

ILIJA MILOSAVLJEVIĆ

Faculty of Philosophy, University of Niš
ilija.milosavljevic@filfak.ni.ac.rs

IVANA ERCEGOVAC

Faculty of Applied Media, Higher Colleges of Technology, UAE
iercegovac@hct.ac.ae

ANNA CARROLL

independent researcher, USA
annabcarroll@gmail.com

The Role of Women in the Production and Distribution of Series in Yugoslavia – Creators of Socialist Cultural Heritage

The paper deals with the research of the presence and roles of women in the creation of series in socialist Yugoslavia during the sixties and seventies of the 20th century. Besides the primary objective of identification, this study aims to identify specific patterns in work allocation, highlight significant female contributors, and underscore their contributions to the development of television series, thereby shedding light on values, cultural patterns, and societal practices. Also, Cultural Identity Theory was implemented to provide a valuable framework for understanding how women's contributions behind the scenes in Yugoslav television series production during the 1960s and 1970s are intricately linked to the construction of cultural identity. Further, the paper analyzes the list of employees involved in the creation of 17 Yugoslav series created during the 1960s and 1970s. All information about the employees was found on the site IMDB.com. With the help of a specially constructed code list, they were listed and classified, and descriptive and comparative statistics of data analysis were carried out in the SPSS 24.0 program. In the second part of the analysis, the most significant women in this process were singled out and presented. The

results clearly demonstrate that women held significantly fewer positions than men, with a distinct division of labor based on gender roles. Men are more often those who relate to the main positions in making series, and women to logistics and aesthetics of the characters. Also, the conclusion of the research is that, in order to be successful, a woman in that period often had to be supported by a man, but that, when she was recognized, she played a significant role in many projects, thus participating in defining the cultural heritage of an entire era.

Key words: television series, women, socialism, Yugoslavia, cultural heritage

Улога жена у продукцији и дистрибуцији серија у Југославији – креатори социјалистичког културног наслеђа

Рад се бави истраживањем присутности и улоге жена у настанку серија у социјалистичкој Југославији током шездесетих и седамдесетих година 20. века. Осим самог детектовања, циљ рада је и да уочи одређене правилности у расподели послова, издвоји најважније жене појединце и укаже на њихове улоге у креирању серија, а путем њих и пожељних вредности, културних образаца и навика друштва. Теорија културног идентитета је примењена како би пружила користан оквир за разумевање како су доприноси жена „иза камере“ у југословенској продукцији телевизијских серија током 1960-их и 1970-их година сложено повезани са изградњом културног идентитета. Даље, у раду је анализиран списак запослених у креирању 17 југословенских серија насталих током 1960-их и 1970-их година. Сви подаци о запосленима пронађени су на сајту IMDb.com. Уз помоћ посебно конструисане кодне листе они су пописани и класификовани, а дескриптивна и компаративна статистика података и анализа спроведене су у програму SPSS 24.0. У другом делу анализе издвојене су и представљене најзначајније жене у овом процесу. Резултати показују да је ангажовано много мање жена од мушкараца, те да су постојали јасно подељени мушки и женски послови. Мушки су чешће они који се односе на главне позиције у прављењу серија, а женске на логистичке и оне које се тичу естетике ликова. Такође, закључак истраживања је да је, да би била успешна, жена у том периоду често морала да буде подржана од стране мушкараца, али да је, када је била призната, имала значајну улогу у многим пројектима, учествујући тако у дефинисању културног наслеђа епохе.

