Yugoslav Cinematography: The Administrative Period (1945-1950)

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Abstract

Throughout the length of its almost 50-year existence, the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia has established a transethnic film industry distinguished for its specific genres, cinematic styles, trends, and an impressive selection of filmmakers and cinematic works. The industry can be viewed as having five stages: the administrative period (1945-1950), decentralisation (1951-1960), republican ascendancy (1961-1972), the new Yugoslav cinema (1973-1990), and finally, its demise in 1991. To properly understand the development of Yugoslav cinematography, an analysis of the five years that followed the end of World War II – referred to as the administrative period – is needed. The cinematographers of that era originated from all six republics forming Yugoslavia, and were mainly amateur filmmakers. It is due to their transethnic collaboration, enthusiasm, and persistence that professional filmmaking in Yugoslavia began. However, the role of these amateur filmmakers in the history of Yugoslav film is not often discussed, or adequately presented in a coherent historical review. This essay focuses on the first five years of Yugoslav post-war cinematography from a historical, socio-cultural, socio-political, and creative perspective, and analyses the country's individual cinematogra-

phers. It provides insight into the development of amateur and professional cinematography of the socialist era, and illustrates the role of communism on the artistic practice of cinematographers.

Keywords

Yugoslav cinematography, Yugoslav cinematographers, film studios, propaganda film, newsreels, history, post-war cinematography, partisan film.

1. INTRODUCTION

Yugoslav post-war cinematography is commonly associated with partisan film. This specific genre was developed in the newly formed Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) in 1946, and it remained nationally and internationally popular into the late 1970s. It is now linked to the work of directors Veljko Bulajić, France Štiglic, Radoš Novaković, and Branko Bauer. An array of literature focuses on these Yugoslav film directors and their films, but comprehensive research on the work of Yugoslav cinematographers in general is missing. This is crucial to the history of Yugoslav post-war film, as it would present a different perspective on its development. The activities that led to the production of the first black-and-white partisan features were essential to the SFRY's strategy of rebuilding the country and its society after the World War II, and cinematographers were key to this process. In fact, Renata Lučić (2015) refers to the administrative period of Yugoslav film as "the rule of the cinematographers" (p. 49). Yugoslav cinematographers collectively created 19 feature films, 263 short propaganda films and documentaries, and 256 film newsreels (Volk, 1986). Considering Gabriel Figueroa's (cited in Lieberman and Hegarty, 2010) description of the cinematographer's art as "telling stories, evoking history, and making history" (p. 31), the Yugoslav cinematographers can be recognised as the creators of 'Yugoslav film'.

This essay discusses the first five years of Yugoslav post-war cinematography, also known as the administrative period, from a historical perspective – its amateur beginnings, the technical development, and the progression

to professional cinematography, aesthetics, and style. It also investigates how the cinematographers emerged from individual republics of the SFRY. I wish to stress that due to the large amount of literature, this essay is not exhaustive in addressing the cinematographers, their films, and historical details; rather, it attempts to portray their pioneering work in the broader development of Yugoslav cinematography. The analysis is structured by reference to individual republics, but it is not to be seen as division of the nations that comprised Yugoslavia at the time; instead, as a collaboration of the individuals coming from them. Yugoslav cinematographers shared a country, ideology, language, culture, and, most of all, a common enthusiasm and persistence in (re)building the country's film industry after the war. Their collaborations tell the story of the evolution of war cinematography, and, in due course, their work gave rise to a new generation of filmmakers, who started in the roles of camera operators and cinematographers and later became the representatives of Yugoslav cinema. Due to persistent combinations and intertwining of filmmaking roles and understanding of cinematography as a part of the filmmaking process, I often refer to the early Yugoslav cinematographers as simply 'filmmakers', as this period demonstrates the creative beginnings in both processes, cinematography and filmmaking, at the same time.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

During World War II, many cinematographers were originally reporters and partisans, actively documenting the National War of Liberation with amateur 9.5mm Pathé[1] cameras. After the war, they continued to shoot short propaganda and documentary films that focused on political and national themes, specifically the socialist reconstruction that followed in the newly formed SFRY. The administrative period was unique in two ways; it gave rise to the wave of amateurism (Benčić, 2015), but, also, due to newly formed organisational structures, enabled the experimental filmmaking to slowly progress into professional filmmaking on a larger scale.

