With much more serious tones on the difficulty women face, we have the case of the film "*Shpresa*" (**Shpresa**). A film directed by Eduart Makri in 1989. The editing director is Mimoza Nano. The main character Shpresa (which means hope in Albanian) has an unfortunate love story. Her boyfriend left her, and she had an abortion. She is very desperate and has lost faith in herself. She is alienated from people and has lost hope for her future. She has no one since even her mother has died. But then she meets and falls in love with the new engineer Piro. The new love awakens Shpresa the interest in life but at the same time, she has problems with Piro's family. She suffers her spiritual drama without seeking mercy from the people around her, facing them as they are, with virtues and flaws. The society she lives in, especially the people at the container they work gossip about her as a disgraced woman. She is very capable at her work, but her supervisor gives her underqualified work despite her being educated. This changes when Piro as an engineer sets her to work in her expertise field. This is a movie of a kind since it is one of the rarest that shows society as masculine and clearly shows the prejudices women face at work, in family, and in society. Shpresa is condemned for her "mistake" as she explains her previous love. This is a society that blames the girl, and the guy for destroying her life, and hopes are not criticized at all. Piro, despite everyone warning him that she is a dishonest girl, decides to hear the story from her perspective. They must face the looks of the people when they walk together and the rejection of Piro's family especially of the mother as she is worried about what the world would say for a girl like Shpresa to be the wife of her son. Eventually, the conflict resolves, and

their engagement is welcomed by the people around them. A defect at work also brings out the capability of Shpresa which is even better than that of the male co-workers. Shpresa is a heroine in the perspective of fighting the prejudices and keeping her head straight. She suffers but she is strong enough to not show it to society which every time looks at her wanting to attack. She had lost her hope, but when Piro introduced himself with his real intentions, she gives love and hope a chance and embraces it. This is a film made at the end of the communist era. Despite my research, I could not find any article widely treating the issues of the film, so there is no starting point given on how the society welcomed it. As for how the Party let a movie that shows the malfunctions of a masculine society be made, I must stick to the assumptions given on the situation in Albania at the time. Given the crisis of power and the riots starting in those years, I believe the Party had started to lose its control over everything. But when the communist era ended, the people had an antagonism to the movies made, since those were the identification of the Party, and the traumas were still fresh. However, the first film to be shown on Tv was “*Shpresa*”, which tells me that it was a movie with true resemblance of the society so people didn’t see it as an alienation which could have happened with the other movies expressing “the perfect happy life” in communism. There was an anti-national nihilistic spirit that denied everything to the culture of the past and the social systems of the past.

4.2. Female filmmakers’ analysis

Among **Xhanfise Keko**, Albanian cinematography has the luck of containing documentary works by a sadly to say limited number of women filmmakers. After so many years, everything has now remained fixed in the collective memory of every citizen; works done by **Marianthi Xheko**, **Adriana Elini**, **Donika Muçi** and **Vitore Çeli**. The plan to bring something out of the structure, that would talk from infinitive profundities, the craving to feature singular highlights of creation and works, presently removed in time, in an inventive movement which goes route back to the year 1947, appears to be exceptionally normal in this sequential history, on the grounds that these movie producers have made the film picture, particularly in documentary film, with their own hands directly from the underlying stage. Except for the documentary movie producer **Marianthi Xheko** who has studied in the same course as directors like Tarkovsky, the Albanian movie producers have begun their cinematographic imaginative action inside the undetectable kitchen of the alcoves of the movie, and functioning as editors on account of **Keko** or **Elini** who have encountered the feeling of creation, and of the structure up the picture rhythm, as on account of documentary movie producer **Donika Muçi**, who for a

significant period has worked with masters of the movie as music directors. This road began similarly and diversely has prepared the incredible humble ladies who have assembled the details of a lifetime like the crumbs of bread. Youthful and recently acquainted with the world, they removed themselves from the general man-centric world out of their adoration for the bromide silver as Marco Ferrari could have said about them (1999, pp. 35). Isolated from one another by virtue of their livelihoods, **Donika Muçi** attempted to develop the social world all in all. **Adriana Elini**, attributable to her long involvement with the account of the day, tended to fix the internal world of the individual. Although of different ages, they have all inhabited when to move toward the man and his destiny was forbidden. The sentimental soul **Vitore Çeli** was affected by Albanian images. "Poor poppy has no place home for itself. It has nobody". These verses by Albanian poet Asdren have pulled in **Çeli** to introduce the national disaster of the individuals who keep on enduring right up 'til the present time. Similar remains constant for **Adriana Elini** who was consistently looking for the poetic language.

