

Film Production Between “Global” and “Local”: Insights From Bosnia and Herzegovina

Contemporary post-2000 Bosnian film is a success story, according to all crucial “indicators of international success” accessible to non-Hollywood films; it has earned most of the key film awards worldwide, including a Golden Bear and an Oscar. Perhaps even more importantly, Bosnian film is also remarkably popular with audiences at home, which is certainly not the case with many of the cinemas in Central and Eastern Europe. However, its success becomes truly significant when we shed light on the film production rates in Bosnia (in recent years, the rate of fiction feature film production has been 1-3 per year), and even more so, if we take into consideration the conditions for film production in Bosnia, which are close to impossible.

Marked by the contemporary conditions that strongly define film production everywhere (the transformation of creative and technological systems in the “digital age,” the increased interplay between local, national, regional, and global factors and dimensions), film in Bosnia, from production to consumption, has been completely transformed. As in other Central and Eastern European countries, it has been heavily affected by the rapid transformation from state socialism to global capitalism that began in the early 1990s. Moreover, it has also been influenced by destructive socio-political processes and armed conflicts following the dissolution of Yugoslavia.

So, how have socio-political and economic conditions – including military invasion, so-called “democratization,” and harsh neoliberal economic mechanisms – shaped and continue to shape film production in the state? What are the mechanisms that support, manage, regulate, and control creativity in film production in this conflictual socio-political context? How do films actually get made in Bosnia?

Table 1: Overview of the film domain in Bosnia

Production of (fiction) feature films per year	1-3
Responsible for cultural (film) policy	<i>State level</i> Ministry of Civil Affairs; Ministry of Foreign Affairs <i>Entity level</i> <i>Federation:</i> Ministry of Culture and Sport <i>Republic of Srpska:</i> Ministry of Education and Culture <i>Cantons (in Federation):</i> Ministries of Culture and Sport)
Budgetary institution (in charge of allocating funds)	<i>Federation:</i> Fund for Cinema <i>Republic of Srpska:</i> Ministry of Education and Culture

Production of (fiction) feature films per year	1-3
Public support for film	<i>Federation and Republic</i> : Mostly production and exhibition (festivals only), and, in rare cases, film infrastructure (theatres) or archives & conservation (digitization)
Annual public investment in Film	<i>Federation</i> : Film Fund which varies, but on average 1.5 million Euro (10-20% of public funding per film); smaller contributions from other public agencies <i>Republic of Srpska</i> : varies significantly, but in the best cases, approx. 1 million Euro in 2008
Average (fiction) feature film budget	<i>Federation</i> : 1 million Euro <i>Republic of Srpska</i> : too few films to be defined

Two sub-state political units follow more or less separate paths in the development of film culture (the third political unit is too small to have its own film policy or film production).

Film production in the independent state of BiH: the beginnings

Film in the newly-established state of Bosnia, set up in 1992, was marked by extreme conditions, destructive political processes, and armed conflicts generated by radical political manipulations. The Yugoslav film model – in which film was throughout its life-cycle, from production to exhibition, heavily supported by the state due to its recognition of film's importance for the state's political projects – completely collapsed.[1] A military invasion and interethnic combat brought about a massive decline in feature film production (and in the film market, too, obviously). After six months of shelling of the multiethnic Bosnian capital city Sarajevo,[2] which had a strong tradition as a film production centre, only four out of 16 production houses (barely) survived.[3] During the armed conflict, one fiction feature film was completed[4] *Magareće godine* (*Awkward Age*, 1991, released in 1994; directed by Nenad Dizdarević).[5]

However, despite the absence of fiction film production, film-making did not cease in Bosnia during the armed conflict. On the contrary, the number of films actually significantly increased during the

[1] Production funding came from the government and was allocated to production centres in the individual republics. These centres acted to some extent as self-regulating agencies; "workers" councils served as decision-making bodies, while the creative staff were granted "the status of freelance professionals." P. Levi, *Disintegration in Frames*, Stanford University Press, Stanford 2007, pp. 14-15.

[2] The three-and-a-half-year siege of Sarajevo was conducted by the Army of the Republic of Srpska and the Yugoslav People's Army (later transformed into the Army of Serbia and Montenegro), stationed in the hills around Sarajevo. The siege and war in Sarajevo resulted in huge human losses, with an extremely high percentage of civilian casualties.