Кључне речи: телевизијске серије, жене, социјализам, Југославија, културно наслеђе

INTRODUCTION

Watching television has been the most popular and widespread way to spend time and pass the ubiquity of the modern period because of the hyperproduction of television shows, their availability, and the rise of specialized streaming services. While these media goods are frequently the focus of serious study and research these days, they were disregarded and considered low-quality forms of entertainment for a long time. This perception was akin to seeing them as subpar movie copies (Simeunović Bajić 2016; Stanković 2018, 2). Such an attitude of theorists and the academic public resulted in television series and their role in creating the context of society, culture and what will become a significant cultural heritage being almost completely neglected. On the other hand, in periods of great social changes, crises and value transformations, it was the series that played a very crucial role in cultivating and defining culture and everyday life (Simeunović Bajić 2016), and this was especially noticeable in the areas of socialist Yugoslavia in the sixties and seventies of the last century (Mihelj 2013; Erdei 2020). Therefore, a thorough retrospective of media content produced during this time period is required in order to comprehend the society of that time as well as numerous themes and legacies from that era that still remain today in television and series discourse.

The appearance of television in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1958 (Vesnić-Alujević & Simeunović Bajić 2013), which was under the supervision of the state, combined with frequent social, political and economic changes, imposed on this medium and its contents, among which series, the role of stabilizer of society and creator of value. At the same time, one of the most significant aspirations of that era was the real manifestation of socialism's promise of gender equality, both through the class struggle and through the destruction of the dominant patriarchy (Jelaca 2020, 1). While the relationship between media content, particularly series and films of socialist Yugoslavia, and the portrayal of women has been studied before (Aksentijević 2018; Vuković 2022), there has been limited attention given to women as subjects rather than just objects in television series. Put differently, no examination or justification of the part played by women in the development of television shows "behind the camera" was provided. From the standpoint of the struggle for gender equality as well as in a larger social context, the answer to

this crucial question would clarify the degree to which women of that time were able to shape and create values, ways of life, and acceptable attitudes. This is especially significant since many of the series from this era are regarded as important pieces of Yugoslav cultural memory as a whole, as well as a significant part of a serious cultural heritage and historical landscape (Simeunović Bajić & Vujović 2021, 110). As Miša Đurković observes, “domestic television series, created in the last forty years, represent one of the pillars not only of general culture, but also of the collective memory of people from this area” (Đurković 2005, 358).

Thus, this paper aims to investigate the function, number, and prominence of women in the series of socialist Yugoslavia during the 1960s and 1970s, focusing on their roles in production and distribution.

CHARACTERISTICS, ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE SERIAL PROGRAM OF YUGOSLAVIA

The appearance of television as a new medium in Yugoslavia at the end of the fifties and its spread to a large number of homes during the next two decades, in addition to its informative function, particularly popularized its entertainment function. “In the environment of growing interest in the new media, and confirmation of its growing importance for shaping everyday life, as well as possible cultural and political influences that can be achieved with its help, and with a clear awareness of Yugoslavia’s “lag behind” other European countries, the formation of Yugoslav television took place” (Erdei 2015, 409). It was very quickly used, specifically in the direction of the formation of a certain political and social context and climate, but it is very interesting to note that the contents were not created under the assumption that audience members are passive receivers of messages who absorb messages, but their active role and criticality was assumed (Mihelj 2014). That is why media professionals moved towards using it “as a tool of social mobilization for the communist cause, using innovative formats premised on audience participation” (Mihelj 2014,11). This approach to audiences was very advanced for the period, especially considering that these ideas about active audiences were still in their infancy with the founding of the Birmingham School of Cultural Studies in 1963 (Schulman 1993).

This idea provides the foundation for the fact that television shows started to play a significant role in the dissemination of particular ideas and attitudes far earlier than in certain countries in the West. This was particularly apparent from 1970 to 1976, Yugoslavia’s “golden era” of television programs (Simeunović Bajić 2015).

“In contrast to political declarations and ideological sermons, television series succeeded in a much more subtle way, often seasoned with humor, with the help of language and gestures understandable to the common man, to market the values of the modern age and make them receptive to people who were finding it difficult to navigate in increasingly intense changes” (Vuletić & Zvijer 2018, 115).

It is important to point out that this was possible at the societal level because the characteristics and context of watching series were significantly different from what we experience today. First, the series could be watched exclusively and only on television, more precisely the only television channel that existed in each of the republics. The place and time were always fixed, and, unlike the modern viewing of series, watching was a family, collective activity. Because of this, the series were talked about, debated and formed a much more significant part of the collective cultural spirit of the entire country than today, when following what each individual likes from huge catalogs is a very individual experience.