1. The 9.5mm film format was introduced by Pathé in 1922 as part of the Pathé Baby (France) and Pathéscope Ltd. (UK) amateur film system (Newnham, 2014).

The first two years of cinematography in the administrative period are distinguished by short and documentary films that were primarily of propagandistic purposes. These were followed by feature films that heavily reflected nationalist realism. After Yugoslavia's expulsion from the Communist Bloc (the group of states under hegemony of the Soviet Union) in 1948, the number of films with a patriotic theme (i.e. recent war and the victory of the antifascist forces) – also referred to as the 'partisan genre' – began to increase. Cinema was an increasingly important popular mass medium of the time and heavily supported by Yugoslavia's cultural policy – "the party discipline" (Škrabalo, 1989, p. 535). In 1945, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia had set up an 'agitation and propaganda apparatus' (AGITPROP) which organised cultural life – from planning theatre repertoires to readings of everyday cultural columns in the press – and monitored work at universities (Tadic, 2011). Boris Groys (2006) believes the apparatus was intentionally creating "new socialist people" after Stalin's image of an artist as an "engineer of the people's souls" (p. 288). The result of that attitude is that the feature films from the administrative period reflected the "unimaginative framework of socialist realism" (Škrabalo, 1989, p. 534) and followed this formula for years to come.

2.1. Collaboration of the Republics

While, thematically, the administrative period did not offer much versatility, its universal formula enabled the making of such films all around the country. The cinematographers could shoot outside of their republics, following the practice they had been engaged in during the war. Military action and liberation battles were documented by the Film Section established by the National Liberation Army of Yugoslavia at the end of 1944 and led by Radoš Novaković (1915-1979). The cinematographers of the Film Section came from all of the republics of Yugoslavia. Most of those prominent in the administrative period, involved in filming military action during the war, had formed collaborations and relationships which facilitated their filmmaking in the new Yugoslavia. They collaborated on making newsreels individual to each republic, as well as filmed propaganda shorts and documentaries, as directed by the regime. The

film newsreels were the work of young filmmakers who started filming in 1944 under the wing of the Film Section, subsequently taken over a year later by the newly established National Film Company of the SFRY (Filmsko Preduzeće FNRJ). This group directed, shot, and edited films themselves, collaborating within and outside the country, and later in a number of Yugoslav film production studios. Once purely partisan-inclined cinematographers now entered the era of filmmaking, which surpassed treating film art as a trade and industrial work – which was the case during the war – and began regarding it as a means of social impact (Volk, 1986).

2.2. Technical Development of the Post-War Cinematography

The distinguishing feature of the early Yugoslav film industry was its experimental and amateur beginnings, reflected in the works of post-war filmmaking pioneers. The reasons for these characteristics are straightforward enough; at the time, there was little equipment available in the country – "no cameras, no studios, no experience, but strong support of the State and enthusiasm and persistence" (Liehm & Liehm, 1977, p. 123). Thus, filmmakers had to gain professional filmmaking knowledge and expertise elsewhere. This was done in two ways: sending people abroad for education and training them at home.

Yugoslav cinematographers (and other technical crew) acquired filmmaking skills assisting Russian filmmakers in the Soviet Union in co-production projects (Stanković, 2012). The feature film *V Gorakh Yugoslavii* (1946) is generally considered to be the first such filmic collaboration between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. The second manner of gaining filmmaking knowledge was learning through experimentation. The Film Section had already started training their camera operators, albeit with poor technical equipment: a limited amount of celluloid, and a small number of cameras, sound machines, and reflector lights. "We had no technical means," said Slovenian director France Štiglic (1964), describing the conditions in Slovenia at the time, "100m of celluloid was usually what we got for an episode of *Film News*" (p. 1574).

