



DISSERTATION / DOCTORAL THESIS

Titel der Dissertation /Title of the Doctoral Thesis

„Family Photography as a construction of family memory “

verfasst von / submitted by

Zanita Halimi

angestrebter akademischer Grad / in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doktorin der Philosophie (Dr. phil.)

Wien, 2020 / Vienna, 2020

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt /
degree programme code as it appears on the
student record sheet:

A 792 304

Dissertationsgebiet lt. Studienblatt /
field of study as it appears on the student record
sheet:

Europäische Ethnologie

Betreut von / Supervisor:

Em. Prof.Dr. Konrad Köestlin

Acknowledgements:

When I chose this topic, I was aware that it would be quite difficult for many reasons but also because its content is linked very closely with emotions, too. First of all, it was the topic approached anthropologically for the first time in Kosova. Since, photography was personal and narratives too, it was not so easy to deal with it. During the time of research I became very much connected with the stories of families, got familiar with different faces, and thought about them, even after fieldwork. There is a long list of people I really would like to thank, but I will start first with my parents, my mother and father. They supported me very much during my studies and research, but unfortunately I lost them, while I was writing my thesis. I felt a lot of pain during the writing process and this makes me observe photography in different way, too. I came to understand why other people linked photography with persons they lost, why photography helped them to remember; now I understand it personally and more deeply. When I lost suddenly my father, the first thing I used to think about was if my daughter has enough photographs with my father, in order to remember him. This topic changed my behavior toward photography.

I will thank my supervisor Professor Konrad Koestin, who has always been by my side, his advises and recommendations helped me very much.

I really want to thank Prof. Drita and my friend Lumnije, which were always there for me supporting me in this long and difficult journey.

Of course I want to thank Christine, an Austrian friend who hosted me during my stays in Vienna; I really appreciate that.

Also I want to thank my colleagues from Department of Anthropology/ University of Prishtina, conversations with them were very fruitful for my thesis.

For their patience, their trust on me, I want to thank my brother Flakron, my daughter Eudora and my husband Besnik. They supported me a lot and gave me courage when I needed it the most.

Table of Contents

I. Introduction	9
II. Hypothesis.....	12
III. Location/Site	12
IV. Research Methodology	13
1. Photography in Cultural Anthropology	19
1.1. On family Photography	26
1.2. The history of photography in Albanian society	31
2. Family Photography in Kosova -first phase 1950- 1981.....	34
2.1. Photography as memory and exchange	35
2.2. The social organization of the Kosovar Albanian Family	48
3. Second phase 1989-1999.....	53
3.1. Representation of Symbols.....	58
3.2. Family photography during the 1999 war and after.....	59
3.3. Museum of Ferdonije.....	70
4. Third phase 1999-2015 (or till now)	73
4.1. Family Photography for marketing purpose.....	76
4.2. Going Digital/ New Practices	81
4.3. New ways of communication/ posting and sharing	85
4.4. Looking at family albums.....	88
4.5. Selfies/ new generation	92
4.6. Family photography – from framed to Accessorized.....	96
5. Toward Family photography practices.....	98
5.1. What does family photography mean in/for a Kosova family	100
5.2. Displacement of the family photography from private to public.....	111
5.3. Display of the photos in home environment	113
5.4. Display of family photos in public spaces	115
5.5. Exhibiting family photography in public places/spaces	118
5.6. Attitudes of visitors toward this exhibition.....	119
6. Family photography in memory studies	121
6.1. Convictions related to photography based on generation and religion.....	124
7. The process of elicitation the photographs	127

7.1. Wedding ceremony	134
7.2. Nuclear Family Photograph.....	138
7.3. Photo of Engagement as a Special event	139
7.3.1. Circumcision rite/Rituali i rrethprerjes (Syneti)	140
7.3.2. Large family nostalgia	141
7.3.3. Invention of family gathering.....	142
7.3.4. Tourist photography	145
8. Gender and family photography	147
8.1. Destroying family photography	150
8.2. Photographs as family heritage	150
9. Assembling family photography – continuity.....	152
9.1. Keeping family ties in virtual space.....	155
10. Conclusion	164
11. Bibliography	168
ABSTRACT.....	174
ZUSAMMENFASSUNG.....	175

List of Photos:

Photo 1: *The author taking photographs during fieldwork, photo by Cathlin Norris (2017)*

Photo 2. *My grandparents wedding photography in the bedroom*

Photo 3. *This is the first advertisement where photography moves to the homes, Kodak Advertisement*

Photo 4. *Photography with description given for remembering 1980, (private family corpus/ collection)*

Photo 5. *Photography as memory 1973 (private family collection)*

Photo 6. *Family photography 1946 (family private collection)*

Photo 7. *In the mountain (after work/ sheep shearing), Private family collection*

Photo 8. *The photo of the migrant after arriving home (family private collection)*

Photo 9. *The story after the wedding ceremony*

Photo 10. *One of the photo of the head of house hold (sometimes they cut make it as a portrait)*

Photo 11. *Portrait of the head of the family with his part of clothes (shoka)*

Photo 12. *Photo of a house serving as a school. 1990/91 (From private family collection)*

Photo 13. *Oda with the photography of the president as a part of the interior decorations*

Photo 14. *Family photography with symbolic images in the wedding ceremony*

Photo 15. *Photo by Kael Alford, May 1999*

Photo 16. *Family photographs arranged in the wall of home in London (from private family collection)*

Photo 17. *Going to Germany, private collection*

Photo 18. *Refugees flee fighting, Kosova, 1999*

Photo 19. *In Ferdonije's museum; author and Ferdonije*

Photo 20. *Photographs of students who finished their secondary schools 'alb. maturante' (high school graduate), photo by author*

Photo 21. *Before going to the prom night with the photography of my uncle's family*

Photo 22. *The winners of the campaign*

Photo 23. *Photography of five generation family*

Photo 24. *Kids photography, professional, from private collection*

Photo 25. *Selfie, private collection*

Photo 26. *Family photography accessories in photo studio, photo by author*

Photo 27. *Looking at photographs during birthday celebration*

Photo 28. *Family photographs display in the house of one of the interviewees*

Photo 29. *The first picture when is born and decided to display that photo*

Photo 30. *Center wall of family room featuring soldier killed during the war*

Photo 31. *Family photographs displayed in the Ponte Vecchio restaurant, photo made by author*

Photo 32. *A photograph in one of the shoemaker shops*

Photo 33. *Family photography exhibition group*

Photo 34. *Faceless woman, from private collection*

Photo 35. *Funeral Service in the Catholic Community, from private collection*

Photo 36. *Advertisement for hiring a professional photographer on wedding ceremony, photo by author*

Photo 37. *Wedding photographs selected by families (private collection)*

Photo 38. *Social action during wedding ceremony, (private collection)*

Photo 39. *Modern wedding photograph, private collection*

Photo 40. *Nuclear family, photograph from private collection 1989*

Photo 41. *Engagement ceremony (private collection)*

Photo 42. *Bed decoration of circumcised boy (private family collection)*

Photo 43. *Family photographs (private collection)*

Photo 44. *Festa e Babukes after Babuka's death*

Photo 45. *Babuka's event with Babuka, (in the middle is Babuka)*

Photo 46. *Photography during vacation in Ulqin, from private family album, 1995*

Photo 47. *In the field looking at albums in Lirije's family*

Photo 48. *Three generations of family*

Photo 49. *Combined photo of Ferdonie's family*

Photo 50. *Loxha's family Facebook pages*

Photo 51. *Gashi's family Facebook pages*

Photo 52. *Shkodras's family Facebook pages*

Photo 53. *Power Point presentation Halimi's family "90 years old and one entire life - Mother Kadrije with us"*

List of Tables:

Table 1. Structure of the interviewees

Table 2. *Similarities and differences between main photography time frames*

Table 3. *Answers on several questions based on three age groups*

Table 4. *Differences between communicative memory and cultural memory*

List of Figures:

Figure 1. *Smartphones cause photography boom*

Figure 2. *Possession of mobile phones in the household in 2016, in%*

Kosova Map divided by regions:¹



¹ Map developed by Kosova Statistical Agency, map of Kosova with current municipal and administrative regions

Introduction

The world used to be much more diverse in way of life than it is today. The historical events and technological discoveries that occurred made the world change drastically. But can we go back to the past times for a moment? Thanks to photographers, we can say yes. Photographers have captured important moments on their film, such as life cherishing moments and death, marriages and funerals, family, the changes and transformation of it, traditional clothing and so on. Hence, the picture is a kind of a revolt. Developing film presents us with the visible collective memory, the dream of peoples. This magic development evolving from universal light, could not escape Kosovars.

In Kosova, there is not a long tradition of photography – neither photographing nor the care for the photography preservation. In general, officially, only few institutions collect and preserve photographs.

Historically seen, at the beginning when the practice of taking pictures has started, family photographs were taken only in photo-studios, by professional photographers who had finished schools of photography outside of Kosova, typically in Greece, Italy, Turkey, etc.² Moreover, at the beginning, there were only a few families which would have been photographed in photo studio, mainly rich families. However, gradually, owners of personal photo cameras increased and thus the way of photographing, of the places, and of the events where photographing took place changed too.

For Kosovars, the concept of family is very meaningful.³ Thus, my thesis will focus on family photographs, not only as cultural artifacts, but also on the historical, social, and cultural contexts

² Shukri Kaçaniku. *Fotografia ne Kosove 1900-1950*, (KOHA, 2012), wrote about the history of the photographers and their education.

³ There are studies which accentuate this fact, see more Karl Kaser, “The Balkan joint family: redefining a problem” in *Household and Family in the Balkans. Two Decades of Historical Family Research* at University of Graz, Vienna (2012), 89-108; and Mark Krasniqi. *Gjurm e Gjurmime*, IAP (1979), Lumnije Kadriu, *Pushimet, familja, vendlindja në praktikat e diasporës shqiptare të Kosovës*, Instituti Albanologjik, Prishtinë (2017).

they may reflect. By looking at the way the photographs are treated within the family, the family structure, its organization, and its most relevant events, the photographic artifacts will be analyzed. The presence and the absence of family members, arrangement of photographs within different spaces and places around the houses, all speak of something that was or is going on within the family and society at large. Through photographs not only relations within family members are reflected, but also family relations with other social, cultural, political levels are reflected.

The photography presents “the cultural inventory”⁴ not only of material culture but also of the relationship between people. As Collier wrote “ the photographic inventory can record not only the range of artifacts in a home but also their relationship to each other, the style of their placement in space, all the aspects that define and express the way in which people use and order their space and possessions.”⁵

I have chosen a timeframe from 1950- to present time.

The year 1950 was chosen as the beginning of this study because before this time family photography was not widely available in Kosova. Additionally in the Kosovar context, 1950 is the year modernization after the Second World War began. The third reason is that I wanted to research families with three generations of photographs, in 1950 some of the oldest generation were 10 years old. Finally, the timeframe has been divided into three phases for analysis.

The first phase contains photographs and practices from 1950-1981. In this phase, Kosova was part of Yugoslavia. The photographing act was a special event for family members. There are photography of weddings as an event taken in photo studios (before the event or after), as well as other selected and relevant family events, like those taken for a ceremonies and festivities in occasion of circumcision “*syneti*,” those taken during holidays, or any other family gathering. As far as I can see, this phase has generated only a small but precisely defined number of family photographs. However, considering economic and political development in Kosova, sometimes

⁴ John Collier, Jr., and Malcolm Colliers, “*Visual Anthropology, Photography as a Research Method* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986), 45.

⁵ Collier, 45.

family members took photographs for passing them to their relatives living abroad to keep their family ties.

As a second phase are the years from 1982-1999. This phase is characterized firstly by intensified social movements of Albanians for defining their political position, and secondly by the beginning of the war which simultaneously marks the end of this phase. On the other hand, in this phase technical improvement of photography proceeded and they are immense. Development of family photography increased as well in this phase and the photography was used more often by family members (as amateurs) to capture different moments of life. Photography not only served as the presentation of family togetherness and of the happiest moments of family life, but also in this phase, for some of the families, photography presents bad memories such as portraits of persons who have been lost from persecution of the Yugoslavian regime and later even in war.

If we consider the period of war, it is very interesting to note that there are a lot of family stories about what they have done with their photos in such a crisis, how they tried to hide family photographs during the war, and about the ways family photographs survived during the war. Through these stories is seen the relevance and the role of photography not only as simply a bearer of the memory, but also as a connection to the past and intergenerational connection.

The third phase contains photographs from 1999- until now. Photo cameras are now found in every family, so that everyday life can be captured. In this phase, family photography presents personal moments of every member of the family (children, babies etc). Mainly, all photographs are kept in hard drives. Mobility of photographs from big families to the small families is very evident. Now there are reflected not only family development but broader context of global developments, like increased mobility and thus the need for connectivity of people through photos. For example, regardless of how distant family members are from one another in geographical location, the photo taken by them can be posted instantly and can be seen around the world through the internet.

Therefore, it is quite important to understand the Kosovar culture and family relationship through the study of family photographs from the 1950s to present.

How family photography reacts within the historical, social, and cultural context of Kosova in these phases/ages, as well as to contextualize it with the evolution of the meaning of family in Kosova. Since the importance of family (“familje”) has been highlighted in my country and seems to be incorporated in the construction of national identity, the social use of family photographs should be considered.

I. Hypothesis

My hypothesis is that Kosova Albanian families use photography not only to promote its members individually as part of that particular community named family but also to tell how family notion is very important for each of them. In order to prove my hypotheses wrong or right, I conducted interviews with members of different families. To evaluate my hypothesis, I conducted qualitative interviews with members of different families. During each interview, I asked the same series of questions and carefully recorded the participants responses for later analysis. It is very important to notice that they have begun to think differently about the family photography, not just as part of them, but also more than enough to think about the importance that family photography have in preservation not only of family memory but as well as collective memory

II. Location/Site

My research took place in the Kosova Albanian families which are living in Kosova. I conducted interviews in families where three generations are living together to fully represent the timeframe which I chose for my research. This type of family organization in the Balkans is very common and is known as extended family and quite often referred to as traditional.⁶ I did the interviews in their homes, the environment where they felt most comfortable to talk about photography. Talking with many families about family photography was not only a pleasure, but this process was full of emotions and nostalgia for both of us. My research required more than one visit in selected families, and our communication continued via emails too.

⁶ In literature is mostly referred as Zadruga, see for example Maria Todorova, “Ballkan Family Structure and the European Pattern (Budapest: CEU Press, Budapest, 2006 (1993), 127-66.

III. Research Methodology

My primary method was narrative interviews conducted with a variety of families in different places in Kosova. The way how I did the interviews is through looking through their family photography albums, computer files and the other places where families put their family photographs. The methods I have used have been the in-depth interview. In-depth interview as Burges (1984) and Lofland (1995) said are often considered as a form of conversation “an in-depth interview is often considered as a form of conversation.”⁷ Noting some of the key features, Legard, Keegan & Ward (2003)⁸ state that “in-depth interview intends to combine structure with flexibility and is interactive in nature as material is generated by interaction.”

My research focus was a few family collections and its practices in Kosova in rural and urban areas. This kind of conversations also enabled the “participant observation”⁹ methodology that involves getting close to people and making them feel comfortable with your presence so that you can observe and record information about their lives”. These were the methodologies used to research this topic. Through observation, I analyzed their feelings while looking at the photographs and their behaviors toward photographs.

I followed these steps for doing research with families 1) getting approval for research project 2) fulfilling consent forms, 3) starting in depth interviews about the meaning of family photographs and practices of family photographs 4) using photo elicitation to select the most important family photographs which are in a way constructing family memory.

⁷ R.G. Burgess, *In the field: An introduction to Field Research*. (London: Allen & Unwin, 1984). And J. Lofland, & L. H. Lofland, *Analysing Social Settings*, 3rd edition (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1995).

⁸ R. Legard, J. Keegan, & K. Ward, In-depth interviews, in *Qualitative Research Practice* (London: Sage, 2003), 139-168.

⁹ H. Russel Bernard, *Research Methodology in Anthropology Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches 3rd edition* (England: Altamira Press, 2002), 344.

Sample:

I conducted interviews with twenty families; families were selected randomly within Kosova. In the beginning it was difficult when I introduced the topic because photography is considered a personal / private thing. In the beginning, the families hesitated to talk about the photography. Firstly, they have chosen photographs that they wanted to show, or where they looked young or different or others that contained their favorite people. Apart from looking at the pictures I have taken as data in-depth interviews with families to analyze relationships / organization within the family as well as the family's importance for the Kosovar society. I also focused on the practices about 1) what they do with photography, 2) what it presents for them, 3) how they treat it, 4) how they distribute it, 5) what impact it has on family relationships, 6) how they keep family ties through photography, 7) how attitudes towards photography has changed through generations, 8) how family photography represents Kosovar family, 9) Intergenerational connection, power and idea of ideal family, and so on. I interviewed the head of the house individually, as well as I conducted interviews in groups. There has always been someone within the family who took care of the family photographs corpus or even wanted to talk about family photography with so much passion, because through photography we can understand the whole story of their family tree, who has been, what they have done and how they should be now and what to inherit. Of course, I took permission¹⁰ from them to allow me to public their photography and filled up a consent form.¹¹

The interviews with families were usually conducted in groups. I want to describe some important observation about the interview process. I want to accentuate that there was always one among them who takes care of photographs and thus wanted to talk more. The least talkative were the young people. This was the process that I faced almost in all interviews. Also, there are events or persons that young people were not so much informed about, and it was a kind of learning for their family memory. They asked questions, why did not you tell us this before/ we

¹⁰ Since, photography is private thing in the beginning I took a permission letter which described my topic and asked them if they allow me to use their photographs for my research as well publish them and got both signatures.

¹¹ The form with both signatures (me as a researcher and the person of the family name) to use their photographs for my research as well as publish them.

did not know this / because of you we know, now. But there were young people who knew events and described them as if they were there. And they choose the most important photographs of their grandparents or their parents. Photography served as a space for dialog with their families to learn much more about their family memory.

The families were diverse, rural and urban families. There were 13 to 15 members living together in each interview house. There were cases in which one the family member were in migration/ unmarried daughter/ or one of the members of families were divorced.

Here I will explain the structure of families researched. All family members have mobile phones, camera equipment, (not personally but family), the laptops, or computers where they keep photographs.

No:	Household	No. in home	Age	Gender
1	8 members	6 members	28-58 years old	3 male/ 3 female
2	8 members	5 members	30- 75 years old	3 female/ 2 male
3	10 members	7 members	29- 65 years old	3 female/4 male
4	11 members	8 members	30- 73 years old	4 female/ 4 male
5	9 members	6 members	25-67 years old	4 female/ 2 male
6	15 members	10 members	24- 72 years old	6 female/ 4 male
7	11 members	7 members	18- 70 years old	4 female/ 3 male
8	9 members	6 members	20- 65 years old	4 female/ 2 male
9	8 members	5 members	25- 61 years old	3 female/ 2 male
10	10 members	7 members	30- 82 years old	4 female/ 3 male
11	11 members	8 members	18 - 66 years old	5 female/ 3 male
12	10 members	8 members	19- 70 years old	4 female/ 4 male

13	12 members	7 members	22- 73 years old	4 female/ 3 male
14	9 members	7 members	23- 75 years old	5 female/ 3 male
15	8 members	6 members	18- 69 years old	3 female/ 3 male
16	9 members	7 members	19- 73 years old	4 female/ 3 male
17	13 members	9 members	18- 69 years old	5 female/ 4 male
18	11 members	8 members	18- 65 years old	5 female/ 3 male
19	8 members	6 members	23- 59 years old	3 female/ 3 male
20	12 members	8 members	18- 75 years old	4 female/ 4 female

Table 1. Structure of the interviewees¹²

Photographs are loved by everyone in the family and the people who are connected with them I was often contacted later on asking if I still wanted or needed photographs. In this process, the students of the department of anthropology have also helped me; they have gathered family photographs for their courses. According to Harper:

Photo elicitation is based on the simple idea of inserting a photograph into a research interview. The difference between interviews using images and text, and interviews using words alone lies in the ways we respond to these two forms of symbolic representation. This has a physical basis: the parts of the brain that process visual information are evolutionarily older than the parts that process verbal information.¹³

Therefore, during research interviews, we agreed with families they choose five to six photos so they can tell the story of their family history as a whole. The process of research required more than one visit to those families, and communication continued by email. They claimed to have

¹² In the table 1, I did not included children, as well the persons which belong to the family but are living abroad and only come during holidays. To compare my data I started from those who are between 18 years old and 70 years old, which contains three generation due to my research purposes.

¹³ Douglas Harper, "Taking about picture: a case for photo elicitation, *Visual Studies* 17, no. 1 (2002).

begun to think differently about the photography, not just as part of them, but also more than enough to think about the widespread research that the photography in this case can do. This research changed my attitudes toward photography, makes me take care much more about them, arrange, organize as well as design albums.

Analyzing methods:

In the process of analyzing photographs, the important part has been archiving the photographs after collecting them. I archived them in the files based on Family names (those which I have interviewed) and the content (description of the photograph) associated with the interviews. As well, I did interviews about practice toward photography, and analyzed through the historical approach.

As mentioned above, I have divided the collection of photographs in three phases. Through this we will see specific issues regarding these phases from 1950-2015 a) what has been photographed, b) what events, c) what has been the subject of the photography, d) the social, economic context of photography.. I asked them as series of questions including, why they make pictures/photos, who collects photographs in the family, who is in charge to take care of them, where do families put photographs: in the albums, boxes or somewhere else like hanging them on the walls, whose photographs are displayed and how the families distribute photographs among family members, and how do families and for what reasons take photographs together, Do they take photographs by themselves or they do hire an expert and are family photographs of a kind that represent family visions? How family photographs help them to construct their family history.

I analyzed the photographs with the internal narrative and the external narratives and to do so I was inspired from the work of March Banks who claims

The content of an image I refer to as its internal narratives- the story, if you will, that the image communicates. This is not necessarily the same as the narrative the image- maker wished to communicate; indeed it can often be markedly different. This is linked to, but analytically separable from what I call the external narrative. By this I mean the social context that produced the image, and the social relations within which the image is

embedded at any moments of viewing. External narrative- information of the nature of the world beyond the photograph.¹⁴

So, the content I based on family interviews, and the context on the literature review about social, economic and historical situations in Kosova and how that situation reflects in family photography.

Barthes in his book Camera Lucida talks about the Operator and Spectator, “The Operator is the Photographer. The Spectator is ourselves, all of us who glance through collections of photographs of photographs- in magazines and newspaper, in books, albums, archives.”¹⁵ In the process of selection the photograph the interviewees were spectators as well, which give the meaning to the photographs, some of them based on their personal stories (they were present of that moment) some of them try to remember the story told by their parents (they were not present).

What was the reason to select that a particular photograph was Studium or Punctum? Barthes distinguish the difference between Studium and Punctum:

Studium, which doesn’t mean, at least not immediately “study,” but application to a thing, taste for someone, a kind of general, enthusiastic commitment, of course, but without special acuity. The second element which will disturb the studium I shall therefore call Punctum; for Punctum is also; sting, speck, cut, little hole- and also a cast of the dice. A photograph’s Punctum is that accident which pricks me (but also bruises me, is poignant to me).”¹⁶

Based on what Barthes said, the interviewees of my research sample, while in their selection process I could say were more based on Punctum of photograph, the symbolic element in their content.

¹⁴ Marcus Banks, *Visual Methods in Social Research* (London: Sage publication, 2001), 11.

¹⁵ Roland Barthes, Geoff Dyer, and Camera Lucida, *Reflections on Photography* (New York: Hill and Wans, 2010), 9.

¹⁶ Barthes et al, 26.

The context analysis of the family photography was very helpful for analyzing the data regarding the time frames. Context analysis was developed by Albert Schelfen (1973) and Adam Kendon (Kendon 1970). “The ‘context analysis’ approach saw interaction as an ecosystem of concerted social action that was sustained across real time in the continuous verbal and nonverbal activity of all the participants in an interactional event.”¹⁷ Context according to Dey is “any information that can be used to characterize an entity. An entity is a person, place, or object that is considered relevant to the interaction between a user and an application, including the user and application themselves.”¹⁸

Analyzing family photographs during fieldwork with the family members was a communicative way and very meaningful for analyzing data.

1. Photography in Cultural Anthropology

One of the most important conversations about the use of photography in anthropological research was between Margaret Mead and Gregory Bastons and is immediately relevant to this research. It’s been reproduced below:

Batson: *I was wondering about looking through, for example, a camera.*

Mead: *Remember Clara Lambert and when you were trying to teach her? That woman who was making photographic studies of play schools, but she was using the camera as a telescope instead of as a camera. You said, “she’ll never be a photographer. She keeps using the camera to look at things.” But you didn’t. You always used a camera to take a picture, which is a different activity.*

Batson: *Because, I think the photographic record should be an art form.*

Mead: *I think it’s very important, if you’re going to be scientific about behavior, to give other people access to the material, as comparable as possible to the access you had. You don’t, then,*

¹⁷ Frederik Ericson, “Reflection on practices, teaching/ learning, videos and theorizing” in *Theories of learning and studies of instructional practice* (Springer, 2011), 388

¹⁸ Anind K. Dey, “Understanding and Using Context,” *Personal and Ubiquitous Computing*, 2001, no. 5: 4-7.

*alter the material. There's a bunch of film makers now that are saying, "It should be art" and wrecking everything that we're trying to do. Why the hell should it be art?"*¹⁹

So, this is a conversation between them regarding their different conceptions of visual ethnography, differences that decreasing still exist among different scholars. Historically, photography played a very important role in cultural anthropology as a research method and evidence data. There is no doubt that photography is not only art, it is a science, and this was approved in Guidelines for the evaluation of the ethnographic visual media produced in 2001 from Society for Visual Anthropology of American Anthropological Association. There is this statement.

Film and video, photography, and digital multimedia play increasing roles in research; they are crucial as teaching tools in the discipline's course offerings; and they are often used in applied contexts. Visual representations offer viewers a means to experience and understand ethnographic complexity, richness and depth, which are the distinguishing features of anthropological knowledge. Visual media can convey forms of knowledge that writing cannot. Further, the content of ethnographic visual media is necessarily based on research: its effectiveness is honed by familiar research techniques including long-term ethnographic engagements, interviews and participant observation.²⁰

Today, there are a lot of research studies about photography from social science, in different countries.

Photography is a medium that not only in the anthropology but also in the other disciplines will be treated. Jay Ruby in her essay "Seeing through pictures" has categorized the use of photography in the social sciences, in four perspectives. 1) Cf. Ward considers photography as High art; 2) according to Cf. Green it is vernacular art that generates a high art; 3) Bateson and Mead (1941) and Collier (1976) consider it as a "Social science research tool"; 4) Cf. Lesey

¹⁹ Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead, For God's Sake, Margaret, *CoEvolutionary Quarterly*, June 1976, no. 10: 32-44.

²⁰ "Guidelines for the evaluation of ethnographic visual media," Society of Visual Anthropology, 2001, <http://societyforvisualanthropology.org/guidelines-for-the-evaluation-of-ethnographic-visual-media>

(1973), Musello (1980) and Chalfen (1977) consider it as “Culturally relevant personal document.”²¹

Considering above categorization, my research study falls more on the fourth, because I use photography together with in-depth interviews to understand the role and its changing importance of Kosovar families reflected in family photography. The role of photography in different time frames and how it is reflected in family lives, and how importance of family events are reflected within photography.



Photo 1. The author taking photographs during fieldwork, photo by Cathlin Norris (2017)

S, Weber states 10 reasons why images may prove valuable in research:

- 1) Images can be used to capture the ineffable, the hard-to-put-into-words;
- 2) Images can make us pay attention to things in a new way;
- 3) Images are likely to be memorable;
- 4) Images can be used to communicate more holistically, incorporating multiple layers, and evoking stories or questions;
- 5) Images can enhance empathetic understanding and generalizability;
- 6) Through metaphor and symbol, artistic images can carry theory elegantly and eloquently;
- 7) Images encourage embodied knowledge;
- 8) Images can be

²¹ Jay Ruby, *Seeing Through Pictures: The Anthropology of Photography*, Camera Lucida 3, (1981), 20-33.

more accessible than most forms of academic discourse; 9) Images can facilitate reflexivity in research design; 10) Images provoke action for social justice.²²

Since, during my fieldwork I saw the emotional connection with family photography firsthand and also noticed the place that photography took place in home setting. I agree when Elisabeth Edwards in her essay, which argues that “photographs cannot be understood through visual content alone but through an embodied engagement with an affective object world, which both constitutive of and constituted through social relations. She mentions sensory photograph entangled with orality, tactility and haptic engagement.”²³

Through photographs, we will be informed not only about family culture (way of life), but also about every aspect of it: the persons, the event, and each single elements on it. So, whoever will tell us about one photograph, will focus on different things. Therefore, we can say that photographs are objects specially made to have social biographies. According to Kopytoff, “Biographical model argued that objects cannot be understood through only one moment of their existence but are marked through successive moments of consumption across space and time.”²⁴ He continues by arguing that what would make a biography cultural is not what it deals with, but how and from what perspective. A culturally informed economic biography of an object would look at it as a culturally constructed entity, endowed with culturally specific meanings, and classified and reclassified into culturally constituted categories. The family photography as its social biography, tells about family ties, their feelings, etc. Also, Barthes mentioned “biographemes” saying that “Photography allows me to accede to an intra- knowledge; it supplies me with a collection of partial objects and can flatter a certain fetishism of mine; for this “me” which likes knowledge, which nourishes a kind of amorous preference for it.”²⁵

²² S. Weber, “Using visual images in research” in *Handbook of the arts in qualitative research: Perspectives, methodologies, examples, and issues* (London: Sage Press, 2008), 41–54.

²³ Elisabeth Edwards, “Objects of affect: Photography beyond the image,” *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 41, no. 1 (2012): 221–34.

²⁴ Igor Kopytoff, “The cultural biography of things, commodization as a process,” in *Social life of things, commodities in cultural perspectives* (Cambridge University press, 1986).

²⁵ Barthes, p. 30

So, the interpretation of the photography/ies that the families chose, brought a certain story this time, but maybe in the future will bring another story. Taking into consideration this fact my thesis is divided in three timeframes to understand the life of photography in different moments and/ or periods. Regarding my research, I can say that there are young people (taking part in the research) which are very much connected to old family photography and know narratives from the times before they were even born. As Barthes asks, “Is history not simply that time when we were not born? I could read my nonexistence in the clothes my mother had worn before I can remember her.”²⁶

Photography is not only a cultural artifact, but focuses on the historical, social and cultural context that they may reflect. Collecting photographs means that you are collecting the world. Photography provides evidence. Memorizing the events/actions of different individuals considered members of a family as well as other groups is the one of the earliest popular uses.

Photography is a human document which keeps you in touch with the present and future. As an infinite number of millions of billions of contemporary photographic documents proves to us, what the picture offers us is not just a reminder of the past, but is a new way to get to know the present. As old photographs fill decay and shape our mental image of the past, photographs of today revive what is present in the mental image of the past. The camera sets a deductive relationship with the present, the reality is recognized by the traces it leaves, while providing us with an inexpensive retroactive experience.