“All of those watching TV in Yugoslavia had watched the same programs, and discussed them the next morning, commenting on them, criticizing them, establishing, in the long run, strong connections with the new TV celebrities, actors, singers, program hosts etc., mimicking their way of talking, movements and even some of the catchphrases they used. It was common to retell and comment on the latest episode of the popular series, particularly domestic ones, whose plots, characters and situations were familiar to the viewers and easy to identify with” (Erdei 2021, 98).

These were the series themselves: tales of common people, family, as modern algorithms would categorize them; the most famous example is the cult hit Novak Novak's *House Theater* (Pozorište u kući). This sitcom-style series, which aired for nearly ten years in a setting that every Yugoslav knew well – the family home, dealt humorously with important concepts, objectives, and issues related to socialism (Erdei 2017; Vuletić & Zvijer 2018). Generally speaking, they targeted the working and lower middle class, with a greater proportion of men than women, as well as those who had moved from the countryside to the city (Đurković 2005).

Apart from the aforementioned attributes of the series, a significant factor that impacted their look, structure, and substance was the noteworthy impact of Western content and capitalist culture. In particular, following its breakup with the Soviet Union and its opening to the West, Yugoslavia

was distinguished from other socialist nations by what is known as “soft-socialism” (Mihelj 2014). Just two years after the launch of the series, Radio Television Belgrade aired the American series *Star Trek* (Slapšak 2015). Additionally, comic books, rock ‘n’ roll, and jazz records were available for purchase in dedicated stores (Stojčić & Duhaček 2016)... “Children throughout Yugoslavia played partisans and Germans, but, under the influence of western films and comics, cowboys and Indians” (Vučetić 2011, 186). Free from the isolation used by the Iron Curtain that existed in other socialist countries, life, culture, attitudes, habits, social organization and all other aspects of life had a very hybrid character, a kind of duality between traditional and modern, strictly socialist and capitalist. This relationship was very often tense, and so it was these series that “indirectly supported and facilitated the acceptance of modern values advocated by the political and social elite of the time” (Vuletić & Zvijer 2018, 114-115).

One of the most important aspects in the transition towards a modern egalitarian socialist society was the emancipation of women and the fight for equality. That struggle and its manifestation was waged both in front of and behind the camera in the processes of creation, recording, contextualization of production, and even distribution of television series. Its importance is not limited only to the periods of the sixties and seventies, but also played a role in the “formation of dominant cultural patterns in the second half of the 20th century” (Simeunović Bajić 2016, 48) but also, through re-watching reruns, in the “complex post- socialist political context, thereby significantly affecting the mediatization of the meaning of Yugoslav cultural memory” (Simeunović Bajić & Vujović 2020, 114).

THE POSITION, PRESENTATION AND ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE CREATION OF TELEVISION CONTENT

In the general context of the already-mentioned hybridization of two lifestyles that characterized, especially in the seventies of the last century in socialist Yugoslavia, the position and media representation of women were not altered to the extent that the system promised. This duality, which characterized the general state of mind and societal consciousness, confined women to specific social roles in both systems, such as mothers, housewives, or secretaries. They were expected to prepare food, fold towels impeccably, use fabric softener, and even embrace new inventions like instant hot meals upon returning from work (Brdar 2018, 7). In other words, the self-management model of production assumed the traditional role of women in the household, but burdened them with expectations that they fulfill the roles of “working women”, in truth, only in certain

positions in the job hierarchy. The idea that by leaving the rigid roles of only mother and housewife, a woman will become more emancipated and equal to a man did lead to a certain improvement in her position, but the lack of a completely egalitarian status was justified, paradoxically, by the obligations she has as a mother and housewife (Lazarević Radak 2019, 184-185) which was impossible to solve in practice.

