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CINEMATOGRAPHY IN SERBIA 1941 - 1945

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Abstract. *The fact that it is possible to exert powerful influence on people of different intellectual and cultural level by the use of the universal language of the moving pictures contributed to the importance of film during the Second World War, which became more important than any other media as far as the propaganda influence is concerned.*

During the Second World War various diverse and active cinematographic undertakings took place. The form of such activities were different: from amateur endeavours of filming the important historic moments using the small format film cameras and sporadic cinematographic activities, all the way to the complete and well organized cinematographic ventures. The degree of the use of cinema in Serbia during the Second World War was conditioned and limited by the organizational and technical equipment and capabilities, so that cinematography was not equally used in all geographical communities, military units and organizations.

Quantitatively, the largest number of films shot on the locations in Serbia during the Second World War represents the reports intended for the newsreel presentations, mainly of German production. These films, as far as their present importance and role is concerned, represent priceless historical documents about the time and the participants in the events that shaped the present, a characteristic shared by the superb professionally produced films and the films made by the enthusiastic amateurs.

On the Serbian territory under the German rule a complete cinematographic activities were organized; both the fundamental activities such as production, distribution and projections as well as the additional ones such as the legislation, publishing, education, etc. Cinematography was controlled by actively involved German administrative officials, however similar activities were undertaken by the local institutions and individuals.

Among the natives involved in cinematography in the occupied Serbia, the most prominent person is the cameraman Stevan Mišković.

From the organizational and technical aspect, the full length feature film by Dragoljub

Aleksić "Innocence without protection" is the most important cinematographic project released in the occupied Serbia, successfully realized by local film makers in spite of the fact that the film must be characterized as naive and technically unsophisticated although it tried to approach the art form in the honest manner.

Among the numerous film materials made in Serbia during the Second World War, the majority were made by the Germans. Some of them still remain preserved in our archives although there are probably much more in the German film archives as well as in the archives of German allies and the archives of the Yugoslav allied countries.

The film distribution on the Serbian territory under the German occupation was tightly controlled by the German occupier's administration so that the Belgrade film import companies, like Tesla-film or Jugoistok-film, were the censors at the same time since the imported films were of exclusively German production.

The movie theaters repertoire in the occupied Belgrade was dominated by German films and newsreels serving the propaganda aims of Hitler's Germany.

Kolarac People's University was the sole institution whose film repertoire consisted of educational and documentary films with moral themes, making a strong contrast to the repertoire of other cinemas in the occupied Belgrade and Serbia.

On the other Serbian territories occupied by Hungary, the Independent State of Croatia, Bulgaria and Italy, the cinematographic activities were differently developed although film as a medium had an important role mainly as a powerful propaganda means.

The large amount of film material on the Serbian territory was shot by the war reporters of allied countries, from the Soviet Union and Great Britain. These film materials are being kept in our film archives and the archives of the allied countries, where, regrettably, they are beyond our reach along with the materials filmed by the occupier's troops.

The successful beginning of the organizational shaping of an important professional, artistic, cultural and economic activity on Serbian territory - the national cinematography was the outcome of the activities of three war cinematographic institutions: The Film Section of Serbia, The Film Section of Yugoslavia and the National Film Company. This process ended on July 3, 1945, when the war cinematographic institutions were dismissed and their place resumed by the Film Company of the Democratic Federative Yugoslavia, the first civil cinematographic institution founded in Serbia (and Yugoslavia) after the Second World War, in the just liberated country.

Key words: *film production, propaganda, German occupation, allies, Chetniks, Partizans*

1. INTRODUCTION

Cinematographic activities in Serbia during the Second World War are very important because it was during that period that the process of macroorganized shaping of our future cinematography: Serbian (and Yugoslav - which afterwards, for the first time in its history, was continuously functioning as a system for almost half of a century) was successfully commenced.

Cinematography, understood as an area which belongs to art, but to economy as well, consists of several activities out of which three are basic:

1. Films making

2. Films traffic (distribution)

3. Films presentation

Distribution and presentation of films are often known under the common name *reproductive cinematography*.

In addition to the basic activities, cinematography is composed of numerous *auxiliary* or *additional activities*, necessary for its functioning. Belonging to the additional cinematographic activities, in addition to everything else, are:

- production of technical means, accessories and materials used in cinematography,
- legal regulations of relationships within cinematography,
- activities of schools training experts for cinematographic vocations,
- activities of institutions dealing with a scientific and research work in the field of cinematography,
- publishing activities on cinematography, etc.

All cinematographic activities are intended for the common goal - production of *films* (*works*), which then commences its life, manifested through communications with spectators during the exploitation process. Professional cinematography - a set of activities - functions successfully on condition that all its elements act in agreement.

That the above mentioned purpose of cinematography could serve the needs and particularities of this paper, it needs to be supplemented with several additional explanations. First of all, space and time coordinates should be established. The subject of this paper is, from that point of view, to investigate historical development of organizational forms of cinematography located within the space of today's Serbia, between March 27, 1941, and July 3, 1945. The kick-off of its *war lifetime* the cinematography of Serbia saw ten days prior to the April 6 bombardment of Belgrade, when the movie cameras, on March 27, 1941, recorded demonstrations against the Kingdom of Yugoslavia joining the Axis, and completely lost its war features on July 3, 1945, only after two wartime cinematographic institutions were dismissed: *The Film Section of the General Staff of the Army of Liberation and Partisans' Units of Yugoslavia* (from March 1, 1945: *The Film Section of the General Staff of the Yugoslav Army*)¹ and *The National Film Company*, management over the cinematography being taken by *The National Film Company of the Democratic Federative Yugoslavia* (from November 29, 1954: *The Film Company of the People's Republic of Yugoslavia*)². The first war cinematographic institution founded in Serbia during the Second World War - *The Film Section of the General Staff of the Liberation Army and Partisans' Units of Serbia*³ was dismissed a bit later, on July 14, 1945, when the General Staff of the Liberation Army and Partisans' Units was dismissed as well.

Production of films in the professional cinematographies under the peace conditions is not always equal to the production forms arising in Serbia during the Second World War. Therefore, instead of the expression *production of films*, it is often more correct to use somewhat narrower, but more suitable term *films shooting*, which in a better way denotes particularities of the production of films (films making), featuring Serbia during the

¹ Hereinafter referred to as: *The film Section of Yugoslavia*

² *Službeni list DFJ*, No. 46, Belgrade, July 7, 1945

³ Hereinafter referred to as: *The film Section of Serbia*

Second World War.

Films traffic was not always carried out in the way usual for peaceful times, nor as in the countries the cinematography of which was organized on the market principles. To determine as precisely as possible the specifics of these cinematographic activities in Serbia during the Second World War, instead of *films traffic* it is more suitable to say *distribution of films*, because it suits better to the centralized model of cinematographic activities we come across herewith.

Neither presentation of films had always the trait of the professional cinematographic activities. In addition to the term *cinema show*, which means projection of films before the spectators who bought the tickets, sometimes it will be better to use the term *film projection*, suggesting thus specific conditions of showing films in war times.

The basic aim of cinematography, as described earlier in this paper, is sometimes temporarily changed and in certain cases it becomes important *to hide the film shot and not show it for some time*. During the Second World War, it was often the only way to preserve valuable film materials shot on this territory.

The term *film* has manifold meanings: it denotes different types of film tapes (black and white film, narrow gauge cine film), then national cinematographies (Serbian film, French film), certain kinds of film (documentary film, feature film) and, finally, under the term film any concrete product (work) is understood. When we speak about a film as a product (work), we keep in mind a product which is, in a technical and technological sense, completely done. Dealing with the Serbian cinematography during the Second World War, we come across the unfinished films. In such cases, it is useful to use terms which more precisely and clearly denote their nature, suggesting thus that unfinished product is in question: *film material* or *film shot*.

A film product (work), which today is known as a *feature film*, is often denoted in the referenced documents as an *entertaining film* or *programming film*, while different kinds of *documentary films* are named *cultural films*, *instructive films*, *cultural-instructive films*, and the like.