Now, more than ever before, cultural anthropologists are using visual images on paper, digital, or other forms of modern technology, always exploring and presenting the cultures, lives and experiences of other people, cultures different. Theoretical inventions and technological innovation have made visual images acceptable and understandable to anthropologists, and this has created a contemporary context of ever-increasing development of new methods of ethnographic research.

²⁶ Barthes, p. 30

First, the pictures have served as a notebook. The use of visual as a reminder, as an illustration and as proof of ethnographic descriptions are common and preferred phenomena in Cultural Anthropology, but now is interpreted as an objectifying practice. As Sarah Pink notes in her book *Future of Visual Anthropology*,

Ethnographic photography from this period was usually used as illustration rather than being conceived as an analytical or methodological tool and is now interpreted as an objectifying practice. It was thus unchallenging to the contemporary anthropological project. A more ambitious project was Bateson and Mead's photography and film in Bali, coupled with Mead's conviction that visual anthropology could serve a scientific, objective anthropology.²⁷

In this case we refer to the authors Bronislaw Malinowski, Young, Claude Levi-Strauss, and Margaret Mead, who emphasize and point out the relationship between photography and memory, and in their writings talk about the use of photography during their field work. Theorists' explanations teach us that by using the picture as an interview, the anthropologist is helped to understand reality in a new way. But in the case of photography, a quick and important move can occur when anthropologists do not know how to determine questions and conversations during field work.

Numerous studies have highlighted the advantages of interlinking photography and cultural anthropology. The picture shows that the anthropologist/ photographer allows us to see what was not intended to appear but that appears in the image accidentally. It also draws attention to those aspects that are invisible to the ordinary eye, but on the other hand, they are very meaningful to the way of life.

We will mention here the work of John Collier²⁸ who is best known for his book *Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method* (1967 and as well Richard Chalfen for his academic work on family photography).²⁹

²⁷ Sarah Pink, *The future of Visual Anthropology, engaging the senses* (Routledge, 2006).

²⁸ See more John Collier, Jr., and Malcolm Colliers , *Visual Anthropology, Photography as a Research Method* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986).

Consequently, the photograph quickly took a documentary role in anthropology, based on the basic premise that photographs are visual descriptions of reality, which evidently contain facts, evidence, and truth in an objective form that is the foundation of reporting documentary facts. Objectivity also requires the image creator to be as modest and sincere as possible when photographing and unveiling unbiased visual information so that they can describe two visual contexts, and events do not differ from reality. Within these constraints, anthropologists have adapted a strict documentary approach and combined it with scientific methods in order to interconnect, synthesize, and eventually interpret written and visual information. When the photograph is used in the manner described, then it is a valid substitute for anthropological research. Today, we can encounter numerous monographs of cities that are mostly filled with old photographs, mainly aimed at preserving the visual memory of ancient cities.

The most famous anthropologists in the field of photography and film are Gregory Batson and Margaret Mead. Their most famous study in the field of visual anthropology is “*The Balinese Character 1942, Photographic Analysis*.”³⁰ By placing adequate side-by-side photographs, the study noted the intangible relationships found in different types of standardized patterns of cultural behavior. In this case, Balinese culture is presented as a system of understanding behaviors, which also function as an expression of personal identity and experience. This study also expresses a link between current methodology, used in quantity and correlation of photographic data, in accordance with standard anthropological practice.

In the Albanian culture the Phototeka Marubi (Fototeka Marubi)³¹ is used and can still be used as an important source for studies in the field of Cultural Anthropology. The Marubi photographic archive retains 250,000 photographs of photographers of the city of Shkodra, photographs that show Albanian life, history and culture. With these pictures so far six albums have been

²⁹ See more Richard Chalfen, *Snapshot Versions of life* (Green State University Popular Press, 1987).

³⁰ Mead and Batson. “Balinese Character a photographic analysis,” *Special publication of the New York Academy of Sciences*, Volume II, (1942).

³¹ Fototeka Marubi is well known photo studio in Shkoder with a lot of photographs. The first photography atelier was opened in 1856 in Shkodra from an income from Italy called Pietro Marubi. Matija and Keli were two young boys (from Zadrima) started to work with photographs. Keli Kodheli (Marubi) (1879-1940) after Pietro Marubi died inherited the surname of the photographic family “Marubi” and he convey the craft to his son Gege Kodheli (Marubi) (1907-1984). In 2016 was opened Museum of Marubi in Shkodra.

produced, attracting the interest of photo lovers and photographers, both inside and outside the country.

Photography as a research tool is also used in studies by Albanian ethnologist and authors who have prosperous research methods and have provided a new way comparable to achievements in cultural anthropology generally presenting their scientific research work. But, we will mention here that contemporary discussion of photographs in anthropology moved towards the dialogues between photographs of social practices and personhood, looking to the ways that photographs can materialize memories of the past. Here we can mention the authors as Ruby (1995), Kuhn (1995), and Hirsch (1997).

1.1. On Family Photography

As Gillian Rose in her book “Doing family photography” wrote family snaps are one of the most ubiquitous and familiar sorts of visual images; they are taken, reproduced, archived and displayed by vast number of people.³²

Since, family photography usually presents the happy moments like, families in holidays or parties, there are several authors which have done research in family photographs like (Bourdieu 1990, Chalfen 1987, Larsen 2005, Hof 2006), which paid attention not only on the photographs in themselves but also the social practices as well.

Most of my interviewees said that their albums are very selective, especially in this time of digitalization; they make lots of photos but print only those which are for them good and represent the interesting moments.

For Bourdieu “Photographic act as the ontological choice of an object which is perceived as worthy of being photographed, which is captured, stored, communicated, shown and admired. Photographic practice is accessible to everyone.”³³

³² Gillian Rose, “Doing Family Photography the Domestic,” *The Public and the Politics of Sentiment*, (Ashgate, UK: The Open University, 2010), 11.

³³ Pierre Bourdieu, *Photography: A middle – Brown art*, (Stanford University Press, 1990).

Elisabeth Edwards in her essay about “Objects of Affect: Photography Beyond the image” referring to the studies of Batchen³⁴ emphasizes that “photographs exists as contact prints, enlargements, postcards, lantern slides, or transparencies for example. They exist as professional formats, snapshots, art works, or the products of bazaar and street photographers. They are glossy or matte, black and white, colored or hand-tinted. They are collaged, overpainted, cropped, framed and reframed, placed in albums, hung on walls. Kept in secret places, written, exchanged and sometimes destroyed or defaced in an act of self- conscious violence.”³⁵ She also speaks how the stories told with and around photographs, the image held in the hand, features delineated through the touch of the finger, and object passed around, a digital image printed and put in a frame and carefully placed, dusted, and cared for, are key registers through which photographic meanings are negotiated.³⁶

Here we can see that the photograph as an object tell us about it as a product (black, white, cropped, etc.) but also as a producer of certain acts, behaviors, emotions, memories leading to certain meanings. In relation with this we can add Bourdieus interpretation that:

Family photography is a ritual of the domestic cult in which the family is both subject and object, because, it expresses the celebratory sense which the family group gives to itself, and which it reinforces by giving it expression, the need for photographs and the take photographs (the internalization of the social function of this practices) are felt all the more intensely the more integrated the group and the more the group captured at a moments of its highest integration.³⁷

Nowadays, artistic photographs that are made by professional photographers, especially photographs of wedding ceremonies, as well as photographs of babies, not only in their actual birthdays but also in other different events, are very popular. When they hire a professional photographer, not only the clothes of those who are photographed are good maybe even the best but the background always seems to be unique.

³⁴ See more G. Batchen, *Forget me Not: Photography and Remembrance*. (New York: Princeton Archit. Press, 2004).

³⁵ Elisabeth Edwards, Objects of affect: Photography beyond the image. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 41, no. 1 (2012): 221–34.

³⁶ Edwards, 221.

³⁷ Bordeiu, 1990.

As Richard Chalfen put it: “family photos are photos that get taken by a member of family, that show members of that family, and are viewed mostly by other members of that same family, and often by a few close friends.”³⁸ For this research while talking about the importance their photos have for them showed what they feel, what they do and what the photographs mean to them. While photographs taken few decades ago were mostly and necessarily printed and placed in albums, in shoe boxes, or in the bags; nowadays, they are being kept in personal mobile phones, or in the computer or laptops, but less are printed.

As Gilian Rose concludes from her research, “it is useful to treat modern family snaps less as meaningful images, and more as objects embedded in practice that produces various effects.

A photograph is a three- dimensional thing, not only a two-dimensional image. As such, photograph exist materially in the world, as chemical deposits on paper (or, we might add, as electrical signals in an image sensor), as images mounted on a multitude of different sized, shaped, colored and decorated cards, as subject to additions to their surface or as drawing their meanings from presentational forms such as frames and albums. Photographs are both images and physical objects that exists in time and space.³⁹

Family photographs are applied in different things such as in bags, as key keepers, in pillows, in glass, calendars, etc. It is very easy, they just send the photo via Viber or other digital format and select the object and the family photographs will be incorporated. Elisabeth Edwards for these diverse names as ‘morphological possibilities’ says that there are three aspects to the abjectness of a photograph.

First, on her list is its visual form, which is what the photographic image shows, second is its material form, for example whether, the paper it’s printed on is glossy or matte, whether it’s a torn, what kind of screen is seen on and third is its presentational form.⁴⁰

³⁸ Chalfen, 1987.

³⁹ E. Edwards and J. Hart, “Introduction: photographs as object” in *Photographs Objects Histories: On the Materiality of Images*. (London: Routledge, 2004), 1- 15.

⁴⁰ Edwards, 2012.

Arjun Appadurai argues that objects are inseparable from the practices in which they are embedded, adding that “things have no meaning apart from those that human transactions, attributions, and motivations endow them with. Objects matter in the context of social practices.”⁴¹ In the third phase (1999- till now) family photos are sent to other family member through the internet, as email attachment, through Viber, and so on. Thus, the photos communicate and inform what family members are doing and how they look. So, based on all these facts my research focuses not only on photography but also the social practices that characterize the photography, the linking between people and their interaction with photography.

Photography as medium is not about photography *per se* but about its potential to question and arouse curiosity, to tell in different voices or see through different eyes. One of my interviewees Ylfete, 54 years old, said that “every time that I look to photographs, I feel different, it depends how I feel in that moment, what is on my mind. In some cases, I feel nostalgia, in some cases I feel proud of something we want to illustrate, a fact, or remember a person.”

Photography can communicate about culture, people’s lives, experience, and beliefs. Stanley Migran⁴² says that photography is a technology that has two psychoanalytical ideas, perceptions, and memories. You can learn to sit see and how to remember. In my case it is how to remember and is a tool to construct a narrative that connect different members of family.

Marianne Hirsch used the term familial gaze, which allows us to look closer at the conventions present in family photography. In the book “Familial Gaze” she wrote:

When in 1888, George Eastman invented the Kodak, with the slogan you push the button, we do the rest- photography could emancipate itself from its artistic history and become widely and democratically available to anyone. It left the studio and entered the home. In the ensuing century, the camera has become the family’s primary instrument of self-knowledge and self-representation the primary means by which family memory is perpetuated, by which the family’s story is told. Formal portraits have virtually been

⁴¹ A Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

⁴² Stanley Milgram, "The Image-Freezing Machine," *Psychology Today*, 10, no. 12 (1977): 50-54.

replaced by more casual snapshots that can record the ordinary moments and the minute details of family life. Yet even the speed and simplicity of the process have not radically refocused the convention of familial representation and self-representation.⁴³

Here, I will explain how I decided to choose this topic regarding my personal experience toward family photographs. I was raised in a family in which my mother was very passionate in arranging and taking care of photographs, but not my father. As a family we have some family photographs of our vacations, school photographs, special events etc. But, it was one photograph that communicated with me in a silent manner, every time I entered my grandparent's room. There was a photograph standing in the middle of the room, on the wall just above the sleeping bed (see photo below) which took my attention. It was my grandparents' wedding photograph, made in 1953. I do not know why I liked this photograph so much. It was also very interesting when I heard the other members of family making jokes with this photograph; "look how the groom was standing on the stone to be taller than the bride." In the Kosovar families there is unwritten rule that groom should be taller than bride. But, this photo was made some time after marriage, in the kind of photo studio⁴⁴. During my research I have noticed that each family has this kind of photograph in their family corpus of photos. I was curious to ask much more about the story/ narrative behind this photograph, and I understood that family photography can construct family history, general cultural norms and family memory and also can reflect different cultural practices that surround you and you are not familiar with them. My mother always carries in her bags photographs of her where she was younger (happy moments), and beautiful. Since the sickness changed a bit her appearance, she wanted to tell the people or the doctors how different, beautiful and young she was before. In this way I understood another part of what family photography can do, you can use it as a tool to represent yourself and be known in the different way, in the way you want. On the other hand, my brother always, whenever my friends would come to my house, he begged "please, do not show them my photographs!" He thinks that, he is not photogenic. And my father has the least photographs of us all. He does not like to be photographed but, since he become a grandfather his attitude has changed. Now, he is doing

⁴³ Marianne Hirsch, *The Familial Gaze*, (Dartmouth, 1999), 16.

⁴⁴ Photo studios are shops where people take a photograph and were popular among families. They would go there in very special occasions, and the wedding was most popular family event.

photograph but only with his granddaughter. I come to understand that in each family there are different stories and narratives toward family photographs and photography as a practice and how they construct not only family memory but also self-representation, and how family photography play a crucial role in doing family history and memory.



Photo 2. My grandparents wedding photography in the bedroom⁴⁵

This research shows what the relationship of the Kosovar families is with photographs, how through them they can construct their family memory.

1.2. The history of photography in Albanian society

In his book “150 years of Albanian Photography” Albanian researcher Qerim Vrioni⁴⁶ categorized the Albanian photography in three development times/periods. The first begins with the picture of Hamz Kazazi⁴⁷ in 1850 and continues until 1944. It is mainly characterized by documentary photographs, which later gained historical value; the second lasts from 1944-1990

⁴⁵ This is a photograph of my grandparents, which was my inspiration for conducting a research on family photographs. While they are no longer alive, this photograph stands there in the same place as before for more than 50 years.

⁴⁶ See more Qerim Vrioni, “150 VJET Fotografi Shqiptare”, *Milosao*, 2009 Sarande.

⁴⁷ Hamz Kazani was an Albanian fighter and leader (1779-1859)

and documented and propaganda material for political purposes 1990s and had mainly aesthetic photographs. Initially photography began as an artisan craft and then as an art. The craft of photography was passed from one photographer to another, from father to son. They archived the reality of that time. Photographs became part of the cultural and spiritual life and were very valuable for every person.

When photography was discovered in 1839, Kosova was in the political-economic aspect under the rule of Ottoman Empire. The beginning of the history of photography in Kosova, started with the photographer called Ahmet Zherka (1880-1967).⁴⁸ He bought the camera equipment in Selanik. His work contains the photographs of historical or family figures, musicians, students at school, etc. The characteristic of photographs in this time was that all the people in the photograph are dressed very beautifully; the act of making photos was a sort of ritual ceremony.

Taking, preserving, and sharing photographs captures family identity and preserves memories for the future generations. Since its invention photography has played an important role in the construction of family memory, also evoking a sense of belonging for the members toward their families.

When we speak of photography in Kosova, we can say that there is lack of literature on photography. There is only one book/album which in the introduction has a written summary about the historical context of photography (in general or for Kosova context).

We cannot imagine or think of any activity without photographs, based on our beloved family memories. Photographing or taking pictures does not depend so much on talent, as is the case with painting. Photos can be taken by everyone. There is no actor who does not need authentic evidence, such as photography. Nowadays there is almost no activity without the participation of photography and so we are embedded with it to the point that we do not notice the importance and role that we have in contemporary life.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ *Fotografia ne Kosove 1900-1950*, written by Shukri Kacaniku is the only book/album in Kosova which talks about the history of photography in Kosova. The history of the first photographer and their photograph were presented in his book.

⁴⁹ Fadil Gacaferri 'Kamera Fotografike', Prishtine Libri Shkollor, 2000

The picture is a "drawing" by light. According to the Oxford Dictionary the etymology of the word photograph is “From *photos* (φωτος), light, and *graphos* (γραφος), writing, delineation, or painting. Although ‘heliography’, ‘photogeny’, and ‘daguerreotypy’, were first used as alternatives, ‘photography’ eventually gained universal precedence as the preferred name.”⁵⁰

In the world, family photography has become popular with the invention of Kodak camera equipment, the most popular advertisement; in Kosova it arrived later. But you could and can find many photo studios with the name Kodak, Nikon. Some of them hold family names or first name of owner.



Photo 3. This is the first advertisement where photography moves to the homes, Kodak Advertisement.⁵¹

⁵⁰ The etymology of the word photography from <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100324562>, retrieved on October, 2016

⁵¹ Advertisement of the Kodak, for family use from [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:You_press_the_button,_we_do_the_rest_\(Kodak\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:You_press_the_button,_we_do_the_rest_(Kodak).jpg)

2. Family Photography in Kosova -first phase 1950- 1981

Historical/ economical social context:

In the 50s, the employment of Albanian teachers is noticed, where there were also teachers who came from Albania.⁵² Kosova's autonomy was expanded step by step between 1968 and 1974. The Yugoslav Constitution of 1974 advanced Kosova into autonomous province status, whose rights in parity were the same as those of other republics.⁵³

Albanian families were beginning to emerge from first generations of teachers,⁵⁴ probably with a little bit of speed education because the population needed them because it was almost totally illiterate. We mentioned this fact because these teachers apart from their primary mission that they had to educate children, also were very much engaged in educating adults through courses and similar forms. They were also the first photographers without their studios or shops. "At that time, every teenager's dream was to become a teacher, to have a bike and a camera," claims one of my interviewees. These teachers with the authority they had among population were invited to families in every household. Whether marriage, engagement, circumcision, celebrations of any important family events, but sometimes they were also invited without any significant reason. In 1970 there was made a new agreement with the University of Tirana, so more than 200 professors from Tirana came to Kosova for five years to deliver lectures in Albanian in Prishtina, using texts published in Albania.⁵⁵

Since the camera had already become part of their image - teachers could be considered as the largest producers of family photography at that time. It is understandable that the film tape developed and the pictures were made in the film studios, which have already been opened in every town of Kosova.

⁵² See more Noel Malcom, "Kosova një histori e shkurtër," *Koha*, (Prishtinë, 2011), 41.

⁵³ Oliver Schmitt, "Kosova Histori e shkurtër e një treve qendrore ballkanike," *Koha*, (Prishtinë, 2012).

⁵⁴ Schmitt, 184.

⁵⁵ Malcom, 41.

As Bourdieu emphasizes in his book:

The best argument for psychological explanation by 'motivation' is the fact that ownership of a camera is closely related to income. Which seems to allow us to consider cameras as pieces of equipment comparable to cars, or televisions, and to see the ownership of such a commodity as nothing but the index of standard of living.⁵⁶

He continues by saying that "The fact of taking photographs, keeping them, or looking at them, may bring satisfaction in any of five areas,' protection against time, communication with others and the expression of feelings, self-realization, social prestige, distraction or escape.⁵⁷

Considering the family photography in this phase based on my research sample, what characterizes most their family photo corpus I found that often the photography was considered a sign of memory, and usually was exchanged.

2.1. Photography as memory and exchange

Photographs as a memory from a family member or friend (i.e. giving a photograph as memory 'is kujtim' with the text written behind it. In the Mejreme's family photography corpus I saw some of the portrait photographs, in which were people who her children did not know, and behind them was a written text. These kinds of photographs I saw in other families, too. The photographs below are the photograph of Mejreme's brother as soldier in (1982). He sent them other writing on photos back Memory (in Albanian *kujtim*). She explains that it was for the purpose of remembering, not forgetting. And almost always, these photographs were portraits, made by professional photograph, so not amateur photographs. During my research I have found as well as portraits of the relatives of the families, which lives abroad and give the photograph as a portrait to his/her family. I will mention here a narrative told by my interviewee. Mustafe, 63 years old, told me that her/his aunt was in Turkey and they did not see her for quite a long time. After a while she sent a photography to all her 3 brothers' families, but the photography showed her in her actual age. And now the photograph still takes place on Mustaf's family photo corpus

⁵⁶ Bordeiu, 18.

⁵⁷ Bordieu, 19.

(the oldest son of one of her brothers). In this way, they have been communicated with each other. This way in the other side was as well as kind of communication before.

The practice of exchanging personal photos was very common in some particular occasions and events. For example, when finishing high school, being aware that their lives will take different paths and they will meet each other more rarely, students would give each other their photos, by signing their signatures or writing something in the back, most often only “Pwr Kujtim”/ Besides photos with individual portraits very often as exchanged gifts are for remembering are photographs made in groups, together, in the school activities, and so on.

I do understand from my research that during the time boys served the Army which lasted for one year, so they were away from home without any visit for months families exchanged with them lots of photos. Soldiers send letters and photos to all their relatives. One of my interviews said: “it was a first time that we were far from our families, and we understood how much we love them, and our thought were all the time with them, so we expressed our feelings by writing letters or sending photographs”.



Photo 4. Photography with description given for remembering 1980, (private family corpus/ collection)

“Motres Mejrem” fotografia t’ ju sherbej si kujtim nga vellau me i vogel dhe me i dashur. Muharremi”.

“To sister Mejrem (name of the sister), photography may serve you to remember your dearest and youngest brother. Muharremi”



Photo 5. Photography as memory 1973 (private family collection)

The description in this photograph is very interesting and unique because, since it has a message/news on it. There is written “Memory from Father, Mother, sister, brother and all family” and in the other side is written “my uncle has died”. A member of the family in this photo, said that together with the photograph they were informed what was happening in this large family, too. This photo was sent to their son, while he was a soldier.



Photo 6. *Family photography 1946 (family private collection)*

This photograph has a very special meaning for Loxha's and Begolli's Family This photograph is special because of the reasons it was taken. Members of the families gathered and made a picture/photo firstly because they had guest from Tirana, and secondly so it could be sent to the member of family who was in prison Nowadays this photo is reproduced in several copies so each nuclear family from both sides can own one. The description that the family made to this photograph goes like this:

“Familja Loxha dhe Begolli (Ajsheaba dhe Tefikbegu dhe Gazmendi jetojne ne Tirane). Per me ia dergu Babukes ishte ne burgun e Nishit foto e vitit 1946.”

“Family Loxha and Begolli (Ajsheaba⁵⁸ (the oldest sister with the husband and his son living in Tirana), this was made to send to Babuka (Ferid Loxha) the head of the Loxha's family. He was in the prison in Nish.”

My father, born in 1954, told me a story of "the first encounter with the photographer, respectively with the photograph I had taken when I was 6 years old, in 1960. He was

⁵⁸ In the Kosovar Family we use to call the older sisters Aba. So to their names will be added Aba to show the respect.

photographed together with his 6 years older brother. It was taken by the photographer of the city because at that time in many cities of Kosova were opening studios or shop of photographers who on demand of clients would photograph them outside of their studios or shops. But, understandably the price was higher than when it was done inside the studio. It means that at that time, inviting a photographer into your home could not be afforded by all the families, due to the financial costs.⁵⁹

The characteristic of this phase as far as photography is concerned, is that it was dominated by portraits. At most only heads of household made those pictures and they were /hung in the most central places of the house. With these head-to-head portraits it demonstrated that the master of the home decided everything in the family. In most cases, military portraits were most dominate in this phase. The portrait of the head of the households were present in almost all the families where I did my interviews, which seems that serves as a cult. This fact proves what Bourdie wrote:

Family photography is a ritual of the domestic cult in which the family is both subject and object, because, it expresses the celebratory sense which the family group gives to itself, and which it reinforces by giving it expression, the need for photographs and the take photographs (the internalization of the social function of this practices) are felt all the more intensely the more integrated the group and the more the group captured at a moments of its highest integration.”⁶⁰

Hasan Shkodra (67 years old), a teacher and photographer of that time, told me that with the money he saved he bought a Smena 8⁶¹ film camera. He said that young people back then expressed the will to take photographs. Furthermore, he stated that due to the fact that some of the people that he had photographed did not have the chance for any reason to take them, he kept them and now he has a lot of photographs from that time. Additionally, he said that some of the

⁵⁹ Shukri Kacaniku in his book mentions these well-known photographers with their studios in different municipalities of Kosova as: Ahmet Zherka (Gjakove), Zef Mjeda (Prizren), Osman Zymi (Mitrovica), Nazmi Spahiu(Vushtri), Rexhep Rakovica (Prishtine), Ramadan Gilanliu (Gjilan), Hafez Beqiri (Gjilan), Biter Kajtazi (Prizren), Riza Pepa (Peje), Bajram Pepa (Peje), Neshat Dizdari (Prizren), Vehbi Rexhepi (Gjilan) etc

⁶⁰ Bordeiu, 19.

⁶¹ Smena 8 is the brand of camera equipment.

photographs from that time, since some of them did not have the opportunity to take them, till now I have them. “For me it was another profession too; I made it because I liked it and also wanted to earn more money. But the prices paid for a photograph were not so high, they were affordable for families.”

People who wanted to get photographed would always prepare for that occasion. They would try to look as good and neat as possible. They would wear best clothes and tried to look very solemnly. It is worth noting that for the photography Albanian used the Turkish name “syret”, (maybe because photos were firstly introduced during Ottoman Empire, or maybe just because there lots of Turkish words in Albanian vocabulary). So, when someone stated that they were going to make a photo or get photographed they would say “Me dal n’syret”, or I am looking at the photos, “Po I kqyri syretat”. However, as a result of that, among Kosova Albanians, very often can be heard giving the compliment to someone looking good with expression “Koke bo syret/ you look like a picture/photo”. During my fieldwork I still very often heard this word from the old generation, but rarely from the new generation.

During the act of photography, people try to look as beautiful as they could. So, the photograph itself has taken the connotation of beauty.

It is worth mentioning another fact that during this period there was a trend that a gift for a birthday or friend was sending a photo album.

The other interesting and meaningful feature of family photography of that period is the different types of clothing among of family members. Some of them are dressed in traditional clothes, while others are dressed in modern or contemporary costumes. The other quite important and visible distinction that can be made by examining photos of this period is that you can easily determine if the family is coming from rural or urban households.

Rural households are usually photographed in nature near a flower in the garden, or in any green space, while urban households were usually photographed in front of the house and this way again the distinction between village and town was easily noted. In the urban area, the photographs contained tables and chairs or there were television or radio.



Photo 7. *In the mountain (after work/ sheep shearing), Private family collection*⁶²

Another quite significant feature can be noticed in these photos. It has to do with the way people i.e. family members are arranged or positioned in the photo. Usually the first from the right is the head of the house and then the other men of the family, while in the second order, the women are also starting from the oldest and so on (as we can see in photo 5). It is very important to accentuate that at this time, the age hierarchy was very much respected, regardless of people's other social statuses.

The little children in photographs of that time are very often on the side of their mothers, rarely are they placed next to their fathers. Also, in many pictures of that time, we find that men of the same family are photographed separately from the women. This testifies or reflects their way of living, which means that men stand separately from women even during festivities or family events.

⁶² Qethja e dhenëve (sheep shearing) as agricultural/farmers rite is still present today in some places in Kosovo, as well as the Darka e Lamës as a celebration day organized after the end of crop gathering (shirja e drithit).

2.1.1 Impact of migration in family photography

As with all family photography, it is worth mentioning the fact that at the beginning of the 1970's the former Yugoslavia had signed an agreement with the German state for the employment of seasonal workers in this country.⁶³ Before 1960 there were no statistical data about migration. However, widely it is known that in 1953 a large movement/ displacement of Albanians to Turkey started. There is no detailed data for Kosova, although it is estimated that a total number of 100.000 migrated from Kosova during this period.⁶⁴ Recent research study on Kosova migration has recognized four phases, including this one.

The phase from 1960 to 1989 included the temporary migration of the sought-after Kosovars employment opportunities mainly in Germany and Switzerland. Most of the emigrants were from rural areas who either did not have the skills to develop or were not sufficiently educated. They were given special contracts in order to keep them as temporary workers; these contracts gave them the right to take their family with them. Although there were various programs that encouraged them to return to their country, most chose to stay and live in foreign countries.

□ Phase from 1989-1997 includes individuals leaving compulsory military service, which culminated in the Balkan wars. This group consisted of mostly individuals educated and skillfully equipped, who came from both rural areas and urban ones. In addition, this phase includes the period when the status of Kosova autonomy was abolished. As a result, during this period the massive departure of Kosovars from the countries took place of their work.

□ The phase from 1998 to 1999 represents the period of violent and massive migration of the population displaced as a result of the war. During the war more than 800,000 people left Kosova as refugees, mostly traveling to Macedonia, Albania, Western Europe and the United States. After the war in 1999, Kosova experienced a massive return of its displaced population.⁶⁵

⁶³ Schmitt, 219.

⁶⁴ Malcolm, 402.

⁶⁵ "This separation of the phases comes from the study prepared for Forum 2015 by Riinvest Institute based on the research conducted in Kosova, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, UK, Sweden, Austria and the USA, "Diaspora and migration policies" 2007, Prishtina See as well Lumnije Kadriu."

Interest was twofold, the German state needed labor power, while the former Yugoslav state and, more specifically, Kosova Albanians needed employment. This was especially true for young people in rural areas because the Albanian families in Yugoslavia were characterized as having a greater birthrate and this itself meant that Albanian families had many children among them, and their working age adults. But the vast majority of them were with little (four or fewer elementary school years finished) or no schooling at all, so the opportunity to get employed in the country was too small for them. Since this agreement was an institutional one, inter-state employment agencies at that time were tasked to make seasonal occupation enrollments, and give a number of trainings for various crafts by intensive courses as well as various workshops were relevant to the time, and at their own expense these workers ran to the intended place.

This period marks the most massive legal migration of Kosovar Albanians, which could be characterized by economic reasons. It is worth mentioning that Kosovar Albanians had migrated earlier in different European countries, but for political reasons, especially after the end of World War II. However, they also migrated continuously because they disagreed with the economic, social and political system installed in Yugoslavia. Therefore, they were tortured and imprisoned because of their beliefs and ideology, so they were forced to take this step and thus migrate illegally.⁶⁶

Turning back to the economic migration. When I asked interviewees why they have migrated as seasonal workers, almost of the interviewees gave the same answer: to solve one of the basic issues of human needs and that is the need of residence. This is understandable because at that time in a small house of Albanians lived together three generations with around more than 30 members. Zija Ahmeti from the village of Malishevë, Gjilan municipality, born in 1941, who immigrated to Germany, as a seasonal worker in 1972 says:

I have emigrated because in the house where I lived with parents, brother and his family, and two sisters, when I married I had only one room for myself. My intention was to work as long as I could, build a home and create my family. But life is unpredictable, neither in dreams I could not imagine that I would stay there until I retired.

⁶⁶ See more in Schmitt.

Now he has built in his village, two modern houses, has bought land, which increased his wealth and has secured dignified lives for his close family also. A similar answer or confession can be obtained from most immigrants.

The migration was mentioned almost in every family, even though it was not the central question of my research. It happened because; the stories behind the photographs they were showing and talking about were connected to migration issues, such as:

Here is the one when they came to say goodbye⁶⁷ to me, or my father, or brother; or

Here is the one when I got married and for ten years I lived separately from my husband.