This category has also been assigned the generic social dichotomy. In terms of the proportion of highly educated women at the start of the 1970s, Yugoslavia ranked fifth in the world; but, at the same time, 25% of women lacked literacy. Women made up 53.7% of the unemployed, and a major issue was that many of them had been looking for work since the middle of the 1960s (Morokvasic 1983). These issues have all been translated to television:

“The change in the position of women in society was very obvious. Relationships between the sexes, changes in family relationships or the forced retention of traditional ones, changes in the way women dress, etc., created family tensions and often led to the stigmatization of women, but at the same time they represented one of the most interesting topics dealt with in television series” (Vuletić & Zvijer 2018, 116).

These series portrayed women in various roles, including as caring and supportive, demanding and irrational, fatal, repressed, frustrated, and disappointed (Čuvalo 2020). Also, in film the most common were female partisans, women in the background, collaborators, workers and housewives (Stojčić & Duhaček 2016). This stereotypical conception was maintained, or more precisely, strengthened in the decades that followed, reaching its peak at the end of the 1980s with the “open sexualization of the female body” (Brdar 2018, 7). With a few notable exceptions, women were primarily supported by male characters in the series’ plots rather than being the center of attention (Vuletić & Zvijer 2018). This wasn’t limited to television shows or even series. Additionally, the printed media – magazines, ads, etc. – perceived and portrayed women in society in a similar light, particularly in regard to men. She is always smaller than a man, a subject of admiration and desire, a bashful kneeler, and someone for whom the kitchen and easy reading are meant for (Vujović 2016).

As can be seen, a large amount of research is devoted to the representation of women, but there is no study that deals with the role of women in the creation of those representations, especially when it comes to television series, as the most common means of changing social

consciousness and cultural patterns. There are certain works that deal with the roles of women in the creation of Yugoslav films, which single out the prominent director Soja Jovanović, the editors Živka Tolpak, Ivanka Vuksanović, Ljubica Nešić (Jelaca 2020). However, there were very few of them, many of their works were neglected, and their position which largely remains today in Serbian cinematography, was extremely bad (SEEcult.org). However, very few studies mention the people who worked exclusively or primarily on television and in the production of series, including editors, set designers, costume designers, lighting designers, playwrights, directors, and screenwriters. These people were the backbone of the television industry as a whole in the 1960s and 1970s (Erdei 2015). Only that there were very few women writing television shows is known, particularly in Montenegro at TV Titograd and TV Priština in Kosovo; the highest number of women working in television was found in Slovenia and Novi Sad (Čuvalo 2020). This problem did not exist only in Yugoslavia, but is still present in many Western countries today, because it has been established that gender can significantly determine the type and position in the hierarchy in production, and the lack of women in leading positions “behind the camera” is always associated with poorer and inadequate representation of women “in front of the camera” (Smith & Choueiti 2013).

In addition to detecting their existence as authors, in order to fully understand the context of the creation of series in that period and what came out of them, it should be examined to what extent women played a role in the process of creation of series and what those roles were.

METHOD

Since the goal of the work is to identify the number of women and their roles in the production and eventual distribution of series in socialist Yugoslavia, but also to single out and present the most significant among them based on this analysis, the research consists of two parts. In the first part, based on a specially constructed code list, the total number of people engaged in the production of these series was separated, categorized and compared based on the database available on the IMDB.com website. The code list contained the following categories: name of the series, year of start of broadcasting, name of the person, role in production or distribution through the sector and specific responsibility, while the last segment contained a division into whether they were engaged in the main jobs (director, screenwriter or producer), or auxiliary jobs (all others). These data were extracted manually, and after were analyzed descriptively,