Generally, a major feature of the wartime cinematographies is a strongly expressed propaganda function of almost all cinematographic activities, resulting in films which, regardless of the kind, were a powerful propaganda means. Nevertheless, a product specifically intended for the propaganda activities - *film news* or *film newsreel* should be singled out. A *film story* or a *film report* are the names most suitable to use for the films shot to be included into the film wholes, but if a quite short film record is in question: *film news*.

Definitions accommodated in the way I have described earlier, should from time to time be combined with the standards, just as the cinematography in Serbia during the Second World War demonstrated itself in different intensities and forms: from amateur undertakings and through the forms that hardly exceed a film amateurism to the completely organized professional cinematography. But, all the film recordings we are now speaking about have one thing in common: they represent valuable historical sources about the people and times in which they were shot, regardless of the fact if the first-class professional films (e.g. numerous reports of the German war cameramen) are in question or dilettante shots of nonskilled amateurs (e.g. amateur film shots of the March 27, 1941, demonstrations).

Since its advent, in 1896, on the territory of the Yugoslav countries until the end of the

second decade of this century, cinematography had not organizationally shaped itself at all neither as a cultural and artistic nor as an economic activity, except to a certain degree in Zagreb, but there only over the period between 1917-1923.⁴ Particularly poorly developed was domestic film production. On the other hand, appearance and introduction of the sound film in 1927 strongly encouraged national cinematographies all over Europe. After the success of the sound film in the European countries, where the favourite film stars' words spoken in the cinema spectators' mother tongues were enthusiastically accepted, there began to arise an interest in improving national film productions - the most important part of cinematography as well as in its legal protection on the domestic cinematographic market. Thus, the European countries tried to resist the breakthrough of the Hollywood films, first of all. These reasons, along with the initiative of the domestic film makers, have made the government authorities in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia to draft a law which will regulate relationships within the cinematography. Our first cinematographic law act - the Law on Organizing Distribution of Films, was passed in December, 1931. Under this short-form law (11 articles only), a mechanism to protect the national film production on the cinematographic market of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was stipulated:

"Article 7

For every 1,000 m of the entertaining film to be imported by the end of 1933, the importer shall be obliged to provide or produce and distribute at least 70 m and, after that time, at least 150 m of the silent film, that is, sound film of the national production for the imported silent, that is, sound film.

Article 8

The importers who declare that they shall not be able to fulfill the condition under the above Article 7, shall be obliged for every meter of the national film they ought to provide or produce to pay 50 dinars for silent films and 100 dinars for sound films in favour of the National Film Centre."⁵

Under this Law, founding of the National Film Centre was provided for, an institution which took care of cinematography, particularly of improving the national film production. Nonfulfilment of obligations under Articles 7 and 8 was punishable:

"Article 10

He who violates the obligations stipulated under this Law, shall have to pay penalties from 5,000 to 20,000 dinars in favour of the National Film Centre. The penalties shall be pronounced by the first degree authorities."⁶

It was already in the next year, 1932, that the national film production showed the signs of revival, so that the balance between the number of domestic and foreign films

⁴ See: Sreten Jovanović: *Metodološki pristup istoriji jugoslavenske kinematografije sa posebnim osvrtom na kinematografiju u Zagrebu 1917-1923 (Methodological Approach to the History of Yugoslav Cinematography with a Particular Review on the Cinematography in Zagreb 1917-1923)*, MA thesis, Faculty of Dramatic Arts, Department for Film & TV Activities Organization, Belgrade, 1976, (manuscript filed at the faculty's library).

⁵ *Službene novine* of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, year XIII - 1931, No. 285 - XCIII, Dec. 5, 1931, Belgrade.

⁶ *Ibid.*

released to the cinematographic market of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was redressed, which for the first time happened on the territory of the Yugoslav countries. Thus, however, the monopoly of the foreign companies was jeopardized as well as that of the domestic importers and cinema owners, so that they, by strong pressures (e.g. American film exporters threatened that they would terminate all business agreements and completely withdraw their films from the cinematographic market of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia) managed to procure amendments to the Law on Organizing Distribution of Films. A year later, Article 57, paragraph 7, of the Financial Law for the 1933-1934 fiscal year cancelled Articles 7 and 8 of the Law on Organizing Distribution of Films which caused the possibility of protecting the national film production on its own market to be nullified, which resulted in the decreased national film production and disturbance of the domestic/foreign films ratio on the Yugoslav cinematographic market in favour of the foreign films. Thus, the announced national film production development was held up. On the eve of the Second World War, the film production on the territory of Serbia (as well as in other parts of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia) was almost completely quenched, so that the cinematographic activities were reduced to the reproductive cinematography. The lion's share of the cinema repertoire was composed of the foreign films. Thus, for example, during 1939⁷, 769 foreign films were imported, out of which the largest share was that of American - 467, the films of German production ranked second - 139, those ranked third were French - 99, and from the other countries imported to this market were 64 films. The domestic film makers produced only 50 films in the same year.⁸ The number of experts for the cinematographic vocations was low as well as the number of private film cameras owners, so that the film amateurism in Serbia was not at all developed, except partly in Vojvodina.⁹

That was state-of-the art of the Serbian cinematography it faced the events of March 27, 1941, with.

2. FILM SHOOTING ON MARCH 27, 1941, AND THE FALL OF THE KINGDOM OF YUGOSLAVIA

The period of the cinematographic activities in Serbia during the Second World War was, thus, commenced on March 27, 1941, when the demonstrations on the occasion of joining of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia to the Axis were recorded on the film tape. Several film were shot on these events, some of which are preserved.¹⁰ They were shot by the natives - film amateurs and professionals. Some of those film shots are preserved to this day, while the others, based on the available sources, are reliably known to be shot but have not been traced so far, and, finally, there are those preserved, but the origin and

⁷ *Filmski godišnjak 1838/39*, editor: Vasilije Zarić, *Planeta*, Belgrade.

⁸ Different film kinds are in question: feature films, different documentary films, newsreels, short advertising films, and advertising announcements of films - M.S.

⁹ See: Miroslav Savković, *Filmski amaterizam u Jugoslaviji (The Film Amateurism in Yugoslavia)*, diploma work, Faculty of Dramatic Arts, Department for Film and TV Activities Organization, Belgrade, 1977, (manuscript filed at the faculty's library).

¹⁰ The largest and best systematized collections of film shots of these events as well as of other ones to be discussed are in possession of: *Jugoslovenska kinoteka, Filmske novosti and Muzej revolucije* - in Belgrade.

authors of which are unknown.

The April 6, 1941, bombardment, the entry of German troops into Belgrade and the first days of occupation were also recorded by the native cameramen. Yet, the greatest number of the Belgrade air raid film shots, breakthrough of Wermacht through the Serbian territory towards the south, surrender of the Yugoslav Royal Army and the April fall of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia were made by the German war film reporters. Out of those film materials, a great number of propaganda stories were made and included into the German and Hungarian newsreels such as "UFA magazin", "Degeto Weltspiegel", "Magyar vilaghirado", and several documentary and propaganda films such as "Feldzug im Ehmaligen Jugoslawien". A certain number of film shots made by the cameramen of the German and Hungarian armies are preserved even to date. In addition to these, well-known to us, film shots, I believe, that there are still more, but they are for now, at least, beyond our reach. They were, during the war and retreat of the Germans from Serbia, taken to Germany.

During his stay in the States, Dr. Dejan Kosanović¹¹ have found at the *Library of Congress, Washington DC*, a certain quantity of film shots on the April fall of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia of German origin, of which he advised the *Yugoslav Film Archives Museum* in his letter dated June 9, 1966. The Library of Congress was ready to sell us those film shots at a favourable price: 6 cents per foot. Unfortunately, this material was not purchased, neither anybody at the *Yugoslav Film Archives Museum* remembers the subject letter. Yet, the above mentioned film shots support the hypothesis that a part of the material shot by the occupying armies can be found at the film archives of the allied countries.