[3] D.J. Goulding, *Liberated Cinema: the Yugoslav Experience, 1945-2001*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington 2002.

[4] D. Filipović, *Report on Fiction Feature Films in BiH*, Cinematheque of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo 2010.

[5] The film story is based on an acclaimed autobiographical novel and takes place in the early 1930s. Even though the film was completed by 1992, the negative was confiscated by the opposing authorities, and the film's release was postponed until 1994. The copy had to be smuggled out and processed in Zagreb and Paris; finally, in 1995, it was officially submitted as the BiH candidate for the Academy Awards for Best Foreign Film.

war, as indicated by reports made by Devleta Filipović.[6] Many local film professionals decided to stay in the war-torn country's besieged capital and keep a record of the horrifying experience. According to the catalogue *Sarajevo in the War*, issued in 1998 by the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Sarajevo Canton, 109 films (mostly documentaries) were produced in the Bosnian capital during the war period. Among the operating film production companies were *Atalanta*, *Profil*, and the FAOS (Film Archive of the Army Forces of BiH). However, perhaps the most well-known film production company was the SAGA association (Sarajevo Group of Authors). The film's authors participating in its loose organization provided a huge amount of audio-visual materials on wartime atrocities.

In July 1992, at the beginning of the armed conflict, the Serbian-led part of Bosnia (that would later become the Republic of Srpska) founded a public film production company *Srna Film*, which was set up in Pale, a small town above Sarajevo, where many Serbs from Sarajevo moved before or during the armed conflict. *Srna Film*, for a long period the only production company in the RS, focused on documentary films, as well. However, exact data on the early years of film production in the RS are, to the best of my knowledge, nonexistent.

Obviously, film production in Bosnia survived in the most extreme conditions: in the midst of armed conflict, without any systematic support except from the public broadcasting stations (such as BHT, Sarajevo; TV BiH Sarajevo-RTV BiH). We could talk here about the “heavy flexibilization” of the filmmaking process (cynically labelled). Furthermore, a specific cultural practice was introduced, almost literally, guerrilla film production, with a number of micro-budget documentaries and short films being produced.

The armed conflict was brought to a close in 1995 by the NATO intervention that ended military action on the ground, and the subsequent internationally brokered Dayton Peace Accord, negotiated by representatives of the parties involved in the war, including the neighbouring Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (that later became Serbia and Montenegro). The Agreement created a joint multi-ethnic “democratic” government and established a second layer of government comprised of two entities: the Bosniak-Croatian-led Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (the Federation was further divided into Cantons) and the Bosnian Serb-led Republic of Srpska (RS). Each entity had its own political structure and administration and its own constitution. In 1999, a third administrative unit, the Brčko District, was established.

Post-war Bosnia – socio-political background and film production

[6] For instance, looking at the numbers of short films produced in the last pre-war years, 13 shorts were made in 1990, and 16 shorts in 1991. However, in 1992, 22 shorts were made before the war started

(in April 1992) and 30 after April. D. Filipović, *Report on Short Films in BiH*, Cinematheque of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo 2010.

The process of re-constructing society was heavily influenced by the pressures and interests of the superpowers, and struggles among them. The democratization process led by the international community can be described as a new form of colonisation and colonialism. According to the principle legal document, the Dayton Peace Accord, Bosnia constitutes an “international protectorate,” with decision-making power held by the Office of the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The international actors operating in the region – the United Nations, the European Union, the USA and others – had a peculiarly simplistic understanding of the conflict and, consequently, their solution, the “de-ethnification” of the Bosnian politics,[7] proved to be reductionist and fatal for the future co-existence of various ethnic/religious groups in the state. The state was divided into three administrative entities, three interpretative frameworks and imaginaries (that do *not* correspond to administrative units), three official languages,[8] three official religions, and two alphabet systems. Moreover, the neo-liberal strategies introduced, including privatisation and restrictions on social welfare, recommended as a means for “improving” the Bosnian economy, further strengthened the destructive social processes affecting the already impoverished and polarized state.

