

Table of contents and Abstracts – Winter 2014

Table of contents and Abstracts – Winter 2014

CZECHOSLOVAK NEW WAVE CINEMA RECONSIDERED

Forewords

Péter Gerencsér: Hens on a Škoda: An Introduction to the Czechoslovak New Wave Cinema

Vince Zalán: People who speak differently: On the forerunners of the Czechoslovak New Wave

Surrealism, Sexuality, Counterfilm

Alison Frank: Czech Surrealism and Czech New Wave Realism: the Importance of Objects

Katarina Soukup: Banquet of Profanities: Food and Subversion in Vera Chytilová's *Daisies*

Jonathan Owen: Slovak bohemians: revolution, counterculture and the end of the Sixties in Juraj Jakubisko's films

From Totalitarianism to Paternalism

Péter Gerencsér: Holocaust with a Human Face? Aporias of Identification in Ján Kadár and Elmar Klos's *The Shop on Main Street* (*Obchod na korze*)

Gábor Gelencsér: I care, therefore I am. The motif of paternalism in the films of the Czechoslovak New Wave Cinema

Julia Zelman: Conscience and the Subjective Camera. Karel Kachyňa's *The Ear* (*Ucho*, 1970)

"Streamlined" madness

Petra Hanáková: "The Films We Are Ashamed of": Czech Crazy Comedy of the 1970s and 1980s

Selected Filmography of the Czechoslovak New Wave Cinema

Review

Orsolya Milián: Keletről Nyugatnak (is). Imre Anikó (ed.): *A Companion to Eastern European Cinemas*. 2012.

ABSTRACTS

Péter Gerencsér: Hens on a Škoda: An Introduction to the Czechoslovak New Wave Cinema

The Czechoslovak New Wave (*Československá nová vlna*) is one of the most original film movement in the sixties, yet it is underrepresented in the history of film. This paper does not provide a systematic overview of the Czechoslovak New Wave, but aims to revise a few selected issues. First, the essay focuses on the title(s) of the movement, and prefers to use the term “Czechoslovak New Wave” instead of “Czech New Wave”. Subsequently, it examines the unity and general characteristics of the movement (and Czechoslovak cinematography in general). Finally, the paper draws attention to the importance of the intellectual history of the Czech/Slovak paradigmatical ideas, from which the Czechoslovak New Wave Cinema may be understood more fundamentally.

Vince Zalán: People who speak differently: On the forerunners of the Czechoslovak New Wave

The essay examines the forerunners of the Czechoslovak New Wave, especially the group of auteur films that were the first to break with the earlier schematic tradition. The films under scrutiny are the following: *The White Dove* (1960) by František Vlácil, *The Sun in a Net* (1962) by Štefan Uher, a Slovak director, and finally Jaromil Jireš's *The Cry* (1966).

Alison Frank: Czech Surrealism and Czech New Wave Realism: the Importance of Objects

This article examines a major difference between French and Czech Surrealism as exemplified by their attitudes to film. It engages in a close analysis of three films by documentary-influenced Czech New Wave directors whom the Prague Surrealist group admired: Miloš Forman, Ivan Passer and Jan Němec. The analysis focuses on the way in which objects in these films can take on multiple meanings depending on their context. It concludes that such objects suggest a broadening of possibilities in everyday life and in this respect correspond to both Surrealist goals and to the experience of living in a society in the process of political liberalization.

Katarina Soukup: Banquet of Profanities: Food and Subversion in Vera Chytilová's *Daisies*

In this text, Soukup examines one of the most exhilarating cinematic works of the Czechoslovak New Wave: Věra Chytilova's *Daisies* (1966). Employing an analysis of the historico-political context

of *Daisies*, along with theories of carnival, the grotesque body and the carnival banquet, Soukup aims to unravel how food and gluttony in the film operate as blasphemous metaphors for transgressing sanctioned cultural forms, i.e. the canon of feminine representation and Socialist Realism.