Also, we can suppose for certain that the film archives of Russia and Great Britain possess film shots on these events, but they are still beyond our reach.

3. CINEMATOGRAPHIC ACTIVITIES IN THE OCCUPIED SERBIA

The cinematographic activities in the occupied Serbia were intensive and various: most developed in the part of Serbia under the German occupation, while almost there were none in Kosovo and Metohija. Soon after the occupation of Serbia, a Decree on Cinemas and Films Renting came into force. Although announced on May 25, 1941, the effects of the Decree were retroactive: from May 1 of the same year.¹² The Decree provided, through the control of import of films and strict regulations on cinemas, effective control over the cinemas repertoire, which was, first of all, completely subordinated to the interests of the Nazi Germany and, then, its allies. One decree more: Decree on Organization of Distribution of Films which, in fact, represented a supplement to the Decree of 1941, and was passed by the Council of Ministers on February 23, 1943.¹³ In view of the fact that the national film production was under-developed, and therefore could not be a serious *media danger* to the German occupational authorities and

¹¹ Prof. Dr. Dejan Kosanović, a long-standing professor and chief of the Chair for the Film and TV Production of the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade - M.S.

¹² *Novo vreme*, daily papers, Belgrade, May 25, 1941

¹³ *Službene novine*, No.15, Belgrade, February 23, 1943.

their collaborators, none of the two mentioned decrees dealt with it.

Yet, during the occupation of Serbia, a great number of film shots were made primarily intended for the German newsreels. The purpose of these propaganda films was to promote the Nazi and fascist ideas and practice of the Hitler's Germany and its allies. The most of the films are of German origin (e.g. numerous reports in the newsreels such as "UFA Magazin", "Deutsche Wochenschau", "Europa Woche", etc.), but film shootings were also made in other parts of Serbia (e.g. a large number of stories intended for the newsreels "Croatia in Words and Pictures" and "Croatian Pictorial Weekly" were shot in the east Srem, while the Italian film reporters, according to Qemajl Sokoli¹⁴ shot a story on Prizren which was a part of the newsreel "Luce giornale", No. 161.

In addition to the foreign film shootings, the activities of the natives are evident, among which important is the prewar cameraman Stevan Mišković - an author of the satirical animated newsreel "Weekly Review". Also, the "New Serbia" newsreel used to be processed at his laboratory. Particular attention, however, deserves Dragoljub Aleksić who, during the occupation, managed to produce and show the only national feature film – "Innocence without Protection".

Distribution of films was organized, so that the occupational authorities had a complete control over the import and distribution of all films intended to be publicly shown.

Films projection activities were, in view of the circumstances, very well organized and, of course, strictly controlled by the occupational authorities. The cinemas were well visited, although the repertoire mainly consisted of the films of German production. During the occupation shown in Belgrade were the feature-length films from the following countries:

1. Germany	281
2. Hungary	61
3. Italy	39
4. Bohemia-Moravia	15
5. France	14
6. Spain	8
7. Sweden/Finland	3
8. Denmark	1
9. Japan	1
10. Norway	1
11. USA	1
12. Serbia	1 ¹⁵

The *Kolarac People's University* film repertoire within which the films of the far less propagandistic charge were shown (e.g. educational films and other different kinds of

¹⁴ Qemajl Sokoli: *Razvoj kinematografije na Kosovu (Development of Cinematography in Kosovo and Metohija)*, M. A. thesis, Faculty of Dramatic Arts, Department for Film and TV Activities Organization, Belgrade, 1983, (manuscript filed at the faculty's library), page 49.

¹⁵ Quoted after: Dragan Jeličić: *Kinematografske delatnosti u okupiranom Beogradu 1941-1944 (Cinematographic Activities in the Occupied Belgrade 1941-1944)*, diploma work, Faculty of Dramatic Arts, Department for Film and TV Activities Organization (manuscript filed at the faculty's library), page 74.

documentary films, the projections of which were often accompanied by the expert lectures), greatly differed from the general structure of the cinema repertoire of the occupied Serbia.

In addition to the major cinematographic activities, accompanying (additional) ones were also organized: legislative activities on cinematography, education for professional vocations in cinematography, publishing activities on cinematography and the like.

Cinematography in the occupied Serbia was completely subordinated to the goals of the occupying forces and from that point of view it reached the level of one of the most important propagandistic activities. In view of the diversity of the cinema repertoire, however, a far more universal and good role (first of all, educational and cultural and artistic) can hardly be denied to the cinematographic activities as well.

4. CINEMATOGRAPHIC ACTIVITIES IN THE UNITS OF DRAGOLJUB DRAŽA MIHAILOVIĆ (YUGOSLAV ARMY IN THE FATHERLAND)

Cognizances on the cinematographic activities within the units fighting under the command of Dragoljub Draža Mihailović (Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland) on the territory of Serbia are very poor: assumptions on their existence, scope and contents are different and often contradictory. The historical and diplomatic material investigation results, including investigations of all film archives in Serbia as well, lead us to the conclusion that those activities were neither organized nor continuously conducted within the units of Draža Mihailović fighting on the territory of Serbia during the Second World War. In view of the overall military and political position of Draža Mihailović, it is rather simple to excuse nonexistence of organized cinematographic activities, the successful performance of which, in contrast to the other aspects of propaganda (e.g. oral propaganda, radio, press) means to previously fulfil several complicated organizational prerequisites such as: experts trained for a series of cinematographic vocations, technical means for filming and projecting the films, reproduction materials intended for filming and processing of the filmed materials, safe space provided with the electric power sources to show the films, traffic communications, transportation means and the like.

There is, however, evidence on endeavours the film to be utilized as a propaganda means as well. Thus, Dobrosav Jevđević and major Bačović, in a report to Draža Mihailović, in November, 1942, proposed a cameraman to be asked from the English - "radio-operator with a camera who would shoot our burned down and destroyed villages" - but, unfortunately, nothing more is known about that initiative.¹⁶

The only so far known film shots, made among the Chetniks of Draža Mihailović at Boljevac and the surroundings are being kept at the *Yugoslav Film Archives Museum*. The nonedited film material to the length of 331 m and 35 mm in size is in question. Seen on the film, in addition to everything else, are the remains of an airplane motor and an American pilot saved by the Chetniks, but we do not know who has filmed the material.

¹⁶ *Zbornik dokumenata i podataka o narodnooslobodilačkom ratu naroda Jugoslavije (Collection of Documents and Data on the War of National Liberation of the Peoples of Yugoslavia)*, volume XIV, book 1, No.199, pp 729-736. The document is dateless, but, based on its contents, it may be concluded that it was written in the second half of November, 1942 - M. S.

According to some insufficiently founded assumptions those could be our prewar film cameramen: Mihajlo Ivanjиков Deduška and Anton Harry the Laughter. From a letter, however, sent on April 22, 1992, to Zoran Sinobad, the archive officer of the *Yugoslav Film Archives Museum* by an American researcher named Bob Summers, such film material is being kept at the US National Archives, Washington DC. Thus, it is very much possible that the subject filmed material was shot by the American cameramen. Yet, regardless of the fact who shot this film material in 1944 at Boljevac and the surroundings, that fact can rather be considered as an accidental exception than as an evidence on the existence of the organized cinematographic activities within the units which, under the command of Draža Mihailović, were fighting during the Second World War on the territory of Serbia.

Should there exist some more filmed materials we have not had opportunities so far to find anything about, then those are the films shot either by the members of the allied military missions during their stay at the headquarters of Draža Mihailović or by the native cameramen who had probably sent their filmed materials later on abroad for laboratory processing and temporary keeping the original film negatives, so that they remained there. If we suppose that such filmed materials really exist and that they are stored at the allied countries film archives, it is completely uncertain when they will be accessible to the researchers and the wider public.