In managing simple subjects, the woman producers have figured out how to communicate something exceptionally close to home in their works, particularly in the image which goes a long way past what the word can say. They regularly utilized materials from the archives or ethnographic ones. They have realized how to leave indelible imprints be it in a chronicle or documentary film going to the extent that the feature film as on account of **Keko**, who prevails with regards to depicting man's character through a free creative translation of the film by concentrating on the kids' reality in which she can see the man in his social undeveloped organism. These directors' work is focused on news reporting or political-themed reportage. That is why their journalistic media work deep analysis is not the focus of this study. However, I could not pass without mentioning their existence in the Albanian mediatic world, since women directors were counted by hand. But Albanian Cinema owes much to the only women filmmaker Xhanfise Keko, whose work I will furtherly analyze.

4.2.1. Films made by a female filmmaker, Xhanfise Keko

Xhanfise Keko, brings new tones to the Albanian cinema. Her repertoire is quite considerable. She has directed many festivals, news reportages, and films. I have selected her most distinguished films, a choice done not fully voluntarily as many of her work is lost or in archives which yet are not open to the public. However, the 5 movies I will analyze are enough for us to understand her style and her way of working.

“Beni ecen vete” (Beni walks on his own), was made in 1975. The editing director is Shpresa Papapavillo. It tells the story of an 8-year-old boy named Beni, living in the city with his parents. His mother is very protective and does not let him go outside, play with the other boys, or climb the trees. She is over caring regarding his health and wants to keep him away from microbes. With the excuse of going to buy candies, his mother lets him go outside. He approaches the boys playing in the field, but they make fun of him calling him “tomboy, mama’s boy”. He cries and blames his mother for this, throwing little rocks at the window of their apartment. He is caught by Uncle Thomai, who came from the village to pay a visit to his brother and buy supplies. He decides to take Beni with him and pass the summer in the village, so he can be free and learn to habituate with the surroundings. On the way back, Beni and uncle Thomai pass by the factory where Beni’s father works. Their salutation is set just behind a big slogan saying: *“Let’s fight the tendencies of getting comfortable jobs so as not to go where the homeland needs”*. Uncle Thomai came by riding a horse and on the way back he puts Beni on top of it, himself walking they go to the village. Once they pass through forests, Beni influenced by the tales mentioning wolves or beasts, gets scared and thinks there are beasts in the forest they are passing through. Uncle Thomai laughs and says: *“They have been more focused on explaining to you tales instead of reality. That is why you have turned into a frightened child. You should know that there are no beasts, and the wolves are the one scared of men. As men is the highest creature above all.”*. They rest near a stream and Beni collects flowers so to give to the horse to eat. But the horse does not eat it. Uncle Thomai says: *“The flowers are beautiful that’s why the horse won’t eat those”*. Let us recall the movie **“Concert in ’36”** where a man wants to buy flowers to the artists, and the officers tell him that in those areas the flowers are eaten from donkeys. The comparison is to reflect on the mentality of the villagers of the pre-independence period and of those during the Party era. At the village, Beni is introduced to a new life, which is in much contact with livestock. He is curious but also frightened. As in a scene a cow approaches him, scaring Beni and starting to cry. His cousin Goni, uncle Thomai’s son, tells him that the cow will not attack, rather is just showing its love. The village is quite moderated with all the necessary infrastructures. There are scenes in the house, where the camera stays intentionally at the electric lamp or at the television, as to show that moderation has come to the village as well. The propaganda about the Party is not done literally but through implications. For example, Beni is scared, and uncle Thomai tells him: *“If you are partisan, you can’t be scared”*. In a scene, Goni has captured a fox that is dead. Beni calls it the beats, and the fox is dead, giving the symbol that what he fears, is weak with zero power. Another scene, which serves the purpose of the Party’s ideals, is where Beni sees some boys using the horse uncle Thomai had when he went to take him to the city. He demands them to give the horse as it is uncle Thomai’s property. The boys laugh at him, and a young girl named Jeta explains that: *“The horse, is the property of the cooperative. Even*

those sheep you see in the meadow in front of you, are cooperatives, which mean, property of the village.". Through the pass of the days, Beni gets used to and is not scared of riding a horse, or doing errands with livestock nearby. He is free of his fears and in much connection with everything around him. On the way back to the city, when the summer ends, uncle Thomai tells him to get on the horse. But Beni says that: "I will walk on my own". The movie ends with this sentence and gives the message that he is free and can stand on his own, not being pulled back from any kind of fear. The story of this film starts with that of a young boy but expands to the story of the people of the village. Women's role in this film is not active except for the introduction of Beni's mother, a good character but with an over-caring character towards her son. She is not left with much right to say on the issue, as Uncle Thomai takes Beni to the village despite her disagreement on the issue. Uncle Thomai is a representative of the Party's new man, and symbolically, it is the Party that takes the boy to rehabilitate with a realistic approach to life, far from fears of non-existing threats. The film's overall message is in relation to the Party's agenda of an advertisement on the good life the villages offer, lacking nothing compared to big cities.