quantitatively and qualitatively, and then compared in order to extract general conclusions about the relationship between the roles of men and women in the production of series. The analysis was carried out in SPSS 24.0. The series included in the analysis are those created in the period from 1960 to 1980, for which it is possible to find a complete staff list on the IMDB.com website. This period was chosen for two reasons. First of all, because it is often considered the golden age of Yugoslav television, but also because these two decades cover the period from the first years of the creation and development of television in Yugoslavia, until the death of Josip Broz Tito, which practically ended an ideological epoch created under his leadership, and which had a very significant reflection in television content. Television Belgrade, Television Zagreb, and Television Sarajevo were selected as the three main television production facilities in Yugoslavia, despite the country having several others. The series that had female production positions identified through preliminary mapping were the ones that were chosen. We are aware that the methodology has its shortcomings, but this is also the first paper that connects the roles of women in the production of series and the evaluation of the mark they left on Yugoslav cultural heritage. It is our goal that this work may serve as an inspiration for more research on this subject. A total of 17 such series were analyzed: *The Outcasts* (Otpisani), *Hot Wind* (Vruć vetar), *Truckers* (Kamiondžije), *More Than a Game* (Više od igre), *House Theater* (Pozorište u kući), *Headless Rush* (Grlom u jagode), *Grandma's boy* (Babino unučće), *Masters* (Majstori), *Love in the Country Style* (Ljubav na seoski način), *Round With Two* (Krug dvojkom), *Face Down* (Licem u naličje), *Devil's Ladder* (Đavolje merdevine), *Graduates* (Diplomci), *Musicians* (Muzikanti), *Slaves* (Porobdžije), *Marigold* (Neven) i *Our Little Place* (Naše malo misto).

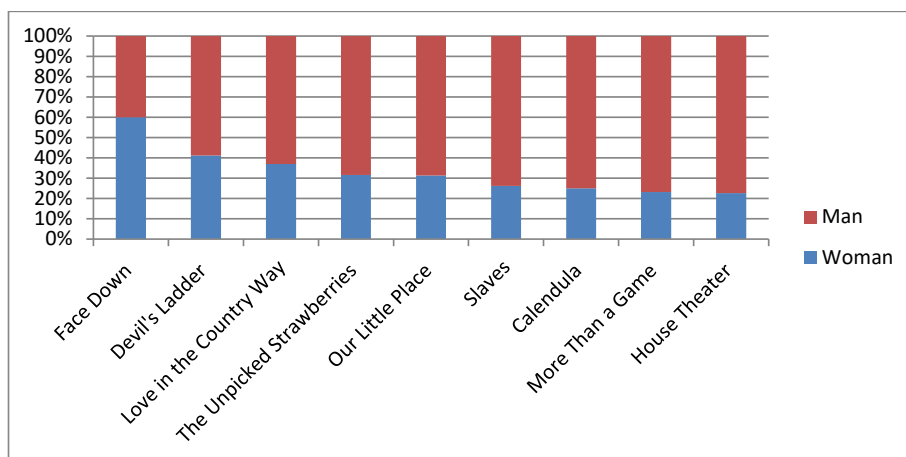
After this analysis, those female members of the production who appeared in the largest number of cases and in the most significant positions within the staff were singled out and they, as well as their work, were presented based on the synthesis of various available sources and works.

PRESENCE AND ROLE OF WOMEN “BEHIND THE CAMERA”

Within the 17 analyzed series, a total of 503 different roles in production and related jobs were recorded and codified. This means that on average in the 1960s and 1970s, approximately 30 people worked on the creation of one series on television in Yugoslavia, mostly in the camera department (13.7% of all), music (9.8%), writing department (8.9 %) and sound (8.3%). However, the main reason is that these ‘supporting jobs’, as defined in the

research, are much more numerous, accounting for 429 or 85% of the total, compared to the three main roles of directors, screenwriters, and producers, which make up only 14.7% in total.

There is a clear disparity in the number of employees when it comes to the specific function that women play in the making of series. Out of all those documented, women made up only 23.5% (118), while men made up more than three times as many (76.5%, 385). It is noteworthy that these positions were distributed in the production in somewhat different ways in other series as well. As a result, women held 41.2% of the numerous jobs during the creation of *Devil's Ladder*, with *Love in the Country Way* (37%) and *The Unpicked Strawberries* (31.6%) having the highest percentages. Notably, the production of *Round with two* was the only series in which women made up 60% of the cast, with director Soja Jovanović leading the way, even though only five individuals were involved in production.



