East European Film Bulletin

ESSAY

Non-Aligned Yugoslavia and 'In-between' Subjects'

Filming Homosexuality in the Yugoslav Black Wave (1967-1971)

VOL. 78 (OCTOBER 2017) BY SANJA LAZAREVIĆ RADAK

Suppression of homosexuality in Yugoslav films, the deliberate effort to deny the possibility of erotic relationships between persons of the same sex, lasted until the mid-sixties. The period of change coincides with the sexual revolution, the revolutionary awakening of Student movements across Europe and the emergence of the Black Wave which originates from the film nouveau, Czech and Polish films of similarly critical orientation.

Post-Yugoslav critics believe that Yugoslav cinema of the 1960's was one of the most radical filmic movements in Europe. But whether the radical and liberal attitude was evenly distributed and covered sexuality to the same extent as other aspects of life, remains a question that can be answered from different angles, taking into account the political, ideological and cultural context of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia.[1] Black Wave directors were disturbing discourses on progress, democracy and society by revealing the hidden side of a Yugoslav reality imprisoned by authoritarianism and social insecurity. They invited the spectator to liberate her/himself from political and ideological discipline. The need to find a public space for experimental cinema, to deconstruct norms, principles, hierarchy, and above all to liberate oneself from the constraints imposed by the regime, gave birth to a new theme – the questioning of sexuality. Thus, an alternative approach to sexuality, one that "deviates" from the heteronormative image, became one of the latent albeit important topics of the Black Wave. To put it bluntly, homosexuality became a possibility, it entered the public debate and thereby interrupted the official narrative, surprising and often even shocking the public. But despite the desire to find an alternative approach to sexuality, the directors initially kept this topic on the periphery of their stories. In Yugoslav films made in the mid sixties, homosexuality thus only emerged gradually, while claiming a wider space in

the films of the early seventies.

Black Wave and Sexual Geography

The first articulated and compelling argument that sexual practices are not given by nature but constituted as knowledge, was given by Foucault. His distinction between *scientia sexualis* and *ars erotica*, which is helpful in the context of this article, can easily suggest a rigid division between Orient and Occident.[2] This short and modest attempt to interpret the representations of homosexuality in the Yugoslav Black Wave is not immune to this risk. In fact, the risk itself becomes inspirational for my approach.

Being a man and being a woman remain constructs of different historical periods. Only in the age of enlightenment, single definitions of man and woman were widely accepted.[3] The ruling concepts of gender in the 19th and 20th centuries are closely linked to the socio-political system and are available as different means of exercising power of discursive and material types.[4] As Judith Butler remarked, gender performativity is not a matter of mere choice, it is based on the repetition of norms which simultaneously constitute it. It is, in short, a compulsive repetition of norm: „The practice by which gendering occurs, the embodying of norms, it is a compulsory practice, a forcible production, but not for that reason fully determining. To the extent that gender is an assignment, it is an assignment which is never quite carried out according to expectation, whose addressee never quite inhabits the ideal s/he is compelled to approximate“.[5]

In the context of Yugoslavia, and by extent, this article, this constructivism of sexual topography is closely related to another form of topography, namely symbolic geography. If geographies, symbolically, have various attributes, it seems that they are not free of gender politics either. Milions of pages of world literature and thousands of films testify to the fact that the Orient and Occident are both imaginary cultures and gender oppositions. But what happens to undefined geographies, those that are neither here nor there, those nomadic subjects wandering in an effort to determine and define themselves? Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav societies in different ways and in different forms nurture myths on the border between East and West. Their inner discourses are distinctly masculinist and follow the great narratives of heroism, holy battles, strength, endurance and world history. This becomes a defensive mechanism during the periods of economic and political crisis which produces a sort of refusal to opt for one of the two symbolic parts of the world. The internal discourse that relies on masculinist self-identification falls into secular myths about historical and political peculiarities, which prevents society from recognizing itself in one symbolic system.

In the patriarchal and nationalistic discourse today’s societies use similar

narratives as those deployed during the period of Socialist self-identification.[6] Similar narratives were the starting point for Non-alignment and a rhetoric of world peace and security on the one hand, and for war and the disintegration of SFR Yugoslavia on the other. In this sense, Yugoslavia, the Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav societies remain closed in their ambivalence, while in the public discourse and on a performative level they were using masculinist geography. Secular myths to which these societies are relying become a serious political and economic problem. It seems that the Black Wave at least implicitly encouraged debate about the symbolic geography of Yugoslav descents. It anticipates the sexual tension that will later be released through the conflict between the former republics (and even later between independent states). Hence, the encounter of critical discourse analysis, Edward Soja's concept of Third Place and liminality theory, might become a framework for analyzing the relationship between symbolic geography and sexuality.