With an extremely complicated administrative division in the state, and entrapped between the international protectorate’s neo-liberal agenda and a weak “local” administrative structure, the organization of culture was, and continues to be, rather retrograde. Culture (except for material heritage) has been basically excluded from the state’s responsibilities, as declared by the Dayton Agreement.[9] Furthermore, a complex administrative structure (more than 10 ministries in charge of culture in the state!) and various layers of governance and authority (state, entity, canton/municipality level)[10] complicate coordination and issue of responsibility for culture – and film – within the system.

The introduction of the “system” in the field of film

However, while film output after the war remained miniscule in the country as a whole, Bosnian cinema was placed on the international map in 2001 in a big way: in that year, the fiction feature debut of the young Bosnian film director Danis Tanović, *Ničija zemlja* (*No Man’s Land*, 2001), started on its winning path, marked by a Golden Globe,

[7] After: A. Hozic, “Democratizing Media, Welcoming Big Brother: Media in Bosnia and Herzegovina,” [in:] *Finding the Right Place on the Map*, ed. K. Jakubowicz, M. Sukosd, The University of Chicago Press, Bristol 2008, p. 151.

[8] Previously belonging to the same Serbo-Croatian language, in recent decades the languages have been subjected to the creation of differences by elites as part of their destructive political projects.

[9] Cultural policy at the state level – giving preference to a “conservationist” vision of culture – was reduced to the lowest common denominator among a

politically, ethnically, and culturally divided society – to an officially acclaimed monumental heritage.

[10] The state level: the State Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with few responsibilities in the field of culture; Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The entity level: the Federal Ministry of Culture and Sport in the Bosniak/Croat Federation of BiH; and the Ministry of Education and Culture in the Republic of Srpska (RS) in Banja Luka. At the cantonal level (in the Federation of BiH), each of the cantons has its own Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports.

a César, a European Film Award, and an Oscar. While the film, a war drama about opposing soldiers trapped in a trench, was actually an international co-production (it received European support), without Bosnian financial involvement, inside Bosnia it was perceived as being purely “Bosnian,” and its international success greatly contributed to the introduction of a “system” into the previously completely “flexible” film field in the Federation. At the end of 2002, the High Representative approved the Act that established, among other things, the Federal Ministry of Culture and Sport as the key institution in charge of cultural activities, with policy-making competencies within the Federation that included film.^[11] The objectives of the Ministry are, as stated in the Federal Ministry report drafted by Negra Selimbegović “to avoid elimination of worthy cultural programmes and manifestations; to support projects and programmes that contribute to the development of culture; and to support self-sustainable projects.”^[12] This strategic direction is more than understandable: culture – while enormously important in the Yugoslav period – inevitably remains on the margins in a war-shattered and unstable country with an ineffective administrative system. But what are these “worthy cultural programmes and manifestations,” important not just for the Federation, but for the whole country? In the field of film, these are considered to be film festivals, primarily the Sarajevo Film Festival, the key film event in the region. I cannot overemphasize the importance of this decision: film festivals are – besides TV – *crucial (“legal”) outlets for the films, perceived as “domestic” in the state* (as well as in the region; otherwise, “domestic” films – as well as “foreign” ones – are consumed in the form of “pirated” products).

In 2002, *The Film Fund Sarajevo (Fondacija za kinematografiju)*, the key agency for the support of film production, was established within the Ministry, with the objective of co-financing the production of domestic fiction feature and short films, documentaries, animation, and regional films; supporting script development, film promotion and distribution; and helping to educate film workers on the basis of annual open competitions. Resources for operations and the realisation of the Fund’s goals were secured in the Budget of the Federation. Even though its initial budget in 2003 was less than 750,000 Euro per year (BAM/KM 1.5 million), the new initiative immediately produced results: in 2003, three feature films and three shorts were completed and released in the Federation.^[13] This must be considered an enormous success when

[11] N. Selimbegović, *Report on the Cinema in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, 2010. (According to international financial institutions, the multilayered governmental structure swallows as much as 50 percent of the GDP; quoted in A. Hozic, op. cit., p. 148). For instance, the Budget of the Federation of BiH in 2010 was a bit less than 900,000 Euro; out of which 0.45 percent was allocated for culture. As reported

by the Ministry head official, the best situation was in 2008 when one percent of the Federation’s budget was allocated for culture (N. Selimbegović, interview, April 2010).