Graph 1. Ten series with the highest percentage of women in production and distribution in the total sample analyzed.

However, an even bigger gap can be seen if we analyze whether these groups are employed in “main” or “auxiliary” jobs, that is, whether they are creators of the series in the narrower sense. Only 6.8% of the total percentage of women were in the positions of “main” jobs, while that percentage in relation to all jobs handled by men was 17.1%. In other words, if we look at the share of all “main” jobs, in 89.2% of cases they were assigned to men, and only 10.8% to women.

Further analysis of the specific tasks and jobs performed by women in relation to men showed that it can be argued that there was a fairly clear division into “women’s” and “men’s” jobs. In the case of all 17 series, not a single woman was hired in the art, cinematography, set decoration, special effects, visual effects and stunts departments. These departments were managed and staffed exclusively by men. On the other hand, female roles were particularly related to:

1. Series costume and wardrobe design – 80.9% of those engaged in these jobs in all series were women. Also, 28.8% of the total number of female roles that were singled out by this research are from this group, which means that in the sixties and seventies there was almost a 1:3 chance that if a woman was employed in the creation of series on television, she worked in this department. By comparison, in the case of men there is no such dominant category. Most of them, compared to all men’s jobs, were in the writing and sound department (9.9% each). As for the specific tasks within this department, 100% women were employed as assistant costume designers;
2. Series editing – A slightly smaller difference than in the previous case, but certainly very visible: 65% of women versus 35% of men in relation to all the people who were in charge of editing the recorded material and its composition;
3. Series makeup department – of the total number of people in all series who were engaged in this work, 85% were women. This is the least surprising category, considering that in the traditional socialist environment makeup and make-up were exclusively associated with the females, so specific tasks such as assistant makeup or makeup designer artist were exclusively assigned to women in all series. However, it is very interesting that this category is actually not the one with the highest difference between the sexes in favor of women;
4. Series script and continuity - in this area, women made up a significant majority even compared to the make-up and costume departments. That percentage was as much as 89%. This position actually meant a kind of logistical and organizational support and supervision of the filming process, and in Yugoslav cinematography, they were called the director’s secretary (Filmska enciklopedija 2019). It requires extremely high concentration, attention to detail and excellent organization. It is particularly striking when analyzing the results that the job of script supervisor, within this department, was always performed by a woman, and this was the position of

as many as 13.4% of all detected female roles in all series, which was the second most common occupation for members of this department, in addition to working on costumes and wardrobe.

Therefore, jobs in which women were traditionally more often involved, in the production and distribution of series, required high dexterity and an extremely refined aesthetic dimension, but also the ability to organize well and focus. That is why these segments are the ones where women left the biggest mark and had the most influence on what a segment of the cultural heritage of future generations will look like. The aesthetic dimension of the series, especially the appearance of the characters, the reconstruction of traditional costumes of certain periods and other styles of clothing, but also the narrative editing structures, which reflect a kind of spirit and dynamic of the time and the very continuity of the scenario, have forever stamped the way generations remember and, later, they experience the past and life in the former great Yugoslavia. Also, with their work, they defined certain parameters of good practice and quality and directed the work of future creators, given that these series were and remain very popular and influential. It is also worth noting that in the 1970s, the situation in America was very similar when it came to jobs in television production, because between 70 and 80% of the jobs that fall into the most important categories were employed by men, while women were mostly employed. were assistants and secretaries, but an interesting difference is that in this country, editing jobs were predominantly male, unlike in Yugoslavia (Ceulemans & Fauconnier 1979). However, it cannot be said that certain women did not have more prominent roles in certain productions.