Hence it was understandable that immigration issue was a very important part of the Kosovar family.



Photo 8. *The photo of the migrant after arriving home (family private collection)*

⁶⁷ In Albanian families when a person goes abroad or somewhere else they use to go and visit and say goodbye, Alb. 'me u pjek', because they somehow are prepared that they might not see each other anymore.



Photo 9. *The story after the wedding ceremony*

There are pictures that the narration shows the photograph with her husband, who only after two weeks of marriage had taken the path of economic migration. There are pictures where the story was told with tears in their eyes about a close family member who is no longer alive.

Photography has a magical force/power when we look at it; it seems to us that our brain acts, or activates a part of it; if we can express the archived part of the brain from which we reproduce the time and space of the past events then we are usually surprised by what we see and enjoy them with the same feelings as if they happened today.

There are in every culture certain locales and activities that the natives consider representative of their public image, areas and structures which they expect the stranger to recognize and enter and take pictures of- sites like public buildings, parks, or the town water-work, that are the pride images of community.⁶⁸ Based on my research data, Kosovar families while interpreting their family photography linked the meaning with the historical time frames and family composition (their family kinship). Richard Chalfen notes that content and form variation might appear in relation to 1) historical time frame- regarding technological developments (more outdoor than indoor settings, more black and white than color pictures) or political context (presence or absence of military involvement); 2) family composition (frequent appearance or absence of children or living extended family members; the use of pets in roles of surrogate children; 3) Religion; 4) Ethnicity; 5) geographic locations.⁶⁹



Photo 10. *One of the photos of the head of household (sometimes they cut the group photo to make it a portrait)*

⁶⁸ Collier, Jr., and Colliers, 31

⁶⁹ Richard Chalfen, *Snapshot Versions of life*, (Green State University Popular Press, 1987), 97.

When they speak about photos in this phase, they speak for the large/extended family as well, or in Albanian “familjen e madhe” in which used to live more than 40 members together. And they mention the portrait of the ‘zoti i shtepise’, the head of the family, who typically stands in front or central part of the dining room at this time. I have come to understand that these portraits have two functions, a) one ancestral to tell about the history of family and of respect and b) the second the cult values.

Home mode imagery reveals only a version of their lives with cameras, and secondly, how they chose to present themselves in front of an operating camera. Thus, photos are not statements of reality, but of interpretations of reality.⁷⁰

From fieldwork data, I understood that the portrait produces in this phase or family photograph as whole family, after they divided in the nuclear family, every family has these kinds of photographs, to be remember as a large family and to know who their ancestors were. Genti around 28 years old, when talking about his forefather’s photography, said: “This photo gives me a power, every time I see this photo I feel much stronger.”

There are families which have a) portrait of the head of family b) husband and wife (grandparents) c) big family d) representative of family like soldier and e) political representative.

Walter Benjamin claims that:

In photography, display value starts to drive cultic value back along the whole line. However, cultic value does not give ground without resistance. It occupies, one last ditch, and that is the human face. It is no accident, not at all that the portrait forms the centerpiece of early photography. In the cult value of the image finds its last refuge. In the transient expression of a human countenance in early photographs, we catch one final glimpse of aura. It is this that gives them their melancholic, matchless beauty. But where

⁷⁰ Chalfen, 135

the human form withdraws from photography, there for the first time display value gets the better of cultic value.⁷¹



Photo 11. Portrait of the head of the family with his part of his clothes (*shoka*)⁷²

Photography sometimes was associated with valuable object. This photograph shows a person's portrait with the *shoka* (part of traditional costume, a cloth wrapped around the waist) hanging below it. In order to understand why this fact is so important, I will explain the social organization of the family below.

2.2. The social organization of the Kosovar Albanian Family

The traditional Kosovar Albanian family is generally characterized by a household consisting of complex and numerous nuclear family relations. The residence rules, kin relations and gender relations are composed by patriarchal and patrilocal rules and norms. In the Kosova context this means the following: sons remain in the household, whereas daughters are married out. Extended

⁷¹ Walter Benjamin, *The work of art in the age of mechanical production* (London: Penguin Books, 2008), 14.

⁷² This photograph was taken from the book of Statovci, Drita "Djepi dhe perjetesia," *Instituti Albanologjik i Prishtines (IAP)*, (Prishtine, 2014), 197

family is the one in which at least three generations live together, father with his married sons and their children.

Extended families were studied by numerous scholars and as a result there are many definitions in this regard. According to Mosely, the Balkan joint family household was “an extended family consisting of two or more small or biological families owning land, livestock, and tools in common and sharing the same livelihood.”⁷³

Balkan Joint family from Karl Kaser’s point of view, came into being independently from other East-European joint-family-household organizations. It has a particular and specific historical origin and is based on a cultural pattern related to a pastoral economy. The functions of the Balkan joint family were threefold. First, it provided protection for its members in a hostile political environment. Second, its structure was defined by the pastoral mode of agrarian production. Third, it functioned as the basis social unit of archaic social organization, such as tribes, and large lineage groups”⁷⁴

The extended Kosovar Albanian family (familja e madhe) is, above all, a group of people connected by blood, having common assets in which they live and work together and share the fruits of their work. The household is led by ‘I zoti i shtëpisë’ i.e. the head of household, who has one or two assistants. Usually, the oldest person is ‘I zoti i shtëpisë’ but very often this task is handed to the smartest or most fit person who has the respect of other members of the family. The head of the family enjoys great rights within the household, so the term itself clearly shows that his rights to the home are great. The righteousness of the head of the family is one of the main pillars that keeps strongly tied family communion.

On the other hand, the woman who takes care of and leads the chores done by women such as dairy, preparation and sharing the food, cleaning etc., presents after the head of the family as the second most important person of the family.⁷⁵

⁷³ Mosely, Philip E. “The distribution of the zadruga within southeastern Europe,” in Robert F. Byrness (ed.) *Communal Families in the Balkans: The Zadruga*, (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976), 59.

⁷⁴ Kaser, 89-108.

⁷⁵ Krasniqi, Mark. *Gjurme Gjurmime*, *Institute Albanologjik I Prishtines*, (Prishtine, 1979), 216.

Extended families among Kosova Albanians were present until late twentieth century and in some variations they can be noticed even nowadays Mark Krasniqi lists several factors that have influenced the survival of large families in Kosova: there are economic, social-historical and ethno psychological. In the psychology of Albanians, the genus of blood plays a great role. This connection is so strong that even members of a very distant kin are considered as relatives. It is believed that the whole kin is derived from a common ancestor/family root. Large families are more prized and respected in society than smaller families. The family with a many members of family living together is called “shtepi e forte, shtepi e madhe”/strong household, big household’.

According to the ethnologist Mark Krasniqi depending on their way of life and economic work conditions Kosovar Albanian extended families can be categorized in some varieties, which were determined also by their geography position and the place where they live. They are: a) Temporary divided family, b) Permanent family, c) Family with diverse profession, and d) Patriarchal divided family.⁷⁶ Each family type is explained in detail below.

A) Temporary divided families are those families in which the members of the family did not live in the same house for part of the year. They are a transhuman family which during the summer (some members) go on the mountains in so called ‘T’bane or Stane” i.e Huts. This variety of families lived in the periphery of Rafshi i Dukagjinit (Platueau of Dukagjin) and in the Bjeshkët e Nemuna. There was a lack of pasture in their villages, during summer with their livestock they went in mountain. Not only the shepherd, but also most of the women and children went in the mountain.

B) Permanent families are those families which do not go on mountains but stay at home because they do not have a very large number of livestock.

C) Family with diverse professions, (agriculture, official/government, and industry) are those whose members used to have different kind of professions.

⁷⁶ Krasniqi, 216

D) Patriarchal divided families are those families that once their number of members increased significantly, had to buy land in some other place and live there, but nevertheless considered part of and belonged to the extended family.⁷⁷

After the last war (1999) in Kosova there can be seen the appearance of several similar houses, which are built by brothers of the same household. Lumnije Kadriu in her research “Family affairs while on holiday – Practising holiday and keeping family ties in the Kosova Albanian diaspora” regarding this phenomenon claims that

The symbolic visibility of these houses represents family as a social, cultural and economic unit and reflects at the same time the old tradition as ascribed in the Kanun of Leke Dukagjini, thus premodernity, and also reflects present time, postmodernity, in regard to not only the modern construction of the houses, but also mobility and multilocality in cases of transnational families. It mirrors family size, family property, family strength, and above all their division reflects equality and unity among them, as an important social and cultural and moral value. This way belonging of family members is visualized, affirmed, and ‘rootedness’ preserved, especially in the case of diasporans.⁷⁸

The importance of the concept of family among Albanians is also noticed by the author Gilles de Rapper in his study about “Family photographs in communist Albania” in which he states that:

In spite of their external production, these family albums are of great value for the family: this can be seen first of all in the fact that while almost everything that could recall communist times in the country was destroyed, family albums are still there. In spite of the political turmoil, population movements or changes in the furniture and decoration of the house, those images of the communist past are still present in every family.⁷⁹

Considering the division of Kosovar Albanian transnational families in several countries and their persistence in being reunited several times during the year in homeland, especially during

⁷⁷ Krasniqi, 208-210

⁷⁸ Kadriu, Lumnije, Pushimet, familja, vendlindja në praktikat e diasporës shqiptare të Kosovës, (*Instituti Albanologjik, Prishtinë, 2017*), 197.

⁷⁹ De Rapper, Gilles and Durand, Anouck. “Family Photographs in Communist Albania: State Photography and the Private Sphere,” *Audiovisual Media and Identity Issues in Southeastern Europe*, (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), 210-229.

the summer time, even by going together in the seaside (mainly Albanian coast) Lumnije Kadriu in her above mentioned research concludes that:

In the ongoing changing process family remains still of central importance, however the place where family members cultivate mutual ties (different host countries, homeland, cyberspace, seaside), the way members (of extended families) are chosen in order to cultivate those ties, the geographical distance they have between as well as the frequency of meetings, become less important and may differ from family to family, from case to case. The common quest in all these variations remains the feeling of “at-homeness” i.e. feeling like being at home; whilst where the one might feel so, may vary from individual to individual from family to family.⁸⁰

Analysing the photographs of this phase it is shown that they were used in a function of remembrance, as a token sent to migrated family members or those who were serving the army. In this case, family members through photographs showed primarily longing, but they used them to also share some news.

Based on the Institutional Education of Albanians, establishment of the university but also greater employment of Albanians in different sectors, as well as economic migration this phase may be considered as a phase of prosperity. This due to the fact that many interviewed families mention seventies as a time when they were first equipped with the camera, usually given as a gift by migrated family members.

⁸⁰ Kadriu, 399.

3. Second phase 1989-1999

Political, economic and historical context of Kosova

Viewed from the political, economic and historical context, the period of the years 1989-1999, for Kosova represents the period of dramatic developments in all spheres of social, political and economic life, as well as cultural. In 1989, with the suppression of the constitution of Kosova by Serbia, Serbia began its physical and institutional occupation. In this phase Kosova was in a state of arrest, with suspended institutions and with the people excluded from the normal state functions.

Also, Kosova was not in the system, but was violently involved in another system, which it had never met, neither politically, economically, legally nor religiously. In this state of occupation, the Albanian political and intellectual elite and the Albanian people of Kosova decided to express their political will by building a parallel political system that shaped and established the Republic of Kosova, which initially was intended as equal to other Republics of Yugoslavia, and then later as a completely, democratic and independent Sovereign State. In short, 1989-1999 were years of confusion, of a total surprise and uncertainty about the daily life in Kosova, the total occupation of Kosova, and the longest years for Albanians who were totally unemployed.

This also influenced the overall economic, political, and cultural trends. In the economic aspect, the Serbian authorities originally provided supplies respectively to the unification of all economic enterprises operating in Kosova, with the companies operating in the territory of Serbia by converting them into joint stock companies and over 5% of the shares had the enterprises operating in Serbia. Understandably, all these were respecting economic rules or laws.

They used all the primary and secondary school buildings that existed in Kosova, even usurped the only public university that existed in Kosova, Pristine University. They also closed the only public TV named Pristina Television.

However, Kosova Albanians did not give up; they started parallel economic and political system and it was parallel in every area of life in the 1992 period. The entire political organization has been centered on one political party, *Lidhja Demokratike e Kosovës* that is Democratic

Movement of Kosova. In this newly-formed Movement were involved almost all Kosova Albanians; this movement had organized the first democratic general and presidential elections in Kosova during May 1992.



Photo 12. Photo of a house serving as a school. 1990/91 (From private family collection)

The political situation first began to deteriorate in 1981, after the demonstrations organized by Kosova Albanian students and youth in general. After these demonstrations, Serbia started a fierce and comprehensive campaign, mainly based on police violence, pressure and on schools and Albanian education. These instruments and methods were applied consistently from 1981 to the 1990s.⁸¹

I find necessary to mention these facts, because this situation was reflected in the family photographs, too. However, Albanians have a tradition in organizing the teaching process at private houses. The first Albanian language school, founded in 1887 in Korça, conducted the teaching process at the private house of Diamandi Terpikos. Diamnadi Terpikos was one of the members of the Bucharest society. Before his death he left his house by the testament to the Albanian school including all the wealth he had in Romania. At the beginning of the twentieth

⁸¹ See more Schmitt, 2012 and Malcom, 2011.

century, all first schools around Albania organized the teaching process mainly in private houses.⁸²

The echo of the organization of schooling in private houses was a surprise for most Kosovars. They had no idea how the lessons could be organized in small rooms, usually 20 m², how 30-40 pupils could be accommodated in such a small space, how such lessons could be organized without a desk or chair, without a blackboard, without any other necessary equipment. How the lesson could be organized in a private house when the students would learn in one room while in the other room a family would plan for meals or their daily activities. There were so many dilemmas that finally became a reality.

By launching the information that the teaching process at all levels of education would be organized and kept in private houses, a large number of family heads were presented willing to help. In the cities, houses were mainly in peripheral places. Since, some of my interviewees were teachers during that time, they showed me many photographs related to this period as education was very important for them and moreover they consider themselves teachers of resistance. Shyhrete (69) years old remembers this time when she and her husband were teachers; they have five children, three daughters and two sons. During this time, two of the daughters were students and their salaries were too low. But, thanks to her husband's brothers living in Germany who helped them with remittances, their children did not lack the education. So, she said "when I look to the photograph of that time, I wonder how we could survive at all during that time. But, we had a hope that one day will be better."

Among the most important decisions of that government was the decision of the Ministry of Finances for the establishment of the 3% fund. This decision obliged all employees, both those in Kosova and those employed anywhere in the world, to pay 3% of their personal income to the newly formed Kosova government. With these means, the salaries were paid to the teachers and health personnel who worked outside the jurisdiction of Serbian bodies. These salaries were distributed equally to all teachers for a monthly amount of 40 Deutsch Marks (about 20 Euros in modern currency).

⁸² See more Bajram, Shatri *"Arsimi Shqip ne Kosove 1990- 1999 :Shtepite shkolla, Sfidat, arritjet dhe aspiratat"* (Libri Shkollor, 2010)

Social solidarity, family helping the family, was a voluntary act that manifested in all areas of life and not governmentally imposed. Families who find themselves in a better material situation helped other families in need. Thanks to this solidarity the basic necessities were fulfilled, such as food requirements, requirements for housekeeping, and housing. The high level of remittances from diaspora, kept the economic activity in Kosova alive, an activity that was mainly focused on the services sector as well as in trade. Thanks to these remittances and the galloping inflation who reigned at that time in the Serbian state, went in favor of Kosova Albanians who received stable currencies from abroad. Inflation is the root of the value of money, which causes the reduction of purchasing power of money. Galloping inflation means the value of money decreased greatly, sometimes even with three-digit numbers, within the short period of time.

As the Ethnologist Statovci emphasizes:

Solidarity of the people, the care of the person/man to a person/man has never been absent, whether in the past or in the present day. In the past, the most important and most helpful aids were for the agricultural works, ranging from the spring to autumn. In the addition to helping the agricultural sector, which belongs to the field of agricultural, man also helps in other cases such as livestock, in the different work in different customs of the families.”⁸³

The heads of households who gave their houses for parallel education did not seek any financial or other compensation, rather they provided the schools with financial means, with the provision of heating, with the maintenance of facilities, with the provision of premises.⁸⁴

In one case when a head of the family gave his house to one of the faculties, declared: “This house is yours, until you will go back in your /school.” While he was alive he left an “amanet”⁸⁵ to his wife and children: “If I die do not make students leave the house.”⁸⁶

⁸³ Statovci, Drita “Etnologjia Flet “ *Instituti Albanologjik i Prishtines* (Prishtine, 1998), 211.

⁸⁴ See more Shatri, 2010.

⁸⁵ “Amanet” means unwritten will or testament, a moral demand, a promise to be kept by family members or any other trusted person. Usually “amanet” is left just before the death, but also may be left while health. Amanet means everything that one can give/lend in trust to someone in particular circumstances.



Photo 13. *Oda with the photography of the president as a part of the interior decorations*

During my fieldwork I have noticed that in many photographs of this period if they were taken in their dining rooms or Oda⁸⁷, on the wall was usually displayed a photo of then Kosova president, Dr. Ibrahim Rugova, who was elected in 1992. So, beside their family photographs, in this phase, they kept this photograph as a part of their family.

This word, besides in Albanian is used in several other Balkan languages, thus it might have been introduced during the rule of Ottoman Empire in this region.

⁸⁶ See more in Bajram, Shatri *“Arsimi Shqip ne Kosove 1990- 1999 :Shtepite shkolla, Sfidat, arritjet dhe aspiratat”* (Libri Shkollor, 2010)

⁸⁷ The guest room (*Oda*) present in all Albanian households also had an educational function. Oda represents the space where men from a family or village gather to discuss different social, family and political aspects. Great decisions have been made there, important issues have been raised, stories have been told. In Oda our first schools were opened, also in which the rhapsodists would sing their creations, which would be followed to this day, which means that they were once places of entertainment. This room, with the same dedication, name and function, is still present in many modern houses. Usually there are *Odas* in modern houses wanting to “preserve” (imitate) the traditional image therefore the hearth and wood carved ceiling are inescapable part of the room.

3.1. Representation of Symbols

The major focus of symbolic anthropology is studying the ways in which people understand and interpret their surroundings as well as the actions and utterances of the other members of their society. These interpretations form a shared cultural system of meaning, i.e., understandings shared, to varying degrees, among members of the same society.⁸⁸ In the corpus of family photographs we see the presence of the symbol of Eagle in wedding photographs or the in the interior of the room.

Starting from the fact that our national Flag is composed of two-headed black eagle with a red background, it means that it was placed or carved with a big pleasure and meaning. But if we look within this national symbol far back in the past, the eagle was known among Albanians as a bird cult. In some of our regions exists the belief that eagles should not be killed because an act like that is a crime. About the special honor that Albanians paid to prey bird wrote Edith Durham in her book about customs and origins of clans of Balkan countries.⁸⁹ If an eagle is killed which is a bird that grabs hens, they open its body in a position of flying above a tree in gardens or fields, and this they do for harvest in production of fields and gardens.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Des Chene, Mary. Symbolic Anthropology. In *Encyclopedia of Cultural Anthropology*, ed. David Levinson and Melvin Ember, (New York: Henry Holt, 1996), 1274-1278.

⁸⁹ Durham, E., "Some tribal origins, laves and customs of the Balkans" (London, 1928), 140-144.

⁹⁰ Tirta, Mark. "Mitologjia Ndër Shqiptarë, Akademia e Shkencave e Shqipërisë," (Instituti I Kulturës Popullore, Dega e Etnologjisë, Tiranë, 2004), 65.



Photo 14. Family photography with symbolic images in the wedding ceremony

After the Second World War, Kosova Albanians did not have right to use the Albanian flag as their national symbol. This right was given only after harsh demonstrations in 1968 and after 1974, when the Yugoslav constitution was amended, Albanians got more rights to exercise their national and ethnic identity. The Albanian Flag had a yellow star above two-headed Eagle as a sign that this is a flag of communist era. However, in lots of folk handicrafts the star usually is missing. So, in when photographs have the symbolic signs in it, then you can see when they want to say something that they are not allowed to do deliberately. In the photos above, you can see two wedding photographs with the national flag on it, one has the yellow star and the other does not. These symbolic signs show the political and social context in Kosova in different periods, and also people's attitudes toward those contexts.

3.2. Family photography during the 1999 war and after

I am not going to speak about war in historical perspective in this paper, but about the importance of family history represented in family photography or *vice versa*. I will try to elaborate on how interviewees, even during midst of the war, thought about photographs as something valuable and important.

It was interesting that in many interviews participants mentioned that during the well-known exodus from Kosova or return to Kosova in the Spring of 1999, they were photographed by national and international journalist and photographer. Here I will mention two albums with the photo from the various photographers, which treated with the term like Kosovar fortitude, they have been photographed during the time where they were refugees. They showed me some albums with the photographs during the exodus.

They represent and convey an emotional legacy to those like us, who forget, or choose to close our eyes or watch indifferently; there are also images that will be forever engraved on the memory of those who caused this tragedy, and become tangible and absolute evidence of their guilt.⁹¹

After the war, several photography albums have been published by Albanian photographers or international photographers who took photographs of Kosovar families during deportation as refugees. In the other albums, these photographed serve as a reminder not only of the tragic events that took place in Kosova, but also of the dignity and the essential humanity of the refugee.⁹²

The UN Convention in 1951 relating to the status of refugees defined a refugee “as a person who “owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his/her nationality and unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country.”⁹³ The albums provide a visual record of the terror and the continuing tragedy of Kosova and its people,

⁹¹ See more in “A journey Home, the Humanitarian challenge in Kosovo,” ed. Helene Kanx, (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2002). And, Roland Tasho, Qendresa ne Syte e Kosoves, (Kosovar Foritute, 2001).

⁹² Kanx, 2002/

⁹³ “The 1951 Un Convention of the Status of Refugees”, *United Nations Online*, June 2016, <https://www.unhcr.org/1951-refugee-convention.html>

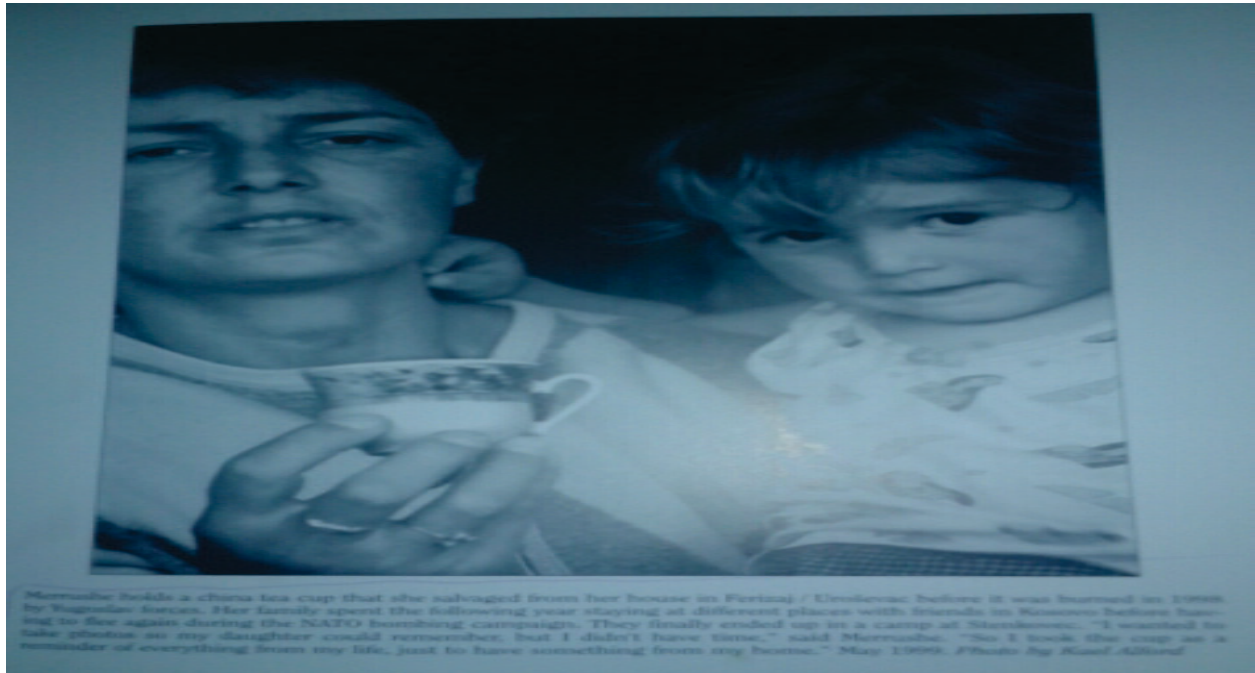


Photo 15. Photo by Kael Alford, May 1999

The text under the photograph “Mirushe holds a china teacup that she salvaged from her house in Ferizaj, before it was burned in 1998 by Yugoslav forces. Her family spent the following year staying at different places with friends in Kosova before having to flee again during the NATO bombing campaign. They finally ended up in a camp at Stenkovec. “I wanted to take photo so my daughter could remember, but I did not have time, “said Mirushe. “So I took the cup as a reminder of everything from my life, just to have something from my home.”⁹⁴

Two most relevant and frequented camps where Kosovars were accepted as refugees immediately after their expulsion from Kosova, were Blaca and Stankovec in Republic of Macedonia (Now Northern Macedonia).

In this part, I will present the data that I gathered in the regions of Kosova, which have been more damaged by the war. People from these areas have much more to tell about family photography during the war than those from areas less affected by the war. If we consider the period of war, it is very interesting to note that there are a lot of family stories about how they tried to protect family photographs during the war and how family photographs survived during the war. Through these stories that I have collected, the relevance and the role of photography

⁹⁴ Kanx, 2002.

not only as simply a bearer of the memory, but also as a window to the past and intergenerational connection can be formed. The role of photography during the war in Kosova 1999 is very important and special one for our understanding of family photography. It's well known that during this period, a massive deportation of Kosova Families occurred, and as a result lots of families have been separated. Searching for family members through photography shows that in this phase photography has gained a new meaning. Here will be discussed different stories of family photographs, how they hid them in different places, how they took them along beside scarce, necessary and basic things they could only carry as refugees; how they have been sharing them with those who could not do so, what they represent for them and how they reflect on them today. Remembering the war in the spaces inside of homes by displaying certain (family) photos is tightly bound to family photographs for families which have lost their members during the war. Family photographs helped family members, remember and not forget the persons which they have lost during the war. And in a way, these photographs represent a continuation of life. During and after the war period, in terms of collecting family photographs, migrants/Diaspora played the crucial role in their families. The idea that family photography can help migrants to keep strong family ties came up during 1990s, thus before the war, when lots of Kosovars migrated in European and other world countries because of unemployment and political insecurity at home. Through photography they have been informed about family news. Through photography they have been introduced to the new member of family, different events etc. This way they have been collecting family photographs spontaneously. The collections of photographs helped them sustain not only existing family links, but also links with their past, and provided a way of transferring an awareness of family history to the next generation. I have noticed that in many houses in different spaces there were displayed photographs of people which have migrated, thus were absent.

Richard Chalfen, an American anthropologist, called the family photography "home- made photography. "He argues that family photography must be seen as at the same time a process and a 'doing' an act of communication and a "symbolic activity" as well as phatic."⁹⁵ In my case, I agree with Chalfen argument that it is an act of communication in terms of family

⁹⁵ Chalfen, 1987.

memory and history. And this can be better understood by the answer that one of my respondents gave to me.

Photography for me has an extraordinary importance, without photography you are like without history. Photography does not evoke only memory, it evokes emotions, too. History of my photographs is divided in two phases, before and after war. So, all my family photographs during the war were stolen, and then I gathered photographs from relatives and friends in order to recreate family history. (Participant M. S)

From this we understand that in a way photography is a communication tool between relatives in terms of creating family history. Chalfen's 'symbolic activity' can also be elaborated with another fieldwork case:

My sister who lives in London since before the war has been collecting family photographs all the time, and now she created with them a family tree and hung them on the wall of her apartment.



Photo 16. *Family photographs arranged on the wall of home in London (from private family collection)*

Migrants often while visiting their homeland during holidays take numerous family photographs with them, in order to compensate for their absence. In the mentioned London case, she has somehow constructed her family history with photographs. Barthes has observed photography as emotional, affective tool. While doing fieldwork it sometimes happened that respondents met

their relatives in the photos for the first time, since because of the age distance, geographical distance or simply because of the dynamics of life or some other reason they were not introduced to them. So, people met their relatives through family photographs. From my interviewees it came up that someone has been introduced to her aunt by photographs, the other one to her grandfather, and they described it was a special feeling. This happened especially in those cases when they have collected family photos after the war, asking different relatives for them. So, in this case, the photography serves as an information tool, to their belonging ties. It has also to do with the fact that in the past, or in the first phase of family photography not everyone could develop photos, or they simply developed one or two copies of photos, and since families were mainly large, after family division they have remained in the family where the head of family used to live when the photo was taken. When they watch photography albums at certain time, and it is a sort of ritual, as Sussan Sontag says, they laugh, cry, share stories with each other, and create their family narratives.⁹⁶ Photography in which all family members are together is very meaningfully for families. Moreover, in some cases, if they do not have such one, they compose it with separate photographs of family members. This way they want to tell, who their ancestors are and make a composition of photographs about the forefathers and grandfather. Similarly, it happens with the soldiers if they did not have chance to be there when entire family was photographed; they take some photo of him and compose it somehow, and put it on the wall of home.

The object cannot be fully understood at any single point in its single existence but should be understood as belonging in a continuing process of production, exchange, usage and meaning. This can be elaborated with the exchange process of family photographs within the families. The exchange of family photographs is very common among Kosovar families, in order for everyone to have a complete story of their families. They also share with each other and try to have them in each family generation that has been created in the meantime. Nevertheless, migrants in this case, after the war, played a crucial role, in sharing and preserving family photographs. In present times they do not have to wait and send them by regular post mail or wait to come back in their homeland to take photographs; since the technology has advanced greatly, they just send them via emails or by posting them on different social media such as face book where everyone

⁹⁶ Sontag, Sussan. *On photography*, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977)

can see them. “Visual economy” is the term used by Deborah Poole, who explains the way how the family snap travels to maintain family togetherness.

Poole is concerned to develop a framework that focuses on how images travel and the consequences of that travelling, and to do so develops the concept of a visual economy ⁹⁷

Poole’s tool:

to integrate her account theoretically is ‘visual economy’ [and here] the term ‘economy’ assumes that the field of images is organized. It is structured and it is structured by social relations of inequality and power. The second advantage is that an economy refers to the production an exchange of material goods, and hence can speak of global flows of images. Three level of organization, first production, circulation, reception of images. ⁹⁸

Value of the photograph in the Kosovar Albanian family context, in the time of the migration, travels through people but now the photographs are traveling through Viber and other digital means. The value has changed from past to now. For Poole, the images gain value not only from what is shown but also the process of accumulation, possession, circulation, and exchange.