[12] Ibidem.

[13] *CineLink Publication*, Sarajevo Film Festival, 2008, p. 84.

taking into account that this equalled the total output of feature films in all of Bosnia from the end of the armed conflict in 1995 until 2000. During that period, only three feature films were made in the country; according to Horton (2001), this was “the lowest cinematic output of any European country over that period.” [14] From 2002 until 2008, the Fund supported 30 feature film projects, among these were the most awarded works in the territory. [15] Moreover, from 2004 onward, the Fund was open to co-production projects from the region, and included support for majority Croatian productions. In 2010, the Budget of the Film Fund was 2,000,000 BAM/KM (approximately 1,000,000 Euro); this meant that in the budget of the Federation, 0.11% was reserved for film.

Table 2: Budget allocated to the Film Fund, Federation of BiH per year [16]

2003	1,425,000 BAM/KM
2004	962,750 BAM/KM
2005	2,000,000 BAM/KM
2006	2,000,000 BAM/KM
2007	2,000,000 BAM/KM
2008	3,000,000 BAM/KM
2009	1,527,999 BAM/KM
2010	2,000,000 BAM/KM

The Film Fund initiative is open to projects by citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and establishes production companies in charge of film projects (producer-based mechanism). A film must have relevant aesthetic and cultural worth and contribute to the development of cultural diversity and identity in Bosnia, but no specificities are given. Language requirements broadly cover all official languages in Bosnia (Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian). The following criteria/requirements greatly shape the production mode: financial participation by the producers and domestic financial sources (the minimum requirement is 20 percent of the film’s budget), and securing eligibility for the project as a candidate for Eurimages and other European co-production funds. The contribution of BiH filmmakers must be considered *domestic* according to the criteria used in the Eurimages list, and must play a role in the development of BiH cinema.

According to film professionals in the Federation, subsidies from the Fund cover approximately 10–20 per cent of film production costs for domestic films. [17] Obviously, this initiative almost exclusively

[14] A.J. Horton, “Down in the gutter, looking up at the stars: Faruk Sokolović’s *Mliječni put* (Milky way),” *Kinoeye*, vol. 1, Issue 8, 10th December 2001.

[15] SFF 2008, Promocija Fondacije za kinematografiju FBiH.

[16] N. Selimbegović, *Report on Cinema in the Fed-*

eration of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federal Ministry of Culture and Sport, 2010.

[17] Almir Šahinović, producer, Heft production house; Lejla Panjeta, film scholar, interviews, Sarajevo August 2008. Namik Kabil, film director; interview April 2010.

requires *international co-production mode*, and makes obvious the importance of (pan-)European initiatives for film production in the Federation.

Moreover, a significant role in film, from the development and production stages onward, is played – following the general European tradition – by *public broadcasters*: BHRT, Federal FTV (FTV), and RTRS often offer financial, material, and in-kind support, including services, infrastructure, and promotional services.[18] They also offer film professionals the possibility to work – primarily on documentaries and short TV films.[19] In recent years, film production has been backed by the canton of the capital city, the Canton of Sarajevo and the Sarajevo City Government, as well. The Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Canton of Sarajevo also allocates resources to film exhibition infrastructure; taking into consideration the extremely poor (and still declining) state of cinema theatres in the capital and the Federation in general, this is of salient importance.

In the Serbian-led enclave, the Republic of Srpska (RS), the key policy-making body in the domain of culture is the Ministry of Education and Culture, located in the RS capital, Banja Luka. Still, while the Federation inherited some of its film production system from the Yugoslav era (the strong traditions of its production centres; the system of education for film professionals),[20] in the RS, “real cinema” did not exist until the establishment of the Academy of Arts in Banja Luka in 1999, which began, along with the Faculty of Dramatic Arts, educating future film professionals, as Vedran Padalović notes.[21] In 2006, when the first generation of film professionals started their careers, the Ministry of Education and Culture began to allocate funds exclusively to the domain of film. The funding was minor – three short documentary films received between 2,500 and 5,000 Euro each – but the system had at least been introduced.[22] A major increase in funding occurred the following year: a fund amounting to 750,000 Euro was established[23] for the purpose of making a co-production with neighbouring Serbia; the project was a fiction feature film, the historical drama *Sveti Georgije ubiva aždahu* (*St George Shoots the Dragon*, 2009), directed by Srđan Dragojević, and co-produced by a “local” production company, Oskar Film. At the same time, a budgetary initiative, *Funds for the Development of Cinema*, was introduced in the Ministry of Education and

[18] *CineLink Publication*, Sarajevo Film Festival, 2008, p. 84.

