

on how much these Yugoslav movies could be contextualised in view of the post-socialist tragedy of the country.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, in between there was a period, when it seemed that a new urban culture, which transcended the attributes of an exclusivist ethnic identity, was emerging in this multi-cultural Balkan republics. Many cases of films could be found in almost all Yugoslav republics that in many respects shared a similar aesthetic codes and modernist views as some other European films mentioned above. However, let me bring up my point by briefly presenting just one film: *Sand Castle* (*Peščeni grad* – 1962) by Boštjan Hladnik, the *enfant terrible* of the Slovenian cinema.

In 1960s the Slovenian cinema made first most recognisable and serious moves towards a modernist approach in film-making. As recently deceased director of the Slovenian cinematheque Silvan Furlan remarked in his article for a special issue of the review *Ekran*, dedicated to the celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Slovenian film: “[The Slovenian film] gained importance as the mass culture and as art as well. Why should our film be anything special in this regard? But it is certainly very special for our culture and art – it visibly co-created and it still co-creates an image of ourselves” (Furlan, 2005: p. 42). The period of late modernism, in which a part of film production in Slovenia went on dutifully screening “national” myths and canonised literature, brought about also some of the most important films in Slovenia so far. Boštjan Hladnik contributed quite a big share of them. The film *Peščeni grad* maybe is not Boštjan Hladnik at his best, but still the film very well represents his role in the history of Slovenian cinema. Already with his first feature film, *Dancing in the Rain* (*Ples v dežju* – 1961) Hladnik introduced the aesthetics of modernity in the cinema of Slovenia. And he did so very much so that the meaning of the film remains rather impenetrable and ambiguous for most average viewers. Although the *Dancing In the Rain* immediately gained high acclaim among the cultured audiences, it looks like that Hladnik perhaps felt a need to come closer to less sophisticated moviegoers. The result was in many respects not much less accomplished film, which is in view of a presentation of an identity problem much more transparent than the first Hladnik’s film. As in the *Sand Castle* (which is a sort of a road movie or maybe more precise: off road movie) there is not much of a story, we just get many fragments, which emit double messages of joy and anxiety. The story of the film

6 In my view, a research along such lines would shed some additional light on many reasons for fierceness of the ethnic conflicts in the Balkans after 1990.