

Cinematic Road to a Redefinition of the Balkans

No matter what one may or may not know about the period of communism in the Balkans, we can say that this period coincided with the pattern of organisation of film production in a framework of national cinematographies, which were at the time universal. In this period the activity of filmmaking, especially in countries like Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary and Yugoslavia, developed in its top products a mode of *auter* cinema. We can generally assert that aesthetics, topics, approaches, and so on, of these cinematographies did not differ much from what we have known as *nouvelle vague* type of cinema in Western Europe. Even after some setbacks following the year 1968, when the political executive and ideological powers of the time rudely interfered with accusations and exclusions of some authors or whole cinematic currents,¹ this kind of cinema persisted in a somewhat softened form until the fall of the Berlin wall and Ceaușescu's departure. In the period after these events, cinematographies in the Balkans had to re-invent themselves due to a double (or even triple) impact of political, cultural and technological changes.

1 A very well known case was the so-called black film (*crni film*) in Yugoslavia, which actually got its name through the anathema, launched by the Party *nomenclatura*. However, in a typical self-mocking denotation this labelling was used by the youngest representative of the trend Želimir Žilnik as a title of his semi-documentary film (*Crni film* – 1971) on homeless people, who theoretically should not exist under the socialist system.