The Yugoslav Black Wave

Today, the Black wave is considered to be an expression of rebellion against the prevailing politics of Yugoslav Socialism.[7] The policy of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia contributed to this image. Films were not banned through legal acts and official documents, but by referring to their content as undesirable, useless, anarchic, pessimistic, by attributing them the negative influence of Western culture as well as anarchic elements and a destructive influence on the construction of a Socialist society. Newspapers published reviews of films never seen by the public. One of the most influential experts on this topic and author of the book *Black Wave*, Bogdan Tirnanić, has explained how and why films were banned without being officially prohibited.[8]

In the public discourse, the Black Wave constitutes evidence of the repressive politics under Socialism, rather than being celebrated as a form of artistic expression. The events associated with the premieres of these films and their prohibition are considered to be facts about the history of Yugoslav cinema and the impact that Communism had on the cultural life.[9]

In Black Wave movies, so-called non-professionals (*naturščici*) acted out the social reality in which they lived, disturbing the usual rules of film aesthetics.[10] In this sense, these films are anti-traditional, experimental, and opposed to the mainstream both aesthetically and ideologically speaking. They aestheticize a new ideology that focuses on eruptions in Socialist society. Black Wave movies encourage a new sensibility of filmmakers that is fatalistic and transgressive; they address the struggle for freedom, independence and the process of building a democratic society. Today, critics emphasize the polyvalent character of Black Wave films. Thus the Black Wave is not considered to be a homogeneous film movement, but a loosely related group of films which the Communist Party identifies as potentially destructive and nihilistic forces.

Although the directors and writers of these films have never written a unifying manifesto, and although there is no single criterion which all of their works share, they pursue similar political ends in criticizing Yugoslav cinema.[11] Until today, these films are considered to be some of the most provocative art projects. They point out ethnic tensions, class stratification, the emergence of the Communist elite (which is getting rich in spite of egalitarian rhetoric), they anticipate the bloody breakup of Yugoslavia and demonstrate the possibility of victimizing the future of this Socialist country. Yugoslav non-alignment is interpreted as a refusal to be defined as either the East or the West. Relatedly, homosexuality is used as a metaphor of political neutrality of Socialist and non-aligned Yugoslavia.

Black Wave and Gender

In the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia, sexuality was considered a matter of *private life*. However, this formulation was ambiguous. Although partnership and sex were not meant to concern the public, information on homosexual relationships could be used in order to discriminate against public figures. In other words, the emotional life and sexual preferences of individuals were not important to wider society so long as they were kept secret and regarded heteronormative („normal“, „non-eccentric“, „healthy“). Until rebellious Black Wave films became a part of secret cultural life, there was no aesthetization of homosexuality. As a Yugoslav form of New wave, these films addressed social and political problems; life on the margin; the ideological discrepancy between Marx’s early works and the economic reality of Yugoslavia; divisions (class, nationality) in society; the shaky foundations of historical narratives; various aspects of freedom, including drug use, prostitution; traveling as a form of expansion of cultural perspective; and finally, perhaps most provocatively, homosexuality.

The films which addressed erotic relationships between persons of the same sex were declared anarchistic and marked as products of anti-Socialist agitation. Meanwhile, the silent discourse on homosexuality continued. Its presence was concealed, while the prohibition of films was justified by way of political motives. In this sense, the subtext of prohibition reveals that homosexuality was not considered desirable in Socialism. The use of silence as a weapon testifies to the fears, anxieties and frustrations of Yugoslav society.[12]

Dialectical materialism dominated the Yugoslav public discourse. The binary separation of the sexes was viewed as a natural fact, and the creation of offspring was regarded to be its primary aim. After the end of World War Two, propaganda films romanticized the relationship between woman and man. The background of the main narrative was often formed by a love plot between a man and a woman which was complicated by war, or terminated by the death of one of the two protagonists. Twenty years later young people began

question the normative rule of sexuality and started experimenting with new angles for approaching sex and gender. Despite its ideological openness and its readiness to speak about homosexuality, however, Black Wave films also reveal an ambivalence with regard to erotic relationships between persons of the same sex.