"Tomka dhe shoket e tij" (Tomka and his friends), was made in 1977. The editing director is Shpresa Papapavullo. It starts with some boys playing at the castle on top of the hill from where they see the entrance of German tanks to the city. On the way back, a thorn is stuck in the foot of a boy. As he complains of the pain Tomka says: "*The partisans are afraid of the bullet, and you complain of a thorn*". The Germans set their camp at the field which the boys used for playing. When they see it, they say: "*These are the greatest thieves in the world*". That field symbolizes the country and those children, the future of it which for the time being are occupied. But the boys will undertake some actions to help the partisans and be part of the reason, the Germans get defeated in that city. The partisan who are family members of the little boys, asks them to gather information and count how many tanks, cars, and soldiers are in the camp. The boys accept and, on the way, a little girl Tefta, wants to join them. But one of the boys does not take her seriously and says: "*You better go play with dolls*". Jeta's answer is: "*Do you think that only boys are partisans? What about us girls?*". The boys reflect over this and take her with them. As part of their plan, it is to poison the German dog which constitutes a danger for the partisans in their planned attack. They manage to do all this despite being beaten by the Germans for trespassing. One of the partisans asks the boys if they are scared ongoing near the Germans, to which they reply: "*No we are not, that field, and Albania is ours. The partisans will defeat the Germans, and we want to help*". Their mission has a success and with their help, the partisans can attack the German camp and destroy it at night. As a symbol of the victory, the film's closure is with footage of every house in the city turning on its lamps, and like that the night is enlightened. A symbol of the future of Albania, soon to be enlightened. The purpose of this film is

focused on the awakening of patriotism in the young generation of the audience. The acting of the children, as in all **Xhanfise Keko's** movies is as natural as it can get. However, the normalization of the gunshots or the bombs, or the fires in the children's eyes, is too much to be true. One cannot escape the chance to make a comparison between the characters of Beni in the movie "**Beni walks on his own**" and Tomka in this one. Tomka in the independence War period, since he lives in a warzone, is used to combat, and the lack of his fear is supported by the great belief the people have put in the partisans fighting for them. Whereas Beni, living in the post-war rebuild Albania under the Party's rule, is frightened even of a fox since that is the maximum danger he can comprehend. The welfare of the life in the socialist country, leaves no fear on a possible occupation or foreign attack. Even the fox fear, the Party takes control on deleting it from Beni's character. In communist cinema, there is no space for such a normal feeling as fear, in its people.

"Partizani i vogel Velo" (Velo, the little partisan), was made in 1980. The editing director is Marika Vila. It tells the story of an orphan named Velo. After the murder of his father by the fascist, Velo a little boy living in the mountain, dreams of becoming a partisan and taking revenge on the murder of his father by the enemies. Even though the partisan battalion does not accept him due to his age, he still insists on his intention by all cost. The movie starts with Velo walking through the fields with his dog named Balo. He sends some food and aid to the partisans hidden at the mountains, by the instruction of his father named Samet. He later has a long conversation with his father, who explains to him the war, the sacrifices the partisans take, how they must help them at any cost, and about the traitors among them who have chosen to side with the outsider enemy. His father a shepherd, is shot in front of Velo, by the traitors who learn that he supplies the partisans with food and clothes. In a following scene, some young boys catch a bird and plan to put it in a cage. Velo, releases the bird, an act not comprehensible by the other children. Velo says: *"Try and stay in a cage yourselves. Then let me know if it is fun"*. This is the main example that differentiates Velo from other children of his age. As they think of playing around, whereas Velo thinks of freedom and of revenge on his father's death. This is seen in the other scene where Velo goes to his grave and swears on taking his revenge no matter what. The following scene is at the house, where some partisans have come as guests for the night. The commissar says to Velo: *"Albania is a small country but with unaccountable mountains. Those mountains harbor the partisans, the enemy which comes by ship from the sea, and the traitor inside of us. Those who kills us at night, know that we kill at daylight"*. Albania shares the Adriatic Sea with Italy, that is why the enemy is described as someone coming by ship. The killing at night refers to the murder of Samet, Velo's father who was killed in the evening time. Velo replies to the commissar that it is he who will take revenge on his father. For which the commissar says that he is too young and that this is the duty of the partisans who represent every comrade. Since Velo kept

insisting, the commissar had to give him the promise, that he will allow Velo to join the partisans when spring comes. Days pass, the snow melts, and the first flowers of spring start to blossom. Velo goes to the mountains, but there he encounters a ceremony where the partisans are paying respect to the grave of the commissar who apparently has recently died in combat. The leader of the battalion tells Velo to come when he gets taller than the rifle he will use to shoot. Velo, must leave but rejects on turning home. He finds a camp with fascists and at night kills one of them. He trains the dog to go take the enemy's rifle so he can send it back to the partisans. He thinks out loud and says: "*Thy who kills the enemy becomes a man, and a man cannot be rejected from the partisan battalion.*". The film ends with the scene of Velo running through the mountains on his way to the partisans. In this film, we are presented with the portrayal of a child who thinks and acts as an adult. Since the movie takes place in the pre-independence period, the propagandas we are used to seeing in other films, do not sit here. However, the messages of patriotism and heroical portrayal of the partisans, which the Party has always proclaimed were the communists are the essence of the film. We recall that from the statistics, the partisans were 70,000 and only 28,000 of them were communists.