Based on the data that I gathered in the fieldwork about war/postwar period, regarding the importance of family photography to its members or a family as a community, I came up with this categorization of families:

- a) Families which did not take with them their family photographs during deportation.
- b) Families which took with them their family photographs during deportation.
- c) Families which hid their family photographs before deportation.

⁹⁷ Poole, Deborah (1997) *Vision, Race and Modernity: A Visual Economy of the Andean Image World*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 60.

⁹⁸ Poole, 61.



Photo 17. *Going to Germany, private collection*

Now, I will bring together several stories I gathered from my fieldwork research, which are related to their experiences regarding family photographs during the war.

The first category said that they did not have time to take photographs, and thought that maybe some of their families in migration have them, they wanted to save their lives.

The following story was reported by participant V. T.,

“During deportation my younger brother took only documents and photographs of our father, like old photographs, when he was student. He did so although some of the family members were told not to take photographs’ and gold with you, because they [police or paramilitary forces] will take you, too. Nevertheless, my brother took them, and luckily, we managed to save those photographs. During the deportation we saw a lot of family photographs thrown out in the street. These are the only photographs which we saved during the war.”

This one represents one case of the second category of families who have taken some of their family photographs during deportation.

The first category said that they did not have time to take photographs and thought that maybe some of their families in migration have them, they wanted to save their lives.

The third category is represented by the story Yllka reported,

“My Father hid the family photographs underground, covered them in plastic bags and on the top he put grass, in order he could recognize the place. I was curious and followed what my father was doing, but I did not ask him anything at that time. When we came back /arrived in our house everything was destroyed, and I saw my father went to look for photographs. I asked him: “Why did you hide photographs?” He said that whatever could have happened to us, somebody would later find them and know who has been living here, how they looked, etc.”

Interviewees reported different places where family photographs were hidden, like stovepipes, trailers and so on.

Wherever they hid them, they put them there for the reason that they wanted to be remembered, as a history of the family and to pass that history on to the future generation.

While I was talking about the war and the refugee migration with Agim (66 years old) he said: “look at this photograph” showing me a photograph on his phone, “look what is written on it” and the quote said: “You can show war without showing a gun, and that’s interesting, in just one photograph.”

Agim further reported that, “what we have experienced but he said that unfortunately we have not any photograph which shows the time that we were refugees part as family. We have been in Blace and then come back. With my children (one 15 years old, 12 years old and 7 years old and my wife) all my children and my wife.”



Photo 18. *Refugees flee fighting, Kosova, 1999.*⁹⁹

While watching the respondents look at their photographs, I noticed that they held and touch them very carefully. One of them said:

“When we were in the secondary school, our mother said. ‘Yes, you will take the photograph with cases not whenever you want, because they will destroy by touching with finger. We had a timetable in our family when we will see a photograph, it is not that we could see them when we wanted.’”

It was interesting because watching photographs incorporated physical and emotional actions, besides touching, some of them while holding a photo of a lost person, they would often kiss it. Some photos made them laugh and some made them cry. This fact illustrates well Long’s statement:

As photograph become active sensory interfaces between referent and viewer, there is a perpetual movement between touching to see and seeing to touch, to the extent that touch

⁹⁹ Refugees flee fighting, Kosovo, 1999. Photo and quote by Alexandra Boulat.

enables seeing, in this way bringing about a blurring of the iconic, indexical and material aspects of the photograph, in this context the integral relationship between seeing photographs and touching the referent are played out at the surface of the image. Indeed, the indexical trace is sometimes removed by constant touch: it is worn away. This, however, does not necessarily invalidate photographs as social objects. For the experience of photographs, their meaning and impact, cannot be reduced merely to a visual response. Rather, they must be understood as corporeal, and sensory as bearers of stories, and of meanings, in which sight, sound and touch merge.¹⁰⁰

To illustrate this even better I will share another respondent's experience. Merita, 60 years old, a mother of three sons, talked very emotionally about family photography. She said that during her life she changed more than 30 apartments, and photographs help her remember those places. She continues by saying:

For me, photography has an extraordinary importance; without photography you are as without history. It is not only about history but emotions, too. If you are aware for that moment, emotions of that time increase; you can even sense the smell of that time. The emotions may be sad or happy. Photography of my parents, my children are for me (sensory) history, it is as the person who takes part and talks about it.

She said that she looks at family photographs every day, because when she does a new photograph and that causes her to see all of the others photographs differently. When she talks about photographs, she talks with a lot of passion. She is very connected to the photographs the same way she is connected to her family. So, she makes a close linkage between family and photographs, too.

Further Merita adds:

¹⁰⁰ Long, JJ, Noble, A & Welch, E. *Photography: Theoretical Snapshots*. (London: Routledge, 2008).

My history of photography is divided before and after the war, I keep photographs in bags, in the smart phones, in the computer. It is a pity¹⁰¹ that we are not developing photographs nowadays. Before the war I considered myself as a family without history. During the war, since I did not take the photographs with myself, I lost the photographs of my children, the videos that I made of them. After the war, I gathered the photographs through people, like my sister (living abroad), my aunt, and my other relatives. My aunt, I never met her, I met her only through photographs, through posts and letters. When I take in my hands family photographs I feel nostalgia, because they are as important as family.

3.3. Museum of Ferdonije

There is another interesting and quite specific case in Gjakova (a city and municipality in western Kosova, among the most damaged during the war), where a mother called Ferdonije Querkezi has made her house a museum, because during the war (1999), her four sons and a husband have been taken away. So, her house is like a memory of the war in a private space, which in this case she wanted to and turned it to serve as a public space. There visitors can come and get information. This space is filled all around with their photos, their clothes, with everything that belonged to them. This is a good example that illustrates how private family photographs can become public too. There are lots of family photographs on the walls, from their weddings as the two oldest sons were married. In this space, you can find compositions too. She used a photo of her and her husband and the single photographs of their sons and made one composition. Moreover, she organized albums in a very good way, she put all photos and wrote their description, date, content, the people, and divided them by name of the sons. So, whoever wants to know more about their lives, they can learn from those photographs and albums. She repeated several times that the photographs help her think that she is surrounded by them and that they are still there.

¹⁰¹ She used the Albanian word “Gjynah” in coming from Turkish word, and I heard this word several time in terms of not developing the photography in the paper. It is a word synonymous to pity.

According to Porto:

Photographs are things, they are made, used, kept and stored for specific reasons which do not necessarily co- inside, they can be transported, dispersed, or damaged, torn and cropped, and because viewing implies one or several physical interaction.¹⁰²

In this case, there is a lot of interaction with the photographs, from the people that she does not know, but wants to hear the story of her family.

In Ferdonije's own "Museum" the story told by Ferdonije became visual through photographs displayed. The photographs contain different time frames of their lives. She says that one day when she will not be in this world anymore, people will learn about her history through these objects. This is a way to inform and teach future generation of the war crimes committed in Gjakova.

She has a special relationship with photographs. They do not only link her with the past but keep her tied with the present. It is a kind of replacement with the present. She sits at the table to eat food with five more empty plates and empty chairs. She continuously communicates with them through photographs, the photographs take their place; assure their presence even though are absent. And through these photographs, she tells others that she is a mother, that she has sons. She says that without the kids she is not a mother. She says that when she takes care of the photographs of her kids she feels as if she takes care of her actual kids. She has integrated them in the present, it is not about the past anymore.

Surrounded by different photographs put up on the walls of different rooms; with the ones that she cropped from different videotapes and arranged them in several albums, adding to each one certain descriptions, and also by other items such as clothes (trousers, shirts, socks, shoes, jackets), and all the dishes from the time she lived as a whole family, makes her feel as if she is with them and they are still there. The photographs help her feel not alone. Beside all these family artifacts, in her museum you can see hung on the wall a copy of the written Declaration of

¹⁰² Porto, N. "Picturing the museum: photography and the work of mediation in the Third Portuguese Empire," in ed. M. Bouquet, *Academic Anthropology and the Museum*. (Oxford: Berghahn, 2001), 36–54.

Independence of Kosova (2008). Here, we can see how she interprets her loss as a family sacrifice for freedom and Independence of Kosova.

Ulrich Baer suggests that photography has affinity not with memory, but with trauma. Baer juxtaposes the historical time of narrations and continuity to the discrete, explosives temporality of extraordinary isolated events.¹⁰³ Through this lens, we can understand what Ferdonije is actually doing is not about ‘what has been’ as much as about continuity.



Photo 19. In Ferdonije's museum; author and Ferdonije

¹⁰³ Baer, Ulrich, *Spectral Evidence' Photography' the photography of trauma*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press Cambridge, 2002).

Political changes, forced migration, and war characterize the second phase, which are also reflected in family photographs. Thus, it may be labeled as a phase of violence and resistance, that is testified also by the above examples illustrated

4. Third phase 1999-2015 (or until now)

For this phase, the top historical development that needs to be emphasized is that Kosova became free from Yugoslav i.e. Serbian rule, and declared its independence as a state in 2008. By now Kosova is known by more than 100 countries. The population started to work in nongovernmental organization, and international and local organizations, as well as in the public institutions and private sector. Also, the migration in this phase changed since Kosovars started to study abroad, some of them with the scholarship. In this phase, photography has gained different meanings since personal cameras now a prevalent part of every family.

As far as photography is concerned, this perpetuity can be said to characterize or dominate the production of portraits and graduation photographs in Kosova. Long ago, the trend began where the photographs of high school graduates were published in the Photoshop's windows. This serves to inform the larger community of who finished the high school and serves as a reminder of the very important phase in their life, with teachers and the all friends. These photographs were done by professional photographers and their studios. It is worth to mention, also that during fieldwork with the aim of treating family pictures, almost every family I have visited had such photographs on display in their environment.



Photo 20. *Photographs of students who finished their secondary schools ‘alb. maturante’ (high school graduate), photo by author*

Beside photos from high school graduation, of same or even greater importance were photos of the children who graduated from universities. Parents were very proud of their children’s achievements. Upon graduation, beside photos with their peers it was very common to make photos with all the family members. It is an important event for all the family, so even if some members of family do not live at the same house, they come to congratulate and to get photographed.

When I finished high school in the year 2000, I was photographed with all members of my family, except with my uncle. During the war after deportation, he went in the Switzerland with his family and remained there. Since, he with his family was not physically present, my mother said to take the photographs of him and his family (wife, son, and daughter) and to get photographed while holding them. Photo I have seen this practice in many other cases during fieldwork, i.e. Making photos with photographs of people who are absent at that certain moments (mainly because of migration), or who are missing for other reasons as a consequence of the war (i.e. are dead, murdered, or simply still have a status of “missing person”).



Photo 21. *Before going to the prom with the photography of my uncle's family*

Since the camera is already part of every family, the number of producing photographs has increased dramatically. Now, families have many more photographs in their family photo corpus.

During the third phase, the migration issue remains prevalent and significant. But, now we have a different situation regarding the meaning of the family photographs because of the technology advancement, family cameras are replaced by personal cameras on smart phones. Even though Kosova is independent, and many countries has recognized it, Kosova citizens have still problem with getting travel visas, since liberalization of movement was not approved to Kosova. Because of ongoing economic difficulties Kosova is still experiencing, a new wave of migration that lasted for few weeks happened in 2014. I went to the bus station in Prishtina from where people departed and there was a huge crowd of people waiting to go through Hungary to other parts of Europe. I managed to talk to only three families, because they mostly were not prepared or in mood for conversation.

There was a family of 5 members, a couple and three kids. During conversation I asked them if they took their photographs along and they said “No, we have our smart phones.” Regarding the reason for leaving the country they said that they are searching for a better life, because here they work a lot but are not being paid well. Another family was of 4 members and they were from one

village. When I asked them if they took their photos along, they reacted quite harshly and said, “What photographs? We hope we will manage to leave and not remember this bad place!” This answer made me think that they do not like or want to photograph and remember bad experiences.

The family member went on saying, “I did not have any good memories here. I hope that where I am going, I will make new, better memories, I will record them in the photography so I will be able to share with people.” This answer gives us a hint that photography has a meaning only if there is something good to share with people. Only happy moments. This also shows that for them the most important thing in their lives is their wellbeing.

There I also met two young boys of around 20 years old standing in a group with others and asked them about family photography. They also said “Why, we have them on phones, and our family is there.” Therefore, they did not take their photos. I believe that this migration in 2014, since it was not forced and imminent as was during the exodus of 1999, that they did not consider photography as important item to take in that moment. They just thought they were unhappy and wanted to change something. The crisis in these two situations was different. During the war, uncertainty was greater since they did not know where they were going to end up and what was going to happen with the houses they were leaving. In the second situation, they did not know exactly what to expect in new countries, but still things left behind were more secure.

4.1. Family Photography for marketing purposes

In this section, we will explore how recently family photography is being used for marketing purpose, but without losing its important element of telling the story of family history.

For marketing as a branch of economics, there are four main characterizations: 1)the product, 2) the price, 3) the promotion and 4)the distribution.¹⁰⁴ In other words, the basic task of marketing or

¹⁰⁴ Nexhmi Rexha dhe Nail Reshidi – Bazat e Marketingut, (*PRISHTINË*, 2002) 23.

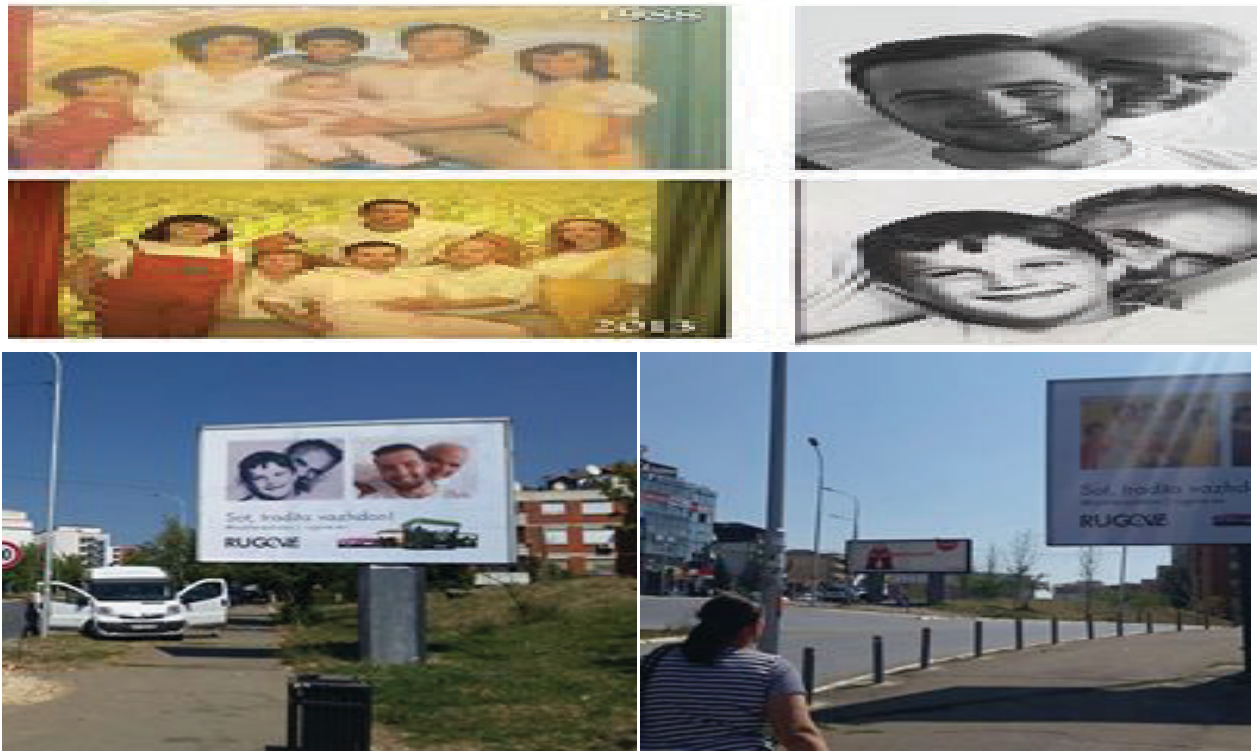


Photo 22. *The winners of the campaign*

market activity is to simplify the path between the producer and the consumer, to the extent that the product sells itself. In this context, the family photography is also used in the marketing approach, because the family photography takes the form of the product and of course the product itself has a price because it represents a value. Being exposed in the competition for the selection of the best family photography, and at the same time promoted by becoming more accountable to a wider public and thus by itself, represents the distribution characteristic seen by the marketing approach since family photography is transformed into public photography, meaning its for the broader public.

For Bourdieu, consumption is at one and the same time a material and symbolic activity.¹⁰⁵ This idea as the symbolic meaning because link photography and cheese and important part of making family togetherness.

¹⁰⁵ See more Bordeiu, 1990

The domestic company made the advertisement for all interested participants to engage with and here is the text which accompanied the advertisement:

When I visited Ylli's family for an interview, they told me that they have participated in the competition about family photography. I was curious to know for what motivated them to take part in this competition regarding family photographs, and they answered:

Since cheese is an inseparable part of our kitchens, it is part of the family for generations and generations, during all the happy moments. The "Rugove Company"¹⁰⁶ invited all those who interested to find their oldest pictures, the most interesting, to recreate them in present time with as much similarity as possible with the original one, including environment, clothes, body positions. Re-created photos should be posted on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter with the #handle hashtag so they can be part of the game. Aside from the fun of making these pictures, which can often be ridiculous, this is a good chance to meet someone you may not have seen for many years. Within the next three weeks, the collection and selection of the best photos would be made. Three winning photos would become part of Rugova's image and would appear on all promotional materials (billboards, newsletters, brochures). The author of the best photography would also be rewarded with a two-day hike vacation during a weekend in the Rugova Mountains and have the opportunity to see the production of cheese closely.¹⁰⁷

This event was so popular since it had to do with the family photography. Some newspapers in Kosova wrote about this campaign¹⁰⁸ and titled it "Travel in time with photographs."

¹⁰⁶ Rugova company, is a local company which has a line of products such as Rugova water, Rugova cheese, pure yogurt, juices see more on <http://www.rugove.eu/traditavazhdon/>

¹⁰⁷ www.rugove.eu
<http://www.rugove.eu/traditavazhdon/>

¹⁰⁸ <http://www.telegrafi.com/ekonomi/marketing/udheto-ne-kohe-me-fotografi.html> (Telegrafi, accessed on 29 June, 2015)
<http://zeri.info/ekonomia/39526/t-i-rikthejme-momentet-me-te-bukura-video/>(Zëri, accessed on 29 June 2015)

In this title, we can say that they connected photography with continuity and family relations. When I talked to the manager of the marketing in this company, she said that in this case the company, as well as the participants, recreated memories.

The manager of the Rugova Company explained how this call for recreation of photographs was very well accepted by public and they received a large number of photos through Facebook. Since, for me it was quite interesting to understand all this from the perspective of those who participated in this competition/ advertisement, with the help of Company's manager, who made this advertisement in order to promote their domestic cheese product, I contacted the winners. The conversation with them was based on these questions/topics/issues.

a) What does family photography mean to you?; b) Why did you decide to participate in this campaign; c) How did you select this photos and was it hard for you?; d) What were the comments of your family members?; e) Did somebody from your family mind or try to prevent you from making this photograph public?

Regarding the way the interviewees in this case described the selected family photography, I will mention authors Ball and Smith, who categorized the analyzing of visual data like this:

Between (1) what is given in the photograph- its content; (2) whatever the photograph is of- its referent; and (3) the presentation of the photograph one made- context in which appears as consumption is increasingly driven by rummaging through imagined histories, repetition is not simply based on the function of simulacra in time, but also on the force of the simulacra of time. ¹⁰⁹

On the question about the meaning of family photography with which he competed, one of respondents mentions the love and respect that continues between him and his father. The photograph comprised him, Atdhe, with his father. This is the way they wanted to construct their family memories. The motivation to take part in the campaign was that a local company, located in a familiar, traditional and loving place for all Albanians-- Rugova, posted the advertisement

¹⁰⁹ Ball, Michael, & Smith, Gregory, *Qualitative Research Methods: Analyzing visual data*. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 1992).

which is now associated with their cheese that is on the tables of almost all houses in Kosova. The reason why he chose this photograph, was not by accident. There is a story behind that he explains,

The first picture taken in 1995 is characteristic and has its own history. It is my moment of meeting with my father in Zurich a year after he had escaped Serbian police expedition in 1994 in Kosova. He fled and settled in Switzerland. The photo is black and white (at the time when there were no color photographs), indicating the time when we were occupied by Serbia. The second photo is made after twenty years in Free Kosova, in Prishtina, therefore it is in color. Both show a part of family history in two times. To take a photograph with the same pose was my idea, but without thinking that the time would come that we would compete with it.”

From the interview with him, we come to understand that his father has hesitated in the beginning to make this photograph public, but later he accepted to share it in public. The father’s motivation was because the campaign was dealing with an Albanian business that along with the "Rugova" company kept with tradition. Even with the campaign, we can understand, that the family photography here is connected in relation with migration and freedom, which is understood from the symbolic coloring in the photographs.. It is not only the content of the photography, the love between father and son, but much more than that it’s the story behind the photograph that they wanted to make public. Here we can understand how much power family photography has to construct family memory, how only one single photograph makes such a meaningful story, a dream of young son to reunite with his father.

Below I will bring a transcript of one of the mentioned interviews:

Anthropologist: What do you mean by family photography?

Vlora (participant in this competition): Memories, growth, life cycle.

2. Why did you decide to take part in the campaign?

“I just wanted to share this photo in memory of my dad because the picture was a bit humorous to us and our deceased daddy.”

3. How did you choose the photograph; did you find it difficult (or did you consult with someone)?

“The re-creation of the picture was my oldest sister Vjosa’s idea. She lives in Scotland. The whole family contributed to sewing the clothes so that we can look like in the picture of 1988. Besides Vjosa living abroad, my father’s brother works and lives in Canada with his family. During their visit to Kosova, we were looking at our old family photographs and picked up that picture. Otherwise, this is the first and last picture of the whole family together. We knew that my father’s health was not getting better, so I decided to take a picture of the same kind of fun as we did not have a lot of photos of everyone together as a family.”

4. What were the comments of family members?

“Everyone was happy with the finished picture, especially since it captures the sense of humor of our family. Every time we see the picture brings us the memories and laughter that we had until we made the reproduced picture correctly posed. The most beautiful part of all the photos are the 2 to 3 hours of laughter we had until we made the right poses.”

5. Did you hesitate to share something with the public?

“Although the picture was supposed to be private, it was shared in memory of our daddy who passed away after we reproduced the photographs. We did not expect it to become as public as it was since it was placed in posters or 'shared' on Facebook. But, in the end, we all agreed that it was a beautiful homage to our dad and us as a family.”

Through these interviews, we come to understand that the families in Kosova have very powerful connections with old family photographs, and they see them not only as a vernacular object but a part of their life histories. These narratives illustrate this fact in a very good way.

4.2. Going Digital/ New Practices

In the literature about photography the recording and active family life and values through snapshot photography is a rather different practice from the pursuit of photography as a hobby. Family photography might include a photo of family members at a meal gathering, but the focus is on the people present, the food symbolizes their connection, but is not the focus of attention.

In this phase, social networks play very important role in changing the practices toward family photography. In this section, I will analyze several opinions brought up in conversations during the research.

Smart phones play an especially important role, as most people are taking most of their photographs with smartphones now. This is the table from Info Trends, which shows Number of digital photos taken worldwide, where photographs taken by digital cameras was 10.3%, with tablets was 4.7% and with smartphones was an overwhelming 85.0%.

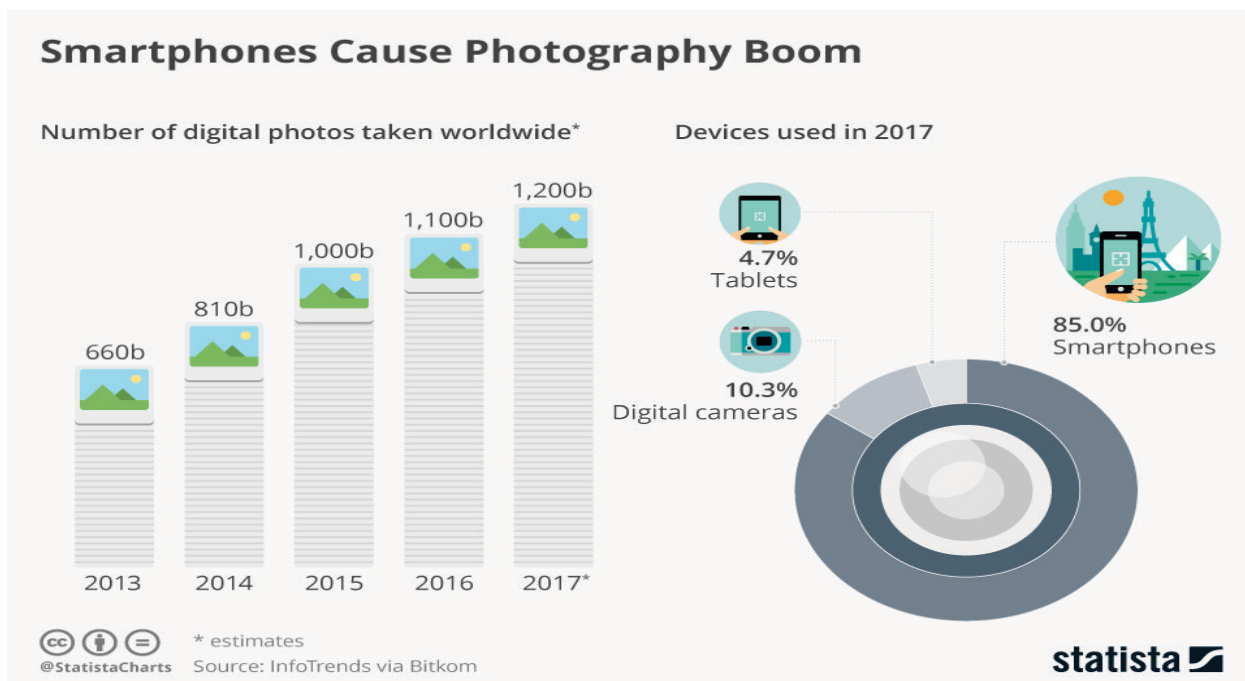


Figure 1. Smartphones cause photography boom¹¹⁰

Leonora says that the way how the photographs are viewed during years and in the different aspects can be explained from the emotion that they give and/or gave to you. In the period in which we are living, we have access to the photographs of other people all the time because of

¹¹⁰ According to estimates by [InfoTrends](https://www.statista.com/chart/10913/number-of-photos-taken-worldwide/), a total of 1.2 trillion digital photos will be taken worldwide this year, that is roughly 160 pictures for every one of the roughly 7.5 billion people inhabiting planet earth. <https://www.statista.com/chart/10913/number-of-photos-taken-worldwide/>
So what is causing this sudden boom in photography? Is it a global vanity epidemic? Well maybe, but the fact that more than a billion people constantly carry around a device that doubles as a digital [camera](#) is probably the biggest factor contributing to the slew of digital photos floating around. The award-winning photographer Chase Jarvis once coined the phrase “the best camera is the one that’s with you”, and right he is. According to InfoTrends’ estimates, 85 percent of all pictures taken this year will be captured on [smartphones](#).

social networks (Facebook and Instagram) which connect us constantly. In the previous times when photographs could be seen only in paper, it took a while to be seen by the others, to tell where they have been, which places they have visited, how much they changed each year, and the photograph serves to see a person (men or women) for the first time before marriage. Shukrije told me that she did not know her husband before marriage, she saw him in photograph and liked him. On the wedding day she saw him in person, but she continues saying that photograph did not disappoint her. Now, you just post the photographs on one or more social networks and it will be seen and distributed immediately. She continues by saying that on social networks the number of “likes” and “comments” someone receives has an important influence on their behavior. Shukrije explained while laughing, “Before we post, we think how good is a photograph, how many likes will the photographs get? After we post a photograph, we stay in front of our phones to view the likes and comments, who liked it, who commented, etc. If we post an old photograph that has a special meaning for us, we usually describe it and then the certain note of nostalgia goes with it, and we get lots of likes.”

When talking about social networks, Liridon said that they also have their positive side, which conveys appropriate messages to individuals. This positivity is also reflected in the words accompanying posted photos on the social networks, such as: “use your smile to change the world don’t let the world change your smile”

Doni went on to explain, “But on the other side ever since the Facebook was founded, people have been “killing” the most precious time, by neglecting and overlooking primary things such as talking to friends face to face, and/or reading, while spending much more time commenting and communicating virtually.”

In her book “Holidays, family, homeland in the practices of Kosova Albanian Diaspora” Lumniye Kadriu discusses the role cyberspace has for migrants/diasporic communities to maintain family and other social ties with their homeland. She states:

In fact, for mobile people, cyberspace is the most important facilitator of maintaining links with those who either stay behind or move somewhere else, because cyberspace also includes all manner of information and communication at a much lower price. Phone- like connections such as skype can be established, various TV channels from the

most remote localities, and above all free social networks such as Facebook and Twitter which enable the creation of numberless other webs and networks available to everyone. Moreover the technology of uploading photos and videos is so easy that it has become a space in which the whole globe can be instantly connected with particular image or event. Some families use You Tube as a space to upload recording of different life events, such as weddings, burial ceremonies and other important events, and this is a much more open website than Facebook, for example, where networking can be individually controlled. Nevertheless it is also understandable that many dimensions of transnationality are practiced through and by cyberspace.¹¹¹

Ron, 34 Years old, responded when asked about posting photos on the social media like Facebook and Instagram as follow:

Social media and the publication of photos recently have become a topic of discussion. In my opinion there is positive and also a negative side of it. Positive because through pictures posted on the social network, we are little bit closer with each other, especially those who live in remote distances with our relatives. When I say negative, I think how much can we really trust that those files are secure even when are stored under the option of PRIVATE. They might be seen by anyone, even those who you do not want to access them. But, I think that photo publishing on social networks has its own benefits as well. Some people we are seeing very rarely and through the photos it is enabled us to be informed about them and to preserve a virtual touch at least. Then again, after few years I can see myself chronologically remembering the events of life. In Digital ages, it is very interesting because “Likes” serves as a measure when you post a photographs to see how loves you or not/ In order to realize this phenomenon (who really loves you or not?), I think one’s social networks should be moved from virtual space to real world spaces. For me social networks are public-private spaces - that is, they are open to the public, but are at the same time the property of a company. As soon as we decide to open an account on social networks, we automatically agree with their Terms of Agreements, often not reading and analyzing those regulations that have direct implications in our photos, posts,

¹¹¹ Kadriu, 296.

and personal information. So, social networks have often been subject to criticism because of their policies against users. There are many other controversial examples of social networking phenomena, and as long as these social networks remain part of a lucrative company, its users will always be targeted for profit-making. In conclusion, I think that, despite the fact that social networks have re-established old friendships, we must always be careful about what we are posting. Since it is a fact that every post that is made on social networks is always copied to their servers, and one day it can be published again on the internet, even if you do not want it”, concludes Ron on our conversation regarding Social network.