[19] N. Ibrahimović, “Između nacije i kreacije: bosanskohercegovački igrani film 1995–2008,” *Sarajevske sveske*, 19–20, pp. 116–165.

[20] The Academy of Performing Arts in Sarajevo was founded in 1981 with a Department of Acting. In 1989, the Department of Directing was opened and in 1994 the Department of Dramaturgy. The Production Department for theatre, film and television producers

was established in 2010, as stated in the publication published by the Association of Filmmakers of BiH, *BH Film 2012/1213* (2013, p. 83).

[21] Vedran Padalović, Consultant at the Ministry of Culture and Education of the Republic of Srpska, 2010, interview, email, Banja Luka, August 2010.

[22] BA Film Funds Data Collection. Vedran Padalović, acquired March 2013.

[23] *Ibidem*.

Culture.[24] In 2008, the fund, which increased to one million Euros, was spent on film festivals and another film co-production with Serbia, the “dark” comedy *Turneja* (*The Tour*, 2008), directed by renowned Goran Marković from Serbia and made in co-production with the production company Balkan Film, located in Banja Luka; the film received 250,000 Euro. In the RS, as well, 2008 is considered the most significant in terms of both the *amounts* allocated for film, as well as the *diversity* of projects funded.

In 2009 “The Law on Cinema in the Republic of Srpska” was passed. As its title implies, the Law governs the film field of the RS as an *independent territory*. (in contradiction to this, Article 12 defines what “domestic” or “indigenous” film would be, and the definition is wider).[25] While the Act defines “cinema activities” as the development, production, promotion, distribution, commercial reproduction, public exhibition, preservation and storage of film works, public support goes merely to film production and film festivals. The Act, among other things, “provides for the establishment of the Film Centre of the Republic of Srpska, a public institution that deals with the administration of funds, and serves as a film commission, providing information and generally working to improve film as art,”[26] but due to the global crisis, the budget for film in the Republic of Srpska was cut by 70 per cent, and the Film Centre has not yet been established.

I must introduce here the wider problem of regulatory mechanisms in Bosnia. While in the RS, the system is more centralized, the situation in the Federation is even far more complicated, and the system proves to be an obstacle in itself: the Constitution of the Federation grants the right to adopt and implement laws to the cantons. Even though the cantons are authorized to pass their own laws on film, the majority have not yet done so, with the exception of the canton of the Bosnian capital (the Canton of Sarajevo’s Ministry of Culture and Sport) with its Film Act.[27] The system of transferring authority for regulation to the canton level in actuality represents a hypocritical and ineffective project, since the cantons (especially the smaller ones) have no actual resources (financial or other) at their disposal for the development of a regulatory framework, and even less for its implementation. What would usually be called “de-centralization,” is actually a diminishing of systematic support for cultural activities and cultural development, and would perhaps better be described as the *atomisation* of culture.

However, as in all Yugoslav successor states (and many “Southern” states), an even more burning issue is the interpretation of legis-

[24] Ibidem.

[25] Domestic film is produced by a domestic producer independently or in collaboration with one or more domestic or foreign co-producers; the majority of members of the authors’ part are citizens of the Republic of Srpska and Bosnia and Herzegovina; the theme is from the cultural space of the Republic of

Srpska and Bosnia and Herzegovina; a work made in coproduction with a foreign co-producer is produced according to the European Film Coproduction Convention.

[26] The Law on Cinema in the Republic of Srpska.

[27] Ministarstvo kulture i sporta Kantona Sarajevo, “Zakon o filmskoj djelatnosti,” Sarajevo 2001.

lative acts; their implementation is heavily defined by power relations in a particular context, with “stronger rules” having the imperative.[28] The issue also concerns, of course, the identity of the “stronger” one (a state, using its “official” sanctioning mechanisms, or a private entity).