"Kur po xhirohej nje film" (When shooting a film), made in 1981. The editing director is Shpresa Papapavullo. It tells the story of a young boy named Genci, whose parents are about to divorce. This happens, while Genci is taking a role as an actor in a movie. The film goes forth and back from the shootings of the film to flashbacks of previous times from Genci's perspective. It starts with the shootings of the film. The rare case of intertextuality, in which the Albanian cinema, gives a glimpse of their way of shooting films. The film being shot is about the war era, so the props and locations are much different, which makes it easy for the audience to understand the switch of scenes from that of the shooting, to that of the film itself. While shooting, Genci is being mocked by other children for not having a father, since the rumor of his parents being separated has spread. Genci cries and the shootings stop. They go to the hotel, where they rest, and Genci speaks to the movie's assistant director, a young woman named Drita. He asks her if her husband gets mad that she works far from home. Drita explains to him that in the beginning, it was hard for him to understand, and would get mad, but over time he started to accept that this is normal and necessary according to the profession. Genci asks her to explain this to his father as well. From this, we understand that the conflict is about Genci's father not accepting his wife to go work far from home in another city. To fully understand this, the director puts a flashback of Genci's memory, where he goes with his father, to his mother's workplace. There passes the dialogue between the couple, in which Kujtim, Genci's father, asks Lilita the mother, to change the work sector so she will not need to travel. An idea not welcomed by her. Then we switch to the hotel scene of the next morning, where Drita calls by phone Genci's father and asks him to come to visit since Genci has asked. That day by chance Genci's mother comes as

well to the shooting place. The mother comes first and while they turn back from the shooting to the hotel with Genci, he has a flashback of the time the family was together. The scene is about Liliana at dawn doing all the housework, cooking cleaning, and making coffee for the husband who yet is sleeping. It switches back to the hotel, where at lunch table Liliana speaks to Drita about the issue. Drita says: *"Man are used to get many privileges in the household. That is why the change requires time, it cannot come immediately."* Right after Kujtim comes to the hotel and sits in a separated table with Genci, who asks his father to go sit near the mother, so as for the children to see that his parents are together. For which the father rejects by saying that: "You cannot understand these issues because you are too young". Liliana leaves the hotel to go to work and here another flashback of Genci comes. Genci and the father are at the house, the mother comes from work and is saddened. When asked why, she disappointedly says to her husband: *"Why did you ask to my director to change my work sector?"*. Her husband replies: *"Every woman no matter how smart she is, she needs her husband's lead"*. For which Liliana says: *"Support maybe but not wardship"*. Genci asks his mother the meaning of the word "wardship". Liliana explains it such: *"Wardship is just like the baby wheelchair you refused to use once you learned how to walk on your own."* Kujtim is angered and makes assumptions that Liliana's desire to work far from home, is so she can easily hang out with another man. Just as Liliana starts to speak, he again offends her by saying that she can speak while wearing the apron and cleaning. Liliana rejects this treatment and says: *"I will not accept these accusations just because your personal interest is at risk. You are selfish"*. Kujtim rejects to hear these words and hits her. If we recall, in the movie **"The furrows"**, Adem jealous of his wife working, accuses her of infidelity and hits her as well, when he is faced with her rejection of his imposing threats. The same happens in this film about 8 years later in the production year. With Kujtim's leave out of the house, the flashback stops, and we are sent to the time-being scenes. Drita goes to Liliana's workplace, where she admires her work and gives comments on how great it is that a big factory works under the instruction of this woman. From here the film jumps to Kujtim's conversation with the movie director of the film Genci is shooting, a young man named Ilir who explains that Genci's disturbed mind reflects on his acting. Kujtim rejects to talk about the issue and focuses on his son, who again tries to change his father's mind. Here passes an interesting dialogue considering it comes from a child's point of view. Genci says: *"Even Miss Drita's husband used to get angry but by the time he got used. Why won't you get used father?"*. His father pretends to not understand what he means, so Genci keeps going: *"Every child has both of his/her parents at the house together"*. His father says that he is always there for him. But Genci says that he has gone, he is not there. Through these scenes, we see Genci's desire for their parents to reunite but the next one is the that which explains his point of view on the matter. He says to his friend that when he gets married, he will let his wife build any factory she wants anywhere it is

needed. To resolve the conflict, there are supportive scenes of Kujtim's reflection on the matter which conclude with a phone call to the house and Liliana's answer on the phone. We do not hear the conversation going, but we see her face start smiling and with the support of a cheerful soundtrack, the audience gets the feeling of a happy ending. Overall, the logic of the Party regarding the portrayal of the men is as: For as long as they follow the rules and work under the instructions of the Party, they are not antagonist characters. Their toxic traits such as patriarchalism, personal interest, or abuse of power against women, are treated as bad weeds left from the previous bourgeoisie regime and are given a chance till the end to reflect which they undoubtedly do for the sake of the happy-ending necessity. Whereas for the woman character facing these problems, there has been given space to her staying affirm in her decisions but only to that which is in the Party's interest. In the last film, I am about to analyze we will see that the woman is taken her right on deciding what she wants for herself since that puts in jeopardy the interests of the Party.