Merita 60 years old notes:

Digitalization is a knife with two sides; it is very easy to be maintained, today we have many more options and opportunities to make choices as we wish not only with the photograph but the video as well, and in the other side, they are not printed, we are not creating albums, and we have an opportunity to delete what we do not like. So, it is not like it was before, in your family corpus exists photographs of the people that you do not know. Since, there was printed photographs we could not have the opportunity to delete. For me, destroying photographs is like destroying money, I cannot do it. I remember that I have posted on Facebook, an old photographs of my mother and my aunts (one was living in Albanian and one was living in Turkey), three sisters in one photograph, very important family moment, got a lot comments and have opportunity to share the family history with the others. So, it depends on how and for what you use the social networks.”

4.3. New ways of communication/ posting and sharing

As one of the mediums and the ways of sharing photographs with each other, present time families mention Viber, too. So, they said they take a photo and share it at the same time. It means doing and sharing photography instantly. Not only information, but family members’ important moments through photographs. So, compared to the past, when photography was like a ceremonial ritual, now we can see that not only is taking photos but also sharing them has become a very simple, routine action. Thanks to smartphones we may take numerous photographs, of all our activities we are engaged in. One of my interviewees said “I take more

than 100 photos in a short time, but maybe I delete all of them because none of them are good enough.”

Families in Kosova exchange their family photographs via phones yet in another way, which is called moblogging. Moblogging¹¹² consists of snapping things in the street or around one's home that can quickly be uploaded, and commenting on the photos of others is also available. Moblogging “is about documenting your everyday life and sharing your picture online so that everyday life can be the material for sociability.”¹¹³

It is interesting to mention that now there are very popular and common the groupings in Viber, in order to keep connection and send also photographs during all times. This act of grouping is also a fact within family members. One of the interviewees said that when the guests come to our homes, they do not ask for the password of the wireless but for the password of the Viber. It shows that actually Viber is used as a synonym for wireless connection and I come to understand that the Viber is the platform used by every family.

When smart phone became available, people started to make lots of photos, but it became a very ordinary habit in the last few years. So, in this case the phone plays a dual role, not only as an information tool but also for taking photographs and recording videos. This shows that today everybody has the opportunity to take photographs and they take them on every occasion, while eating lunch or dinner, with the table full of food, while drinking coffee, when visiting a place or a friend, when buying new clothes, etc. They post the photographs as soon as possible on Facebook, to tell and show where they are, with whom and how they look. Several interviewees said that on the Facebook they post most recent selfies or photos of family gathering, but they mention that they also post old family photographs that they previously scanned. One of them laughing said that through comments and likes, we know how the relationship closeness among family members, since we are not living within large family members anymore.

¹¹² The concept of “Moblog” was first introduced by Justin Hall (2002) and Adam Greenfield in (2002). Since then at least three terms, “wireless blog”, “visual blog” and “photoblog” have been introduced. They all refer to a special kind of visualized blogging. The moblog can be characterized as more or less regularly updated website in which photos are chronologically ordered. See more at Koskela, I. and I. Arminen. “Attractiveness and Responsiveness of Moblogs.” *The Observatory* 1 (1970): 73-91.

¹¹³ Rose, 2010.

Here we can say that posting photographs on Facebook is not only a way of consuming family photography but sometimes it might also be seen as being done in an imitative way. What one of your relatives post now, you will be posting next time. There are also people who do not have a Facebook account or who have one but simply do not post family photographs on the social network. Because for them family is considered as something “sacred” thus photos should not be published. It is very interesting to accentuate, if one person/ family post one photograph that gain a lot of “likes” for example Luli told that when he posted a photograph with his old grandmother, he received a lot of comments. Luli said that he’s noticed people want to imitate him by posting similar photos. This fact explains better what Appadurai notes:

The tendency of mobility patterns to be organized around imitation of social superiors. The fact that consumption may sometimes be conspicuous and imitative should not tempt us to regard it as always being so, not least because various forms of abstinence can be equally conspicuous and socially consequential.¹¹⁴

I contend that publication of the photographs on social media has good sides when considering that some people we see quite rarely and thus through the photographs we become informed about them and maintain at least the virtual contact. Beside this, the photographs remain there, and after some years you have the opportunity to look back and be reminded about your own life events in a chronological manner, it is a kind of virtual album.

It is obvious that the communication in this phase is different, since the photography is not made only by photo cameras, but also with phones. Now taking photos has become a social activity that is shared quite widely. Below I share the reflection of one of my respondents, Besa a 37 years old mother, regarding taking photos in present times in such a manner:

We are doing a lot of photographs now with our phones, and we have the opportunity to do a lot of photographs but it is not safe. Now, kids are playing with [our] phones. My 5 years old son, deleted all the photographs in my phone. I was so sad, but what to do, (“mend per tjera

¹¹⁴ Appadurai, Arjun, *Modernity at Large, Cultural dimensions of globalization*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota, 1996), 67.

here.”)¹¹⁵It is too, (gjynah)¹¹⁶ that we are not doing printed photos, in the past it was different, we took and held photo albums in our hands, we felt them, re-experienced the image. In the phones, I think the emotion is missing”.

Photography today is an everyday activity, we do almost nothing without taking a photo; when we go out, we take a photo, recording how we look; when you buy something you say “wait I will take a photograph;” when you cook something, you photograph a dish; when you drink coffee with someone you will photograph that moment and almost immediately, with Viber you send all photographs, to be seen by friends and family, the clothes or anything else you bought. Then, when you go to visit someone, you do not just tell something as information, but show as evidence of where you were, what you did, with whom you were, and what you looked like. Beside all this, the posting of photography on social media is becoming the only reason reason to meet someone, to go somewhere. We go, and take photographs as an experience is less important, it is the marketing, the information for the other, that matters.

For more important events like Eid (Bajram)¹¹⁷, as ritual events, new year, or flag day (28 November) , Independence day (17 February), we see that personal walls on social media are full of family photographs. Most importantly the photographs seem as if they were taken in photo studios in the past, where family members seemed to have been prepared, and all of them are together to show gratitude happy to show this is happening. Knowing that social media outlets, such as Facebook and Instagram, are very popular and active, very often we encounter greetings on behalf of the family saying “Urime Vitin e ri/Happy New Year” or “Urime Bajramin/Eid Mubarak/Happy Bajram.”

4.4. Looking at family albums

The family album is exposed as a narrative of inter- and intra- generational resistance toward forgetting in this section.

¹¹⁵ “mend per tjera here/mind for other times” is an Albanian expression meaning that this should be reasoned or remembered so to not repeat a mistake other times in the future

¹¹⁶ It is a pity that we are taking a lot of photographs but we do not make them physically.

¹¹⁷ Religious festivals such as Eid for Muslim community, is celebrated. During Eid it is a tradition to go to the cemetery, and this is due to the respect of the cult of the ancestors

Christine Wilkie- Stibbs in her paper “Reframing Family: Photographic Memory in Penelope Lively’s Family Album” said, “Family album is a demonstration of the power and paradox of words performing as visual imagery that ‘show’ rather than ‘tell’ how family is fabricated through photographic figurations as distorted memory and how the narratives of childhood give rise to the surprise of adult life.”¹¹⁸ The use of these domestic photos display family representation, therefore it seemed very important to discuss with respondents at home about their interpretations of both stored and displayed photos within the home, as well as about their digital practices.

As I understood during my research, the act of looking to family albums is the act of communication, exchanging information, and constructing the memory of the family.

Looking at family photographs means not only retrieving information about a moment in the past, but also being reaffirmed as a part of the process.

It means that family photography has always been a function of communication.

Patricia Blanco on her essay about “Family Photography as a phatic construction” said, “Family photography is very individual, just like each family is. However, there is a common terrain by which we all can distinguish a family photographs when we see one.”¹¹⁹

Martha Langford in her essay ‘Speaking Album’ says, “Indeed, attention to the photographic album since the mid – 1960’s can be said to constitute in itself a model ‘thought community,’ an idea of album sustained by interdisciplinary.”¹²⁰ For Susan Sontag, the family album is the mnemonic devise.¹²¹ And an album is a meeting point. In some of Kosovar families’ albums, the photos were not chronologically marked or organized, but on the computer they are with dates

¹¹⁸ Wilkie-Stibbs, Christine. “Reframing Family: Photographic Memory in Penelope Lively’s Family Album.” *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies* 16 (2013): 366 - 382.

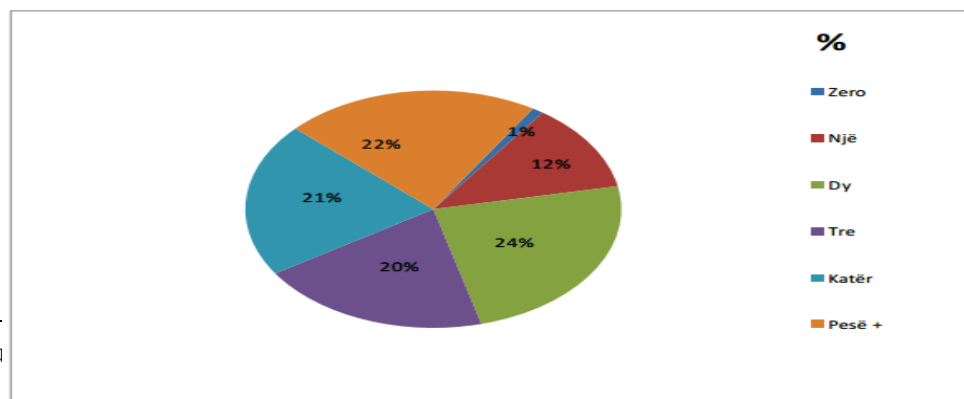
¹¹⁹ Blanco, Patricia Prieto. “Family Photography as a phatic construction.” *Networking Knowledge: Journal of the MeCCSA Postgraduate Network* 3 (2010): 1-20.

¹²⁰ Martha Langford, *Speaking the Album An Application of Oral-Photographic Framework*, ed. Annete Kuhn and Kirsten Emiko Mc Allister (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), 223.

¹²¹ See more Sontag, 1973.

and the computer arranged the folders by themselves. Pierre Bourdieu assures us that the family album is “chronological order, in the logical order of social memory.”¹²²

Looking at family photographs is a group dynamic. But, some of my interviewees said that they want to look photographs within their close family circle. They said that it is intimate thing. “How much you appreciate photography and how you take care of it, shows how much you respect family, too, and this habit then you pass to the others,” was a frequent response. I also got the answer that in order to see photographs they had to ask for a permission from their parents. The permission demonstrates that it was a right that one has to gain/win, and at the same time, be able to prove that the photographs one will see will be taken special care of and afterwards put back in the same place. Since the photographs are artifacts, which can construct family memory, we see that families preserve it in different places. Some of the Kosovar families preserve them in the ready bought albums, others in the boxes. In the numerous persons which are not alive anymore, and now the living will not have opportunity to make their photos anymore. So, they keep and take care of them as of a “drita e syve.”¹²³ But, with the digitalization process, they keep and store them simultaneously in many places such as: smartphones and different online platforms and albums. Another fact that I want to accentuate here is the emotional attachment of interview subjects to certain photos or family albums, usually those of people who played a special role in one’s life and the fact that they do not want to, or resist to let photos leave the home even temporarily. They keep hold onto them as a special family treasure.



¹²² Bourdieu

¹²³ “As of an *cyenight* in Albanian culture is used as an expression to show the things that are loved and dear and precious.

Figure 2. *Possession of mobile phones in the household in 2016, in%*

This chart as an illustrated how many smartphones are owned per member in a single family. Only in 1% of families does no member own an mobile phone, in 12% of families at least one has a phone, in 24% -two, 20% -three, 21% -four, and 22% -five.¹²⁴

Dije said “in my albums some of my photographs have descriptions, but usually those that are of special importance (first day of birth, first day of kindergarten, school, various ceremonies, etc.)”. Blerta said “some of my photos have descriptions. Usually, they are descriptions of the feelings I had in those moments when I published those photos”.

In the newspaper I saw this photo, which make me think about it. The title of the photo was “five generations in one photo,” but there were only men. It should not be quite surprising since in the Kosovar Albanian society there still dominates patriarchal ways of thinking, and this is also visible in how they create memory by photographs. So, they proudly show the lineage of five generations in their family, and since nowadays it is quite unusual phenomena to have representatives of 5 generations alive, the newspaper wrote about it.

¹²⁴ These data are taken the Kosova Agency of Statistics publication Kosova Agency of Statistics (KAS), namely Department of Social Statistics has been conducting the Household Budget Survey since 2002. The purpose of this publication is to provide statistical data on consumption, income and statistical data on other similar issues dealing with the standard of living of households in Kosovo. This Publication presents the results in summary for consumption, expenditure and household income for the periods 2015-2017 and living conditions for the periods 2016-2017. <http://ask.rks-gov.net/media/4094/abef-2017.pdf>



Photo 23. *Photography of five generation family* ¹²⁵

4.5. Selfies/ new generation

Pierre Bordieu notes “Photographic practice is more closely linked to the presence of children in the household (and more so the younger they are), because the arrival of the child reinforces the integration of the group, and at the same time reinforces its inclination to capture the image of this integration an image which, in turn, serves to reinforce the integration.”¹²⁶ I am speaking about children because they are the new digital generation which are making selfies.

Konrad Koestilin in his paper “the passion for the whole: Interpreted Modernity or Modernity as Interpretation” accentuates that:

a perusal of childhood photos reveals something surprising, which we then must translate out of its obvious state. Namely, that only children have their “whole life”, or everyday activities, photographed. In photos, we see children being dressed and undressed, eating or being fed, sleeping or lying in strollers, looking at picture books, laughing, bawling,

¹²⁵ This photography was published in the daily newspaper Gazeta Express with the title “Meaningful photography, in one photo five generation,” 2017

¹²⁶ Bourdieu, 36

screaming with wrenched- up faces , taking a bath, or getting dried off while sitting on a towel. They even get photographed sitting on the potty.”¹²⁷

In recent years, this happens in the Kosovar families too. Young parents use to take not only photographs but also make videos of their kids. But nowadays, they not only do it but also send those photos and recordings to the other family members and friends. This fact is available in Kosova, too. Younger generation parents are part of a new practice, to photograph their kids every month with different clothes, with various designs and in different or the same environments.



Photo 24. Kids photography, professional, from private collection

Indeed, their whole lives are photographed, and the photos are then displayed, something inconceivable for the everyday lives of adults.

Dona, a mother of two sons and 40 years old, told me, “One day, when I visited my aunt (my father’s sister), after my father passed away, while chatting she showed me she has the photography of my parents’ wedding ceremony. I never saw that one before. It is the only photograph of my father that I have, since I lost him when I was a child. When I discovered it, I felt so happy. I asked her if I can have it, but she said that I may only photograph it with my phone, but not take it away. So, I did like this I make a photograph with my phone.” During

¹²⁷ Konrad Köstlin and Scott M. Shrake. "The Passion for the Whole: Interpreted Modernity or Modernity as Interpretation." *The Journal of American Folklore* 110, no. 437 (1997): 260-76.

different conversations while doing a research several times I was told that for certain photographs they were asked to give them away so they could be multiplied in photo studios, but owners would not allow that. They argued that their bond with them is very special and they would not like to risk giving it away in any case, not for a moment. They have a strong feeling of abandoning people in the photo if they depart from the physical presence of the photo. On the other hand, digitalization and the presence of smart phones makes possible fulfillment of each sides' needs.

In the photography people are producers and subjects, too. Now, most people are making photographs. If the children do not have their own personal phone cameras they take their parents' phones and take photographs. They are not making ordinary photographs but photographs with different samples that some application on smart phones offer or make available. My daughter, who is 6 years old, loves to take photographs with my phone, but she never choses ordinary ones, but those within applications, and below are some examples. There she is seeing what she is doing, and with quick clicking she makes more than 30 photos in 4 minutes. On the other side, it is interesting because of course I usually delete those because I find them meaningless, but my husband once said to me, "look, some of them seem quite artful. Maybe we should print them and display and put somewhere in the home. This shows how technology is playing role stimulating children's creativity by recording what they want and how they want.



Photo 25. *Selfie, private collection*

Arjun Appadurai notes “what we know of Europe allows us to watch a society of sumptuary law slowly changing into a society of fashion. In general, all socially organized forms of consumption seem to revolve around some combination of the following three patterns: interdiction, sumptuary law, and fashion.”¹²⁸

Nowadays for everybody it is fashionable and an everyday practice to do selfies. Appadurai suggests that the idea of consumer revolution is itself in some ways inadequate to the electronic present.

According to Gisèle Freund:

The historical significance of the rise of photography is the democratization of the self-representation. But the recording technique based on the principle of optical projection imposes a geometrical separation of the universe into: space of representation versus

¹²⁸ Appadurai, 71

represented space. According to this division, the operator cannot be part of the picture, except by using means which bypass constraints of the camera.¹²⁹

Selfie, “a photograph that one has taken of oneself, typically with a smartphone or webcam and uploaded to a social media website,”¹³⁰ is often published by using social media.

4.6. Family photography – from framed to Accessorized

Since, the number of people going in the photo studio to be photographed is decreasing, it is noticed that in Kosova now there are going especially to get photographed for visa applications. Nevertheless, there is another way how photo studios incorporate and commodify family photography when families are going to visit these photo studios. They prepare different things with family photographs on printed on the items, such as different glasses, key holders, pillows, watches, etc. So, families are sending their photographs and put them on the selected tools. They are usually used as presents and are very popular among Kosovar families. Since, the family is very important for them, they want to attach family photos in the things which they use often, even the very personal. Sahit, an interviewee, said:

This is very modern way to remember persons which we love, so not only in the frames, but in the other things, too. I send to my friends a clock; I selected from his Facebook his family photography and send him as a present. He liked it very much and is keeping it in his room.

Meri also mentioned the present that she sent to her cousin. She said that she took her cousin's family photography on Facebook and made a heart like key chain.

Because they use keys on daily basis it seems they keep them with pride while seeing their beloved people while away from home.

¹²⁹ Gisèle Freund, *The frontier eye: Paris 1933-1940*, (Paris: Saint-Germain-la-Blanche-Herbe, 2011), 11.

¹³⁰ selfie, n. *OED Online*. September 2020. Oxford University Press.
<https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/390063?redirectedFrom=selfie> (accessed September 15, 2020).



Photo 26. Family photography accessories photo studio, photo by author

5. Toward Family photography practices

Besides looking to their photo albums jointly, I have also talked with the family members about their thoughts/opinions and practices regarding family photography. I have already mentioned before that usually, there is one of the family members, such as the head of household, mother and the oldest son/ or daughter, who takes charge of caring for the family photograph corpus and wants to talk more about it. The conversations are always accompanied by laughs, tears, and/or silent. All the interviewees were so kind to me, they offered tea, coffee, a meal and great hospitality. I want to notice that young people were so happy during this process, because they said that they learned a lot about their family history/ memory. Usually, the stories that were told by the older family members during my research conversations was the first time that younger family members heard the story. They said that they will share those stories with their kids in the future. And some of them were feeling guilty, because they did not print photographs, and are aware the phones are not so secure.

A while ago the daughter of my friend turned 18 years old and during her birthday celebration event, where all the family members were drinking, eating and chatting I was present there too. It was so surprising when at one moment she brought in with her several photo albums and said, “look how I was as a 3 year old celebrating my birthday.” Everyone was telling her “give it to me”, and started to look the photo albums, and then made different comments including how young they were. I asked her why you decided to look to the photography albums at your birthday celebration. She said, “Since now I am becoming 18 years old, and this year is a symbolic year: now I am independent. I felt emotional and wanted to look back to my photograph as a memory of my childhood. This makes me feel better.”



Photo 27. *Looking at photographs during birthday celebration*

I want to notice that in Kosova, at these kind of celebrations it usually happens that members of families want to look to their photo albums, to tell new members present there about their family past or simply to remember old times or the people that they miss. I want to accentuate that from families that I interviewed, almost all families prefer to look at the albums in groups, but there are few families which responded that the process of looking at the family albums was considered an intimate thing nor did they want to look at them alone with only close family members. One of the families in my research sample was a well-known doctor from Peja. He has two daughters (one 33 year old, married with a 4 year old daughter, and the other 31 years old with a 3 years old son) and a son who is 28 years old with 2 years old daughter/son. The head of the house said that he was so connected with photography and video documenting:

I really wanted to document all my children's growth because I consider it very important for children to know about their past, what did they do, how did they look, what did they wear etc. We used to tell them, but it is different when they see it in photographs and/or watch on video. I wanted to give a gift to my oldest daughter when she turned 16 years old as a surprise. The gift was all the photographs and videos that I took for her.

She interrupted the conversation and said "yes, whenever the photography is mention I remember that time when my dad gave me that present as an unforgettable moment. Since now I am a mum myself and my daughter is 4 years old, I wish I could do something for her that makes her feel like I felt in that moment."

5.1. What does family photography mean to a Kosovar family?

Practice is now a heavily theorized term. A substantial definition is offered by Theodore Schatzki,¹³¹ who describes a social practice as a cluster of ‘doing and saying’. Andreas Reckwitz elaborates:

A ‘practice’..... Is a routine type of behavior which consists of several elements, interconnected to one another: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, ‘things’ and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge. Photography is a ‘globally disseminated and locally appropriated medium.’ The viewing of photographs is another equally conventionalized site of specific practices, in which I felt I participated when I undertook my interviews.¹³²

Marigona, when I mentioned family photography, started to talk about her grandfather, who was born on 1939 in Kacanik, and how passionate he was about photography. She said when she talked with her grandfather, he remembers the first camera equipment, an Altix 35mm, and did 36 photographs. He bought the camera in Skopje. He is an autodidact on recording photography. He also has several other cameras such as Jashika Gold, Pentakon, Cannon, Sonny. During the war in Kosova in 1999, they took 48 pieces of camera equipment. His sons, inherited the same passion for photography and continue the practice today. Now, he walks with two cameras in his shaking hands, but when he clicks the camera the photograph has a lot of emotion on it.

Julia Hirsch describes the family as a state whose ties are rooted in property, the family as a bond of feeling which stems from instinct and passion.¹³³

¹³¹ Schatzki, T., *Social Practices: A Wittgensteinian Approach to Human Activity and the Social*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996)

¹³² Reckwitz, Andreas. “Toward a Theory of Social Practices: A Development in Culturalist Theorizing.” *European Journal of Social Theory* 5, no. 2 (May 2002): 243–63.

¹³³ Hirsch, Julia Hirsch, M. “Introduction: Familial looking,” pp. xi-xxv in M. Hirsch (Ed.) *The familial gaze*. (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1999).

When I asked Esma, 42 years old and a hair dresser, about family photography, in the beginning she begins to smile when I asked her about photography, (I was surprised because nobody in my interviews did not laugh when I ask for photography), then she continued:

My life history is pretty much connected with the photographs. When I celebrated my 16th birthday, together with my friends, we took some photographs with a camera. My dad took the film to develop them and afterwards took the photographs in to work and showed them to his colleagues, telling them how good his family is. One of his colleagues said, “your daughter is very good for my aunt’s son.” And this is how the things began. Later I met with him, and when I turned 17 years old I got married. We have been together for 25 years. If my life happened to be bad, I would have blamed photography, but my life is good, and that is why I laughed when you asked about photography.

While looking at the albums in the families I asked them about: a) The meaning of the family photographs, b) how often do they look to their photo albums, c) photography arrangements, and d) how many generation does your family photographs corpus contain. I was interested as well to learn as much as possible about the photography practices, such as how often they look to the photo albums.

5.1.1 The meaning of the family photograph:

Family photography for me is a form of reality from the past, and through the photographs those realities come back to life every now and again. (Participant E.N.)

I think that photographs represent a form of a reality, whether symbolic or not. However, no matter what the reality is, that reality exists in a conserved visual form. And it is precisely the relationship of the person with a particular picture that makes it decisive if that reality is only symbolic or complete. In my collection, I have pictures with which I have a strong connection and the reality I experience in the whole, as I have other photographs with which I have a superficial connection and, therefore, I always see them as a symbolic form of reality. (Participant N.P)

Family photography for me is part of the estate; it is a frozen moment in frames that speaks not only for that moment, but for a certain period of time. (Participant A.A)

Family photography for me is a very beautiful memory I take special care of, and over the years, it becomes more valuable. (Participant F. S)

A family portrait that gives the image of ancestors as well as a servant of the later family memories. (Participant S.A)

Family photography, in my opinion, embraces various philosophical elements. Photography (whether or not family) is an object that contains objects, in this case the subject (family), aesthetics (the beauty or the artistic part), as well as the emotions that are often perceived through memory. Therefore, photography for me means communication with the past; resuscitation of certain emotions, visually presented, within a certain photograph; as well as reflection on the trajectory of development or evolution of family, society, country or myself. (Participant R.S)

5.1.2 How often do you look at the photo albums?

Family albums allow us to gain a sense of identity, we see the similarities in our lives, in comparison to our ancestors, and ensure how aspects of lives have moved on with the times, but what has been photographed has remained relatively the same. Marriane Hirsch says that “family albums include those images on which family members can agree and which tell a shared story.”¹³⁴

Similarly, for this study, interview participants photo albums were the family’s collective memory, not the individual’s memories:

I look very often at the family photography, especially those that I have posted on social networks. Others that I have stored in different digital forms I see rarely. I look at hard

¹³⁴ Hirsch, M. *Family frames: Photography, narrative and post memory*. (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2002), 107.

copy albums only when I visit my parents, and unfortunately, it is not more often than once or twice a year. (Participant DH. A)

I do not look at the pictures, maybe I look at them once in two years. I usually look when I need a picture or when I'm bored. (Participant S. B)

It depends of the format in which the photographs are preserved, if they are kept in the computers or phones, we look at them much more often than the others. (Participant B.R)

Several times within a year (maybe 8-9 times), when I want to introduce someone with my family and in case of free time where I need to remember the past. (Participant A.R)

Viewing pictures, for me, varies depending on what format they are stored. For example, if photos are stored on a smart computer, tablet or smart phones, then their viewing is quicker and more dynamic, and involves a broader spectrum of people viewing pictures. But if we take prints, especially the oldest ones in time, then I look at them rarely, with a closer circle of people, and the link with those photos is more authentic. (Participant G.S)

Generally, I do not look at photos often, maybe 1-2 times a year, in the case of family meetings or meetings with friends. (Participant A.A)

5.1.3 About photography arrangements in photo albums by family members?

Families in Kosova have different attitudes toward the arrangements of the photo albums, some of them by member of families, some of them by events etc. From the answers below we can understand better their practices toward this phenomenon.

In my family every member has their own albums, selected by years and events. But there are also some common albums, which are also selected based on the years (Participant M. A)

In my family photos are selected by family members (usually with school mates and other friends company photos), but we have some photos with our family and other relatives in the family photos. (Participant D. Z)

No, my family is not selected photos (Participant V. D)

5.1.4 How many generations of the family do you have in your family albums corpus?

Hirsch states, “If one instrument helped construct and perpetuate the ideology which links the notion of universal humanity to the idea of familiarity, it is the camera and its by-products, the photographic image and the family album.”¹³⁵ This is certainly able to be recognized by exploring how far the perpetuation might go by preserving family photographs.

In the collection of photos, we have 4 generations. Years can be defined based on the age of the photographers, based on the quality of the picture (the shades of lighter even though they were black and white. (Participant B.E)

My family has pictures of four generations; usually my parents wrote the data or place behind the photograph, and some of the photographs also have the name of the people present in the photograph or any dedication. Some pictures are marked with the persons, as well as the place where the photo was made. (Participant B.J)

The oldest picture in our family was probably taken in 1950, while new photos are from 2012. (Participant M.H)

“4 generations. The years are mostly marked on the back of the picture. The new photos have marked dates immediately with a technological device. (Participant V.G)

5.1.5. When did you have your camera equipment in your family?

The best argument for psychological explanation by ‘motivation’ is the fact that ownership of a camera is closely related to income, which seems to allow us to consider cameras as pieces of equipment comparable to cars or televisions, and to see the ownership of such a commodity as nothing but the index of a standard of living.¹³⁶

In the past, the camera equipment used to be a common property, so all family members and/or even the large family members used the same camera equipment in different events or occasions, especially for the vacation.

¹³⁵ Hirsch, 48

¹³⁶ Hirsch, 14

Anthropologist Richard Chalfen states that:

The introduction of camera equipment for anyone's everyday use has been an extraordinary event, influencing the way of inexpensive people can keep track of who they are and how they have lived. The increasing availability of inexpensive cameras has made us the most-photographed people in the history of the human condition. This access to cameras has provided us with a modern experience form that promotes the communication of information about ourselves and future generations.¹³⁷

In the case of Kosova, based on the fieldwork research and conversations I had with the families, they mention the years around 1970s, when most of them got cameras as a present from the migrants. Based on the answers we could group attainment of cameras as follows:

- a) Got it as a present, usually from relatives living abroad;
- b) borrowed it from friends or relatives when they went to the summer vocation or when they had a special event;
- c) Got a used one as a present when other families, relatives or friends).bought new camera equipment.

In this case the camera equipment is somehow a sign of modernity. One of the respondents said deliberately that he sees the possession of camera equipment as a sign of intellectual development.

For example, first, our dream as young people was to have a bike, then later to become a teacher, and then to have camera equipment. The device that I remember was Canon, the exact year I do not know, but we got it around the end of the 1970s. (Participant K.H)

Another family did not remember what the brand of their first camera was; they just knew that their uncle brought it from Germany.

¹³⁷ Chalfen, 4

In another family the answer was “Yes. It has been a type of Spirit 600 (Polaroid)¹³⁸ and we have had it since 1990. We still have it in the family.”

5.1.6 Summary of Main Photography Research

Below I will present the table which will illustrate similarities and differences between main photography time frames of my research based on the answers regarding the: 1) Events that were photographed, 2) reasons for being photographed, 3) if photography was planned, 4) the author of photographs, 5) people present in the photos, and 6) chosen photograph for discussion showing the relevance and context it has for interlocutor, etc. Research fieldwork data are based on more than 20 families in different regions in Kosova.

	1950-1981	1982-1999	1999-2014
Events	Special event (Weddings, birthdays)	Special events (weddings, birthdays)	Special events (weddings, birthdays, baby shower)
Reason for being photographed	Different occasions (Weddings, school photographs, new year, national days)	Different occasions (Schools photographs, new year, national days)	Different occasions (daily activity) Photographs in the schools.
Planned	Almost all photographs are planned	Photography in the school (pupils and teachers) home/ school Photograph at work Vacation's photographs Photograph during the time as a soldier	Photographs at workplace Photographs in the vacations Photographs during deportations Photographs in the semipublic places (cafés-restaurants) Snapshots

¹³⁸ For more information on the type of device, see <http://technabob.com/blog/2011/11/02/polaroid-600-camera-refurbished/>

The author of photographs	In the studios of photographers Photographs with payment	At home with their own camera. In the photo studio. .	With their own cameras With phone
Displaying photographs	The portrait of family ancestor in the center place in the dining room.	The portrait of family ancestor in the center	The portrait of family ancestor in the center
Where and whom?		Photography of nuclear family Photography of children	Photography of nuclear family Photography of children Photography on social media Facebook, Instagram)
chosen photograph for discussion by interlocutor showing the relevance and context it has for family	wedding circumcision Photography in photo studio	Photography with national symbol Wedding, circumcision, birthday, schools Photography of the migrants .	Photographs of soldier of army. Different rituals. Personal photographs.
Gender relations	Woman has to take care for photographs.	Woman has been taking care about photographs but the men during the war were much more responsible for photographs since woman	Woman has been taking care about photographs but the men during the war they were much more responsible for photographs since woman

		was taking care for kids and food.	were taking care for kids and food. .
Familiar relations based on kinship	Photographs of big families (based on father's and mother's lineage)	Personal photographs, photographs of relatives, but photographs with friends	Personal photographs, photographs of relatives, and friends. But, as well personal photographs, posted in personal Facebook, Instagram, or in the other platforms such as flyers, VSCO, etc.

