

ical existential forms, which are transmitted by ‘concrete’ individuals of a given social formation, encompasses much more than just observation of their speech and deeds. It must penetrate to the mechanism that produces the existential forms of subjective individuality in which such a mechanism is to be found” (Rotar, 1985: p. 33).

The period in which Slovenian film entered its modernist form (the 1960s to the early 1980s), brought a significant change of register with regard to topics, as well as in view of its messages. Contrary to the earlier period, Slovenian film became much more aware of itself as an agent within national culture. A range of various indexes of modernity entered the work of reconstructing identity in the imagery of films, which were still based on traditional and modernist local literature. Instead of emphasizing the peasant roots of the Slovenian nation (i.e., ethnicity), there was a shift towards the construction of an almost non-existent bourgeois past, with all imaginable components, from characters of frustrated intellectuals to brothels.

Films that were not preoccupied with the problems of the closed “national (ethnic) universe” were rather rare. Such films, shot in the 1960s, appeared to be sophisticated, existentialist, and very particular. They flirted with French New Wave cinema, and finally some similar (yet different) films appeared as alternative film in the 1980s. Slovenian cinema was the first among Yugoslav cinematography to join other Eastern European trends, which in final analysis, especially in view of aesthetics and topics, does not differ very much from the contemporary Western European *auteur* film. It should be added here that in his film Robar-Dorin in part also reacted to this tradition of modernism, represented most visibly by Boštjan Hladnik. In his “post-modernist” montage, Robar-Dorin turns this current of Slovenian film from certain universal topics to local problems – only to confront the phenomena of nationalism.

Having said all this, the film *Rams and Mammoths* represented a transgression of the established institutionally supported form of film production in Slovenia. For the group of critics formed around the journal *Ekran* in the late 1970s and 1980s, who for a long time were silently ignored in the public arena, this transgression was more or less expected. The basic structure of the film, which is discernible in a “polyphonic” *montage*, resembles a sociological method. The film nevertheless retains its specific cinematic form, but this form benefits from sociology in the sense that it intensifies its suggestive potential, compared to films determined by artistic mannerism. Even measured against the “traditional” criteria of aesthetic