Hence, what do all these problematic contexts mean for filmmaking in the state? How do films actually get made in Bosnia? Here, we could talk about the *microenterprise* organization of film production; small production enterprises are mostly established by the filmmaker(s), director(s) and/or producer(s). Small production enterprises, however, are greatly under-capitalised, and film production activities (fiction feature films, documentaries, shorts) must be supported or complemented by the production of commercials, music videos and other “commercial” materials. Furthermore, there is an almost complete institutional centralization of filmmaking in the capital cities, Sarajevo and Banja Luka. From the early 1990s on, we can, to a large extent, talk about *ad hoc* film projects in Bosnia, and, in many cases, even “guerilla” filmmaking. *Project management* (project-based work) absolutely dominates the development/production stage.

Moreover, a number of the film and media products (and other art forms) are made by *non-profit sector* organizations that are not exclusively focused on film (like Pro.ba). These films are characterized by strong socially-oriented goals (art for social change; strengthening civil society in Bosnia, etc) and are mostly supported by grants from international organizations (including foreign embassies, the Soros Fund, Fonds ECO – Europe Centrale et Orientale, Pro-Helvetia, Rotterdam IFF’s Hubert Bals Fund). A number of significant film projects, including short, feature, fiction, documentary, and animated films,[29] have been completed this way; however, the issue of this kind of filmmaking is its limited circulation and consumption (basically limited on the film festivals and occasionally TV).

In the case of the fiction feature films, the dominant production mode in Bosnia can be identified as multilateral co-production involving two or more territories from the region and one or two other European territories; co-productions between two or more territories from the region alone is rarer.[30] There is an almost complete depend-

A microperspective on film production practice

[28] Interview with Miran Zupanič, film director, associate professor, University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, May 2008.

[29] Among many others, films made in this production mode have included short fiction films, such as *Prtljag (Baggage)* by Danis Tanović (Bosnia and Hercegovina/Italy), or *What Do I Know* by Šejla Kamerić and Timur Makarević (Bosnia and Hercegovina/Slovenia, 2007), with a successful tour of film festivals; animation, such as Dragan Rokvić’s *Ljudi još uvijek idu na mjesec (Man Still Goes to the Moon, 2008)*; and documentaries, such as Namik Kabil’s

Interrogation (2007), which investigate the traumas of war. See, for instance, the Sarajevo Center for Contemporary Art (Pro.ba), with its projects such as “Tales of Transition” – a media and art project to raise general awareness about meanings of transitional justice or “Bosnia And Herzegovina Searching for Lost Identity”: <http://www.pro.ba/en/priceiztranzicije/>; <http://www.pro.ba/en/bosna-i-hercegovina-u-potrazi-za-izgubljenim-identitetom/>.

[30] Based on *CineLink Publication*, an industry overview in South Eastern Europe, issued for the Sarajevo Film Festival, 2010, pp. 36–37.

ency on *public* funding (coming from the state, (pan-)European level, or regional funds). The shortage of public funding in the Federation, where the filmmaking community is larger, results in a heavy dependency on transnational finances.

It must be emphasized that film production patterns to some extent differ remarkably between the RS and the Federation; the parallel development of film production in the two Bosnian administrative units must be recognized. While policies are relatively non-discriminatory (based on indicators as to who can apply for Film Fund funding in the Federation, for instance, or the definition of a “domestic” film in the Law on Cinema in the RS), the funds are *de facto* completely divided, resulting in the complete non-collaboration between filmmakers outside the administrative borders of a given state. To the best of my knowledge, no film produced in Bosnia has received funding from one of the “other” entities. However, as a means of building bridges, film events, such as festivals, and the Sarajevo Film Festival, in particular, with its industry section CineLink co-production market, play a crucial role; and recently, efforts to unite the film industry in the state have been undertaken through the project “Mapping the Film Industry in Bosnia and Herzegovina.”

In the Federation, the first post-war fiction feature, produced in 1997, *Savršeni krug* (*The Perfect Circle*, directed by the acclaimed Ademir Kenović), made in an international (French-Bosnian) co-production, provided a strong indicator of the predominant future filmmaking model: a new “international” production mode, involving “cultural” as well as financial collaboration, and the pooling of creative, financial and technical sources Europe-wide.