Homosexuality and the Black wave: Can a Revolutionary be Homosexual?

A couple of years after the end of Second World War, Stalin and Josip Broz Tito split ways. On the manifest level the reasons were as much economic as they were ideological. During World War Two, interest in Yugoslavia was split between the Soviet Union and the Occident. After the war ended, the Soviet Union became the patron of the newly formed state. More than 70% of Yugoslav products ended up on the Soviet market, and people were growing poorer every year. Then came the split with Stalin and Tito's self-representation as a leftist progressive and revolutionary. Yugoslavia received material help from the United Kingdom and the United States and remained dependent on loans, credits and other forms of support from capitalist and democratic countries. A decade later it became one of the most important forces of Non-Aligned Movement, though its material dependence on the Occident never waned, becoming a „lifestyle" of post-Yugoslav societies.

The film *The Rats Woke Up* (Živojin Pavlović, 1967) illustrates the lives of the marginalized supporters of Stalinist politics. After the split with the Soviet Union, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia opened a concentration camp for former supporters of Stalinism, while hundreds of thousands of Stalin sympathizers and functionaries with ties to the Soviet Union had to emigrate. The film shows the inability of people who spent years in such camps to integrate into Yugoslav society and accept its politics of Non-Alignment. One of the protagonists, Velimir Bamberg, is an ex-Stalin sympathizer. While skimming a book, he stumbles upon a photograph of one of his friends having sex with another man. Immediately, he reacts by adopting the majority attitude towards homosexuality and begins attacking his friend. Unlike his friend who maintains erotic relationships with young men, Velimir pays women for sex. (The author hereby reveals two phenomena unacknowledged by the public – prostitution and homosexuality.) But by situating the photograph in a book on the Hungarian revolution, the filmmaker challenges the official narrative about the revolution, which is rehearsed by Bamberg but turns out to be false. The assumption that a revolutionary must be heterosexual becomes porous and questionable.

The Rats Woke Up was banned shortly after filming. The reasons were explicit and unambiguous. According to the critics employed by the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, the author was openly insulting the revolution, misleading spectators, and seducing the masses by using images of revolutionaries who

are allegedly homosexuals. But Živojin Pavlović did not suffer further consequences. As a leftist and former revolutionary he continued his career exploring the dark side of revolution.

Living on the border, whether it is between East and West, North and South, capitalism and socialism, means to inhabit a space of instability both in politics and in the physical sense. Unidentified spaces easily become a no man's land. In this sense, the protagonists of the film *Rats Woke Up* are neutral and indefinite as Yugoslavia was itself. It does not define itself except as a member of the Third World in order to keep the balance between Orient and Occident.[13] Thus, Živojin Pavlović represents the country by way of a marginalized homosexual who is forced to reject his own feelings and identity.

Queer for Export: Ballet Dancers on the East/West Wire

In *Crows* (Gordan Mihić, Ljubiša Kozomara, 1969), Yugoslav spectators could have witnessed homosexual intercourse on the big screen for the very first time, but the film was banned in spite of traveling all the way to Cannes.[14] *Crows* visualizes slippery borders. A former boxer lives on the margins of society. His attempts to find a job are all unsuccessful. The gray space that surrounds his home is filled with garbage and small, old houses. Hunger and the inability to care for his ill old mother bring him into contact with a group of imaginary actors, people-crows that steal and cheat in an effort to make ends meet. One of the artists, a „member" of the Crows, is Milan, a ballet dancer. Having been rejected by his family due to his commitment to dancing (and perhaps because of his ambiguous sexual orientation), he ran away from home. Indeed, more than any of the characters, Milan symbolizes the political and ideological situation of Yugoslavia during the sixties. Milan socializes with women, dressing up as they do and using their make up. He calls them his children. Casual sex with one of the members of his ballet group remains on the border between heterosexual and homosexual precisely because it is unclear whether he is there among the women as a man, or as a woman. He takes baths and dresses up with the other women feeling equal to them in terms of gender. The friendship between artist and boxer reverses the binary tension between the prevailing, heteronormative ideal of athletes and the queer-like image of the artist. The boxer tends to have physical contact with a person of the same sex, thus releasing repressed desire for sex with other men. The homosexual scene takes place among people on the margins, while the protagonist remains heterosexual. The film raises the question to what extent the authors consciously placed queer scenes at the margin and in a context of questionable morals.