The learning opportunities were different in Croatia, though. They had benefitted from the Ustasha[2] regime's financial and technological possibilities in respect of film production: due to the essential role of film for propaganda purposes, the latest modern film equipment was imported from Germany during the war (Škrabalo, 1989). Although it was to be returned after the end of the war, "the complete technological equipment which was taken over after the Partisan victory" (Škrabalo, 1989, p. 533) stayed in the country, and the Croatian *Film News* was able to film the liberation of its capital Zagreb at the end of the war (1945). Zagreb was then providing technological services to other Yugoslav film centres, initiating training for film workers all over the country. Consequentially, the education and production facilities in Yugoslavia started developing very soon after the end of the war.

During these beginnings of the developing film industry, young people were also being sent to study abroad (for example, in Prague, Moscow, and Rome), and the first film school for acting and directing was established in Belgrade, Serbia in 1947. It was soon followed by two schools for film technicians in Belgrade and Zagreb (Lučić, 2015). Short one- to two-month technical courses for cinematographers, directors, editors, and lab technicians were also organised in the production companies, starting in Jadran Film in 1946. Cinematographers and camera operators were taught film history, art history, the specifics of camera mechanics, lighting, and the organisation of production companies (Kosanović, 2007).

2.3. Formation of Regional Film Studios

The growth of Yugoslavia's film industry was achieved, on one hand, through education, and, on the other, by gaining sufficient national funding (Stoimenov in Graf, 2009). The Federal Committee for Cinematography was established in Belgrade in 1946. Regional committees were set up in each of the six republics: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Macedonia, and Montenegro. "Each was to found a film studio, a cinema network, and all were to work cooperatively with the State on the

2. Croatian fascist organization (1929-1945).

import and export of films," Greg de Cuir Jr. (2013, p. 2) explains. Nevertheless, each Republic's film studios functioned autonomously; Avala Film in Belgrade (1946), Jadran Film in Zagreb (1946), Triglav Film in Slovenia and Bosna Film in Sarajevo (1947), Vardar Film in Skopje (1947), and Lovćen Film in Budva (1948).

It is apparent from the aforementioned that the film studios in individual republics were not established at the same time. Despite the Communist Party's commitment to eventual transfer of control of the film industry from state level to the individual republics, it located the Federal film centre in Belgrade (Serbia), which also housed the Serbian Film Centre. There was a similar approach to technical development. For example, Škrabalo (1989) notes that "Zagreb could boast of probably the best and most modern technological basis in Yugoslavia and one of the more advanced in Europe" (p. 534). Such contrasts strained relations in the Yugoslav film industry for decades to come (Parenta, 2015). It took as long as five years for the system to even partially change and for the funds to be decentralised to each republic. The decentralisation meant acquisition of independence for many cultural organisations and institutions, and the earlier state-controlled cinema was replaced by a producer-run film industry (Škrabalo, 1989). Production companies held all the power; they were able to make decisions relatively independently of state administration, following the so-called 'self-management law'. This law changed the position of artists dramatically (Bumbak, 2014). It gave filmmakers the status of freelance artists, and each republic was able to establish their association of film workers. Finally, in 1950, the Union of Film Workers of all of Yugoslavia (Savez filmskih radnika Jugoslavije) was founded (de Cuir Jr., 2013). This was the ultimate appreciation of the cinematographer's vocation and also the final step from the Yugoslav era of cinematographic amateurism into professionalism.

3. THE BEGINNINGS: *FILM NEWS*

Film newsreels – or audio-visual collages ('film journals') of current political and social events (and later news from abroad) – were launched by the filmmakers of the Film Section on the day of liberation of the city of Bel-

grade, 20th October, 1944 (Majstorović, 2016). Until 1950, they were produced weekly and monthly under the name Zvezda Film, a national production company based in Belgrade, which had been placed in charge of documentary and film reportage. The intention of the film newsreels was to inform the public of the social, economic, and political situation in Yugoslavia, including the rebuilding of the country, the development of its industrial capacity, cultural and sporting events, and even reportage of the war in Algeria (Kosanović, 2004). They were usually screened in cinemas. Aesthetically, they sometimes reflected the cinematographer's subjective approach to framing; as Volk (1986) observes, the composition could be effective, but the camera movement was rarely noteworthy. That said, these newsreels can be seen as the beginning of a growing differentiation between the film directors and cinematographers – which became more obvious in the shorts and documentaries that followed.