In this film, the distance between the spectator and the actors is dissolved as the story is treated in such a realistic point of view in correlation with the life of people at the time, that it comes very naturally the identification of the audience with each actor's perspective. The film has been praised at the Giffoni film Festival in Italy which was reflected in the newspaper of the time. Vitrano (1983, pp.4) shows how the spectators warmly welcomed the film, especially the children spectators who were actors as well, recalling their comments on the film which made them reflect on the fact of how love and happiness are the most important things in life.

The last film is "***Taulanti kerkon nje moter***" (**Taulant wants a sister**), made in 1984. The editing director is Shpresa Papapavillo. This film is about a young boy named Taulanti's desire to have a sister and his mother's refusal out of fear of losing her chances in her artistic career. It starts with Taulanti anxiously waiting for the neighbors to come from maternity with their newborn child. Taulanti asks the mother of the baby aunt Luli: "*How did you get it?*" to which she jokes and says that she bought him. Taulanti's mother Zana, and his father Pirro prepare a welcoming dinner for the neighbors' Miss Luli and Mr Gezim who is a gynecologist. In their conversation, we learn that Zana is a pianist and Pirro an engineer. In the late scenes, Taulant asks his mother to buy him a sister. His mother draws a baby on paper and gives it to him jokingly saying that that is his sister. Taulant gets saddened and goes to his father's workplace to complain about the issue to which the father does not give much importance. Pirro asks one of the company drivers to take them home. In the car, the conversation between Pirro and the driver revolves around having more than one child. Pirro comments that having many children takes out the commodity they are used to. The driver who has 5 children says that the more children you have, the more your life is fulfilled. Influenced by the talk, Pirro speaks to Zana about having other children for which Zana angrily says that: "*If you wanted many children, you*

shouldn't have married an artist. For the sake of having children, I cannot abandon my career in arts". The conversation implies the new fact that Zana is pregnant, but she wants to have abortion. The first case in Albanian cinema that it breaks such a taboo as the topic of abortion. Pirro is against the idea, and a fight between them is expected. Taulant manages to hear everything from the other room. In the next scene, Taulant goes to aunt Luli and asks the meaning of the word "abortion" for which she pretends she does not know as she refuses to explain to him such a sensitive topic. The conflict of the film arises with Zana's attempts to ask a favor from the neighbor Gezim who is a gynecologist to perform an illegal abortion, as the constitution of the country prohibits abortion only on the rare cases of deathly like illnesses of the mother. In support to the idea that a child has the right to be born and there is no shame in pregnancy, it follows up with a scene where Gezim's aunt comes to the house to ask the same favor for her daughter who is not married yet to her fiancé but is pregnant. A situation that for the aunt meant shame for the family honor. But Gezim treats the issue as a normal thing and advice the aunt to prepare for her daughters' marriage instead of focusing on such absurd ideas. Zana witnessed the conversation yet does not comprehend this point of view. Gezim explains that: *"The birth of a child is not a personal matter, but a society's matter. It has to do with the nation's future. We have to keep our population's age young, so the country does not face aging issues."* The plot keeps going on this level of tension until it arises in the scene where the couple debates for the last time. Zana complains: *"For the sake of having children I cannot leave my profession. I cannot turn into an ordinary woman whose only interests are cleaning and cooking"*. Pirro explains that: *"Having children does not mean abandoning profession, as both can be done at the same time. Same as you I do not want my wife to have ordinary interests, such as thinking only about her small selfish desires"*. Zana is left with nothing to say, and there starts her reflection which is helped by Taulant's actions. He goes to the maternity and gives his allowance to a doctor and says he wants to buy a baby. The doctor calls the mother Zana on the phone, and just as in the previous movie, she starts smiling at what she hears on the other side of the phone and caresses her belly. The movie ends with a scene where while caressing the belly, Zana composes new sonnets on the piano, as if to show that the new baby is the one who inspires Zana in her artistic career.

The right of childbirth is being taken from the mother's hand and the newborn children are in a way the property of this country. This country owns the people their bodies and their actions. This film and the previous one **"When shooting a film"**, are the two and only examples in the Albanian Communist cinema, in which taboo topics for the Albanian society, such as divorce and abortion have been discussed and presented to the audience. A report the state had prepared in the year 1977 speaks about these two issues:

“There is still room for more qualified workers in the organization, to prevent a troubling problem such as the increasing number of divorces. The ratio is 4 marriages a divorce. Causes include quarrels, mistreatment of women, criminal penalties for men, and infidelity.