The films co-produced in the Federation have an average budget of one million Euro, and minority co-production partners mainly come from Germany (supported by German regional funds – Medienboard Berlin Brandenburg, Mittle Deutche Medienfonderunng; ZDF/ARTE); France (Fonds Sud Cinema; ARTE France); and Austria (Vienna Film Fund). On the (pan-)European level, of course, the MEDIA development support programme and Eurimages are of salient importance.^[31]

[31] For instance, if we take the case of the drama *Grbavica* (*Sarajevo, My Love*, 2006), directed by Jasmila Žbanić, focusing on the day-to-day survival practices of a single mother in the post-war Bosnian capital), that won the Berlinale Golden Bear, and became one of the most popular films in post-war Bosnia, the co-producing countries were Bosnia, Austria, Germany and Croatia (countries’ share: 40 percent Austria; Bosnia and Herzegovina 26 percent; Germany 23 percent, and the rest came from Croatia – Croatia’s Ministry of Culture and Jadran Film); the film was supported by the Eurimages co-production fund. Or, taking a case of the drama *Snijeg* (*Snow*, 2008), di-

rected by Aida Begić, which tells a story of a post-war village where, except the village elder, no man was left alive, and won the Critics Week Grand Prize at the Cannes Film Festival: with co-producers from France, Germany, and Iran, the shares in the film were: Fond Sud 10.2 percent (France), MDM Fund 27.2 percent (Germany), and DEFC 8.5 percent (Iran). The funding coming from “inside” Bosnia was the following: Film Fund Sarajevo contributed 16.6 percent, Federal Television (public broadcaster) 7.7 percent, the City of Sarajevo 5 percent; the Canton of Sarajevo 3.5 percent, the municipalities in the Federation 2 percent. The share of private financiers did not exceed 3 percent of

While the system in the Federation requires the *internationalization* of film production (especially in the fiction feature films), in the RS, film production output is even much smaller, and has been, up to now, and especially in the case of fiction features, basically more or less attached to neighbouring Serbia, a state with which the majority of the RS population shares “cultural attributes,” such as ethnic/religious background, and – of crucial importance in this case – an interpretative framework.[32] Participants from other countries participate as minority co-producers. If we look solely at films supported by public funds, the issues of the “nation,” and the “Serbian question” in particular, seem to be of particular importance, including *Stradanje Srba u Sarajevu* (*The Suffering of Serbs in Sarajevo*), a short documentary supported in 2006 and 2008; *Sarajevo logor za Srbe* (*Sarajevo, Concentration Camp for Serbs*), a feature documentary supported in 2009; and *Crni Đorđe i srpska ravolucija* (*Black George and the Serbian Revolution*), a historical documentary series supported in 2009.[33]

However, it seems that filmmaking in the RS is striving to become self-sufficient of its “attached” situation. In 2009, a fiction feature film *32. Decembar* (*32nd of December*) was made, directed by the young Saša Hajduković, a drama that in a non-linear way narrates three stories that unfold on New Year’s Eve. The film was supported by the RS Ministry in two successive years, 2008 and 2009, and received 75,00 and 20,000 Euro, respectively. As stressed by Padalović, the film became “the first feature film (national production) of the Republic of Srpska,”[34] as it was made from start to finish by the film professionals from the Republic of Srpska; hence, it is perceived as the first “indigenous” film in the RS.

Since film is a capital-intensive cultural activity with a more emphasized economic dimension, I would like to raise – and leave open – the question of the “speaking position” and production-specific constraints upon “creative voices” in the absence of a well-funded cinema from “inside.” We might argue that in a conjuncture marked by neo-liberalism and the continuing growth of dependency on transnational finances, the film industry in the Federation and its co-production mode (with non-national partners) are following the larger processes of globalization; however, perhaps, we could also talk about “con-

the film’s budget. Sponsors included a telecommunication company (BH Telecom) and a pharmaceuticals company, with smaller contributions coming from others. The project also won Eurimages support (16 percent); interview with Elma Tataragić, producer, Sarajevo.

[32] In other words, along with destructive political processes, and the generation of new political units and groupings, new “interpretative frameworks” have also been established in the Bosnian and Herzegovian socio-cultural space. *What happened during the war?* became a crucial question posed by all ethnic

groups involved in the conflicts, with interpretations highly contradicting each other. These interpretations form a crucial part of the *integrative mechanisms* of the states/parties to the conflict (the mechanisms employed to manage society and form social units, based on *common interest*), and for *social segregation* between and within the states, and within administrative units.