3.1. From Propaganda Pioneers to Professional Cinematographers

At the beginning of the administrative period, "mobilization of the masses for the purpose of rehabilitation and reinforcing the newly-established revolutionary regime was necessary" (Tadic, 2011, p. 3). It was developed in accordance with the new communist regime, producing a great number of 'propaganda' documentaries and shorts, with the leitmotif of socialist reconstruction after the war. The 'heroic' agricultural, industrial, and infrastructural rebuilding of the country (Goulding, 2002, p. 23) had a strong impact, forming "its own identity as an artistic and social and poetic ideological being" (Munitić in Dragić, Munitić & Ostojić, 1977, p. 35). Approximately 67 such films were made between 1945 and 1947 (Liehm & Liehm, 1977), and their form was to be followed by all filmmakers (Volk, 1986). As a result, it may seem that there was no room for the cinematographers to develop individual aesthetics and their own manner of storytelling with the images, but this is not completely true; they still managed to impart their distinguishing styles, which I will also address in this essay.

Next, I will discuss specific cinematographers and their work, which will

throw light on the technical and stylistic development of cinematography in the individual republics of Yugoslavia. Their names have been chosen on the availability of literature, so not all cinematographers are included. Still, those discussed below form a strong representative pattern.

3.1.1. Croatian Cinematographers

Oktavijan Miletić (1902-1987), the first Yugoslav to have received international acclaim for his experimental/avant-garde films made between 1928 and 1945, is seen as one of the founders of Croatian film (Škrabalo, 1989). "Extremely skilled" (Kosanović, 2011, p. 75) in camera work, film tricks, and the use of film language, Miletić's first Croatian feature-length sound film *Lisinski* (1944) put him in the spotlight, as "his amateur fictional output resembles generic conventional exercises in crime, romantic comedy, thriller, horror and expressionism – playing with these genres he melds and reshapes them to the extent that they exhibit generic instability to contemporary eyes" (Craven & Shand, 2013, p. 22). After the war, he worked as a cinematographer, later becoming a "generous teacher of younger generations of film enthusiasts" (Škrabalo, 1989, p. 531). During his career, Miletić shot (and directed some) shorts and documentaries and filmed six feature films (Kosanović, 2011), in both black and white and colour. He was the cinematographer of the short documentary *Jasenovac* (1945), documentaries about the country's elections (1946) and celebrations of 1st May in Zagreb (1946). He shot the second post-war feature, *Živjeće Ovaj Narod* (1947), where his distinguishing practice of double exposure is evident.

His fellow Croatian, Branko Blažina (1916-1998) was a documentarist during the war and filmed the famous flight of German troops from Zagreb at the liberation on 6th May, 1945 (Kljaić, 2014), which was presented in the first Croatian newsreel. Similarly to his pioneering peers, he engaged in documenting the celebrations of 1st May (1946) and political propaganda films such as *Maršal Tito u Hrvatskoj* (1946), the rebuilding of Yugoslavia's cities, and building of the railways (*Omladinska Pruga Samac – Sarajevo*, 1947). He was a cinematographer for *Film News Croatia* (1948-1950) and one of the founders of the production company Jadran Film. After spending the administrative period making documenta-

ries and shorts, Blažina had a long-running collaboration with the Croatian film director Branko Bauer (1921-2002) in the 1950s; effectively "running away from stylised effects" that he had employed previously (*Baza HR Kinematografije*, 2016). As with many of the pioneer cinematographers, he also educated film workers, teaching at the Film School in Zagreb.