Table 2. Similarities and differences between main photography time frames

The second table will present answers to several questions based on three age groups that are corresponding with the research basic division of photography phases. Questions are: a) What thoughts did you have when you took photos; b) Was it expensive doing photographs; c) What does family photograph mean for you now; c) who was engage of taking care about family photographs?

Question	Age Group 1	Age Group 2	Age Group 3
	Answers (50- 70 years old)	Answers (30- 50 years old)	Answers (18- 30 years old)
What thoughts did you have when you took photos?	A few seconds of life but perpetual light	An image of the moment you have reason to eternalize	Photographing for me is a daily hobby
	Moments to smile because by nature is always sad, so when I take a picture, I smile.	Passion that stops time and space	Without photography I feel like I am lost in space
	The permanent family memories, the moment when we tried to look much more beautiful.	Pleasure and taste of the moment I want to inform my friends through Facebook	For me photography is a daily activity
	Reminds me the time when I was soldier because during military service, I have many photographs.	Desire to see myself how I look in a fixed moment	The picture for me is the daily conversation with myself
Was is it expensive doing photographs?	A precious family treasure, a small museum of memories	It is not expensive	No, it is not
	Yes, because I was passionate about photography, and I was often photographed.	If I will print or develop in the studio, it costs a little but is affordable	No, no
	For me , yes. Because I have been photographed	Pleasure and enjoyment of the moment is not	It is not

	with a large family, while I did a lot of photographs and paid for all of them.	measured with money	
	Many photographs I took during military service I do not have, because I had no money to pay for them.		No
What does family photography mean for you?	A precious family treasure, a museum of memories	Family photo is a legacy for future generations	What to say, maybe my family history
	The house without family photographs is empty even though it may have the most beautiful furniture	Family photography: It resembles classical works, the older it is the more important it becomes for the family	I do not have any special interest but on special occasions I use photo albums of my family
	A conversation with myself because whenever I feel alone I look at family photo albums, talk with myself, and I imagine that the people in the picture talk with me.	Family photography is a fortune that you cannot afford	Household wealth and value
	Of course, for those who admire them it means something but I do not have time to think and take care of them	Family photography is one of the most beautiful items that decorates the home	Family treasure
Who was/is engaged with taking care of family photographs?	I take care for my photographs, and my wife takes care for her		Myself

Men/Woman	photographs. We have special photo albums, while shared photos are in that album.		
	I do care, because I have a passion for that. All of them are arranged chronologically, according to the year those were taken.		I do care for my photograph
	My wife cares more because she looks at them more often, but I also always find some reason to look at them.		
	I do not pay any attention to photographs, so I do not know what to say		

Table 3. Answers to several questions divided by three age groups

Based on the answers we can conclude that the meaning of family photography is very important regardless the ages with some differences. Nowadays, the young generation considers the photography as a daily activity, while before it was a ritual. Nowadays, they are taking care about the photography more than before, but mothers were always the most engaged persons with taking care of them. Since the family is still a very important social unit, for young generations, family photography is important too.

5.2. Displacement of the family photography from private to public

If we think of the land as the public sphere, then the house and the authority exercised by its master must simply be considered a public authority of the second order: it is certainly private in relation to that of the land to which it is subordinated, but surely in a sense very

different from how the term is understood in modern private law. Thus it seems quite intelligible to me that "private" and "public" powers are so fused together into an indivisible unity that both are emanations from a single unified authority, that they are inseparable from the land and can be treated like legitimate private rights.¹³⁹

The examples that I gave show the ways the private spheres are converted into the public spheres, because they allow people to communicate about the people and events seen in the photographs, make them share opinions, thoughts. Even though I have divided them into the public and private, they are all open to all the people how enter at the home for visit or restaurant.

The space of displaying photographs in the Kosovar family varies and can be somewhere from the living room to the sleeping room. But in the way, something becomes “molle sherri” (hassle apple) between family members, in the case of more than three generations living together. Seday says, “my wife wanted to display our granddaughter’s picture in the living room. She was the first grandchild in our family, but I told her that our bride (our son’s wife) will be jealous why my grandsons are not displays since we are living with her. And we decided to display two photographs instead of one. I think it happens in the other family like this, it should be a compromise.” But, Xheva said (she is living with two married sons and her husband), in the living room me and my husband decide what pictures are to be displayed and in their sleeping room, my sons and their wives can display what kind of photographs they want.

Also, the place where people display family photography can vary from home, office, wallet, to Facebook, Instagram, and to the new ways of recording of the photography as VSCO, FLICR and it can be also in the places where for families consider as their workplace.

The framing of photographs helps make manifest what Gell might call a “network of intentionality’s.”¹⁴⁰ Digital technologies have changed the photographic practices. Photography is surrounded by relationships and social process

¹³⁹ Habermas, Jürgen. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Translated by Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Boston: MIT Press, 1989), 6.

¹⁴⁰ Gell, Alfred. *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

5.3. Display of the photos in home environment

Displaying photographs in home environment is closely linked with the notion of the family, the people who you love or you miss them because they are not alive any more or they are not living with you.



Photo 28. *Family photographs display in the house of one of the interviewees*

In my home environment are exposed to the photography of all family members, but mostly of children, grandchildren. Apart from the family room, they are found in every other room. Suzana said that she displayed the photo of her kids and her nephew in the hall, because she used to walk several times per day through it, and so she feels as if they were there with her.

One of the interviewees (seven members of family living together, including the mother, father, two married son, and one unmarried daughter), they have two other married daughter, one has three children (one son and two daughters) and the other one has two sons, describes the display of the photos in her home like this

“In the parents’ room is displayed their photo from their wedding in 1970. In the waiting room is the picture of the nephew (my oldest sister’s son, because he is the first nephew in the family) and other grandchildren of the family, also in that room is the portrait of the deceased father. In the brothers' room are different photographs of him from his high school graduation day and party. In my room is my photo from a graduation party from college. I also have a photo of my nephew when he was a baby.” (Participant A.S)



Photo 29. *The first picture when is born and decided to display that photo*

As a consequence of war many families in Kosova have lost their family members. Some of them were killed but many of them are still considered as missing persons. There are 1600 persons still missing in Kosova. In these families in the central part of their homes are displayed photos of the persons they lost in the war (1999). Some of them are dressed in soldier uniforms and some of them not.

Anita has at her home such display of the photos of her brother. Her brother took part in the Kosova Liberty Army (KLA) and lost his life from the war. In the living room, she said we put two photographs of my brother-- one with civil clothes and the other one with the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) uniform. See below display the photo of our brother who has lost his life in the war (see photo).



Photo 30. *Center wall of family room featuring soldier killed during the war*

5.4. Display of family photos in public spaces

Displaying photos in public spaces is the reason that you want to share your home comforts with your working place.

A family of four members, two parents around 50 years old and two daughters of around 20 years old, lived for several years in Germany. Then, at a certain moment they decided to come back to live in Kosova, and therefore established a family business in order to secure a living. They opened a family restaurant serving Italian food, and named it, “Ponte Vecchio.” The atmosphere is so familial, the food is delicious, and it makes you feel like you are at home.

grandparent, or father in same business is displayed. In this case family photographs gain a different and additional role, not only to remember but also to tell a specific information, or as Barthes put it: to inform, to represent to evoke.¹⁴¹ In this case, the displayed family photographs helped me to know much more about their history of their family, including migration, war and return, without asking her about the photography I could not know these information. Marianne Hirsch regarding memory and photography said: “The story told based on the family photography, help the families to construct the family memory. Is a tool of the shared memory. Photography is a practice.”¹⁴² In this case, photography served to share a very personal memory with me.



Photo 32. *A photograph in one of the shoemaker shops* ¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ Barthes, 29

¹⁴² Hirsch, M. (2002)

¹⁴³ Beqa's family continue with the craft of the shoemaker. The beginning of this craft in this family dates back to 1890. This craft was transmitted to grandchildren and great- grandchildren. The photo still serves to tell this story in this space about this family business.

Hirsch considers that:

Memory is both individual and social, embodied and mediated, shared and contested. Memory is a practice and an act. It is about the past, but it is in the present, and it looks to the future. Memories are plural, potentially making space for the stories and experiences of social minorities, even when those recollections challenge hegemonic national versions of the past.¹⁴⁴

Framing illustrates how remembering is not only an abstract, internalized, passive process, but a socially creative act which happens in interaction with the external, material world.¹⁴⁵

5.5. Exhibiting family photography in public places/spaces

In 2015, students of the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at University of Prishtina organized an exhibition of Family photographs. The exhibition was thematically focused on old photographs. The idea of the exhibition was to see how visitors will react to seeing something considered private exhibited in public. Family photography is considered as a private thing, but actually this project was welcomed by the visitors. Many of them declared that it was very interesting to realize that when they saw the photographs they thought about their own family photographs. This exhibition made them think about how important the family photographs are in constructing their family memory. They saw the differences and similarities with their families. In one way they imagined themselves in this exhibition. Since, I was part of this project, and when I read the visitors attitudes toward this exhibition, I thought it would be interesting to analyze what the visitors thought about this exhibition for this research.

¹⁴⁴ Hirsch, Marianne, "The Uses and Misuses of Memory," Hemispheric Institute, <https://hemisphericinstitute.org/en/enc09-academic-texts/item/680-the-uses-and-misuses-of-memory.html>

¹⁴⁵ Adam Drazin and David Frohlich, "Good Intentions: Remembering through Framing Photographs in English Homes," *Ethnos* 72, no. 1 (2007): 51-76.



Photo 33. Family photography exhibition group

5.6. Attitudes of visitors toward this exhibition

One of the visitors said like this:

The exhibition that gives the impression and presents a continuity and presentation of an evolution of Kosovar society. For me personally it brings a nostalgia because that period where the roles and positions were clearly defined, the other nostalgia was because I was aware that it was all in the past a long time ago that is far away from today's reality. ¹⁴⁶

When the family photographs are going to be shown to the public, we have the chance to be informed about the way of life of different families. It is very interesting to accentuate that, from the visitors attitudes we can say that they linked these photographs with their personal family memory and history. They linked the photography with cultural heritage, for them it is a kind of visual heritage, seeing their social organization of family, how we come to have the tradition toward all the things like dressing, work, vocation, etc. Below I bring some of their statements written in the book.

¹⁴⁶ During the exhibition the visitors could write their impression in a notebook about the exhibition 2015, these opinions are taken from that notebook.

An exhibition that needed new generations to see and regain traditions of our Albanian culture including our country, moments by moment filled with emotions and give us the strength to continue a future for the benefit of our family and people. (Visitor)

Such exhibitions, which make the lifestyle more familiar, how it has developed from older generations to younger generations, let you understand that we have a sensational tradition.

The wonderful exhibition, while looking to photographs you feel that you are traveling in different times seemed to be overtaking at different times in Albanian families.

“In my opinion, this exhibition was very good and welcome. A very good, interesting and impressive idea, we have the chance to see the differences in the past way of life from today. Where the surveillance of the photographs turns dark in time and its time of life with today's situation makes a huge difference.

By observing them during the exhibition and analyzing their writings of impressions we can say that this exhibition helped the visitors to:

- a) Increase awareness about cultural heritage
- b) Appreciate the past,
- c) Create their own narratives
- d) Learn the evolution of the Kosovar family

Here we can add what Barthes wrote:

The photograph mechanically repeats what could never be repeated existentially. In the photograph, the event is never transcended for the sake of something else: The photograph always leads the corpus I need back to the body I see, it is the absolute.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁷ Barthes, 5

6. Family photography in memory studies

Based on the data that I gathered in the fieldwork about the role and meaning of family photography in construction of Kosovar family memory and articles that I read about memory studies, I can say that family photography should be placed and considered much more within “communicative memory.” In his article “Communicative and Cultural Memory” Jan Assman, wrote about the differences between these two concepts and he argues,

The term "communicative memory" was introduced in order to de-lineate the difference between Halbwachs's concept of "collective memory" and our understanding of "cultural memory" (A. Assmann). Cultural memory is a form of collective memory, in the sense that it is shared by a number of people and that it conveys to these people a collective, that is, cultural, identity. Halbwachs, however, the inventor of the term "collective memory," was careful to keep his concept of collective memory apart from the realm of traditions, transmissions, and transferences which we propose to subsume under the term "cultural memory." We preserve Halbwachs's distinction by breaking up his concept of collective memory into "communicative" and "cultural memory," but we insist on including the cultural sphere, which he excluded, in the study of memory. We are, therefore, not arguing for replacing his idea of "collective memory" with "cultural memory;" rather, we distinguish between both forms as two different ways of remembering.¹⁴⁸

Personal and family photographs figure importantly in cultural memory, and memory work with photographs offers a particularly productive route to understanding the social and cultural uses and instrumentalities of memory.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ Assmann, Jan. "Communicative and Cultural Memory". In *Cultural Memory Studies*, (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2008), 109-118.

¹⁴⁹ Kuhn, A. "Photography and cultural memory: A methodological exploration," *Visual Studies*, 22, no. 3 (2007): 283-292

Also, Erll states:

Family memories belong primarily to the field of communicative memory, with its focus on everyday life, face-to-face interaction, oral communication, and its restricted time span of about three to four generations. However, communicative memory is linked to cultural memory and cannot be separated from the latter's myths.¹⁵⁰

While E Said ascertains that:

Firstly, it seems that memory emerges when the image is used in a particular social networking this case, a family gathering. Memory connects the image or 'sparks' from it: 'Who is this?' Secondly, these narratives are not unstructured. It is worth observing that while it is usually men who take family pictures, women typically act as the gatekeepers of family memory. Thirdly, what is omitted from this collection is as important to these structured memories as what is included.¹⁵¹

Since, in the second phase I wrote about the war experience and photography and is obvious that the Kosovar families have the war in their family memory, including their experiences as refugees, surviving, and resistance. This can be placed in the word of Marianne Hirsh as Post memory.

"Postmemory" describes the relationship that the "generation after" bears to the personal, collective, and cultural trauma of those who came before— to experiences they "remember" only by means of the stories, images, and behaviors among which they grew up. But these experiences were transmitted to them so deeply and affectively as to *seem* to constitute memories in their own right. Postmemory's connection to the past is thus actually mediated not by recall but by imaginative investment, projection, and creation. To grow up with overwhelming inherited memories, to be dominated by narratives that preceded one's birth or one's consciousness, is to risk having one's own life stories

¹⁵⁰ Erll, Astri. "Locating Family in Cultural Memory Studies." *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 42, no. 3 (2011): 303-18.

¹⁵¹ Edwards, Steve. *Photography: a very short introduction*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 122.

displaced, even evacuated, by our ancestors. It is to be shaped, however indirectly, by traumatic fragments of events that still defy narrative reconstruction and exceed comprehension. These events happened in the past, but their effects continue into the present. This is, I believe, the structure of postmemory and the process of its generation.¹⁵²

For Aleida Assmann, the family is a privileged site of memorial transmission. The “social memory” in her schema is based on the familial transfer of embodied experience to the next generation.¹⁵³

Based on Jan Assman’s work on the memory, and his explanation of the differences between communicative memory and cultural memory, as well as based on the content, forms, media and time structure, family photography can be categorized as communicative memory. Based on my research data, the stories conveyed through photographs are transmitted to more than 3 generations, and these data complement the Assman’s table regarding what photography can do in regard to communicative memory.

	Communicative memory	Cultural Memory
Content	History in the frames of autobiographical memory and recent past	Mythical history, events in absolute past (“In illo tempore”)
Forms	Informal tradition and genres of everyday communication	High degree of formation ceremonial communication
Media	Living, embodied memory, communication in vernacular language	Mediated in texts, icons, dances, rituals, and performances of various kinds: “classical” or otherwise formalized languages(s)
Time Structure	800-100 years, a moving horizon of	Absolute past, mythical primordial

¹⁵² Marianne Hirsch, *The Generation of Post Memory: Writing and Visual Culture after Holocaust*, (New York: Colombia University Press, 2012) 5.

¹⁵³ Hirsch, M., 2012, 32

	3-4 interacting generation	time,"3000 years"
Participation Structure	Diffuse	Specialized carriers of memory, hierarchically structured

Table 4. *Differences between communicative memory and cultural memory*¹⁵⁴

6.1. Convictions related to photography based on generation and religion

While looking at the photo albums of one of the families I saw this picture, in which one old woman hides her face with the equipment that is hard to recognize. When I asked them why she hid her face, nobody knew the answer. Some of them supposed that she did not like to be photographed. But, they keep it because it is a good photograph and the unique one.



Photo 34. Faceless Woman, *From private collection*

For Chalfen a standard definition of social norm is “a rule of standard behavior defined by the shared expectation of two or more people regarding what behavior is to be considered socially

¹⁵⁴ Reproduced from Assmann, 109-118.

acceptable. Social norms provide guidelines to the range of behavior appropriate and applicable to particular social situations.¹⁵⁵

In the digital age, the convictions about photography change and there can exist different values between the generations. In order to illustrate better these differences I will bring here from the fieldwork the dialog conducted between the grandmother and the nephew, while he invited her to be photographed and she said that he should wait because she needed to prepare herself for that, i.e. make her hair and wear good clothes. It happened so because before taking a photography was a kind of ritual and they did it only on special occasions; and it was an unwritten rule to get ready and to wear good clothes because it will remain as a memory for future generations. Why we do not do spontaneous photography, always want to look better, because it will be kept and always means that we should smile, because we have in our minds that we are not doing it for ourselves but the people who will look on it. We know that we will have audience for it and we want to be better. What follows is the dialogue between the Nephew and Grandmother:

Nephew (N): Come to take a photo!?

Grandmother (G): Wait, I am not good, let me change my clothes and get prepared a bit.

N: Do not worry, we can take lots of photos later.

G: no, what do you mean lots of photos, who will take a photo of us

N: Me.

G: How will you?!

N: Eeh, how far has gone the technology, now I will post this and everyone will see you

G: No, No, do not do that, will you display it in a shop?!

N: Noo, on Facebook,

G: What is that?

N: There everyone can see you and we can put our names and children names.

¹⁵⁵ Chalfen, 44

G. Wow, it is a shame, in our time we rarely took photographs and we did it with our best clothes.¹⁵⁶

Reluctance or not to be photographed is also related to religion. For example, when looking at the photo corpus of the family of catholic community, they showed me the photography related to someone's death. Another important photograph they showed to me was the one taken during the funeral of their grandfather. They find it very precious because in that photo are present many close family members.

In the Muslim community, there is a diversity of the convictions related to photography. Some families do not keep photos because of the religion, others are reluctant or might have them but will not show them to the others, especially not strangers. Sometimes reluctance does not have anything to do with religion, but in question are other convictions. There is a family case which has many photos and videos of their family member that was killed in the war, but they do not allow her daughter to see them. They think that that if she sees them, she will only suffer more. But, on the other hand the daughter asked for them and said that they will help sooth her pain.



Photo 35. Funeral Service in the Catholic Community, from private collection

¹⁵⁶ This is the conversation between the nephew and his grandmother N: Hajde po fotografohemi? G: Jo prit, hajde pse, keq jam, prit sa ti ndërroj teshat e të rregullohem, N:s ka lidhje, mundemi me I bo shumë foto edhe ma vonë bënë, g: jo jo qysh shumë, kush po na fotografon, N: prit se e qes unë, g: qysh more ti, n: eeh larg gjyshe ka mrrë teknologjia, tash të shohim krejt g: jo jo mos qysh krejt, ku po don me qit foton ne dyqan, n:jo more ne facebook, g: pse cka është ai, qyqe, n: te shohin krejt edhe përmend emrat e fëmijëve, g: marre more ne vakt tonin rrallë jemi fotografu edhe ato me teshat ma të mira...

However, in the age of digitalization process, we have various cases. Some people visiting cemeteries and graves of beloved ones, makes photos while there and post them shortly after on Facebook. During the Eid, Albanian Kosovar families go to the cemeteries with their family. It is a connection with the dead persons, even though there is not a tradition of Islam. And, these visits they post on Facebook while visiting the cemeteries.

One day I was in the hairdresser salon, having conversation with a girl, D.U, who is 22 years old. Since, I selected the topic about photography I was in the phase of building my research sample, thus choosing the families about my topic, therefore I talked about this wherever I went. When I asked her about her attitudes towards photography, I was quite surprised to get the answer: “I cannot show you, and I have not many. Anyway, I will not make them public. And in our family we do not display photos in our rooms, because my parents said that this is not allowed.” “Not allowed?! Why?”- I asked. “Yes, we are Muslims so displaying photographs is not allowed.

Sometimes reluctance is related to personal attitudes and preferences. One respondent Albiona, a 22 year’s old from a village of Theranda in south-central Kosova, told me how her grandfather does not like to be photographed. She said “we take photos with our grandfather only on New Year’s Eve, and actually we have only two of them. He argues and asks ‘why do you need my photos? No one needs them.’ But then we mention the fact that we do not have a single photo of his father, neither a photo of his ID card, and we miss the knowledge about him. Would you like to be such a case? And then he agrees and usually takes photo. [...] My grandfather never took a photo together with my grandmother, [my father] took two separate photos of them and put them in a frame. [...] Sometimes we do insist and ask him how did his father, our grand-grandfather look, and he answers ‘see the photo of his brother, they were quite alike’ and then we picture him like that.”

7. The process of elicitation the photographs

In his paper Douglas Harper “Talking about picture: a case for photo elicitation” notes that:

The photographs used in photo elicitation research extend along a continuum. At one extreme are what might be considered the most scientific, that is, visual inventories of objects, people and artifacts. Like all photographs these represent the subjectivities

embodied in framing, exposure and other technical considerations. Photographs of this type are typical of anthropological field studies.

In the middle of the continuum are images that depict events that were part of collective or institutional pasts. These might be photos of work, schools, or other institutional experiences, or images depicting events that occurred earlier in the lifetimes of the subjects. These images may connect an individual to experiences or eras even if the images do not reflect the research subject's actual lives. At the other extreme of our continuum photographs portray the intimate dimensions of the social- family or other intimate social group, or one's own body. Elicitation interviews connect "core definitions of the self" to society, culture and history.¹⁵⁷

Regarding the elicitation of photographs while doing this research on family photographs in Kosova, people I talked with actually told me their life stories through photographs. They would choose to show me those they found to be the most relevant, those that reflected highlights of their life; those memorable events materialized in photographs. Here are some of the pictures and photographs that families have selected during our conversations and are fragments of different events, part of their family stories. In the Table 4, I have presented a short description of only events which characterize photographs in the context of their development and the differences noted in regard to different generations and different periods. Below, I will present the most mentioned events presented through selection of the photographs.

It should be noted that their selection is accompanied with lots of feelings which can be recognized on the way they touch them when selecting. I could not help it but pay attention to this as it provides the analysis with what Edwards calls the sensory approach. According to her, "It is the sensory approach, [...], that allows photographs the space to be heard. Verbalized, histories and photographs become polyphonic, dialogic narrations" which the narrator shifts from point to point, adopting appropriate modes, effecting responses from his or her audience. As such, photographs can be seen as emotional, interactive and relational, giving the chance to open horizons beyond the micro- analytical to a way in which wider social organization are as telling a

¹⁵⁷ Harper, 2002.

history might be understood.”¹⁵⁸ Of course, the photography itself has no meaning without stories, so we can say these stories told by the family members in a way are stories which construct their family memory.

Furthermore, Edwards explains, “Orality does not exist, however, outside the broader patterns and practices of embodiment. Indeed, as we have seen, the very act of making sound comes from within the body. It is an active not passive process that is also linked to hearing.”¹⁵⁹ What Edwards notes there is a strong tactile or haptic component in the oral expression of photographs, as people must be in the presence of one another to communicate as photographs are viewed in a group passed from hand to hand, displayed, discussed, and handled within everyday practice.”¹⁶⁰

Hirsch’s argument is that the family is in itself traversed and constituted by a series of:

‘Familial ‘looks that place different individuals into familial relations within as field of vision. When I visually engage with others familial, when I look through my family’s albums, I enter a network of looks that dictate affiliative feelings, positive or negative feelings, of recognition that can span miles and generations.’¹⁶¹

In this process of selecting photographs, persons showed different kinds of feelings, even if they were not the main protagonists.

What Wilkie- Stibbes argues is that:

“Representation of the event are shaped and reshaped in different frames and through all manner of conscious and unconscious and ideologically situated choices and ways of seeing. Such a process is metaphorically akin to the stop- motion of the camera eye that has particular powers to see and to reveal complicated and otherwise invisible networks of looking, as here, where the unspoken codes of familial relations are caught in the

¹⁵⁸ Long, Noble, and Welch, 42.

¹⁵⁹ Long, Noble, and Welch, 48

¹⁶⁰ Long, Noble, and Welch, 43

¹⁶¹ Long, Noble, and Welch, 73

shutter speed and when the object of the gaze is directed elsewhere, toward wider and more palatable social coding's of family life.”¹⁶²

Modern photography as an everyday aesthetic practice, with its noticeable tendency toward family photos, seems to point in a similar direction. The photos are supposed to preserve life-worlds (and communities, occupations, the family) from disintegration, or at least attempts to photograph together what has long been separate in everyday life. ¹⁶³

One of the main purposes of family photography is to 'document' our lives. It is used to record events such as birthdays and holidays and particularly to capture what people looked like and who was present on special occasions. Therefore, in a sense to take a family photo means to create an information source. Van Dijck argues that personal photographs still serve as a memory tool, but they can also be used as “instrument(s) for identity construction, with more power to shape autobiographical memories.” ¹⁶⁴

“Taking a picture at a family reunion or graduation may seem like a simple act, but it is influenced by numerous sociohistorical factors such as technology and cultural expectations about identity, self- presentations, and memory.”¹⁶⁵

“Digital photography, then, serves as a mean toward presentation of self in idealized forms. The acts of taking, organizing and sharing family photographs thus become not just pieces of a technological project but also pieces of an emotional project that may pressure individual social actors to put forth a certain family image in order to meet societal ideals. Thus, the mutability of photos and memories has potential implications for roles and performance in families “¹⁶⁶

¹⁶² Wilkie-Stibbs, Christine. "Reframing Family: Photographic Memory in Penelope Lively's Family Album." *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies* 16, no. 2 (2014): 366-382

¹⁶³ Köstlin, Konrad, and Scott M. Shrake. "The Passion for the Whole: Interpreted Modernity or Modernity as Interpretation." *The Journal of American Folklore* 110, no. 437 (1997): 260-76.

¹⁶⁴ Dijck, José van. "Future Memories: The Construction of Cinematic Hindsight." *Theory, Culture & Society* 25, no. 3 (May 2008): 71–87.

¹⁶⁵ Janning, Michelle, and Helen Scalise. "Gender and Generation in the Home Curation of Family Photography." *Journal of Family Issues* 36, no. 12 (October 2015): 1702–25.

¹⁶⁶ Janning and Scalis, 1705.

To be considered a family photograph, an image must look like a family photo but also to be treated like one. It must have family photography things done with it. It must be a participant in family photography practices. Through looking at photographs, we make that space domestic. We look at the photographs in the albums in the homes, but as well on the computer and smartphones.

Family photography is not only part of the family story but a product of the culturally defined family. “Every day, while walking around in my home,” said Arber (36 years old), “seeing different displayed photographs, I realize I am in the process of understanding much more about the history of my family, how is it being built, as if photographs hanging on the walls are telling a kind of ongoing story.”

One of the interviewees Kaltrina (27 years old) said that when we mention the word photography, we first remember those old monochrome/ black and white photography. They actually helped us so much to get to know how were things in the past, how people used to live or went through different phases. When we hear any news about a past time event, we are eager to know more and want to see the photograph, to actually see what the story is about.

In the introduction to the book, Patricia Holland says that “family pictures pose a series of challenges, as memories interweave with private fantasy.”¹⁶⁷ Genti, (29 years old) one of respondents, said, “In one way, if the photograph did not exist, I would not know anything about my family, my history of the family. History of my family makes sense through photography. I create my imagination fantasy about my family”.

Our family snaps offer a way for us to construct a narrative, so that we can make sense of the past. We look back at albums, to fill in the gaps. We may look at these albums and not fully recall a memory, but by looking at photographs they allow us to reconstruct these memories. However, each individual viewer, will project their own memories onto what the images mean to the individual.

¹⁶⁷ Spence, Jo, and Patricia Holland. *Family snaps: the meaning of domestic photography*. (London: Virago, 1991) 1.

Holland states, “recording the event has become part of the event and perhaps the most important part, no matter how untidy or unsatisfactory the experience. We can ensure that the picture will project the appropriate emotions into the future.”

Selection of photographic from their family photo corpus was quite interesting. They would usually begin with the one of the oldest from their collection, because for Kosovar Family it is very important to know about their ancestors, who they were. Alternatively, they would select one that was about an event in which all family members took part in. Then, those in which there were children, presenting the integration of a new person into family. Thus, in the process of elicitation of the photography interviewees in a way presented the chronological continuity of their family. They certainly mention their large extended families (in which at least 3 generations live together), since this family organization was existing until recently in Kosova and for many respondents it was part of their reality and understandable conception of the family. So, the process of the elicitation the family photographs actually revealed the history of the family.

When there was a case of group conversations, the selection of family photography was made in the compromise between family members. They all wanted to be included in selection process. And they always were eager to present their family togetherness, starting from their oldest members, ancestors, to show family roots etc. In the Kosovar families, they always tried to link the photography with the past. It is also interesting to note that they did not choose the show photos of the objects, for example the house, car or bicycle etc., but the people, different members of family, because they matter for them much more than anything else. As we have mentioned before according to Barthes “Punctum is a piercing moment derived subjectively from the photographic image by its viewer.”¹⁶⁸ The punctum moment emphasizes the notion of being family. Through interpreting the photographs, they communicate about their life stories with the other family members. “Less and less remains uninterpreted in our society, while more things seem to gain meaning only through interpretation.”¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁸ Barthes, Dyer, Lucida, 2000.

¹⁶⁹ Koestlin, 260-276.

One of my interviewees, a 52 years old man married with three kids (two sons and one daughter), also has three married sisters and he said that when his sisters come their parents and family usually look to the photo albums and he continues saying,

A while ago I have looked at family photos with my parents and discussed with them about them. I have also looked at my daughter's and sister's and laughed, and we were amused with those pictures where we became aware about the look and the style that our family members had in over time. It is very true that family photographs can construct family memory; I can tell you that we have family photographs in which all members of the family are present, but since not all of them have it, we reproduced it and distributed to the other family members. Even if we are not living together anymore, we never forget that we are part of a big family. Also, my parents were the only ones who had a photograph of my deceased grandfather (a photo of his identity card), so we have multiplied and distributed it to other members of extended family to know about our ancestor.