5. FILMS SHOOTING BY THE ALLIES

The Soviet and the British cameramen were shooting on the territory of Serbia during the Second World War. There were several cameramen within the units of the Red Army who entered Serbia in 1944. An exact list and sequence of their arrivals cannot be established, but the names of the most of them are known, both from the casts of film they have shot and based on the good bibliographic and film data given in the book *Очерки истории Советского кино (History of the Soviet Film)*¹⁷

According to the list made at the *Yugoslav Film Archives Museum*, the first group of the Soviet war film reporters consists of:

1. Vladimir Yeshurin (Ешурин, В. С.)
2. Ivan Grachov (Грачев И.)
3. Solomon Jakovljevič Kohan (Коган С. J.)
4. Viktor Muromtzev (Муромцев В. Н.)

The other group consists of:

1. V. Petrov (Петров В. М.)
2. B. Rogachevsky (Рогачевский Б.)
3. S. Stoyanovsky (Стояновский С.)
4. I. Chiknoverov (Чикноверов И.)
5. A. Sologubov (Сологубов А.)

¹⁷ *Очерки истории Советского кино*, в трех томах, под редакцией Ю. Калашникова, Н. А. Лебедева, Л. П. Погожевой, Р. Н. Юренева, Государственное издательство *Искусство*, том второй, 1935-1945, Москва, 1959.

6. S. Shkoljnikov (Школьников С. С.)

7. F. Korotkevich (Короткевич Ф. Г.)¹⁸

In addition to these reporters, other Russian cameramen worked in Serbia during the Second World War. Among the Soviet film directors engaged in making feature-propaganda films, documentary-propaganda films and newsreels, I will mention on this occasion: Leonid Varlamov (Варламов Л. В.) Dziga Vertov (Вертов Дзига) and Vsevolod Pudovkin (Пудовкин В. И.). Music for the films was composed, among the others, by Nikita Bogolsovsky (Богословский Н. В.) and Isaac Dunayevsky (Дунаевский И. О.), while the narrators' texts were written by Ilya Erenburg (Эренбург И. Г.). In addition to several documentary films (e.g. "Сыны Югославии" - "The sons of Yugoslavia", "Югославия" - "Yugoslavia"), a greater number of film stories shot by the Soviet war reporters were included into the newsreels (e.g. "Фронтной Спецвыпуск" - "Special Report from the Front" and "Новости дня" - Daily News").

The film shots of the British origin kept at the *Museum of Revolution of the Peoples and Nationalities of Yugoslavia* were made by the cameraman - war reporter Keneth Rodwell, who arrived in Belgrade as the member of the British delegation headed by the field-marshal Sir Harold Rupert Alexander on February 24, 1945 (e.g. "The British Ambassador Mr. Stevenson Coming to Yugoslavia", "Marshal Tito Received a Delegation of Pioneers at Beli Dvor", "A Welcome to the War Prisoners in Belgrade", "Signing the Agreement between Yugoslavia and UNRA", "The Youth Meeting in Belgrade at the Vuk Monument").

In addition to the above mentioned film shots, there are likely some more at the film archives of the Yugoslavia's allied countries, particularly in Russia, Great Britain and the United States of America.

The films and nonedited film materials in possession of our three, earlier mentioned, institutions represent cultural assets of priceless value, although not processed and archived in the best possible way nor most adequately kept. Certain efforts to protect and permanently preserve this film material were made by the *Yugoslav Film Archives Museum* when, on May 17, 1980, a Decision on Establishing the Material of Exceptional Importance was procured from the government of the Socialist Republic of Serbia. Based on the Decision, a list of 165 films representing cultural assets of exceptional value for Serbia was determined.¹⁹ Thus, I believe, the state has picked up the obligation to financially support renovation of this film materials so as to be permanently preserved. Item No. 154 in the list, for example, illustrates "Unedited Archival Film Material" to the length of 12,592 m, 35 mm in size (reg. no. 7269) containing film shots made during 1944 and 1945. These voluminous film materials contain numerous filmed documents shot by the allied cameramen on the territory of Serbia.

An organized protection of the archived film materials must be improved and expanded to other film archives in Serbia. First of all, its possible destruction should be prevented, then an expert processing, adequate archiving and precise registering provided - *permanent protection and the possibility of using the complete film archival materials all over Serbia.*

¹⁸ Stevan Jovičić, chief of the Yugoslav Film Archives Museum, a series of interviews, Belgrade, 1991-92.

¹⁹ *Službeni glasnik SRS*, No.19, Belgrade, May 17, 1980.

6. CINEMATOGRAPHIC ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE UNITS OF THE ARMY OF LIBERATION

Commencement of the cinematographic activities within the units of the Army of Liberation coincides with the formation of the General Staff of the Partisans Units of National Liberation on June 27, 1941, and their conclusion falls on July 3, 1945, the day of dismissal of *The Film Section of Yugoslavia*. This period feature disproportion in view of the cinematographic activities intensity until the foundation of *The Film Section of Serbia* on July 16, 1944, and after that, because it was only after *The Film Section of Serbia* had been founded that very active and organized cinematographic activities within the units of the Army of Liberation took place. Lack of the cinematographic activities within the units of the Army of Liberation on the territory of Serbia up to the summer of 1944 was caused by a series of circumstances such as: poor prewar cinematographic basis, the way the war was waged and the military position of the units of the Army of Liberation in Serbia, the volume and quality of the allied countries support, etc. Added to this should also be the already mentioned necessity that successful organization of the cinematographic activities required a great number of necessary organizational and technical prerequisites to be previously fulfilled. Photographic activities within the units of the Army of Liberation, the organization of which is in every respect far simpler than that of cinematography, were carried out sporadically and until the summer of 1944 were nonorganized as well.

However, in spite of a very difficult position the Serbian partisans were in after the fall of the "Republic of Užice" due to the great defeat they suffered by the end of 1941, careful organizing of other forms of the propaganda activities resulted in the conditions to establish cinematographic institutions within the units of the Army of Liberation on the territory of Serbia as soon as the opportunities presented themselves - beginning with July, 1944. Then, by the order of Koča Popović, commander of the General Staff of the Army of Liberation and Partisans Units of Serbia, *The Film Section of Serbia* was founded. Due thanks for organizing this institution are to Radoš Novaković²⁰, its creator and first head. His closest associates were: Manojlo Bojkovski, Josip Zidar and Milosav Đurić Era, who will be discussed about later on.

The Film Section of Serbia started its activities in the summer of 1944. Its seat, after October 19, 1944, was in Niš, but having its branch offices in several places of the southeast Serbia such as Prokuplje, Kuršumlja, Leskovac, Lebane, Žitkovac, Blace and Vranje they were of wider scope. Later, the activities were spread to other places as well such as: Pirot, Vlasotince, Vrnjačka Banja, Sokobanja, Ozren, Kruševac, Valjevo, etc. *The Film Section of Serbia* was operating under the war conditions on a temporarily liberated territories and it was because of that that from time to time it had to stop activities at certain places.

Since there were no conditions provided for shooting (producing) films, filming activities were reduced to the undertakings of Đorđe Vasiljević²¹, a prewar photographer of Niš, who is the author of several very important film reports.

²⁰ Radoš Novaković, prominent postwar film director, film historian and pedagogue: a long-standing professor of the Theatre, Film, Radio & TV Academy, Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Belgrade.

²¹ See: Miroslav Savković: "Pionir filmskog žurnala" (The Pioneer of the Film Newsreel), *Filmograf*, magazine No. 36-37, Belgrade, 1988.