Jonathan Owen: Slovak bohemians: revolution, counterculture and the end of the Sixties in Juraj Jakubisko's films

The Sixties films of Slovak New Wave director Juraj Jakubisko demonstrate how one can adopt “revolutionary” aesthetics without necessarily espousing actual revolution. Deeply engaged with the ideas and motifs of surrealism and the counterculture, Jakubisko is nonetheless radically critical of those movements. Above all Jakubisko rejects Sixties-style, macro-level utopianism and modernist notions of historical progress. This essay focuses particularly closely on the 1969 film *Birds, Orphans and Fools*, whose bohemian protagonists turn their backs on a world of unchangeable horror and oppression and decide to become “fools”. This film explores, and also problematizes, both the Sixties aspiration towards self-transformation or alternative lifestyle practices and the countercultural valorization of madness. The author suggests that Jakubisko is poised ambivalently here between a consuming negativity and a nuanced critique of Sixties radicalism that preserves, in more limited and personal terms, a sense of the utopian.

Péter Gerencsér: Holocaust with a Human Face? Aporias of Identification in Ján Kadár and Elmar Klos's *The Shop on Main Street* (Obchod na korze)

The Shop on Main Street (Obchod na korze, 1965) directed by the Slovak Ján Kadár and the Czech Elmar Klos was the first film which won an Academy Award for the Central and Eastern European region. This study examines the film focusing on facets of the idea of a Central European identity. Firstly, the essay tests the applicability of the concept of (trans)national film. Secondly, it puts the film in the context of the Holocaust films made in Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic. Finally, the study analyses the film in the light of Hannah Arendt's idea on the “banality of evil” and the possibilities of representing Holocaust.

Gábor Gelencsér: I care, therefore I am. The motif of paternalism in the films of the Czechoslovak New Wave Cinema

Following the period characterized by personal cult, the Soviet-type states in East- Central Europe realized diverse versions of a paternalistic “soft dictatorship”. Apart from the Soviet model, the culture of national politics may have played a role in the formation of “caring oppression”. Consequentially, the representation of paternalism, situated in the grey zone between total oppression and democracy, has meant a complex challenge to artists, striving, on the one hand, to grasp this complex sociopsychological aspect of oppression, and on the other hand express the unique national character. Significant works deal with this phenomenon in the filmic heritage of most countries in East-Central Europe. The topic is particularly noteworthy in the case of Czech New Wave since it overarches the history of the style, and emerges in diverse modes. Thus,

paternalism may be regarded as a representative thematic motive of the Czech New Wave.

The essay discusses the history and stylistic variations of paternalism in the following directors and films: Miloš Forman's: *Black Peter* (Cerný Petr, 1963), *Loves of a Blonde* (Lásky jedné plavovlásky, 1965), *The Firemen's Ball* (Hoří, má panenko, 1967); Jan Němec: *A Report on the Party and the Guests* (O slavnosti a hostech, 1966); Jiří Menzel: *Larks on String* (Skrivánci na niti, 1969); Karel Kachyňa: *The Ear* (Ucho, 1969); Vlastimil Venclík: *The Uninvited Guest* (Nezvaný host, 1969).

Julia Zelman: Conscience and the Subjective Camera. Karel Kachyňa's *The Ear* (Ucho, 1970)

This paper examines one of the most political films of the Czechoslovak New Wave, *The Ear* by Karel Kachyňa, who belongs to the older generation of the movement. The film was banned, and was not shown until 1990, after the Velvet Revolution. The study suggests that the older generation was often more critical towards the regime than the younger generation. It argues that the film is not only significant from a political point of view, but is also aesthetically innovative, and this can be identified in the use of the subjective camera. Based on this assumption, the essay scrutinizes the extent to which different stylistic features apply to films made by older *vis-à-vis* the younger generation.

Petra Hanáková: "The Films We Are Ashamed of": Czech Crazy Comedy of the 1970s and 1980s

The study examines films belonging the group of "crazy comedies" (*bláznivé komedie*) made in Czechoslovakia during the political era called normalization. This genre is frequently contrasted with Czechoslovak New Wave Cinema. Firstly, the paper explores generic and stylistic characteristics of the genre, and finds that these comedies are hybrids. Subsequently, the essay researches the reason for this hybridity. It concludes – and thus rehabilitates the genre – that the strategies of self-hybridization and self-colonization are rooted in Czech history, in particular in the Revival era in the first half of the 19th century.

© Apertúra, 2014. tél | www.apertura.hu

webcím: <https://www.apertura.hu/2014/tel/table-of-contents-and-abstracts-winter-2014/>

Apertura.hu

Image not found or type unknown