How Mysterious Can Sex(uality) Be?

In his international production *W. R. – Mysteries of Organism* (1971) Dušan Makavejev brought famous New York transvestite Jackie Curtis before the camera, a friend of Andy Warhol. The film is dedicated to Wilhelm Reich and the research of his intellectual heritage in the form of orgone theory. Dušan Makavejev's preoccupation in this film is actually a link between the liberated Man and liberated Sexuality. On the manifest level, the starting point is the work of Wilhelm Reich, although the subtext remains Reich's biography as a symbol for the fight for a liberated society. Thus, Reich is a „martyr" on the battleground for a liberal understanding of sex. Wilhelm Reich left Germany to be able to work undisturbed in a democratic society. But having arrived in the United States, while developing his theory, his works were burned and he was diagnosed mentally unstable.[15]

As a director, a psychologist and an individual, Makavejev links the liberation of the individual to sexual liberation. His film examines the alienation imposed by society, the mechanical separation of the instinctual and intellectual spheres, and of the pleasure of thought and bodily pleasure, as well as the impossibility of realizing oneself through love and work.[16] Therefore, he raises the question why social structures such as Socialism and democracy tend to suppress individuals. Makavejev shows that the fight against the non-alienated individual is a fight against free love. The liberation of Eros is a key prerequisite for the spiritual liberation of mankind. Free love, deconstructed love which opposes the general norms of the family, heterosexuality, and monogamy, remains one of the main preoccupations of this director.

In *W. R. – Mysteries of Organism*, scenes follow the rhythm of sexual intercourse. Its excellent editing is crucial in provoking associations of various forms of sexuality.[17] Makavejev tested his beliefs about the importance of liberated sexuality on the political and ideological field of Soviet communism and Yugoslav Socialism. Stalinism had failed assumptions of liberated society and yielded an orgiastic celebration of mass obedience to the leader. Soviet Communist mysticism and the establishment of the Stalinist cult became acts of escape from the unbearable tension produced by sexual oppression. In such a state, liberated sexuality was impossible. Orgasmic impotence as a consequence of suppressed sexuality is recognized in societies constituted by unfulfilled dissatisfied men/women. But where is Yugoslavia? How far is it from becoming a healthy society – is it able to achieve a healthy and liberated sexuality?

By introducing the protagonists Milena, a Yugoslav leftist, and Vladimir, who represents Lenin and by extension Soviet Communism, Makavejev pulls the rug under Milena's ideological footing. Like the country she lives in, Milena wavers between East and West. While being manifestly Leftist, she tries to maintain good relations with opposed parts of the world. The postponed payment used by the regime to finance its desolate economy is translated here into postponed satisfaction. In this way, Makavejev parodies the relationship

between Yugoslavia and the Great Powers as well as the Soviet Union. Milena postpones sex with Vladimir Ilic Lenin in order to remain on the path of Non-alignment. She wants to talk about sex because she needs some time to think about it. Therefore, Milena becomes a victim of Vladimir's/Soviet aggression. Her non-alignment comes into play when the camera is directed at a transvestite, whose culture was relatively unknown to Yugoslav society at the time.[18] In the background, the spectator can hear advertisements for cosmetics, makeup, and clothes. Yugoslavia wants to enjoy the benefits of capitalism, but at the level of public discourse it remains a Socialist country. In this sense, Makavejev depicts Yugoslavia as a symbolic transvestite. The film ends with a scene in which Vladimir Ilic Lenin cuts off Milena's head.

Almost thirty years later, Makavejev will direct a movie entitled *Gorilla is Bathing at Noon* (1993). Its protagonist is a Soviet major who finds himself in a time vacuum because he misses a train back in 1945. Therefore, he has to watch the „decapitation" and final removal of the statue of Lenin in East Berlin. Subsequently, in his dreams and fantasies, Lenin becomes Viktor's lover and mistress, a bearded woman and transvestite who loves him, caresses him, and weaves his sock. He remains a non-aligned, liminal entity stuck in the past, stuck in the transition from Communism to capitalism, a man and a major whose family remained in Moscow. Therefore, *Gorilla is Bathing at Noon* can be interpreted as a continuation of *W. R. – Mysteries of Organism*, as it answers a series of questions raised by that first film: „Who will be killed?"; „When and in which circumstances?"; and most importantly, „If geographies have genders, what is the symbolic of gender Yugoslavia?"