The regressive increase in the number of abortions remains very worrying. As a Republic, in every 5 births, there is 1 abortion. In cities, the ratio is 2 births and 1 abortion, while in villages 12 births and 1 abortion. This comes as a result that in general women are cultivating the micro-bourgeois tendency to have as few children as possible, to have a more comfortable life. These issues require us to deepen as much as possible in the educational work at women” (AQSH, 1977, p 17).

An educational work which in the next years is reflected at its cinema as well. In addition, this mission was given by the Party, to a women director. **Xhanfise Keko**, succeeds in portraying a man’s personality through a rather free artistic interpretation of the film by focusing on the children’s world in which she can see the man in his social embryo. Films for children often face two directorial problems. The difficulty in preserving the authenticity and organicity of the nature of the children and the synchronization of the children’s and adult actors’ interpretations. In both cases, **Keko** has succeeded in managing to preserve the nature of the children by also creating characters out of them and the adult and child actors harmonically coexist in the story. Regarding this, the screenwriter Lako (1999, pp.32), argues that the principal value of a feature film for children is the point at which you love the children yet, in addition, regard them when you consider them as individuals who are being made in certain social conditions and you realize how to enter with a similar significance, enthusiasm, and earnestness in their reality, as you would for the grown-ups. So, the young are viewed as equal among equals. Plainly **Keko**, observes them profoundly the second she chooses the content. She crosses with no lament the pointless words, she includes with fortitude decisions and sentiments which come out from the age and enthusiasm of the children, enslaving them to the inventive point. It happens that the dialogue is changed during the shooting procedure on the grounds that the youthful interpreter himself appears to recognize what truly has a place with his age. The film “**When shooting a film**”, is an example of the treatment of contemporary subjects. It points out the lack of treatment of these subjects which has created an emptiness that should be filled. **Xhanfise Keko**, is a woman filmmaker who amidst the pathetic slogans of that period treats social topics through children’s perfect natural character.

But what distinguishes the only female filmmaker among the other male filmmakers? The differences are both technical and artistical. **Keko** gives the sense of continuity as camera passes from one shot to another. The films have a biological clock, in which the jump from day to night, from one location to another, from one dialogue to the other, from one character to the other is done so harmonically, that

the spectator forgets the fact that is watching a film, rather that is a fly on the wall of someone else's life. She prepares the audience for what is to come with the smallest details. For example, at "**Velo, the little partisan**", when Velo enters home, the camera firstly focuses on the new shoes at the door, Velo observing that, and later it passes to the in the room scene where there are guests. A delicacy, which is hard to be found in the other movies made by man. As the pass from one scene to another, is done in a rough way, which keeps reminding the distance between the spectator and the film. In Keko's movies, this distance is dissolved. Another main difference is the dialogue selection and performance. Most Albanian movies stay strict to the lines and there was a dominance of verbal expressions and exaggerated punctuation on what the character would say in its literal meaning, instead of what in complex the audio-visual figure would say. The focus was on verbal behavior instead of being at the cinematographic one like in the case of Keko's films. The characters would speak weakly with dialogues lacking filmic function, artificial with no excitement or aliveness. Whereas in Keko's films the most noticeable fact, is the naturality of the acting. A good reason is the use of children however children actors played in films directed by male filmmakers as well. But in their case, naturality was not at all at this level. Probably since the pre-selected dialogues were not adapted for the logic of a child, Keko, adjusted the dialogues in such a way that the child actors, would feel free in their actions which brought to the scene performances that embodied naturalism. Just like others, Keko too could not escape the total control of the Party organs, in every single step of the production. The Party's hand was in every decision regarding the script, shooting location, selection of props and messages to be given. That is why, in her films as well, we face the typical scenario, where the women's emancipation model is delusional. However, she is the one who treated the taboo issues of the society of the time. I wonder if divorce or abortion were to be treated by male directors. I highly doubt that the confrontation with these issues would pass smoothly. Maybe it would have been better had the male directors made these movies. The naturalist approach, and the smooth proposal of educating the minds of the Albanian women done from Keko's point of view, loosens the real tension these social issues have in them. If the films were done by male directors, maybe that distance their footage had with the spectator, would leave space for women spectators at least, to be unsatisfied with the way such delicate issues were treated with. Nevertheless, none of the ways would excuse the gravely wrong idea of brainwashing rather than educating a human's mind regarding personal, individual issues. But again, I must remind us of the fact that word per word the scenarios was double-checked, revised, and adjusted by Party's officials according to the Party agenda. This leaves us with the question: Did the filmmakers really have a say in making a movie?!