By looking to the photo albums they talk with each other, for example when they see a photo from childhood they say, "here we are doing crazy things at our grandparent's home. We had really very good time together."

Altogether, this represents the happiness in the family and the functioning as a whole. And then they continue to talk about for their children's first class, for example.

I have to accentuate that, in all researched families one or more of the photographs that they wanted to talk about was of a wedding ceremony. The reasons for that are: 1) it was considered very important event, 2) as rite of passage, it marks a relevant change to the entire family, and 3) as an event enabling the gathering of all family members, as well as of those in diaspora.

Below I will bring different photos from wedding ceremonies which will at the same time illustrate weddings in Kosovar families in different phases, starting from the way weddings were photographed and celebrated in the first phase, in which dominate photos of only groom and bride, those of the entire wedding ceremony, in the end of the first phase and the beginning in the second phase and the professional, hired photographs, which capture important moments of the wedding ceremony. A part from the professional photographs (in the third phase) there are

also the video tapes/cassettes, later DVD, composed not by the professional who make as 10-15 min video from the important moments of the wedding ceremony as well, need to be reserved before, because there is no wedding without the professional cameraman and photographs. Nowadays we can say there is a novelty in Kosovar society because wedding photos can be also found as part of different advertisements, posted not only on the online media but as larger posters in the streets.



Photo 36. Advertisement for hiring a professional photographer for a wedding ceremony, photo by author

It should be noted that sometimes the wedding photo was not chosen to talk about the wedding ceremony but about the story behind it. For example, one respondent chose her/his wedding photo because it was the only one where her/his grandparents were shown together.

7.1. Wedding ceremony

The wedding ceremony is considered one of the most important events of human life. Marriage is a relationship not only between two persons, but also between the two families, so it has always been very and sometimes more important to see from which family the girl comes from, what reputation it has, than who the girl as a person is. But, on the other side, the girl's family has also always been very careful about where their daughter will be married. In the case of the boy's marriage, it was considered that the family's position was strengthened, so in the past much more attention was paid to the interests of the household, than the love and personal wishes of

the two young people who entered the marriage. An honorable family, is the first sentence that has been heard in the past centuries when the bride was selected. Shkuesi (mediator) as a patriarchal element occupies an important place in the marriage ceremony. Today, even though the couples choose each other on their own, the “shkues” (a mediator arranging marriage between families) is still present in the process, namely he is the person who seeks out formally the hand of the bride.

Kanuni i “Leke Dukagjinit”¹⁷⁰ treats in detail all phases of the marriage including the organizational process of the wedding ceremony such as:

What should be cooked for who, who participates in the wedding party, the home chores, the order and the division of works, who will go to the wedding, etc. The “Krushqi-people who go to take the bride from her house and bring her to the groom’s house.”



Photo 37. Wedding photographs selected by families (private collection)

¹⁷⁰ Kanun of Leke Dukagjini (Code of Leke Dukagjini). Code of Leke Dukagjini is a corpus of laws, regulations and norms of Albanians collected in a book by Shtjefen Gjecovi in the years 1910-1925.



Photo 38. Social action during wedding ceremony, (private collection)

The rituals that are practiced during the wedding ceremony are of great interest to the science of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology. Rite and customs of wedding preparation at the bride's house as well as the groom's house, the separation of the daughter from the father's house etc. Wedding have largely evolved over time, some rituals and actions that have been exercised at the wedding ceremony have undergone changes. The ceremony of weddings and the following rituals nowadays take place in public places, such as restaurants and hotel halls.

The arrangement of marriage begins with the so called "ndarja e vades" namely the setting of wedding date when the wedding ceremony will take place. In the past weddings were arranged to be made in the autumn, after all seasonal agricultural fieldwork jobs were finished. In present time, they are mostly arranged during the summer, because of the great number of relatives living as migrants outside Kosova who come for holidays during the summer. Traditionally not only was the season of weddings strictly prescribed by customary law, but also the days. Wedding days were Sunday and Thursday,¹⁷¹ depending on the ethnographic region. For folk-mindedness, these were days of prosperity and happiness. Nowadays the exact date and day of the week are dependent on the availability of the restaurant or hotel hall where the ceremony will take place or/ and the music bands that will perform there.

Various rituals of symbolic significance have also been made during the arrival of the bride at the groom's house. Some of them had to do with the desire for the bride to have many sons while

¹⁷¹ In some places Thursdays were reserved for the couples whose wedding was not the first one in their lives (widows and widowers for example).

some had to do with the protection of bride from the bad eye, i.e., negative energies. The presence of the boy in the lap of the bride upon her arrival at the groom's house is symbolic act of sympathetic magic that shows the desire for sons. In other parts of the country, other actions are being carried out, such as placing a plis (traditional man's hat) on the head of a bride.

Today's weddings tend to be associated with other contemporary elements, often to be unique and different from the other wedding. However, there are many elements that have come back from tradition, such as taking the bride to groom's house with horse and chariot instead of a car, to wear traditional costumes during the wedding ceremony, not only adult attendants but also toddlers and children. Before different kinds of kin solidarity were highlighted during the organization of the weddings (like helping with food, service, decorations etc) and this custom is still being exercised, even though mainly through presents which tend to be mostly monetary. In present times, there is also opportunity for the wedding day to be organized by various companies, which specialize in wedding planning, which makes it easier to organize the wedding ceremony in general. What is the same as in the past as it is now, is the desire for the wedding to be as magnificent as possible.



Photo 39. *Modern wedding photograph, private collection*

7.2. Nuclear Family Photograph

The families choose as an important part of their family history creation of their new family. Here I will present an answer of one of my interviewees:

“Photographs present a very important part of my life, as you see we have a lot of photographs. But, with creation of my nuclear family, when I got married, things have changed. Since, my child was born in 1983, we started to create albums, and when I go through photographs, I talk to them and remember a detail from my past. I chose this photograph made in 1992. (He showed me one of those displayed in his living room.) I look at it every day, me with my wife and two children. Here, I will stress that during the last war (1999) in Kosova I stayed at home, but I was prepared that at every moment we could move like thousands of other Kosova families. I have hidden family pictures, but this is the only photograph that I wanted to take with me, if we left. But it happened so that despite many challenging experiences, nothing happened to us. Photography in general has a very important role in my life. And with no doubt if I were forced to relocate to the other place without hesitation, as a means of remembrance of this land, I would take my family photographs.



Photo 40. Nuclear family, photograph from private collection 1989

7.3. Photo of Engagement as a Special event

Among different family events families chose to talk about through photographs was also their engagement day. I will present the story of one of my interviewees, about why she chose this photograph to talk about. Merita said that it was very interesting for her history of the family to talk about the engagement day of her parents. Here's her story,

It happened in the 1956 in Belgrade, Serbia where both of them were studying at that time. He proposed to her (while attending a party). It was such a modern event since before, in the past, marriages were mainly arranged by families. I posted it on Facebook a while ago and I got numerous comments and likes. I told this story to my children, and now for them it is very important event, too.



Photo 41. *Engagement ceremony (private collection)*

7.3.1. Circumcision rite/Rituali i rrethprerjes (Syneti)

Ethnologists have pointed out that circumcision is a very ancient ritual, which has not been confined to a particular religion, civilization or geographical area. “As the initiation rite of puberty, circumcision a very widespread phenomenon, almost universally. Circumcision is a very important ritual for the Albanian families of the Muslim religion.”¹⁷² For many Kosovar families it is a special event. They decorate solemnly the bed of the circumcised boy, invite their family members to participate in this event, and end with a feast. In some families, these feasts are the size of a wedding ceremony. In present times, they organize it in hotels and restaurants and quite often the invitation is made to “Dasma e Synetisë/ Circumcision party”. Taking into consideration this fact, families chose quite often photos from this event to talk about, because in these cases a great number of family members would get together, and experience happy moments while celebrating.

¹⁷² Papleka, Ndoc. “Kulte, Rite, magji në traditën orale”, (Tirana: Toena, 1999) 78.



Photo 42. *Bed decoration of circumcised boy (private family collection)*

7.3.2. Large family nostalgia

Family was and is a very important institution for Kosova Albanians. In the past as Mark Krasniqi wrote Kosova lived in the big or extended families.¹⁷³ I will discuss here the importance of the family through photography as it has been shown by research sample respondents. Even though in present times the most families are nuclear they keep several ties and certainly also photographs from their extended, bigger families. They keep these big family photographs because they feel and experience strong mutual connections. An example of this connection is shown in the case when they proudly show a family photograph in which is also their grandmother from the time she was pregnant with the respondent's father, or in which photo respondent's grandmother is holding their mother on her lap. They talk about these photos with nostalgia and love to say that they are part of that family. Below is one such a photograph which is now in possession of a nuclear family, or several nuclear families due to its multiplication, and they are proud for having this.

¹⁷³ Krasniqi, 1979



Photo 43. *Family photographs (private collection)*

7.3.3. Invention of family gathering

It is very interesting to accentuate that there are some events marking something important that families invent with sole intention of family gathering, and afterwards use it as a reason to continue with it periodically, personalizing it in their own family histories.

Hivzi, the oldest son of the Loxha family, lives with his mother around 70 years old, one brother and four sisters. When I did the interview with them, they mentioned that they would like to talk about the photograph taken On “Babuka’s Party/Feast/ alb. Festa e Babukes. Babuka is his grandfather’s nickname. He further explained,

This photo of a traditional gathering is devoted to my grandfather Ferid Loxha. We used to call him Babuka, and so we named this family gathering after him “Festa e Babukes” and usually takes place on 12 February. On this day we mark the day when our grandfather was released from prison. It was the midnight between 12 and 13 February 1959 when he without announcement came home. Since then, more than 55 years have passed and the family is still gathering to mark this date. [...] During the Second World

War, he joined the so- called “Volunteer Group” (political group of Albanians securing more rights of fighters). After the end of the Second World War grandfather was enlisted as wanted person by the communist regime and soon was imprisoned in the notorious Sheremeti Prison. On August 11, 1946 he managed to escape the Sheremet tower massacre and was a runaway for two years. After the time of the escape from Sheremeti Tower, he illegally joined the group of so called “Ballistë” who were also runaways until they eventually were caught by the partisans of Lipa, a village of Peja (a city in West Kosova). In these gatherings, we talk about his life, his sacrifices, deeds, and his patriotism. This gathering and his remembrance keeps the family together and we are all so proud of him.



Photo 44. *Festa e Babukes after Babuka's death*



Photo 45. Babuka's event with Babuka, (in the middle is Babuka)

I would like to note that several of my interviewees said that in the cases of losing a family member they started to think and evaluate photographs differently. Usually during the conversations about photographs, they felt an urge to choose photos of those who are not alive any longer and more (mother, father, grandparent and so on) and talk about their lives, their connections, experiences, etc.

How important is family for Kosova an context, can be easily understood from the fact that in all the families that I did interviews, they chose to talk about those photography's which tells the history of their whole family, the events, and the people. So, not any photo showing personal adventure, a bike, or a car, but something that was meaningful for the entire family, something that shows their integration and/or something relevant for their sharing the same roots as one another. While looking and interpreting photographs the interviewees and those present (usually younger family members) have shown different emotions, like surprise, happiness through laughs, sadness that made them cry with tears, provoked thoughtfulness, etc.

7.3.4. Tourist photography

The family is the producer, performer and audience of snapshot photography. From the point of Sontag's view "Travel is a strategy for the accumulation of photographs." ¹⁷⁴

Tourist Photographs are different from the other event's photographs

On vacation, everything gets in toto: people doing the laundry or dishes, drinking coffee, reading and sleeping. In normal daily life, these activities are not worthily of being photographed. Childhood and vacation are times that we want to experience as whole; hence they are out of the ordinary, and we photograph them. Where photos are taken, things are beautiful."¹⁷⁵

In Kosovar families, based on the family photography corpus that I have seen, we can say that it is the same situation what Prof. Koestlin argues, they take many more photos while on vacation. However, it is worth noting that photography's taken at the seaside while on vacation, they hesitate to show and display, but when they vacation in other places, visiting other countries, they tend to display them more, and they usually choose to be photographed near distinguished monuments in prominent city squares, usually representative for certain countries.

Another element worth noting is that, in the context of Kosovar family, vacation photos made during the second phase are very similar and less in number. But, since the presence of smartphones has been prevalent, from the research data, I can conclude that each family member makes and has numerous photos, in their phones, but they rarely develop any in printed form. Instead, it happens more often the printed ones from the past to be photographed by smartphones so they can have them stored there. In photos shown to me from their phones are their vernacular photographs from the time when they were babies, or from some of their birthday celebration as a child, as well as some other event in which all the family was gathered, sometimes particularly an image from a vacation. And these are usually shared between different family members. This shows that even though members of the family have their own smartphones, through common

¹⁷⁴ Sontag, 9.

¹⁷⁵ Koestlin and Shrake, 268.

shared photographs among large number of individuals, sometimes members of big extended families, they create and express a special community bond, unity, and integration.

Haldrup and Larsen in their paper about the family gaze wrote that:

Tourist and snapshot photography are modern twins. Vocations is that single event when most snapshot images are made and it is almost unthinkable to travel for pleasure without bringing the lightweight camera along and returning home without snapshot memories. Despite the fact that taking photographs is perhaps the emblematic tourist practice and that tourist studies have been dominated by a visual paradigm of gazing, remarkably little sustained research has explored the general connections between tourism and popular tourist photograph.¹⁷⁶

From the data that I gathered during fieldwork, most of the interviewees told me the fact that families borrowed the camera equipment from their neighbors or relatives while they went to the summer holidays; because, during the first and second phases, families did not have the opportunity to have cameras only few families has.

We view tourism as a ‘cultural laboratory’ in which “people derive pleasure from performing and narrating alternative identities and ways of being together in other places.”¹⁷⁷

However, younger generations are displaying vacation photographs on social network platforms in large quantities, especially they who has opportunity to travel. And it is interestingly since they post many of them, whether from the beaches on seaside holidays, or those taken in front of different famous monuments, or those made while they are eating in the restaurant, etc.

I did not see these kinds of photographs displayed in the environment of homes of the families I have been with during this research. Rather I saw them on the social media sites they are posting to when they are going in the holidays. Below is a tourist photograph during 90’s. There are six members of family, one couple with two kids, one boy and one girl and grandparents. They are

¹⁷⁶ Haldrup, Michael, and Jonas Larsen. “The Family Gaze.” *Tourist Studies* 3, no. 1 (April 2003): 23–46.

¹⁷⁷ Lofgren, Orvar. *On Holiday: A History of Vacationing*. (University of California Press, 1999).

in summer holiday in Ulqin, Montenegro at a small beach, as you see in the photograph, the mother and grandparents are with clothes and father with kids with swimsuits.

Tourist photography is of the unique modern ways through which families produce their life narratives and that are constructing them as families in a mobile world.



Photo 46. *Photography during vacation in Ulqin from private family album, 1995*

8. Gender and family photography

Chalfen and Rose claim in their studies that the mother of the household has assumed the role of “family chronicler” which means she is responsible to document and create the memory of the family.¹⁷⁸

Digital photography is considered the first experience of photography. Shove accentuates that for the parents the transition from film to digital is a process of adaptation and revision.¹⁷⁹

In some cases the interviewees said that the younger generation knows and understands better the digitalization process and so they can curate photos at home, when they have time to do so, and try to display the most representative photos of the families. This can be understood as a democratization of family. According to the Giddens, this is also seen in the inherited photographs.

¹⁷⁸See more Chalfen 1987.

¹⁷⁹ Elizabeth Shove, Matthew Watson, Jack Ingram, and Martin Hand, *The Design of Everyday Life* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2007).

Democratization in the context of the family implies equality, mutual respect, autonomy, decision-making through communication, and freedom from violence. Much the same characteristics also supply a model for parent-child relationship. Parents of course will still claim authority over children, and rightly so; but this will be more negotiated and open than before.¹⁸⁰

This democratization we also see through the digital practices, because children display photographs on their own without asking their parents for permission and displaying photographs in the room is linked with the family ties. Before, mothers were the ones who selected and decided what family photographs will be displayed in the home environment. Family photography is a very important part of mother's role. Same as she takes care for the kids, she wants to take care for their photographs, too.

Frohlich stated that by developing the digital revolution, photographic practices change, too.¹⁸¹ The role of curatorial control on displaying family photography, sometimes or more often than not is taken by mothers. But with the digitalization process, the mother lost her role in being curation controller.

According to Kachadourian “women especially mothers, are socialized to preserve kinship ties, protect family identity, and display family memories in the form of framed photo albums.”¹⁸² However, based on their study about the engagement of teenagers in the curation of family photo displays in homes Durant et al., consider that “the means by which photographic representations of individual household members are coordinated- or ‘curated’- across the home environs to portray the household-at-large.”¹⁸³

Does family photography present the vision of their life? Family photos are particular sorts of images embedded in specific practices, and it is the specificity of those practices that define a

¹⁸⁰ Giddens, A. *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy* (Cambridge: Polity Press Cambridge, 2013) 93-94.

¹⁸¹ Frohlich, David. *Audiophotography*. (London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2004)

¹⁸² Janning, Michelle, and Helen Scalise. “Gender and Generation in the Home Curation of Family Photography.” *Journal of Family Issues* 36, no. 12 (October 2015): 1702–25.

¹⁸³ Durrant, A., D. Frohlich, A. Sellen and E. Lyons. “Home curation versus teenage photography: Photo displays in the family home.” *International Journal of Human Computer Studies*, 67 (2009): 1005-1023.

photograph as a family photo as much as if not more than, what it pictures. What is important in family photograph is: who took it, who it shows, where and how it is kept, who made copies of it and sent them to other people, who those other people are, and how it gets looked at by all those people. Technological changes have affected the way photography is used and perceived. In the beginning very formal for special occasions and then as an informal everyday activity, snapshot through domestic activities.¹⁸⁴

From the point of view of cultural but also social anthropology, a woman loves her children, educates and prepares them for life, and wishes for her children all the best. The woman with her wisdom holds the family very stable- an element that is very important for every society and not only for Albanian society, the woman is the guardian and the carrier, transcending the best of hereditary and cultural identity.¹⁸⁵



Photo 47. *In the field, looking at albums in Lirije's family*

¹⁸⁴ See more Chambers, D. "Family as a place. Family photograph albums and the domestications of public and private space," *Picturing place: Photography and the geographical imagination*, (2003), 96-114. And Halle, D. "Displaying the Dream: The Visual Presentation of Family and Self in the Modern American Household." *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 22, no. 2 (1991): 217-29

¹⁸⁵ Statovci, 2014.

De Duve identifies how the space embodied in the snapshot is a “graft off of natural space.”¹⁸⁶ The photograph as a material artifact is, like the verbal narrative of the novel, vulnerable to mutable meaning and interpretations in relation to the ever- changing circumstances in which it is viewed at any given moment in time and by whom.¹⁸⁷ In the other worlds, time in the photograph is suspended, while the life that was once its referent and from which it derives flows on. Sontag identifies the photograph as “a thin slice of space as well as time.”¹⁸⁸

8.1. Destroying family photography

In some of the family photography corpuses I have noticed, photos which were deliberately torn or cut off, since sometimes only one certain part of the photo in which once a person was positioned now was cut off or void. Explanation why this was this done were various. Sometimes the reason was divorce, break up of a romantic relationship, and sometimes the reason was the non-relevance of the person in the photo, non-existence of any accentuated relationship or linkage with them during life and thus their presence there was explained simply as annoying.

8.2. Photographs as family heritage

Possession of original family photographs and their conveyance from generation to generation makes them increasingly valued heritage. From the research data gathered from a 20 different families as case studies, it can be seen that only in three family cases original family photographs have been inherited by daughters, and the reason why is because they did not have brothers, i.e. the families did not have male descendant., In the cases where there are several sons, with the possibility to inherit these family photos, so too in case of extended families, then due to patriarchal structure of Albanian families and such mentality, and because of the rules of property division in case of division of families, it comes very natural the answer that family photographs remain with the son who takes care of the aging parents. Thus, along with the

¹⁸⁶ De Duve, Thierry. "Time Exposure and Snapshot: The Photograph as Paradox." *October* 5 (1978): 113-25.

¹⁸⁷ Wilkie-Stibbs, Christine. "Reframing Family: Photographic Memory in Penelope Lively's Family Album." *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies* 16, no. 2 (2014): 366-82

¹⁸⁸ Sontag, 1977.

inheritance of the house as a property goes family photographs as well, which actually remain there. One of my interviewees said:

“When we siblings (two brothers and four sisters) of the family, now all married with children, we gathered sometimes in order to look at the old photo albums. I kept accentuating, ‘please look but do not dare to take any of them with you.’ Since they are very eager to possess photos containing the events and their images when they were young. They were allowed to photograph old photography’s with smart phones, but they would like to have original ones.”

The value of originality of the photographs was mentioned in most cases. One of them said: “It is very important to have original one; the copy does not have the same value. The original one holds the smell, the fragrance of the past.

According to Drazin and Flochlich, photography’s gaze surrounded by relationships and social processes confirms that “the act of remembering is commonly understood as occurring with an attitude of recovery from the past. From their work the act of remembering appears as a future-oriented, creative act, remembering to remember in future.”¹⁸⁹ They also conclude that “the ways in which photographs come to be framed in domestic contexts communicate construction of temporality (isolated moments, from time to time, biography, history) and, appear to reflect categories of people as kin and non-kin friends and acquaintances, and people present or not present in the home.”¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁹ Durrant, 2009.

¹⁹⁰ Durrant, 2009.

9. Assembling family photography – continuity

By assembling I mean the process of putting together, or mounting, or composing a photograph consisting of parts of several different ones, whether from a single or several events, in order to create a single image. This action is usually sparked by the idea to put together the image you would like to materialize. This happens mostly when someone is missing (in a particular event) or is no longer alive and you have no opportunity to be photographed with him or her, but you want and like their presence in the photograph.

This could be said to represent the solemnizing and immortalizing the high points of family life, in short, reinforcing the integration of the family group by resetting the sense that it has both itself and of its unity.¹⁹¹

This assembling speaks of the family cult or family togetherness, and by bricolage photos of decided members of the family, shows gratitude toward ancestors, their remembrance by the living, and desire to see and be seen as an idealized image of family togetherness. Assembling is a construction of a reality in which you would wish to partake, the one that creates a sense of naturalist that did not exist earlier. As Hall puts it, “Representation is the production of the meaning of the concepts in our minds.”¹⁹²

Family albums exhibit both examples of photographic images that are in either case, the freezing of time in space. Barthes has identified how the photograph produces as new category of space time as the “illogical conjunction of the here and the formerly.” However, De Duve suggests that Barthes’s formulations describes only half the photographic paradox that is the space-time of the snapshot, and that another category of the “now and there” could be added to include the times exposure photograph.

Below is a photo that illustrates these formulations. It was assembled and posted as such on Facebook as a greeting for Christmas and New Year’s Eve. In this great photo, the deceased father was added behind a photo of his wife and all his living children (sons with their wives and

¹⁹¹ Pierre Bordeiu, *Photography: A middle – Brown art*, (Stanford University Press, 1990). 19

¹⁹² Stuart Hall. *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*.(London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 1997) 1

his daughter), as well in this photo is his deceased mother image . Another photo was added into the upper left of the father when he was younger, as if in this way is shown the desire of how he would like to be remembered, young and handsome. But most importantly in this photo, by putting together members of three family generations they wanted to represent the wholeness of their family and continuity. Another interesting element in this photo is that the greeting is addressed to entire kin and even entire nation, wherever they are. By constructing the greeting in this way, the relevance of the family as a cultural value of entire community, i.e. Albanians, is the central focus.



Photo 48. Three generations of family

Another interesting case is the one below in which are seen a grandmother wearing traditional Albanian costumes. This photograph contains three generation with her son and her grandson. Since, they did not have the chance to have one photograph together. Three single photographs were edited into one, with her son's photograph taken in his military uniform, and the grandson's photograph taken in traditional clothes. This photograph is displayed in the center of the living room in the family's home.

Blerta, 24 years old, said that, "My grandfather was in an accident and lost his life, and my grandmother with my father when he was young, with the photograph of my grandfather during

his time as a soldier, they composed and put a photograph together, since they could not all take a photograph together.” (she was so emotional telling me this story).

She was looking at the family albums but did not find it, she said maybe my aunt took it. Kosovar Albanian family want to present all the family together, since they have not the opportunity to be photographed together they compose it, or even when they miss a person and want to be photographed with him/her all together.

Konrad Koestlin wrote also about “musealization,” which is another staged event of our life-world where we enact ourselves, and which gives our life a theatrical dimensions.¹⁹³ Below is a photo assembled by Ferdonije, the woman who lost her husband and four sons in the war and was mentioned in an earlier chapter. Her photograph illustrates the process of musealization as described by Koestlin well.



Photo 49. Combined photo of Ferdonije's family

Once memory is materialized, it can be arranged in space. As the example above illustrates, material memory is fashioned around the home into an interconnecting architecture. Memory in the home can be a product of the work of the whole family, but often one person is the architect of memory, the person who takes physical charge of memory artifacts. Other people may join in,

¹⁹³ Kostlin and Shrake, 265.

such that work is arranged as collaborative, although someone still has to set up the collaborative situations. During my research, I have noticed that they are several families, who make family trees and put them on the wall. For this event, the women are those which are doing this job better, but there are cases where men help them to create the tree.

About the adaptation of new digital technologies and the effect of the adaptation in the family life, Shove called this the “apparent democratization.”¹⁹⁴ The traditional practices of personal and family representation are changing with the digitalization of family photography.

Hoskins introduces the terms “networked” and “connective” memory to account for the construction of a new kind of memory that mixes not only the individual and the collective, the private and the public, but also past and future into a permanent stream of visual “present.” This culture of connectivity is a culture where perspectives, expressions, experiences, and productions are increasing mediated by social media sites. The culture of connectivity manifests itself particularly through platforms such as YouTube, My Space, and Facebook.¹⁹⁵

Contemporary memory is thoroughly interpenetrated by a technological unconscious in that there occurs a co-evolution of memory and technology. Memory is reality and dynamically configured through our digital practices and the connectivity of our networks. The increasingly digital networking of memory not only functions in a continuous present but is also a distinctive shaper of a new mediatized age of memory.¹⁹⁶

9.1. Keeping family ties in virtual space

The way of life in contemporary times has changed tremendously and people all around the world are increasingly mobile. This mobility is a result of transnational trends in trade and labor market, schooling, professional contacts, conferences, migrations, wars, etc. However, the need to keep continuous communications with those remaining behind and others who are also on the

¹⁹⁴ Shove, 2007.

¹⁹⁵ Dijck, José van. “Flickr and the Culture of Connectivity: Sharing Views, Experiences, Memories.” *Memory Studies* 4, no. 4 (October 2011): 401–15.

¹⁹⁶ Hoskins, Andrew. “Digital Network Memory”. In *Mediation, Remediation, and the Dynamics of Cultural Memory*, (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2009).

move, and especially with family members, remains unchangeable. The need for intense and immediate communication does not imply always long distances. This has become part of everydayness and people within one city or neighborhood communicate more frequently at any time from any place/space. Fortunately, it is being facilitated and became very easy by the newest developments in technology of communication. One way of communicating is through photographs and this also made easier and extremely facilitated by smart phones and other similar devices.

Therefore, this phenomenon has recently been dealt with by many authors. For example, Durrant et al. considers that “Mobile digital devices afford photo-mediated communication between teens and parents in and beyond the home, but the meaning of ‘family’ and ‘home’ in these communications remains relatively unmapped.”¹⁹⁷ Chalfen (1987) acknowledges the central role that photography plays in family representation, observing how familial conventions are reproduced through photography’s tool and practices. Rose (2003) has explored this further in relation to motherhood. More recently, Drazin and Frohlich (2007) have shown how the specific presentational forms of traditional photos displays in the home are arranged to communicate domestic roles, relationships and obligations and can attribute salience to particular representations over others.¹⁹⁸

An interesting phenomenon regarding social networking platforms as public spaces is that it does not serve only to connect individuals around the world but also to establish different social groupings bringing together people with shared interests, as well as other cultural and social features. As a result of such grouping possibilities it is not surprising that in these platforms are very often encountered pages and grouping with family names. As such are pages named: Familja Loxha (Loxha’s family) Familja Gashi (Gashi;s family), Familja Shkodra (Shkodra’s family). This is certainly done for the reason of keeping family ties strong and to get to know each other and get information from all family members. But it is also interesting to know such questions as who initiates the creation of family pages, what they post on their pages, who is responsible for them, and how the page helps them?

¹⁹⁷ Durrant, 2009.

¹⁹⁸ Durrant, 2009.

It is very interesting to accentuate that research data show that the people who manage these pages are usually family members living abroad from Kosova. They are migrants, want to keep family ties, let their kids know about their ancestors and where they belong. Andi is the nephew from Loxha's Family living in USA, and he said that by posting in this page family photographs helps very much in keeping family ties.

My kids do not speak or understand Albanian so well but I always tell and inform them about family, my uncles, aunts and their kids. My mother has two brothers and two sisters, and now they are married and have grownup children who also are married and having kids. So, now within this page we are a virtual large family. We post different news. For example, I posted there the dates when I am going to be in Kosova, and let everyone who wants to come and meet know when I am available.

He also told delightfully and laughing a very interesting story. He was watching with his nuclear family in the USA a wedding videocassette of his uncle, who got married 30 years earlier. They made a copy of it on DVD and thus he could crop different photos capturing different sequences from the wedding. Then, he posted those cropped photos on the Facebook family page and this led to a very fruitful discussion among members. They mentioned people in photos with name and discussed their character as kids. "This is a very interesting kind of communication within our family members and at the same time new members of family are getting information about our family tree."