Artificial Leaders and Artificial Heterosexuality

A prospective student of film directing, Lazar Stojanović, through the voice of his protagonist, said that the „Real thing is filming gays." His film *Plastic Jesus* (1971), which was meant to initiate a discussion on sexual freedom, was banned, while he himself had to spend three years in prison.[19] The very title implies a critical stance towards authoritarianism. The term „Plastic Jesus" refers to the three artificial/authoritarian leaders Hitler, Stalin and Tito. Ethnic tensions are associated with sexual tensions when the promiscuously inclined protagonist discovers films from the concentration camps Jasenovac and of the celebration of Croatian state independence back in the 1940's – recordings the protagonist believes will be worth millions in the future. Stojanović uses the mirror as a metaphor for joining past and future. While rushing forward on a motorcycle, the rear-view mirror of the protagonist's bike flashes back images of crimes committed during the Second World War. The same crimes under the same or similar names were repeated during the 1990's until they finally tore Yugoslavia apart.

The discourse on homosexuality served only to provoke the public, but it

revealed more than that. Stojanovic's attitude toward homosexuals maintains ambivalent. While the protagonist, Tomislav Gotovac, an artist whose real-life presence reflects the film's joining of documentary and montage film, plans to make a film on and with homosexuals, but wants to remain heterosexual while doing so. He wants to continue having sex with one or more women, with a pregnant woman or a young girl. The sentence: „The real thing is to shoot queers", has a mocking tone. Gotovac represents the perspective of the heterosexual as superior. He makes pornography with homosexuals, but he does not become one. Homosexuality is here treated as a mere source income in the world where sexual freedom allows intimacy with someone of the same sex. The *Plastic Jesus* scheme offends various aspects of public and personal life and homosexuality is just one of them.

Lazar Stojanović was the first man to be sent to prison under the law on the protection of the name and work of Josip Broz Tito. The reason why the film was banned and its director had to spend three years in prison, was not that Stojanović played with the multiple meanings of sexuality and the introduction of a discourse that destabilized heteronormativity, but because he used documentary material. Stojanovic used film footage of the manipulative „June speech" which helped Josip Broz Tito crush rebellious students. A few seconds before the start of his direct address, the undisputed leader seems confused, while his wandering gaze reveals a state of shock. Stojanović represents him not as an everlasting leader, but as a simple man. This calls into question the mythic dimensions of Tito's demigod status.[20] In public discourse, the leader was portrayed as masculine while it was emphasized how large was the number of women with whom he had love affairs. The large number of children he left behind similarly feeds into the narrative of the Communist revolutionary man.[21]

Queer Culture and the Black Wave Legacy

One of the most important names of the Black Wave, Želimir Žilnik, enabled a continuation of the anti-traditional and opposition legacy of these films and recorded *Marble Ass* in 1995. The dynamics of the post-Communist pursuit of identity resemble those of the post-colonial search for identity, while the post-Yugoslav quest for authenticity is based on a practice of Othering – the categorization of others into neighbors, friends and enemies. *Marble Ass* disturbs this obsession to achieve a unique and unrepeatable identity that requires a sacrifice in order to be stabilized. Transvestism is actually a particular state of those who are neither here nor there.[22]

The narrative of *Marble Ass* follows the seemingly simple everyday life of transvestites Merilinka and Sanela. They are real characters, so the film exceeds genre boundaries in picking up documentary filmmaking methods.[23] Their everyday life is disrupted because of the return of Merlinka's former lover

from the battlefield, and his return means the entry of war into everyday life. Johnny reverts to macho discourse about the war, that is battlefields, the people, the nation, and national defense, a discourse which opposes everything that is different. While Merilinka and Sanela are women in male bodies, Johnny's partner from the battlefield was born in a woman's body that fought, "shot", "killed," and thus became an inverted man. Johnny is thus a symbol of unrealized homosexuality. He denies his homosexuality while trying to hide his sexuality behind right-wing discourse and war practice. All the characters in the film are actually paradigm when it comes to the atmosphere that prevails during the nineties. In this inversion, transgender ceases to be special, it is equal to the life of the majority; of those who are trying to survive the war and sanctions, but become unusual compared to those who are hungry and thirsty for territory and blood. In this regard, the protagonists Merlinka and Sanela become symbols of one of the last remaining struggles against the pathological aggression that pervades Serbian society.[24] At the end of the film Johnny is shot and his body burns in flames as protagonist Jugoslavija (Yugoslavia) burned in the closing scenes of Žilnik's *Early Works*. It is a matter of dialectic. The history goes on without its „heroes."