5. Conclusion and Suggestions

During the war, the image of the heroic woman was required to be created by taking part in the war or raising brave sons and daughters, or the mother who chews her pain and tries to feed her child or the ideal woman who embraces the horizons brought by the Party. After the war, the image of the woman who deals with the construction of socialist society was sought. In the films, all the characters were required to be elaborated, the variety was not liked, in the case of many characters, a unification in ideas was required, with a common opinion and in the creation of a single character.

Staying on the surface of reality without daring to delve deeply into the real dramas of human and social actuality, into the spiritual sufferings of the man of the time; ideological and socio-realist conformism; mitigating conflicts by going above and beyond giving you pink solutions; the schemes of the characters that are repeated in black and white where the "black" would be to some extent of the social hierarchy and not above, while the "white" would come down according to the class affiliation or would be treated according to that affiliation; the repetition of figurative solutions and the insufficiency of the means to benefit from the new contemporary technologies by not cooperating with them, are some of the problems that accompanied the Albanian film.

I see this case as the voice of history, which needed to be understood as a systematic network of binary oppositions, organized like a language. As Judith Mayne explains (1984, pp. 84), Marxists stressed that ideology was a function of representation and the function of films as an ideological medium could be evaluated in terms of its forms to address the spectator. In accordance with this approach, incoherence to Laura Mulvey's examination of classical narrative cinema that is realist films (1981, pp.12), I define the Albanian communist cinema and in particular its representation of women on screen, as a series of plots of crisis and resolutions which made strong attachment between characters and spectators, as a case of a less aesthetic issue and much more of a cultural sense.

The aim of this work is to reveal the presence of Albanian women in its cinema. It is impossible to give a description without mentioning the cause-and-effect relationship it had with the communist state. Let us recall the examples of women in movies. We met a village woman who was happy to work the land. We are acquainted with the women and girls' fighters who fought sacrificing their lives for the liberation of Albania in the post-monarchy, pre-communist period. We are introduced to women who face the tradition of the Kanuni Law and speak out for the love they feel. We have seen the woman raising sons and daughters who would serve the homeland. We observed the educated,

intellectual woman who serves society and even prioritizes the advancement of society before her own life. We have the case of a woman who must fight the patriarchal mentality that creates obstacles in her professional development. We are introduced to the case of a woman who must fight the prejudices that come to her because of her past. There are also cases of well-educated women with selfish prejudiced feelings and who tend to choose a personal interest, especially in career cases. But socialist society has re-educated this woman. The topic of women who with the support of the system have confronted everyone, even the members of their families, putting even their marriages at risk has also been addressed. These women have educated mostly men who have bourgeois and patriarchal influences by showing them the right way. Whether due to the lack of independent styles or the lack of cinematographic equipment, we are not faced with a cinema that has fetishized and objectified women. I declare this without considering parts of the plot where flirtations take place, perhaps even unwanted by a woman but who has never been presented as passive or involuntary.

But this image is superficial. Let us remember that Albania was a communist country that was building a socialist society. It was a place where every property was nationalized and over time it was isolated, bringing the exchange market with other countries to almost zero. The state needed a labor force and therefore it was in the government's interest to give women the same rights as men. This to increase the number of women in the factory, cooperatives, and all kinds of jobs that previously due to the physical heaviness but also the patriarchal mentality, were sectors dominated by men. Thus, the cases of women in films working as tractors or shipbuilding workers are not only "apparent emancipation" but are an increase in the labor force in the service of state-socialist construction plans.

Communist Albania, from its inception, had understood the power of the media in conveying messages, which we have noticed in the speeches of leader Enver Hoxha, who rely on the development of art. The promotion of state policies was done through the media. This also explains why movie tickets were either free or very cheap. The state pushed people to go to the cinema, either to see feature films or documentaries. Considering the small size of Albanian productions, we can say that the documentaries which contained reports on the construction and promotion of the socialist state, were produced in a high number. The people, because of the obligation to go to the cinema, but also because cinema was the only means of entertainment, rigorously followed every show that appeared. Cinema was an educational tool that the Party used to educate through art the mass which after the war was with a high percentage of peasants and uneducated. It was a mass that had no idea what was going on with the world outside the borders, and everything that was served to them was taken for granted and believed to be the absolute truth.

As we have seen in the examples of films that have been analyzed above, each film with even the most dramatic themes in which the pain prevailed, in the end always ended with optimistic tones. This was not unintentional. The cinema created the image of a woman whose child is killed but does not cry because she trusts the Party. She created the image of a woman working the land in the middle of the heat, poor, in an underdeveloped village, but in her face, there is neither fatigue nor sadness. Let us keep in mind that the land that this woman worked on was not even hers but was rented out by the state. If this state decided that she "did not deserve it", it could take the land from management immediately. However, her face shows absolute happiness and confidence in the Party that is "developing society." This was a silent message to the women of the audience, telling them the reality of what it was like to be a woman in socialist society.