1. "Liberation of Niš" - 300 M
2. "Burial of the Red Army Soldiers When Liberating Niš" - 80 m
3. "Concentration Camp, Excavation of the Dead for Liberty" - 200 m
4. "The First Meeting – Celebration of the Liberation of Niš" - 300 m
5. "Red Army Anniversary Celebration (November 7)" - 250 m
6. "Demonstrations Against the People's Unity Killjoys" - 200 m
7. "Working Battalion, the First Transports of Children to Bulgaria"- 190 m
8. "Prokuplje - the Burial of Čičko; Red Army Celebration" - 80 m
9. "May Day Outstanding Work" - 300 m
10. "May Day Celebration" - 125 m
11. "Destroyed Bridges Reconstruction" - 75 m
12. "War Orphans Home; Sports Rally" - 175 m²²

The greatest number of stories shot by Đorđe Vasiljević were shown, at the beginning of 1945, in the first newsreels: "Our Film Chronicle N^o. 1" and " Our Film Chronicle N^o. 2"

The main field of operation of *The Film Section of Serbia* was reproductive cinematography (films distribution and projection). It is worth mentioning that films of the Soviet production enjoyed popularity.

The Film Section of Serbia is the first organizational form - institution of the Serbian (and Yugoslav) cinematography founded during the Second World War. As for its character, *The Film Section of Serbia* is the war army cinematographic institution. The way and conditions under which *The Film Section of Serbia* was organized point to a certain similarity with *The Film Section* founded in 1916 at the Supreme Command of the Serbian Army at Thessalonica.²³

The definitive termination of operation of *The Film Section of Serbia* coincides with the dismissal date of the General Staff of the Army of Liberation and Partisans Units of Serbia as of July 14, 1945.²⁴

Another cinematographic institution - *The Film Section of Yugoslavia* was organized in Belgrade a few days after its liberation, although a written decree on its foundation was declared a bit later, on December 13, 1945, in the *Bulletin of the General Staff of the Army of Liberation and Partisans Units No. 46-47*.²⁵ Quite naturally, this responsible and complicated task of organizing *The Film Section of Yugoslavia* was assigned to Radoš Novaković who, after Niš had been liberated, left *The Film Section of Serbia* and together with the General Staff of the Army of Liberation and Partisans Units left for Belgrade. His experience of the organizer and head of *The Film Section of Serbia* should have been a guarantee for successful operation of the future Yugoslav federal cinematographic institution. I suppose that the suggestion and recommendation to the General Staff of the Army of Liberation and Partisans Units of Yugoslavia to place Radoš Novaković in charge of organizing *The Film Section of Yugoslavia* was issued by Moma Marković,

²² Archive of the Vasiljević family: document N^o.1.

²³ See: Dejan Kosanović: *Počeci kinematografije na tlu Jugoslavije 1896-1918 (Cinematography Kickoffs in Yugoslavia 1896-1918)*, The Film Institute/The University of Arts, Belgrade, 1985, page 113.

²⁴ *Vojnoistorijski institut, Vojni arhiv*, Belgrade, K.372, file 2, document 9.

²⁵ *Zbornik*, volume II, book 1, pp. 559-561

political commissar of the General Staff of the Army of Liberation and Partisans Units of Serbia. Having full confidence in his closest associates from *The Film Section of Serbia* in Niš, Radoš Novaković called Josip Zidar and Manojlo Bojkovski to Belgrade. Called by Moma Marković, Milosav Đurić Era - the then head of *The Film Section of Serbia* left Niš for Belgrade in March, 1945, to take over the duty of the deputy director of *The National Film Company*.²⁶ This group, gathered around at *The Film Section of Serbia* and headed by Radoš Novaković, together with Đorđe Vasiljević, photographer and cameraman from Niš, made up the *Core of Niš* which successfully took part in founding *The Film Section of Yugoslavia* and later *The National Film Company* to be discussed about later on.

Radoš Novaković was responsible for production of *The Film Section of Yugoslavia* and was responsible for its overall activities. Having played an important role in organizing *The Film Section of Serbia* in Niš, he lined up among the important persons of our contemporary cinematography, not only as a film director and pedagogue, but also as an organizer and strategist of the postwar development of the Serbian (and Yugoslav) cinematography.

Immediately after founding *The Film Section of Yugoslavia*, its responsibility was to organize distribution and projection of films, it was thus that its activities get started. Strategically, the principle task was that of organizing the national film production, at first the propaganda newsreels and documentary films - the most important film products from the Yugoslav army and government authorities point of view. Production of feature-length films was of secondary importance (it was not until 1947 that the first Yugoslav feature-length film "Slavica" was shot).

The premiere of the first film of *The Film Section of Yugoslavia*, "Liberation of Belgrade" took place at the Belgrade cinema *Jadran* on January 31, 1945, together with the Soviet film "The Sky of Moscow"²⁷, while the premiere of the next film "People's Answer to the King" was at the Belgrade cinema *Beograd* on February 4, 1945, also with the Soviet films - "The Fair of Sorochin" and "Selebration of the Soviet Air Forces"²⁸. Yet, "Our Film Chronicle N^o. 1"²⁹ - the premiere of which took place at the Belgrade cinema *Jadran* on February 25, 1945, and " Our Film Chronicle N^o. 2"³⁰ - the premiere of which was also at the same cinema on March 26, 1945, should be considered the most important products of *The Film Section of Yugoslavia*. Shown in these newsreels were several, then very current, stories out of which the largest number were shot by Đorđe Vasiljević, the Niš-based cameraman.

"Our Film Chronicle N^o. 1"

1. Demonstrations Against the King
2. Niš also Answered to the King
3. Occupier's Crimes in Niš
4. Yule Log in the Liberated Niš

²⁶ *Vojnoistorijski institut, Vojni arhiv*, Belgrade, K. 372, file 2, document 9

²⁷ *Politika*, Belgrade, January 31, 1945.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, February 4, 1945.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, February 25, 1945.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, March 26, 1945.

5. Our Children Leave for Recovery in the Brotherly Bulgaria
6. The First Congress of Antifascist Women's Front

"Our Film Chronicle N^o. 2"

1. Exercises of Our Cavalry
2. Soviet Artists in Belgrade
3. Blood Donor's Committee
4. Commemorating the Victims of the Occupier's Terror in Niš
5. Working Battalion of the Youth of Niš
6. Cadets of the Military Academy Administering the Oath
7. Red Army Twentieth Anniversary Celebration.³¹

The above products symbolize successful beginning of organizing the most important cinematographic activity - the national film production. Thus, at the same time, a successful development of our postwar cinematography on the whole as an important cultural, artistic and economic activity was announced.

The Film Section of Yugoslavia started (renewed) film business with foreign countries, featured by the co-operation with the representatives of Great Britain, USSR and the United States of America. Relations with the western cinematographies had to be immediately established on economic and market principles because it was an explicit request of the producers and distributors of those countries, while USSR, the cinematography of which was governed by the state, was ready to place some of its films free of charge at the disposal of *The Film Section of Yugoslavia*, but in a short while only as we will see later on.

Concurrently with the basic cinematographic activities, additional ones were also organized such as: education for future professionals, then repair and production of technical means, accessories and materials. Censorship and film archives museum activities were also organized.

The strategic goal of the creators of the postwar macroorganizational concept of development of the Yugoslav cinematography was to organize a state-centralistic cinematography. Thus, this concept was put into effect, so that soon after the liberation of the country all the cinematographic activities were put under the state (nationalized). Certain, clearly noticeable components of decentralization were to the level of federal units, announcing thus, even during the war, a wide decentralization which commenced in 1951.

7. THE NATIONAL FILM COMPANY

The National Film Company was founded by the order of the Commissariat for Trade and Industry of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Yugoslavia on November 20, 1944.³² A capital amounting to 1,000,000 dinars was put at the disposal of the company. Responsible for increase in the capital and possible use of credits was the

³¹ Katalog *Filmskih novosti*, Belgrade, 1945.

³² *Službeni list DFJ*, No.3, Belgrade, February 9, 1945.

commissar for trade and industry (Andrija Hebrang). The Commissariat for Trade and Industry was in charge of supervising *The National Film Company* business operations, while the commissar for trade and industry was responsible for appointing and dismissing the managing board consisting of 5 members. The first session of the managing board was held on December 8, 1944, and the first board consisted of: Milenko Mitraković, Nikola Popović, Dr. Pavle Brežnik, Jelena Žarković and Dr. Vladimir Turina.