Although the films from the 90's and 2000's were built on the legacy of absurdist noir, they played with the construct of the Balkans. Its image becomes distinctly heterosexual, and refers to homosexuality disdainfully. The first decade of the third millennium reveals the need to open up the path to transition, and therefore, to a liberal discourse on homosexuality, but the negative reception of progressive films discourages their authors. In this way, the representation of homosexuality remains closed in the vicious circle of the assumption that a revolution has to be brought about by heterosexuals. In equal measure, it is assumed that the preservation of national identity rests on a man who does not "deviate" from heterosexual norms imposed by bourgeois middle-class ideals.

Closing Remarks

Although critical towards non-alignment, Black Wave filmmakers hold equally ambivalent attitudes towards homosexuality as did the voices of the system. The ability to deconstruct normalized sexuality, was attractive to these directors as a tool for provoking the dominant discourse of socialism. Expressing the necessity for critique, but in equal measure following trends in other cinemas, they manifestly rely upon Marx's early works. Black Wave filmmakers retain heteronormative positions in addressing the viewer through their protagonists. Those who were consistent in their criticism, left Yugoslavia and remained faithful to their critical discourse. Others left the Black Wave project either when the Communist Party offered them to work on more lucrative projects, or when the Black Wave genre was replaced by escapist cinema. But the ambivalence of Yugoslavia transferred to the republics that

were to become independent states. The attitude towards sexuality remains “consistently unstable”. East or West, neither Eastern, nor Western, Eastern and Western, are conceptual pairs which remain at the center of the post-Yugoslav political myths.

The Yugoslav Black Wave of the sixties and seventies enabled homosexuality to become visible. In a society where sexuality, despite of sexual revolutions, remains marginalized, this marks a significant step toward meaningful liberation. Although the Yugoslav Socialist society called for equality and justice at all social levels, homosexual orientation was just one of many marginalized and suppressed topics. The fact that some of the creators of the Black Wave were arrested, and that their work was banned, reveals Yugoslavia’s real face. Although non-aligned and neutral, it defines the presentation of homosexuality as something that is deviant and unusual. And yet, one cannot say that Yugoslavia followed the Soviet model of dealing with homosexuality. There were no concetration camps or mass emigrations of those who were stigmatized as homosexuals. In comparison to the regimes in other countries which have found themselves behind the Iron Curtain, Yugoslav Communism retained a relatively benign face in this regard.

Except for directors such as Dušan Makavejev and later, Želimir Žilnik, even the attitudes of critical voices were patriarchal and machoistic.[25] Whereas Makavejev’s film provokes Yugoslav non-alignment by symbolozing it as political transvestism, only twenty years later, Želimir Žilnik opposes Serbian nationalism by introducing a transvestite figure as a metaphor of mental health and normality in a society rooted in pathological aggression. Political predictions of war on the territory of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia were achieved with the help of homosexual images indicating the penetrance of the Balkan region and its susceptibility to influence of major political forces. Unlike so-called Balkanism, which holds that post-Yugoslav societies are built on firm patriarchal traditions that produce warriors and patriots, film and reality would eventually confirm that the Balkan as a geographic and symbolic area is an entity between a symbolic man and a symbolic woman. That is why the transvestite figure is one of the most important images in Yugoslav and later, in Serbian cinema. (This is shown also by other films made during the twentieth century, like *Cabaret Balkan*, directed by Goran Paskaljevic in 1998, in which one of its two characters is dressed up like a woman during a cabaret performance and refers to himself as a „Balkan whore“.)

Provocation rooted in the Black Wave fully unfolded only decades later, when transgender and transvestite figures became increasingly popular in post-Yugoslav cinema. While the Black Wave did not yet manifest itself as a sexually liberated cinema, subsequent years have shown that its products nevertheless remain deeply provocative. Once again, the cultural phenomenon that is cinema confirms the inseparability of sexuality, ideology and politics.

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