The founder of the Department for Film and Television Cinematography at the former Academy for Theatre, Film, and Television in Zagreb, Nikola Tanhofer (1926-1998) is best-known for his scholarly work on cinematography *Filmska Fotografija* (1981) and gathered notes for his posthumous book (*O Boji*, 2008). He was also an ambitious filmmaker (cinematographer, director, and writer), entering the administrative period by immediately making feature films (*Zastava*, 1949 and *Plavi 9*, 1950).

The close connection between the Croatian cinematographers is best exemplified in the 'ladder' system. For example, Frano Vodopivec (1924-1998) and Hrvoje Šarić (1922-2007) first assisted Miletić on the aforementioned *Lisinski* and documentary *Na Izbore* (1946). The connection continued with the 'giant' of Croatian cinematography, Tomislav Pinter (1926-2008), who initially assisted Šarić in Jadran Film after the war. Pinter was also one of the 'news-reelers' (1948), launching his independent cinematographer career later in the 1950s.

3.1.2. Serbian Cinematographers

As established earlier in this essay, following the end of the war, Croatia and Serbia were in the best position in terms of technical possibilities. From 1945 to the fall of Yugoslavia in 1991, Serbia produced around 50% of Yugoslav shorts, documentary, and feature films, which Kosanović (2011) ascribes to the Republic having the best technical and production capacities in the SFRY.

In fact, Serbian filmmakers possessed good technical and industry possibilities before World War II. An example of their breed is Stevan Mišković (1907-1977), a cinematographer, sound recordist, and director. After finishing technical film school in Munich, he spent some time working for

Pathé, where he learnt the benefits of being a producer. He set up his own film production company[3] in 1927 and so earned the label of "a cinematographer with excellent trade skills" (Kosanović, 2011, p. 133). Taking advantage of being given film work during the occupation of Serbia, he initially made propaganda shorts primarily intended for the German newsreels. Subsequently, working within the Film Section, Mišković became the most prominent of Serbian cinematographers after the war and authored a great number of commercials, documentaries, and film newsreels[4], which were processed in his laboratories (Savković, 1998).

Many of the cinematographers needed their own – albeit small – production houses. Mihajlo Popović (1908-1990) had established himself as a cinematographer with his first feature *S Verom u Boga* in 1932 produced by MAP Film, a production company he had set up just for this purpose. After this "truly artistic work and best film up to date" (Jovičić, 1982), Popović continued to film shorts and documentaries, also as a member of the Film Section, altogether creating 37 documentary and narrative films (Kosanović, 2011). His compositions are described as "incredibly aesthetic, full of meaning, intensity and deep emotional content" (Jovičić, 1982). This is because Popović was well aware of the essential role of 'atmosphere' as the basic element of a scene. He said, "The atmosphere is the actor in a film, and it can be achieved with overexposing and underexposing; the rest is in the hands of bad amateurism" (in Stojanović, 1983/84, p. 410). Popović was a trainee of Eduard Tisse, the Soviet Union cinematographer. Such tutelage was a way of entering filmmaking for many Yugoslav cinematographers.

Aleksandar Sekulović (1918-1974) first assisted the Soviet Union-born photographer – and later cinematographer – Žorž Skrigin (1910-1997) in filming the first Croatian (and post-war Yugoslav) feature film – *Slavica* (1947). The film was shot on the Dalmatian coast, "in only 2 months in the real Partisan spirit" with a single reportage camera (*Cinema Komunisto*, 2010). The practice gave Sekulović enough experience to make his

3. Osvit film, later renamed to Mišković film and Tempo film (Kosanović, 2011).
4. E.g. satirical animated newsreel *Weekly Review* and *New Serbia* (Savković, 1998).

first feature in the following year (*Besmrtna Mladost*, 1948). He went on to shoot 20 feature films and also worked internationally.