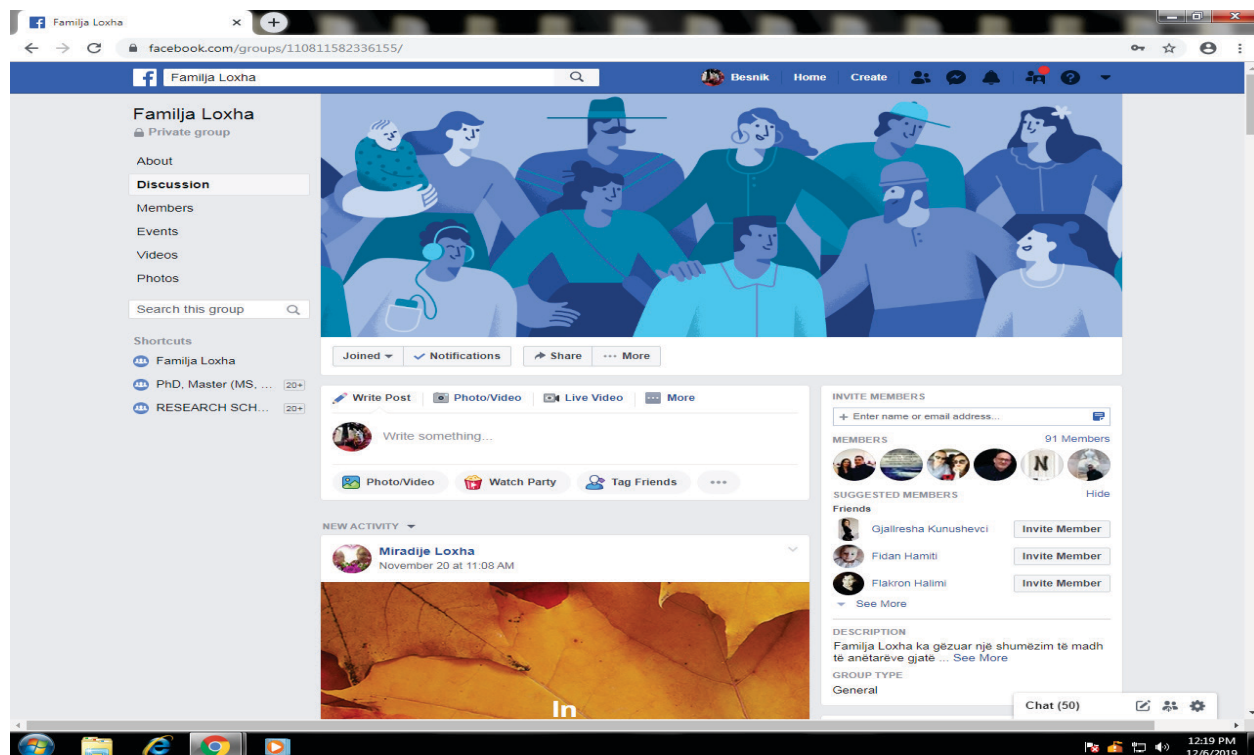


Photo 50. Loxha's family Facebook pages

Familja Gashi (Gashi's family)

On this Facebook page, what we come to see are two family photographs. As a profile picture, the icon on this page, is the family photography which contains four men (they are brothers). They have sisters also but in this icon is only the brothers. In it they presented their patriarchal order. The cover photo of this page contains the family photograph taken during so called "Takimet e fisit", or kin meeting when translated, as every important event of this family. Besides the most recent news concerning the family at large, they also post historical information. They mention their family members that took part in the important historical events in Kosova, for example the "Student demonstration" in 1981. They posted a question asking if they are willing to organize the kin meeting, in which case more than 95% answered yes. These kinds of events are very important for families, to see, meet, and get to know each other. They are very proud and boast if they have any member of their family who was a soldier or imprisoned during Milloshevic's regime due to their political ideology.

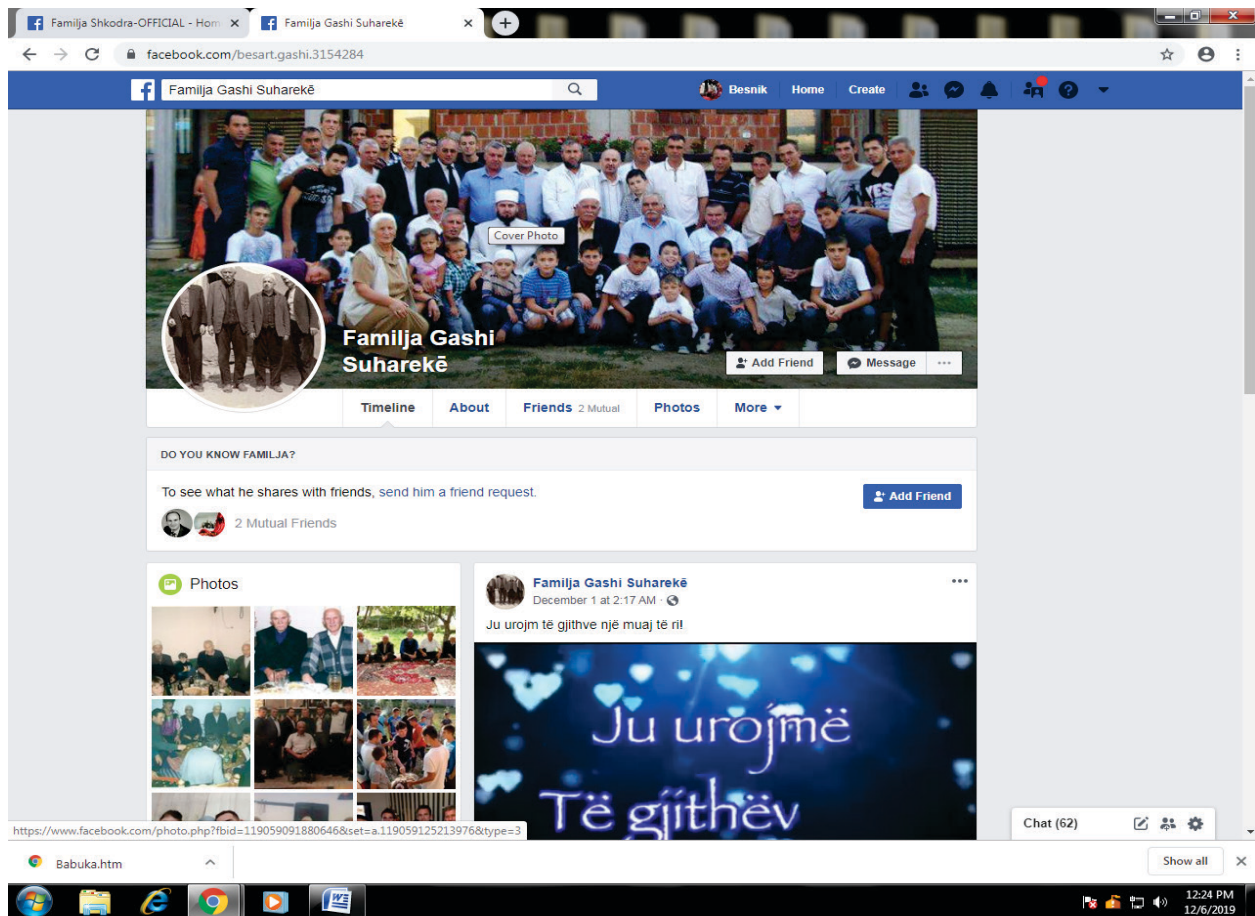


Photo 51. Gashi's family Facebook pages

Familja Shkodra (Shkodra's family)

On this Facebook page as a cover photo is also a family photo from the "Takimet e Fisit" (Kin Family). The reason why they started to organize the family gatherings, they said, was because their family now is quite large and some of them do not live in Kosovo. They are living abroad and so they want to continue to know each other, to keep their ties uninterrupted, they began the Facebook group for their family. The old generation is worried that younger ones will not know each other and consider that it is very important to keep in contact. It should be noted that in many families the need to keep knowing and preserving ties with their far relatives is explained as a need to prevent possible romantic relations between their youngster, which would breach the rule of exogamy in arranging or establishing marriages. So, one way of achieving this is by organizing a family event called the "Takimet e Fisit."



Photo 52. Shkodras's family Facebook pages

It is also interesting that the event takes place in the village from which they originate, where the family has its roots. Besides other news, this family also posts photos marking achievements of family members around the world in the education, or music, journalism and the like to highlight that these people make the entire family feel proud of them.

Another case which illustrates the importance of family integrity through photo images among Kosovar Albanians is that of grandmother Kadrije. On her 90th birthday was organized as a special and unique party. Beside the fact that all family members gathered, including her sons, daughters, nephews, and nieces as well as the partners and children of the latter that are married. They also prepared a PowerPoint presentation with numerous family photographs to tell the family story. So, the corpus of photos in this PowerPoint presentation included those from the year she was born, then those when she married, had kids, and so on. Moreover, there were then

photos of her children with their nuclear families, going on with the development of nuclear families of nephews and nieces. Thus, they chose this way to visualize and acknowledge how large the family has become, chronologically, so as if to accentuate continuity and their integration. This need was even more confirmed by the presence of nieces (with their nuclear families) who came from abroad, one from Vienna and the other from USA. The family selected those photographs that would show not only her life chronologically, but also the development and enlargement of the family. It was very significant for them that she was now a great-great grandmother and gathered in one event four generations, confirming their unity, identity and belonging. Below are some of the photos shown in power point presentation titled “90 years old and one entire life - Mother Kadrije with us.”

So, above the photos help not only memorize certain moments from the ordinary and exclusive days and events of grandmother Kadrije's life, that could simultaneously be read as a family history, but also to immortalize it. Paster¹⁹⁹ notes "the snapshot was presented almost exclusively as a means of dealing with the inexorable passage of time," as exemplified in such slogans as "snapshots remember- when you forget/ snapshots help your heart remember," and "count on today's Kodak cameras and Kodak film to make any moment extra special- a memory to live over and over again." Baer said that The startling effect (and affect) of many photographs, then, results not only from their adherence to conventions of realism and codes of authenticity ... it comes as well from photography's ability to conform the viewer with a moment that had the potential to be experienced but perhaps was not. In viewing such photographs, we are witnessing a mechanically recorded instant that was not necessarily registered by the subject's own consciousness.²⁰⁰

.

.

¹⁹⁹ James E. Paster. Advertising immortality by Kodak, *History of Photography* 16, no. 2, (1992): 135-139.

²⁰⁰ Baer, 2002.

10. Conclusion

Contemporary discussions of photographs in Anthropology were built on the earlier treatments of their aesthetics and technological aspects, and moved towards the dialogues between photographs, social action and personhood. Authors who wrote on issues regarding the ways photographs can materialize memories of the past include Hirsch (1997), Ruby (1995) and Kuhn (1995). Yet these objects are surrounded by relationships and social processes and have different meanings and practices in cultural context.

In this model, the "archive" is already a construct, a corpus that is the product of a discourse. One must dig to make sense of the systems behind what one sees Foucault says, that family albums must also be dug and talked about in order to know much more about your family history.

In the past, Kosovar family households were so called “extended family” in which at least three different generations lived together. These families had usually a great number of members living together. They saw each other every day, witnessed what they were doing, what they are wearing, what they are planning, thinking, how kids are playing, being nurtured, and so on. Nowadays since the families are usually nuclear consisting of fewer members, it is through photographs they are getting informed about what the other kin members are doing, wearing etc.. This new way of has the potential to “threaten” their family ties. This pretend “threat” is somehow consoled with occurrence of different social platforms in cyberspace such as Facebook for example. Sometimes these platforms are experienced as a way of exercising social control, but more often as a medium in which they can nurture their relations and information. Communication is routinely made, motivated and facilitated by posted photos and moreover the posting of one photo from one member triggers the desire to post another from some other members, which has a way of starting a competition between members.

If we compare the role of family photography in the past and today I think there are differences because of the fact that in the past the technological possibility to make a photo was very small, thus this actually increased photography’s importance and role in the lives of people. In the past, they have been photographed only in the most important moments of their life such as: school, festivals, religious holidays, wedding, etc. The role and importance of photographs was not only determined by the possibility but also by the affordability. Not everyone could afford to take

their owner family photographs. There are many members of the families from the past who cannot be remembered and are not known through photographs because actually they never in their life were photographed. One of my respondents claimed, “I remember my grandmother missing her mother saying: *I would give anything to have a photo of my mom.*”

Certainly we witness many cases when we ourselves or someone close to us uses photographs of the dear ones from the past in order to refresh their remembrance, recall the image of people they knew, or to get new generations to know someone important to us.

Pictures of family premises have been kept with fanaticism to be remembered in the. While today I think the photography has lost its importance because now we live in a time where technology has reached the peak of development thus photos have become easily available and distributable. In the past photographs were affordable only for aristocratic families, while today everybody has the opportunity to take pictures, which is why it is probably not given much importance to it. However what is photographed remains important since people do not ignore the fact that photographs realized in happy moments of life like those marriages and different celebrations have an importance that must be preserved for future generations. There is a noticeable change in what people give more attention to in photograph now. For modern people, it is very important to take pictures during the various journeys around the world and their unique experiences in order to preserve them as valuable memories for the one who sees them with an eye of art or study.

The Kosovar family changed gradually since the Second World War due to quite slow process of modernization, but over the last 10 years has undergone through fast changes and one of them is that extended patriarchal families are increasingly divided into nuclear families. These changes can also be noticed and described through analysis of the picture. The role of family photography in the Kosovar family is quite large as the picture itself defines the indicators of family development both from the economic and the educational aspect.

In the past taking a photo posed lots of trouble, or at least it faced different difficulties and was time consuming. Since people lived in extended families, it was very difficult to capture, from present times perspective, an idealized photograph of their nuclear ones. Photos captured by old fashioned cameras with film (tapes) ought to be developed only in professional photo shops, and

that needed several days and also the financial means since it was expensive for families with average incomes.

Today we do not need a photographer to develop entire photo reels because we do it ourselves; we can select the ones we like best and develop them easily and fast in Photoshop, or print them in our own Computers. Others that we do not find very important for a moment, we will still preserve for a long time. .

The photos show the reality of every moment you are photographed, and you can extract many of these photographs.

As a document, the photograph is very important and an inseparable part of our life being present at any moment, starting from the picture of the birth and continuing to be present in all phases of life and every step. Human beings are spiritually and emotionally connected with family photography, since these make possible comparison and analysis of family photography between the past and the present. I think there is a difference where the time and economic, historical, and cultural transformations are affected, and unlike today where the picture is present at all times and each case where in the past usually family pictures were rare and only for specific cases, taking into account the economic situation of that family.

The picture has not lost its role today, the function remains the same where it preserves every family memory, thus mirroring the feelings that were experienced in those ceremonies, different family gatherings, rituals and many other occasions.

The role of family photography has a special value for today's family in Kosova because the very fact that a family possesses a photo of their past brings to life the those events and people once more. There are materialized childhoods and other phases of family members' development, a collective life span. This is priceless thus photographs are considered a treasure; a treasure that secures continuity, feeling of belonging, and preserved memories.

Bordieu wrote:

If one accepts, that the function of the festivity is to revitalize and recreate the group, one will understand why the photograph is associated with it, since it supplies the means of solemnizing those climactic moments of social life in which the group solemnly reaffirms

its unity. In the case of the wedding, the picture that capture for eternity the group that has been brought together, or rather the bringing together of two groups, is necessarily implied within a ritual whose function is to consecrate, that is, to sanction and to sanctify the union of two groups effected through the union of two individuals ²⁰¹

Domination, strength and boasting, shows the family's social status, highlighting the large number of family members. Often Kosovars feature photographs of huge trees to show how big their family was. This is to tell that they have roots which are going to continue growing.

As we mentioned earlier in this work, the photography in all three mentioned phases has its specificities and changes in the way it was used, the events photographed and practices about them. Besides, the role of the migrants in these phases gains a different connotation just as the photography. The first phase due to the way the education, migration and economic development that are reflected in photographs could be labeled as a *prosperity phase*. The second phase that considers numerous and various political developments, namely historical changes happening in Kosova at the time, including forced migration, reflected in photographs could be labeled the *phase of violence and resistance*. And the third phase considering the events reflected in the family photographs could be labeled as a *phase of liberated Kosova*. The process of taking pictures/photos as an everyday activity of almost any family nowadays could be labeled as a *hope for restoration*.

²⁰¹ Bordeiu, 21.

Bibliography

- Appadurai, A. *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- Appadurai, Arjun, *Modernity at Large, Cultural dimensions of globalization*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota, 1996.
- Assmann, Jan. "Communicative and Cultural Memory". In *Cultural Memory Studies*, Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, (2008): 109-118.
- Baer, Ulrich, *Spectral Evidence' Photography' the photography of trauma*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press Cambridge, 2002.
- Ball, Michael, & Smith, Gregory, *Qualitative Research Methods: Analyzing visual data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 1992.
- Banks, Marcus. *Visual Methods in Social Research*, London: Sage publication, 2001.
- Barthes, Roland, Geoff Dyer, and Camera Lucida, *Reflections On Photography*, New York: Hill and Wans, 2010.
- Batchen, G. *Forget me Not: Photography and Remembrance*. New York: Princeton Archit. Press, 2004.
- Bateson, Gregory and Margaret Mead. For God's Sake, Margaret, *CoEvolutionary Quarterly*, June 1976, no. 10: 32-44.
- Benjamin, Walter. *The work of art in the age of mechanical production*, London: Penguin Books, 2008.
- Bernard, H. Russel. *Research Methodology in Anthropology Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches 3rd edition*, England: Altamira Press, 2002.
- Blanco, Patricia Prieto. "Family Photography as a phatic construction." *Networking Knowledge: Journal of the MeCCSA Postgraduate Network* 3 (2010): 1-20.
- Bordeiu, Pierre. *Photography: A middle – Brown art*, Stanford University Press, 1990.
- Burgess, R.G. *In the field: An introduction to Filed Research*. London: Allen & Unwin, 1984.
- Chalfen, Richard. *Snapshot Versions of life*. Green State University Popular Press, 1987.
- Chambers, D. "Family as a place. Family photograph albums and the domestications pf public and private space," *Picturing place: Photography and the geographical imagination*, (2003): 96-114.

- Collier, Jr., John and Malcolm Colliers, "*Visual Anthropology, Photography as a Research Method*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.
- De Duve, Thierry. "Time Exposure and Snapshot: The Photograph as Paradox." *October* 5 (1978): 113-25.
- De Rapper, Gilles and Durand, Anouck. "Family Photographs in Communist Albania: State Photography and the Private Sphere," *Audiovisual Media and Identity Issues in Southeastern Europe*, (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), 210-229.
- Des Chene, Mary. Symbolic Anthropology. In *Encyclopedia of Cultural Anthropology*, ed. David Levinson and Melvin Ember, (New York: Henry Holt, 1996), 1274-1278.
- Dey, Anind K. "Understanding and Using Context," *Personal and Ubiquitous Computing*, 2001, no. 5: 4-7.
- Dijck, José van. "Future Memories: The Construction of Cinematic Hindsight." *Theory, Culture & Society* 25, no. 3 (May 2008): 71-87.
- Dijck, José van. "Flickr and the Culture of Connectivity: Sharing Views, Experiences, Memories." *Memory Studies* 4, no. 4 (October 2011): 401-15.
- Drazin, Adam and David Frohlich, "Good Intentions: Remembering through Framing Photographs in English Homes," *Ethnos* 72, no. 1 (2007): 51-76.
- Durham, E., "Some tribal origins, laves and customs of the Balkans" (London, 1928), 140-144.
- Durrant, A., D. Frohlich, A. Sellen and E. Lyons. "Home curation versus teenage photography: Photo displays in the family home." *International Journal of Human Computer Studies*, 67 (2009): 1005-1023.
- Edwards, Elisabeth. "Objects of affect: Photography beyond the image," *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 41, no. 1 (2012): 221-34.
- Edwards, E. and J. Hart, "Introduction: photographs as object" in *Photographs Objects Histories: On the Materiality of Images*. (London: Routledge, 2004), 1- 15.
- Edwards, Steve. *Photography: a very short introduction*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 122.
- Ericson, Frederik. "Reflection on practices, teaching/learning, videos and theorizing" in *Theories of learning and studies of instructional practice* (Springer, 2011), 388.
- Erll, Astri. "Locating Family in Cultural Memory Studies." *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 42, no. 3 (2011): 303-18.

- Freund, Gisèle. *The frontier eye: Paris 1933-1940*, (Paris: Saint-Germain-la-Blanche-Herbe, 2011), 11.
- Gacaferri, Fadil. 'Kamera Fotografike', Prishtine Libri Shkollor, 2000.
- Gell, Alfred. *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).
- Giddens, A. *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy* (Cambridge: Polity Press Cambridge, 2013) 93-94.
- Habermas, Jürgen. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Translated by Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Boston: MIT Press, 1989), 6.
- Haldrup, Michael, and Jonas Larsen. "The Family Gaze." *Tourist Studies* 3, no. 1 (April 2003): 23–46.
- Halle, D. "Displaying the Dream: The Visual Presentation of Family and Self in the Modern American Household." *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 22, no. 2 (1991): 217-29.
- Hall, Justin (2002) From Weblog to Moblog. TheFeature Archives. Thu Nov 21 2002. Electronic version. Retrieved Jan 10, 2007.
[URL:http://www.thefeaturearchives.com/topic/Media/From_Weblog_to_Moblog.html]
- Harper, Douglas. "Taking about picture: a case for photo elicitation," *Visual Studies* 17, no. 1 (2002).
- Hirsch, Marianne. *Family frames: Photography, narrative and post memory*. (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2002), 107.
- Hirsch, Marianne. *The Familial Gaze*, (Dartmouth, 1999), 16.
- Hirsch, Marianne. *The Generation of Post Memory: Writing and Visual Culture after Holocaust*, (New York: Colombia University Press, 2012) 5.
- Hirsch, Marianne, "The Uses and Misuses of Memory," *Hemispheric Institute*,
<https://hemisphericinstitute.org/en/enc09-academic-texts/item/680-the-uses-and-misuses-of-memory.html>
- Hirsch, Julia and Marianne Hirsch. "Introduction: Familial looking," pp. xi-xxv in M. Hirsch (Ed.) *The familial gaze*. (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1999).
- Hoskins, Andrew. "Digital Network Memory". In *Mediation, Remediation, and the Dynamics of Cultural Memory*, (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2009)

- Janning, Michelle, and Helen Scalise. "Gender and Generation in the Home Curation of Family Photography." *Journal of Family Issues* 36, no. 12 (October 2015): 1702–25.
- Kaçaniku, Shukri. *Fotografia ne Kosove 1900-1950*, (KOHA, 2012).
- Kadriu, Lumnije, Pushimet, familja, vendlindja në praktikat e diasporës shqiptare të Kosovës, (*Instituti Albanologjik, Prishtinë*), 197.
- Kaser, Karl. "The Balkan joint family: redefining a problem" in *Household and Family in the Balkans. Two Decades of Historical Family Research at University of Graz*, (Vienna, 2012), 89-108.
- Kopytof, Igor. "The cultural biography of things, commodization as a process," in *Social life of things, commodities in cultural perspectives* (Cambridge University press, 1986).
- Koskela, I. and I. Arminen. "Attractiveness and Responsiveness of Moblogs." *The Observatory* 1 (1970): 73-91.
- Köstlin, Konrad, and Scott M. Shrake. "The Passion for the Whole: Interpreted Modernity or Modernity as Interpretation." *The Journal of American Folklore* 110, no. 437 (1997): 260-76.
- Krasniqi, Mark. *Gjurmë Gjurmime*, Institute Albanologjik I Prishtines, (Prishtine, 1979), 216.
- Kuhn, A. "Photography and cultural memory: A methodological exploration," *Visual Studies*, 22, no. 3 (2007): 283-292.
- Langford, Martha. *Speaking the Album An Application of Oral-Photographic Framework*, ed. Annete Kuhn and Kirsten Emiko Mc Allister (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), 223.
- Legard, R., J. Keegan, & K. Ward, In-depth interviews, in *Qualitative Research Practice* (London: Sage, 2003), 139-168.
- Lofgren, Orvar. *On Holiday: A History of Vacationing*. (University of California Press, 1999).
- Lofland, J. & L. H. Lofland, *Analysing Social Settings, 3rd edition* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1995).
- Long, JJ, Noble, A & Welch, E. *Photography: Theoretical Snapshots*. (London: Routledge, 2008).
- Malcom, Noel. "Kosova nje histori e shkurter," *Koha*, (Prishtine, 2011), 41.
- Mead and Batson. "Balinese Character a photographic analysis," *Special publication of the New York Academy of Sciences*, Volume II, (1942).
- Milgram, Stanley. "The Image-Freezing Machine," *Psychology Today*, 10, no. 12 (1977): 50-54.

- Mosely, Philip E. "The distribution of the zadruga within southeastern Europe," in Robert F. Byrness (ed.) *Communal Families in the Balkans: The Zadruga*, (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976), 59.
- Papleka, Ndoc. "Kulte, Rite, magji nw traditen orale", (Tirana: Toena, 1999) 78.
- Paster, James E. Advertising immortality by Kodak, *History of Photography* 16, no. 2, (1992): 135-139.
- Pink, Sarah. *The future of Visual Anthropology, engaging the senses* (Routledge, 2006).
- Poole, Deborah. *Vision, Race and Modernity: A Visual Economy of the Andean Image World*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 60
- Porto, N. "Picturing the museum: photography and the work of mediation in the Third Portuguese Empire," in ed. M. Bouquet, *Academic Anthropology and the Museum*. (Oxford: Berghahn, 2001), 36–54.
- Reckwitz, Andreas. "Toward a Theory of Social Practices: A Development in Culturalist Theorizing." *European Journal of Social Theory* 5, no. 2 (May 2002): 243–63.
- Rexha, Nexhmi and Nail Reshidi – Bazat e Marketingut, (*PRISHTINË*, 2002) 23.
- Rose, Gillian. "Doing Family Photography the Domestic," *The Public and the Politics of Sentiment*, (Ashgate, UK: The Open University, 2010), 11.
- Shatri, Bajram, "Arsimi Shqip ne Kosove 1990- 1999 Shtepite shkolla, Sfidat, arritjet dhe aspiratat" (Libri Shkollor, 2010).
- Schatzki, T., *Social Practices: A Wittgensteinian Approach to Human Activity and the Social*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996)
- Schmitt, Oliver. "Kosova Histori e shkurter e nje treve qendrore ballkanike," *Koha*, (Prishtine, 2012).
- selfie, n. *OED Online*. September 2020. Oxford University Press.
<https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/390063?redirectedFrom=selfie> (accessed September 15, 2020).
- Shove, Elizabeth, Matthew Watson, Jack Ingram, and Martin Hand, *The Design of Everyday Life* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2007).
- Sontag, Susan. *On photography*. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977).

- Spence, Jo, and Patricia Holland. *Family snaps: the meaning of domestic photography*. (London: Virago, 1991)
- Statovci, Drita “Djepi dhe perjetesia,” *Instituti Albanologjik i Prishtines (IAP)*, (Prishtine, 2014), 197
- Tasho, Roland. *Qendresa ne Syte e Kosoves*, (Kosovar Foritute, 2001).
- Tirta, Mark. “Mitologjia Ndër Shqiptarë, Akademia e Shkencave e Shqipërisë,” (Instituti I Kulturës Popullore, Dega e Etnologjisë, Tiranë, 2004), 65
- Todorova, Maria. “Ballkan Family Structure and the European Pattern (Budapest: CEU Press, Budapest, 2006), 127-66.
- Vrioni, Qerim. “150 VJET Fotografi Shqiptare”, *Milosao*, 2009 Sarande.
- Weber, S. “Using visual images in research” in *Handbook of the arts in qualitative research: Perspectives, methodologies, examples, and issues* (London: Sage Press, 2008), 41–54.
- Wilkie-Stibbs, Christine. “Reframing Family: Photographic Memory in Penelope Lively’s Family Album.” *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies* 16 (2013): 366 - 382.

ABSTRACT

This thesis is about family photography as a construction of family memory 1950- 2015, with the focus on family photographs, not only as a cultural artifact itself, but with a focus on the historical, social and cultural contexts they may reflect. Through photographs not only relations within family members are reflected, but also family relation with other social, cultural, political levels are reflected.

The thesis is divided in three phases; the first phase contains photographs from 1950 till 1981. In this phase photographing act was a special event for family members, and family members took photographs for passing them to their relatives, living abroad to keep their family ties. The second phase contains photographs from 1982-1999, photography was used more often by family members (as amateurs) to capture different moments of life. In this phase different family stories about what have they did with their photos in such a crisis, how they tried to hide family photographs during the war, about the ways family photographs survived during the war, are discussed. Through these stories the relevance and the role of photography not only as simply a bearer of memories, but also as a connection to the past and intergenerational connection is shown. The third phase contains photographs from 1999- till 2015. Photo cameras are now to be found in every family, so that daily life can be capture by it. It is very evident, that photographs were passed on from joint families to nuclear families. Now not only family development but broader context of global developments is reflected, like increased mobility and thus the need for people to connect through photos. The migration was mentioned almost in every family, even though it was not the central question of my research. It happened because the stories behind the photographs they were showing and talking about were connected to migration issues. Family photography has a special value for today's family in Kosovo because the very fact that a family possesses a photo of their past which shows images, events and people who might not exist anymore. There are materialized childhoods and other phases of family members' development, a collective life span. This is priceless thus photographs are considered a treasure; a treasure that secures continuity, feeling of belonging, and preserved memories.

This doctoral thesis contains a considerable number of photographs that illustrate better the written content and the fieldwork.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In dieser Doktorarbeit geht es um die Familienfotografie als Konstruktion des Familiengedächtnisses von 1950 bis 2015. Der Schwerpunkt liegt dabei auf Familienfotografien, nicht nur als kulturelles Artefakt selbst, sondern auch auf den historischen, sozialen und kulturellen Kontexten, die sie möglicherweise widerspiegeln. Durch Fotografien werden nicht nur die Beziehungen innerhalb der Familienmitglieder reflektiert, sondern auch die familiären Beziehungen zu anderen sozialen, kulturellen und politischen Ebenen.

Die Arbeit gliedert sich in drei Zeitabschnitte. Der erste Abschnitt enthält Fotos von 1950 bis 1981. In dieser Zeit war das Fotografieren ein besonderes Ereignis für Familienmitglieder, und Familienmitglieder machten Fotos, um sie an ihre im Ausland lebenden Verwandten weiterzugeben, zur Aufrechterhaltung der familiären Bindungen. Der zweite Abschnitt enthält Fotografien von 1982-1999. Die Fotografie wurde von Familienmitgliedern (als Amateure) vermehrt verwendet, um verschiedene Momente des Lebens festzuhalten. In diesem Abschnitt werden verschiedene Familiengeschichten diskutiert, wie sie versucht haben, Familienfotos während des Krieges zu verstecken und zu bewahren. Durch diese Geschichten wird die Relevanz und die Rolle der Fotografie nicht nur als Träger von Erinnerungen, sondern auch als Verbindung zur Vergangenheit und zwischen den Generationen dargestellt. Der dritte Abschnitt enthält Fotos von 1999 bis 2015. Fotokameras sind jetzt in jeder Familie zu finden, so dass das tägliche Leben damit festgehalten werden kann. Jetzt spiegelt sich nicht nur die Entwicklung in der Familie, sondern auch ein breiterer Kontext globaler Entwicklungen wider, wie z. B. eine erhöhte Mobilität und damit die Notwendigkeit der Verbindung der Menschen durch Fotos. Die Migration wurde fast in jeder Familie erwähnt, obwohl dies nicht die zentrale Frage meiner Forschung war. Es geschah, weil die Geschichten hinter den Fotos die sie zeigten und über die sie sprachen, mit den Migrationsproblemen verbunden waren. Die Familienfotografie hat einen besonderen Wert für die heutige Familie im Kosovo, da eine Familie ein Foto aus der Vergangenheit besitzt, auf dem Bilder, Ereignisse und Menschen zu sehen sind, die möglicherweise nicht mehr existieren. Es gibt materialisierte Kindheiten und andere Phasen der Entwicklung von Familienmitgliedern, eine ganze Lebensspanne. Dies ist von unschätzbarem Wert, daher gelten Fotografien als Schatz. Ein Schatz, der Kontinuität und Zugehörigkeitsgefühl vermittelt und Erinnerungen bewahrt.

Die Doktorarbeit enthält eine beträchtliche Anzahl von Fotografien, die den Text und die Feldarbeit besser veranschaulichen.