[33] All factual data are from BA Film Funds Data Collection. Vedran Padalović, acquired 2013.

[34] Ibidem.

scious transnationalism” (borrowing the term from Randall Halle). [35] On the one hand, it may be true that, as Halle observes in general, this “does not mean that transnational production undermines national production. On the contrary, it is resignified. Transnationalism can actually strengthen the production of national film.” [36] On the other hand, it is questionable as to how much this co-production is influenced by an active engagement in “pleasing the West,” the community with greater executive power over the filmmaking process. While my interviewees, film professionals in Bosnia, argued strongly that no such thing as investor’s pressures exist, it is obviously a difficult and awkward task for one to comment on the level of auto-censorship in a particular work. However, I would like to raise the issue if the themes and the symbolic order of Bosnian social reality portrayed are perhaps more in line with the principles of a “condensed European” perspective. How much are the operations of selecting the theme, filtering, stylization, and formalisation in the filmmaking process based on “Western” make-believe? How much can painful questions about memory be addressed in a “polished” manner? How much does the transnational production mode prevent films from taking more “radicalized” positions? In what direction would the speaking positions be “radicalized” if a wider variety of funds were available without the necessity of “playing it safe”? Would the level of satirical treatment of particular issues (such as a particularly common theme in filmmaking in Bosnia – BiH’s relation to the outside world and its interrelationship with the international community) be even sharpened if a variety of financing sources were available from the “inside”?

Conclusion

The transformation of the global film landscape imposed by the global economy has brought about a questioning of a long persistent notion and object of investigation in film studies – the category of *national* cinema. While, as Trevor G. Elkington and Andrew Nestingen have pointed out, the category of “national cinema” is “based on untenable assumptions: while national cinema putatively encodes the homogeneity and temporal continuity of a national culture, it may be better understood as a site of conflict, heterogeneity, and change.” [37]

Along these lines, perhaps the problematic conditions of film production in Bosnia can be seen only as representative of contemporary trends? In the absence of highly differentiated production modes and financial sources (as present, for instance, in the neighbouring Serbia, where production modes vary from really micro budget filmmaking practices, to films generously supported by public funding and varied private sources from inside the state), film in Bosnia has

[35] R. Halle, “German film. European film: transnational production, distribution and reception,” *Screen* 2006, vol. 47, no. 2.

[36] Ibidem.

[37] T.G. Elkington, A. Nestingen, “Introduction: Transnational Nordic Cinema,” [in:] *Transnational Cinema in a Global North: Nordic Cinema in Transition*, eds. A. Nestingen, T.G. Elkington, Wayne State University Press, Detroit 2005, p. 13.

somehow established a “new communication geography,”[38] not detached from the symbolic spaces of the culture of population units (rather than a “nation”), and thus, raising particular questions as to the production-specific constraints imposed upon creative voices and speaking positions. Parallel processes co-exist which, on the one hand, might be called localization (“ethnicization”?), and, on the other, transnationalism – especially in institutional and organizational terms, but, to a lesser extent, in terms of representation, as well.

As the case of Bosnia shows, it has become obvious that film in any state with a “small market” (meaning, without large “national” markets, and extensive and all-embracing film industry mechanisms, able to benefit from economies of scale and scope), requires public intervention; market forces alone certainly cannot provide for the satisfactory development of the film industry. In other words, in order to address deficiencies arising from the “free” operations of the market, to enable relatively consistent and diverse film production, differentiated production modes and diverse cultural expressions, crucial for any society, but, in particular, in a conflictual socio-political context, like Bosnia’s, public mechanisms are of the highest importance.

However, again, they must be strengthened at all levels, with a vision, a holistic approach to film culture. The link between the phases of the film life cycle (from pre-production production postproduction, distribution to consumption) has to be re-established. Guerrilla practices based on enthusiasm and creativity are the indigenous films’ life savers, but they are certainly not sufficient.

[38] D. Morley, K. Robins, *Spaces of Identity: Global Media, Electronic Landscapes and Cultural Boundaries*, Routledge, London 1995, p. 11.