The National Film Company dealt with the reproductive cinematography (films distribution and projection) and soon after its founding the business of importing films, discontinued due to the war, was renewed.

The co-operation with Great Britain was officially established on December 6, 1944. Then, an agreement was signed under which the British Ministry of Information rented 8 feature-length films, 11 short documentary films and 26 British newsreels "Free World News". The agreement was signed by Victor J. Hoare, member of the British Army Mission in Belgrade, and Milenko Mitraković, head of *The National Film Company*. Thus, *The National Film Company* was granted the right to use British films over the next three years within the Yugoslav borders "as they will be politically established".³³ The income resulting from the cinema business was divided so that a share of 70 percent belonged to the British Ministry of Information and 30 percent to *The National Film Company*. In addition to this high rent, the British partner imposed some other obligations to *The National Film Company* such as: the term over which each film could be exploited, place of projection, type of cinema hall, form of the film show, the way of advertising the films, obligatory repertoire announcement in the daily papers, etc. Further, the British could have an insight into *The National Film Company* business books and, based on their own estimate, unilaterally terminate the co-operation without any sanctions.

The representatives of the British Ministry of Information took part in some humanitarian actions, so that on certain occasions they gave us their films free of charge and, also, provided help to *The National Film Company* in solving certain problems such as: procurement of reproduction materials intended for film projections, etc.

Although the co-operation between *The National Film Company* and the representatives of USSR was under way already during 1944, even some written agreements were signed on it, it was not until April 27, 1945, that three agreements between *Soyuzintorgkino* (Союзинторгкино) and *The National Film Company* were signed.³⁴ The agreements were signed by Boljshakov (Большаков) on behalf of the Soviet side and Milosav Đurić Era, who already at that time was appointed deputy head of *The National Film Company*. 85 films of different kinds: feature, documentary and newsreels were covered under the agreements. *The National Film Company* was granted the right to show the films on the territory of Albania as well, so that this institution of ours was an agent between *Soyuzintorgkino* and the state of Albania, which otherwise was a rare case in the films trade. In addition to the rent amount - the Soviets charged *The National Film Company* with 50 percent of the total income realized from the tickets sold - the subject agreements provided maximum protection to the Soviets interests placing *The National Film Company* into subordinate position, so that, thus, they did not differ at all from the

³³ Arhiv *Filmskih novosti*, Belgrade, file 9, document 22.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, file 16, document 14; file 16, document 27; file 16, document 29.

agreement signed with the British Ministry of Information. Thus, *The National Film Company*, for example, was obliged to effect all the payment to *Soyuzintorgkino* in US \$ to the account of the Foreign Trade Bank of USSR. The rate of the US\$ was established according to the price paid for gold at the New York Stock Exchange - US\$ 35 for the fine ounce of gold.

Negotiations with *The National Film Company* were also conducted by the Americans by the end of 1944 and beginning 1945 - lieutenant colonel Charles Thayer, head of the American Army Mission in Belgrade and Clifton R. Read, member of the War Department for Information. *The National Film Company* asked for permission to show the American films imported to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia prior to the Second World War, the copies of which were preserved during the war and were in possession of *The National Film Company* or the prewar Yugoslav (private) distributors and cinema owners. That, however, could not be accomplished without the approval of the American distributing companies. The prerequisite to establish the co-operation was to previously effect renewal of all prewar rental agreements for the American films. It was only after the newly obtained licenses that *The National Film Company* could again organize distribution and projection of the American films in the country. In view of the fact that no US government institution was empowered to sign any agreements on behalf of the American films distributing companies, the co-operation between *The National Film Company* and the US representative was reduced to a minimum over the subject period.

Regardless of the rather unfavourable conditions under which *The National Film Company* have agreed the co-operation with the British and the Soviets, it is important to point out that without the British and the Soviet films it would not be possible to organize continuous projections of films in the cinemas on the liberated territory, amounting in March, 1945, in Serbia, to around 150.³⁵

The National Film Company have also renewed the co-operation with the prewar private distributors and cinema owners.³⁶

The National Film Company was the first federal civil wartime cinematographic institution organized on the territory of Serbia during the Second World War operating concurrently with *The Film Section of Yugoslavia*. There was jobs sharing between these federal cinematographic institutions - in short, *The National Film Company* dealt with the reproductive cinematography while *The Film Section of Yugoslavia* was responsible for production of films. *The National Film Company* was a civil counterweight to *The Film Section of Yugoslavia*, an army cinematographic institution. Thus, conditions for demilitarization of our cinematography were created, which even occurred, since July 3, 1945, immediately after the war ended, *The Film Section of Yugoslavia* and *The National Film Company* were dismissed and instead *The Film Company of the Democratic Federative Yugoslavia* founded, which took over the managing role over the whole Serbian (and Yugoslav) cinematography.

³⁵ Ibid., file 45, document 7.

³⁶ It was a step-by-step process of the reproductive cinematography nationalization, completed during 1948 - M.S.

8. CONCLUSION

The film illusion greatly resembles the real life, and it is just that this feature enables the film, when used for the propaganda purposes - as it was the case during the Second World War - to act by far more effectively than other media: press, photography or radio. The importance of cinematography on the territory of Serbia during the Second World War comes from the fact that by means of the film it was possible to strongly influence the human conscience. The universal language of the film is attachable to the people of all levels, because it can affect even a completely illiterate man. But, even a part of the population which was on a higher educational and intellectual level and, therefore, could utilize other (mass) media communications as well, was apt to subjugation to the film propagandistic effects, just thanks to its capabilities which were very smartly utilized by the creators of the war and propaganda films. As for the importance and influence, this feature contributed to the film to be ahead of all other media used for the propaganda purposes during the Second World War.

During the Second World War, various and active cinematographic activities took place on the territory of Serbia. The forms of such activities were different: ranging from amateur undertakings to shoot important historical events using narrow gauge cine film cameras, through sporadic cinematographic activities and all the way to the completely rounded in and well organized cinematographic activities. But, *all those who used to deal with cinematography on the territory of Serbia during the Second World War*, regardless of their military and political position and ideological determination, attached great importance and paid due attention to it.

The use of cinematography was conditioned and limited by the organizational and technical qualification and equipping which resulted in unequally spread cinematography in all geopolitical communities, military units and organizations.

The units which fought a battle using the guerrilla tactics (partisans units of the Army of Liberation and those under the command of Dragoljub Draža Mihailović) had specific difficulties when organizing the cinematographic activities, because the way they waged the war did not allow them to use cinematography to the extent required. Because of that, organizing the first cinematographic war institutions within the units of the Army of Liberation on the territory of Serbia chronologically coincides with the improved military and political situation and commences only by the mid-year of 1944. Neither the members of the units of Draža Mihailović, fighting on the territory of Serbia during the Second World War, were not able to organize cinematographic activities on their own, having never received the expected allies support.

The greatest numbers of films, primarily of German production, shot on the territory of Serbia are reports intended for the newsreels. Those film reports, as for their purpose and essence as well, intensively belong to the propaganda-tinted journalism, most frequently having nothing in common with that called the film art. The value of these films today is that they represent priceless historical documents on the people and times they were created in, which features even the high-end professionally produced films as well as those of the amateurs enthusiasts.

In the part of Serbia under the German occupation complete cinematographic activities were organized such as: basic (production, distribution, projection) and additional (education, legislation and publishing activity, and the like). Cinematography

was under the German occupational authorities control as well as that of the local institutions and individuals.

Among the natives engaged in films shooting in the occupied Serbia, Stevan Mirković, a pioneer of our cinematography between the two world wars, should be singled out, the work of which has most prominently left its mark, although he was working in other cinematographic fields such as: sound recording, directing, etc. From the organizational and technical point of view, "Innocence without Protection", a feature film by Dragoljub Aleksić is the most important cinematographic project implemented on the territory of Serbia by the native film makers, in spite of the contradictory interpretations accompanying the film shooting and its exploitation as well as the fact that, although with the highest intentions in the approach, the film must be characterized as dilettantish.