Two other cinematographers who developed distinguishing and opposing aesthetics should also be mentioned. Soviet Union-born cinematographer Mihailo Ivanjikov (1904-1968) was already a documentarist in Belgrade before the war. He continued to film for *Film News* and authored a number of propaganda films and longer documentaries. Ivanjikov developed a dynamic style of communicating through imagery. His "supreme cinematography" (Kosanović, 2011, p. 130) is exemplified in *Barba Zvane* (1949): it has a great sense for juxtaposing composition and detail, fluid and confident camera movement, and skilled application of light effects (Kosanović, 2011).

Opposite to Ivanjikov's aesthetic style was the cinematographer Vladeta Lukić (1910-1978), who also belonged to the Film Section group. He is a representative of the 'industrial' style of aesthetic. His feature *Priča o Fabrici* (1949) perfectly portrays the industrialisation and socialist reconstruction happening in Yugoslavia at the time. Through his strong visual sense of the simple conditions in which workers lived and worked, Lukić managed to effectively convey the emotions of idealism and patriotism. Lukić's style is reminiscent of the realistic aesthetics of Soviet films of the period and has a marked propaganda undertone, reflecting the cinematography of the newsreels.

Lukić's example demonstrates that the portrayal of real life and real people in the new ideological system – while at the same time trying to adhere to basic cinematographic principles and models influenced by Western cinematography – was challenging: the filmmakers were under strong propaganda imperatives which were difficult to align with the individual's creative expression (Tadić, 2011). Managing to make "a unique creative mark on this early national film, never repeated in similar form" (Tadić, 2011, p. 9) was due fully to the filmmakers' enthusiasm and creative endeavours.

3.1.3. Montenegro Cinematographers

As with other Yugoslav states, Montenegro's first post-war cinematography work was film newsreels made in the production of Zvezda Film. In 1947, photographer Stevo Lepetić (1921-) was sent to Prague (Czechoslovakia) to study cinematography. Returning a year later, Lepetić started making newsreels for Montenegro. The newsreels were still being developed in the laboratories of Avala Film (Bošković, 2017), and only thirteen were created between 1949 and 1951. This low number can be attributed to Montenegro's poor technical facilities and the small number of film workers available. Before Lovćen Film was established, Montenegro sent filmmakers, such as director Branislav Bastać (1925-2007), to study filmmaking in Belgrade, and some returned to shoot Macedonian newsreels (Bošković, 2017).

Montenegro cinematography flourished more prominently, however, after 1950. This can be ascribed to the fact that Lovćen Film was only able to exist by being connected to other film companies in Yugoslavia. It was moved to Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1952, before returning to Budva in 1955 (Volk, 1986). Despite the long gestation period in becoming independent, Montenegro's cinematography can be seen – even in its first documentaries from the 1950s (e.g. Lepetić's *Kongres Fiskulturnika*, 1950) – as visibly moving away from the 'reportage style'. It was, instead, influenced by everyday life, the region's traditions, and ambience of nature (Volk, 1986). Referring in particular to the work of France Štiglic, Daniel J. Goulding (2002) believes this portrayal of nature, and slight departure from the nationalist theme, can also observed in early Slovenian films.

3.1.4. Slovenian Cinematographers

The most distinguishing feature of Slovenian post-war cinematography is that it was built on collaboration. At the beginning of the administrative period, a group of Slovenian filmmakers making *Film News* (*Filmske Novice*) and propaganda films formed long-term collaborations that were to rule Slovenian filmmaking for years to come: France Štiglic (1919-1993), who later became a director, with cinematographers Metod Badjura (1896-1971), Ivan Marinček (1922-), France Cerar (1918-1996), film

technician, sound recordist, and cinematographer Rudi Omota (1910-2008), and Anton Harry Smeh (1898-1953). Despite Metod Badjura having already authored 31 short documentaries and a feature film before the war began, it is Anton Harry Smeh who Kosanović (2011) refers to as the first professional Slovenian cinematographer. This group of cinematographers was working in the 'golden age' (Štiglic, 1964) of Yugoslavian film, the years which gave birth to the first Slovene sound feature film and the sixth in Yugoslavian production, *Na Svoji Zemlji* (1948).