We have been given women who; - by implying an undisturbed state of mind, perhaps also by the director's lack of deep analysis of her inner world -, choose to work on her project as a physicist, rather than to go to be cured knowing she is seriously ill. Her death at the end seems to say to the Albanian woman: "Work for me even when you are dying because the Party will save you, or at least turn you into a heroine and your memory will inspire other women."

This system, in its cinema, especially in the post-war period, and in the beginnings of the construction of socialist society, presents its ideas as donors of democracy and the bearer of individual women's rights.

A communist cinema that acts in the name of democracy! An image of a woman who said out loud how happy she is in this developed society was formed. If there was an independent cinema, I would give an opportunity to the idea that real women in Albanian cinema have been appreciated and respected. But this cinema from the beginning to the end was a monopoly of the state. Here is the case of "polemical unmasking of the ideologies hidden in the text." Ideology and utopia are the two poles of what Jameson calls "the political unconscious" of literary works (1981, pp.9). This idea was abundant in the case of Albania where socialist belief was propagated and where a utopian life was presented in which de jure was a harmonious unity and de facto, a life full of torture, murder, imprisonment, the disappearance of identity, persecution, and slavery.

As explained by Susan Dyer (2001, p 7), the film is an organ of public opinion. A significant medium for the communication of ideas. In correlation with the communication of ideas, one wonders about the realistic approach it bears. As Andrew Kania (2009), explains: "Something is realistic if it bears some sort of vertical relation to reality.". this relation can be seen in Joseph Kickasola's explanation of where film rests: "Film tends to reinforce the existing ideology by creating an unrivaled sensation in the viewer that the onscreen image reflects the reality they purport to represent. Cinema is resting on a

fundamental illusion based more on the visual codes developed by the state, than on the innate relationship with perceptual reality (2009). This clearly decodes the Albanian Cinema, as undoubtedly, it was not a means of artistic expression. Bitterer is the unsuspecting cognitive mode of the population. As Carl Platinga explains in his analysis of Althusser's theory; We must read the spectator's psychology in relation to history and culture. Ideological state apparatuses maintain mass control through what has become known as "subject positioning". An individual is "interpaed", assigned an identity and role by society. The film is said to position the spectator much like ideological state apparatuses position the "subject" (2009). To the Albanian spectator, the meanings of the messages the films gave, were comprehended rather than interpreted.

For Althusser, the ideology describes the process through which society cultivated compliant social subjects by appealing to their need to be recognized and to acquire a social identity. As Richard Allen (2009), decodes Lacan's allegory; The imaginary ego is established by a third term which is provided by the structure of meaning afforded by culture and language, in which the subject assumes a wholly fictitious gendered identity, and cements his self-alienation from the Real, that now forms the domain of that which is wholly unconscious. The Albanian people, its women were in paralysis of consciousness. The formation of the woman subject was done in misrecognition. All these movies tried to give women a social identity, by ripping away the self-identity without leaving any room for doubt on whether her actions come voluntarily from her willingness or from the state who controls and teaches her cognitive what to think, react and feel.

In total, we get three images of women. The real woman in society, whose lives are made of torture. The woman the movies try to form, who are emancipated, who own the same rights as men in the work section. The last one is the image of women that the movies show, the one who must get rid of her self-identity, re-create a new one according to the Party's "new man" idea, the one who abandons any personal feeling or thought which is not in accordance with the common ideology. The truest portrayal of women can be translated into words such as: A woman who under the flag of emancipation, is used as a labor force and controlled like a puppet. A mute soldier imprisoned in a psychic paralysis mode.

It belongs to another discussion, but it should be mentioned that outside the cinema, the Albanian people, up to the portion of sugar, were decided by the state how much they should consume. That image of a happy and educated woman fails to cover up the fact that there are thousands of cases of women who, only from the surname they bore, or only for speaking what was not in the interest of the Party, have been interned for over 20 years in prisons with prehistoric conditions. Even today, the torture, rape or mass graves continue to fade in. This was an ideology that, while advertising a female

scientist on the one hand, killed them only because they raised their voices against the system in which meritocracy did not exist. I mention these because this study understands all things social in terms of a definitive historical approach. In support to this, I emphasize the ongoing communist movies' wrong broadcasting style. There is no agenda on the information of the viewer, that these films contain propaganda messages. The Albanian audience keeps watching these films in every national channel at no hour district. Under the name of nostalgia, these movies are praised and watched with the great honor of owning a national cinema. There is no explanation neither from the state nor from the tv channels regarding the propagandistic messages implemented, which prolongs the brainwashing of the audience to this day. These movies must be taken from the artistic sphere and treated as propaganda dominators.

This is a topic that has yet to be taken into consideration by other academical works. I realize that an interpretation from a deeper psychological intervention is necessary to have a better understanding of the inner world of women characters, of the socialist society, and the woman of the country who blindly embodied the presented image as one of their own. This work may provoke a new search about the extent of the to erase of individualism, freedom of thought, and self-willingness from the people during the dictatorial regime.

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