Out of the numerous films shot on the territory of Serbia during the Second World War, the greatest number was of German origin. Some of those films are being kept at our archives, but I suppose that there are many more at the film archives of Germany, their war allies as well as at the film archives of the allied countries of Yugoslavia. These films are still beyond our reach.

The films business in the part of Serbia under the German occupation was strictly controlled by the German occupational authorities, so that the Belgrade film importers, *Tesla-film* or *Jugoistok-film* were censors at the same time, which resulted from the fact that they imported only German films.

The cinema repertoire in the occupied Belgrade was dominated by the German films and newsreels which consistently served the political and propaganda goals of the Hitler's Germany. Regardless of this fact, the people willingly went to the cinema and the projections during the occupation as well as after Belgrade was liberated were excellently visited. The Kolarac People's University was the only institution in Serbia under the German occupation the cinema repertoire of which consisted of educational and moral documentary films the contents of which strongly differed from those of other cinemas in the occupied Belgrade.

In other parts of Serbia occupied by Hungary, Independent State of Croatia, Bulgaria and Italy, cinematographic activities were at different development levels, but everywhere film played an important, predominantly propagandistic role.

A large quantity of the film material was shot by the allied war reporters from USSR and Great Britain. Those films are being kept at our film archives, but at the film archives of the allied countries as well, where they are, as well as those made by the occupying forces, still beyond our reach. However, it is quite certain that at the Bundesarchiv Koblenz³⁷ and at Istituto Luce Roma³⁸ films shot in Serbia during the Second World War are being kept, but those are already well known materials to us being also kept in this country, which of course, does not exclude the possibility that other, unknown to us, film materials exist at the above institutions in Germany and Italy - just on the contrary.

Data on the photographic activities within the units of the Army of Liberation might

³⁷ Ivan Nemanič: "Evidenca filmskih tednikov (Wochenschauen) v Bundesarchivu Koblenz, ki se našajajo na ozemlje Jugoslavije v letih 1941-1945", *Arhivi*, magazine No. VI, Ljubljana, 1983.

³⁸ Ivan Nemanič: "Evidentiranje filmskega gradiva v Inštitutu Luče v Rimu", *Arhivi*, magazine No.VIII, Ljubljana, 1985.

lead to the conclusion that also, along with the photographic activities, there were organized cinematographic activities within these units on the territory of Serbia by the summer of 1944, which is not right. In contrast to the photographic activities, organizing cinematographic activities requires some more organizational and technical prerequisites to be met in advance. That is why the cinematographic activities within the units of the Army of Liberation commenced only when the historical circumstances allowed it: on July 16, 1944, by founding *The Film Section of Serbia - the first army cinematographic institution established on the territory of Serbia (and Yugoslavia) during the Second World War* - the seat of which was in Niš, after the city was liberated on October 14, 1944. *The Film Section of Serbia* is the forerunner of the future war cinematographic institutions organized by the end of 1944 in the just liberated Belgrade - *The Film Section of Yugoslavia* and *The National Film Company*. The ideological creator and the first head of *The Film Section of Serbia* was Radoš Novaković, while the decision to establish this army cinematographic institution was made by Koča Popović, the C.O. of the General Staff of the Army of Liberation and Partisans Units. Thus, the tradition of *The Film Section*, founded at the Supreme Command of the Serbian Army in Thessalonica in 1916, was maintained. The fact that almost nothing has been known about the activities of *The Film Section of Serbia* so far, and particularly that, as far as I know, not a single word has been written on that by Radoš Novaković, its creator and the first head and the author of *The History of Film*, makes me completely confused. In spite of every efforts made, I did not manage to find out the reasons why it was so.

Immediately upon the liberation of Belgrade, *The Film Section of Yugoslavia, the first army cinematographic institution of Yugoslavia*, started with its cinematographic activities, also headed by Radoš Novaković, who, after the liberation of Niš, moved to Belgrade together with the General Staff of the Army of Liberation and Partisans Units of Serbia. His closest associates from *The Film Section of Serbia*, left Niš and came to Belgrade a bit later to help him in his work. The written order for founding *The Film Section of Yugoslavia* was signed by Josip Broz Tito on December 13, 1944.

The National Film Company, the first civil cinematographic institution organized on the territory of Serbia (and Yugoslavia) during the Second World War started with its activities concurrently with *The Film Section of Yugoslavia*, on November 20, 1944. *The National Film Company* took over the business of the reproductive cinematography, while *The Film Section of Yugoslavia* dealt with the production of films, although this jobs division was neither strict nor the jobs between *The Film Section of Yugoslavia* and *The National Film Company* were precisely divided. *The National Film Company* was the first institution during the Second World War to officially renew the international co-operation in the field of film business. Co-operation with Great Britain and USSR was precisely worked out under the mutually signed agreements and was based upon the respect of the British and Soviet economic interests, while *The National Film Company* was in a subordinate position. Such position resulted from a series of objective circumstances, and the attitude of our allies, who primarily looked after their own interests, is quite normal, even though, perhaps, it is in contrast to our romantic ideas of alliance. The scope of co-operation of *The National Film Company* with the United States of America was narrower. Establishment of *The National Film Company* caused, already during the war, demilitarization of the cinematography to take place and basic prerequisites were provided to organizationally shape our cinematography - Serbian (and

Yugoslav, then functioning successfully as a complete system for almost half of a century).

Successful organization of the important cultural, artistic and economic activities in Serbia - *the national cinematography* - was enabled during the war by the activities of the three institutions: *The Film Section of Serbia*, *The Film Section of Yugoslavia* and *The National Film Company*.

In view of the size of this country, its economical potential, size of our cinematographic market, undeveloped cinema network, etc., we fall into a circle of countries with the so-called *small cinematographies*. That, among other things, means that the national film production cannot survive without the financial support (e.g. state) and, without the production, however, one cannot speak of the national cinematography existence, which is a part of culture of a nation, that is, state community. Founding the war cinematographic institutions in Serbia during the Second World War, the cinematography was macroorganized for the first time by the state taking over the responsibility to finance the national film production: it is the most important feature of the above three institutions - how important their activities were while functioning during the war that important was the *trail they left behind themselves* in our postwar (contemporary) cinematography.

The process of the initial organizational shaping of our cinematography was completed when the three war cinematographic institutions - *The Film Section of Serbia*, *The Film Section of Yugoslavia* and *The National Film Company* - were dismissed and instead of them *The Film Company of the Democratic Federative Yugoslavia*, the first cinematographic institution founded in Serbia (and Yugoslavia) after the Second World War, in the just liberated country, organized.

The newly established macroorganizational model had, like in other countries of the *socialist community*, all the attributes of the state-centralistic cinematography. However, the original form of the *self-management socialist social relationships* was soon after that developed in Yugoslavia and in 1951 the cinematography was accommodated to it.

APPENDIX

WE

ALEKSANDAR I

by the grace of God and the will of people

KING OF YUGOSLAVIA

upon the proposal of the President of our Council of Ministers

and our Interior Minister

announce and declare the

LAW

on Organization and Distribution of Films

Article 1

For companies dealing with import of films from abroad or production of films in the country, for the purpose of further selling or other economic usage a licence in the sense of the provisions under the Law on Companies shall be required.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry issues the licence in agreement with the Interior Ministry after having heard The National Film Centre.

Article 2

At the latest within the term of one month from the date of coming into force of this Law, The National Film Centre shall be founded as a separate branch office institution of the Interior Ministry. It shall consist of the:

Chief of the Central Press Bureau at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers as a president and one representative each of the Interior Ministry, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Social Policy and People's Health as well as the representative of the Association of the Cinema Owners in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the president of film makers in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The representatives of the above mentioned ministries shall be appointed by the competent ministers either from the circle of officers or from the circle of cultural workers.