The film's cinematographer was Ivan Marinček. His first 'professional' experience was filming Tito's speech with fellow cinematographer Balantič Janko (1908-1993), who had previously collaborated with Badjura and Omota on *Filmske Novice* (Lola Božič, 2010). Marinček – who initially had little experience in studio lighting – first entered filmmaking as an assistant at Triglav Film and later formed a close collaborative relationship with Štiglic (Tripkovič, 2014). Their first collaboration, *Na Svoji Zemlji* led the newspapers to label Marinček as a creator of technically impressive visuals, calling him a stylistically distinctive master of composition (Novšak, 1948). Marinček authored 80 shorts and documentaries and 17 feature films in his career, also directing and editing some of them. Cinematographers juggling different filmmaking roles was a common feature in Yugoslav filmmaking of the period. It gave them flexibility, which was essential during the first two years of the administrative period, which were characterised by poor technical possibilities.

3.1.5. Bosnian and Herzegovian Cinematographers

The first years of the administrative period, shooting newsreels and short documentaries, enabled Bosnian and Herzegovian cinematographers to develop the skills "for all kinds of filmmaking" (Volk, 1986, p. 365). As a result, documentary film was flourishing in Bosnia and Herzegovina at the end of the 1940s (Fajković & Tataragić, 2007); and altogether, 19 newsreels were shot between 1947 and 1949. Three cinematographers, who had collaborated on the newsreels, also shot the documentary *Omladinska Pruga Šamac – Sarajevo*: Jan Beran, Aleksandar Vesligaj, and Vito Stašević.

Jan Beran (1927-1993) was the pioneer of Bosnian and Herzegovian cinematography and one of the creators of Sarajevo television. He was "driven by unusual imagination and poetic lyricism in his expression" (Kadić, 2017): he saw cinematography as art – in fact, preferring the black-and-white technique to colour, as the latter was "not as representative of the reality as it should be" (Kadić, 2017). Beran shot a great number of documentaries and propaganda films, but juggled with writing, directing, as well as some editing, throughout his career after 1950s.

Notably, Bosnian and Herzegovian cinematographers started as pioneers and documentarists, but their feature films came later than in the rest of the Yugoslav republics. The first was *Major Bauk* (1951), shot by Serbian cinematographer Mihajlo Popović. This raises the issue faced by some of the republics of Yugoslavia in the first decade after World War II – their films were being directed and shot by filmmakers from other film centres of Yugoslavia rather their own. Nebojša Jovanović (2012) and Elma Tataragić and Vedran Fajković (2007) debate this issue, pointing out that only one third of all Bosnian feature films of the 1950s and 1960s were directed by Bosnian directors. This is problematic, Jovanović (2012) notes, as it underestimates Bosnian cinema output and its authors. Such arguments present the negative side of the 'free movement' of the filmmakers in Yugoslavia. Certain republics were initially given less opportunities to make their own films in comparison to others. In such cases, the development of individual aesthetics and style of narrative feature films had to wait – also contributing to Yugoslavia's future cultural conflicts. Macedonia was a republic subjected to such a situation.

3.1.6. Macedonian Cinematographers

The pioneers of Balkan cinematography, Milton and Janaki Manaki[5], had finished their careers long before the war began, and it was principally other amateurs from the second half of the 1930s who engaged in war cinematography and became industry professionals afterwards. During the conflict, active 'older' amateurs, like Blagoja Drnkov, Blagoja Pop Stefan-

5. The International Cinematographers' Film Festival *Manaki Brothers* is the first and oldest (1979) film festival dedicated to cinematographers only across the world.

ija, and Kiril Minoski, were shooting on 9.5mm film and making documentaries with 8mm Agfa Movex.[6] When the Film Section for Macedonia was established in 1945, they joined the younger generation of cinematographers in filming newsreels and short documentaries.

Trajče Popov (1923-2007) was initially the *Film News* cinematographer (1945-1948) and author of short documentaries (e.g. *Žito za Narodot*, 1947, and *11-ti Oktobar*, 1949). He assisted Žorž Skrigin in the propaganda short *V Kongres Komunističke Partije Jugoslavije* (1949) and began making features in 1950. By 1988, he had made around 100, mainly ethnographic, documentaries. His *Film News* collaborators, Branko Mihajlovski (1924-2000) and Mišo Samoilovski (1931-2009), took a similar path, also making over 100 documentaries and propaganda shorts by the late 1980s.

Documentary filmmaking flourished in the administrative period in Macedonia. Ljube Petkovski (1924-2015) entered cinematography assisting Skrigin and Štiglic, whereas Kiro Bilbilovski (1920-1989) entered Vardar Film in 1947 and honed his skills in Paris and London. Both giants of documentary filmmaking, they joined forces filming the first post-war Macedonian feature *Frosina* (1952), launching the Republic's feature film production.

4. DUALITY OF THE YUGOSLAV CINEMATOGRAPHY

It can be observed that, in comparison with Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia, the SFRY republics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Macedonia were years behind in production of their post-war feature films. The problem was that, although the communist doctrine insisted on providing equal opportunities, and the Party was ostensibly committed to eventually transferring control of the film industry from the national level to the individual republics, it signally failed to do so. It located the federal film centre in Belgrade, which, Parenta (2015) notes, led to "trenchant resist-

6. Launched by the German company Agfa in 1937.

ance from Slovenian and Croatian officials and film workers" (p. 101). The second issue that contributed to "strained relations that marked the Yugoslav film industry for decades to come" (Parenta, 2015, p. 101) was the inability to meet "the diverse needs and ambitions of a young film industry" (Goulding, 2002, p. 3). There was little room for subjective thinking and authorial interpretation. Politics controlled filmmaking and had a crucial role in formulising ideas and the aesthetics of films. The filmmakers were instructed to create films that would unify society by promoting the pride and power of the people – and the propagandist film form was the most effective way to do this (Lučić, 2015). Any "unnecessary wandering of ideas and ambitions that were opposing social order and goals of culture and art government" (Volk, 1986, p. 531) were not allowed. So what inspired the filmmakers, despite these restrictions? Besides the love of film, there was the 'feeling of unity' that prevailed in the Yugoslav cultural field, Bosnian cinematographer Mustafa Mustafić (in Vojnović, 2019) explains:

Culture is a unique space where a universal language is spoken and there are many common, traditional features that connect us. This cannot be erased and it is also the reason that I am today in Belgrade, that my friends from Belgrade, Zagreb and Slovenia come to Sarajevo. Luckily, no matter how hard they [sic] try, this cannot be changed. Art is one thing and politics is something completely different.

5. CONCLUSION

This essay has aspired to paint a picture of Yugoslav cinematography in the period that followed the end of the World War II. A number of cinematographers have been discussed from a historical, social, cultural, and creative perspective. Together, the six republics of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia produced a substantial number of short, documentary, and feature films between 1945 and 1950. The films were heavily guided by the socio-political doctrine of communism and President Tito's call for themes and forms that affirmed the patriotic past: the war, the revolution, and the rebuilding of the country and its people. All that was favoured in the ideology and culture of that time was also present in

the nation's cinematography. The majority of Yugoslav cinematographers started off by shooting the liberation war and newsreels. After the war ended, they quickly entered the world of collaboration with fellow filmmakers from all the republics, creating propaganda films, shorts and documentaries, and partisan films. The success of Yugoslav post-war cinematography came from the ability of free movement and opportunities for collaborations (Volk, 1986). These were so productive largely because "the non-political cinematographers were joined by a common language of filmmaking" (Mustafić in Vojnović, 2019) in creative unity – which ties into the concept of communism being, in fact, an idea of a creative community. The collectively constructed reality was the result of a common desire to articulate the idea that, through film, human identity can be created. The geographical origin of the filmic art is not as important as its aesthetics and content, and this, Volk (1986) believes, is Yugoslav cinematography's greatest accomplishment.

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