Article 3

The responsibility of The National Film Centre shall be to:

1. stipulate and supervise import and production as well as distribution of films;
2. promote national film production; and to
3. support moral education and useful propaganda by films.

Article 4

Assets of The National Film Centre shall be:

1. income stipulated under Article 8;
2. income from the penalties stipulated under Article 10; and
3. credits stipulated under the state's budget.

Out of the income under paragraphs 1 and 2, a current account with the National Mortgage Bank will be opened to be administered by The National Film Centre for the purpose of implementing tasks under Article 3.

Article 5

Closer provisions on the organization and operation of The National Film Centre, on prizes to its members and officers as well as on handling and spending its assets under paragraphs 1 and 2 of the previous Article 4 shall be regulated by the Interior Minister.

Article 6

All the films intended for distribution must be registered with The National Film Centre, through which they shall be submitted for censorship and sent back to the owners.

Article 7

For every 1,000 m of the entertaining film to be imported by the end of 1933, the importer shall be obliged to provide or produce and distribute at least 70 m and, after that time, at least 150 m of the silent film, that is, sound film of the national production for the imported silent, that is, sound film.

Article 8

The importers who declare that they shall not be able to fulfill the condition under the above Article 7, shall be obliged, for every meter of the national film they ought to provide or produce, to pay 50 dinars for silent films and 100 dinars for sound films in favour of The National Film Centre.

Article 9

Cinema owners shall be obliged with each presentation to show one or more cultural films to the length of at least 10% of the length of the total presentation programme. One half of these cultural films must be of the national production.

Under the cultural film a film is understood which contains a moral in the scientific, educational, economic, health, social, civic and national direction. Belonging here are also instructive newsreels on the current themes.

Article 10

He who violates the obligations stipulated under this Law, shall have to pay penalties from 5,000 to 20,000 dinars in favour of The National Film Centre. The penalties shall be pronounced by the first degree authorities.

Article 11

This Law shall come into force when published in the "Official Papers" except Articles 1, 7, 8 and 9 which shall come into force within three months after that date.

Belgrade, December 5, 1931

Aleksandar (s.)

Seen and stamped with the State's seal by the
State's seal keeper and Minister of Justice
Dr. Drag. S. Kojić (s.)

President of the Council of Ministers
and Interior Minister
P. R. Živković (s.)

KINEMATOGRAFIJA U SRBIJI 1941 - 1945**Miroslav Savković**

Činjenica da je, uz pomoć univerzalnog jezika pokretnih slika, moguće snažno uticati na svest ljudi različitog intelektualnog i kulturnog nivoa, doprinela je da film tokom Drugog svetskog rata, po važnosti bude ispred ostalih medijuma upotrebljivanih za propagandne svrhe, poput štampe, koju su direktno mogli koristiti samo pismeni ljudi, što je posebno došlo do izražaja na ovim našim prostorima.

Na teritoriji Srbije tokom Drugog svetskog rata odvijale su se raznovrsne i žive kinematografske aktivnosti. Oblici tih aktivnosti bili su različiti: od amaterskih pokušaja da se filmskim kamerama uzanoga formata zabeleže važni istorijski trenuci, preko sporadičnih kinematografskih aktivnosti, pa sve do sasvim zaokružene i solidno organizovane kinematografske delatnosti. Stepem korišćenja kinematografije na teritoriji Srbije tokom Drugog svetskog rata bio je uslovljen i ograničen organizaciono-tehničkom osposobljenošću i opremljenošću, tako da kinematografija nije bila podjednako rasprostranjena u svim geopolitičkim zajednicama, vojnim jedinicama i organizacijama.

Najviše filmova snimljenih na teritoriji Srbije tokom Drugog svetskog rata čine reportaže namenjene filmskim novostima, pre svega, nemačke proizvodnje. Po svojoj nameni, ali i suštini, te filmske reportaže pripadaju intenzivno propagandno obojenom novinarstvu. Vrednost ovih filmova danas je u tome što predstavljaju neprocenjive istorijske dokumente o ljudima i vremenu u kojem su nastali, što je podjednako svojstveno vrhunskim profesionalno urađenim filmovima, kao i diletantskim snimcima amatera - entuzijasta.

Na delu srpske teritorije koji je tokom Drugog svetskog rata bio pod nemačkom okupacijom, organizovane su celovite kinematografske delatnosti: kako osnovne (proizvodnja, promet, prikazivanje), tako i dopunske (zakonodavstvo, izdavačka delatnost, školovanje i sl.). Kinematografiju su kontrolisale i njome se vrlo aktivno bavile nemačke okupacione vlasti, ali i domaće ustanove i pojedinci.

Među domaćim ljudima koji su se bavili kinematografijom u okupiranoj Srbiji, najvažnija je delatnost filmskog snimatelja Stevana Miškovića.

U organizaciono-tehničkom pogledu, igrani film Dragoljuba Aleksića "Nevinost bez zaštite" najznačajniji je kinematografski projekt, koji su na teritoriji Srbije pod nemačkom okupacijom uspešno realizovali domaći ljudi, uprkos činjenici da se, i pored najdobronamernijeg pristupa, film mora okarakterisati kao diletantski.

Od mnogobrojnih filmskih snimaka nastalih na teritoriji Srbije tokom Drugog svetskog rata, najveći deo snimili su Nemci. Neki od njih čuvaju se u našim arhivima, ali, verovatno da ih još više ima u filmskim arhivima Nemačke, zatim, njenih saveznika iz Drugog svetskog rata, kao i u filmskim arhivima zemalja saveznica Jugoslavije.

Promet filmova u delu Srbije pod nemačkom okupacijom bio je strogo kontrolisan od nemačkih okupacionih vlasti, tako da su npr. beogradski uvoznici filmova, Tesla-film ili Jugoistok-film, ujedno bili i cenzori, što proizilazi iz činjenice da su se bavili uvozom isključivo nemačkih filmova.

Bioskopskim repertoarom u okupiranom Beogradu dominirali su nemački filmovi i filmski žurnali, koji su sledili političko-propagandne ciljeve Hitlerove Nemačke.

Kolarčev narodni univerzitet jedina je ustanova na teritoriji Srbije pod nemačkom okupacijom, čiji je bioskopski repertoar bio sastavljen od obrazovno-vaspitnih dokumentarnih filmova, koji su sadržinom odudarali od opšte slike bioskopskog repertoara u okupiranom Beogradu i Srbiji.

Na području ostalih srpskih teritorija, koje su bile okupirane of Mađarske, Nezavisne Države Hrvatske, Bugarske i Italije, kinematografske aktivnosti su bile različito razvijene, ali je film svuda igrao značajnu ulogu, prevashodno propagandnog sredstva.

Veliku količinu filmskog materijala na teritoriji Srbije tokom Drugog svetskog rata, načinili su saveznički ratni filmski reporteri iz Sovjetskog Saveza i Velike Britanije. Ti filmski snimci čuvaju se u našim filmskim arhivima, ali i u filmskim arhivima savezničkih zemalja, gde nam, kao i filmski snimci koje su načinili okupatori, još uvek nisu dostupni.

Delatnošću tri ratne kinematografske ustanove: Filmske sekcije GŠ NOV i PO Srbije, Filmske sekcije VŠ NOV i PO Jugoslavije i Državnog filmskog preduzeća, još tokom rata je omogućen uspešan početak organizovanog uobličavanja važne profesionalne, kulturno-umetničke i privredne, delatnosti na teritoriji Srbije - nacionalne kinematografije. Ovaj process je okončan 3. jula 1945. godine, kada su rasformirane ratne kinematografske ustanove, i kada je umesto njih organizovano Filmsko preduzeće Demokratske Federativne Jugoslavije, prva civilna kinematografska ustanova nastala posle Drugog svetskog rata na teritoriji Srbije (i Jugoslavije), u tek oslobođenoj zemlji.

Ključne reči: filmska produkcija, propaganda, nemačka okupacija, saveznici, četnici, partizani