IMPORTANT WOMAN IN TV SERIES PRODUCTION

It is clear that the mentioned roles and jobs are the basic positions in which women could see themselves in the production of series in the 1960s and 1970s in Yugoslavia. However, this does not mean that they were not at all in the positions of carrying “main” jobs, although it must be noted that this was very rare. Only a few female authors were given the opportunity to assert themselves in the world of directing or screenwriting. In this analysis, three names stood out in particular:

1. Soja Jovanović – The director of the *Round with two* (Krug dvojkom) series was born on February 1, 1922 in Belgrade. One of the most important authors in the history of Yugoslav cinematography and the first woman in the country who was a director of film or in the theater. She directed more than 27 films, TV dramas or series, and was the creator of the first Yugoslav color film – *Pop Ćira* and pop

Spira, for which she received the award for best director at the Pula Film Festival in 1957. In many of her works, by adapting original material on the basis of which films and series were created, she strove to point out, criticize and reconsider the role and position of women in the society of that time (Perišić 2020). Also, she had an extremely fine directorial instinct for captivating comedy and introduced numerous novelties in Yugoslav cinematography, one of the most significant being the introduction of narration (Nikolić 2016). She passed away in April 2002.

2. Ljiljana Pavić – The wife of the famous director Siniša Pavić, with whom she co-wrote the screenplay for *Hot Wind* (Vruć vetar) and *Graduates* (Diplomci), more precisely, she was a co-screenwriter. In the series *House Theater* (Pozorište u kući), she was credited as the creator of the idea. She was born on June 12, 1935 in Vlasotince, and thanks to her origin, one of her greatest contributions to the creation of series and films of this time was the precise presentation of the speech and character of people from the south of Serbia, who often had prominent roles in the stories for which she wrote the scripts (Konić, 1982). She collaborated with her husband on almost every one of the 22 series and films for which she wrote, and this practice continued long after the socialist period. The pair's last series *Heroes of Our Time* (Junaci našeg doba) finished filming in 2020.
3. Ljudmila Mila Stanojević Byford - Screenwriter of the series *Marigold* (Neven) was born in Ruma on September 21, 1943. Like her colleague Liljana Pavić, she was the wife of a director and screenwriter Timothy John Byford, born in England, who was certainly one of the most prolific socialist serial creators of Yugoslavia. However, unlike Pavić, Ljudmila Stanojević Byford had many more independent projects within the framework of 24 series and films in which she was listed as a screenwriter, and once she was also in the position of director. Her contribution to socialist serial production was that she dedicated most of her creativity to children and youth programs, especially during the eighties and nineties. She also published several books for children.

From this brief presentation, for which the data was collected by synthesizing scientific and professional works, important websites with databases and journalistic articles, it is possible to conclude that, in order for a woman to reach the position of direct creator of a series, in addition to talent, knowledge and ability, she had very often to be supported by men engaged in the same or similar work. This certainly made it difficult for

many women of that era to independently fulfill their full potential and opportunities. Quite simply, socialist serial production in Yugoslavia was predominantly reserved for men. However, there was a significant number of female participants in this process who did not have such a visible role, but many of them literally defined certain aspects of the serial culture of that time. Thus, by far the most common name in this analysis, both for men and women, is Jelisaveta Gobecki, who participated in the creation of as many as 8 of the 17 analyzed series. This costume designer, born in 1927 in Osijek, worked on 98 different productions over 36 years, some of which were foreign productions or co-productions such as the spaghetti-western *Ballata per un pistolero* or the adventure thriller *Agent Joe Walker: Operation Far East*. Her contribution to the aesthetics of films and series of the sixties and seventies is enormous in many different genres.

Radmila Nikolić was a standout when it came to sound and video editing. She worked as a sound editor in one series (*Hot Wind*) and as a video editor in four (*Musicians, Masters, Love in the Country Way*). Despite having contributed to over 70 distinct accomplishments between 1966 and 1991, no professional, journalistic, archival, or other records exist regarding her background or accomplishments. Similarly, the most important representative makeup artist, Radmila Todorović, whose name also popped up in four separate series covered in our investigation, is in this situation. Born in 1937 in Belgrade, she worked on up to 122 different titles as a makeup specialist on the set. focuses on significant global productions such as the big co-productions “Long Ships”, “Genghis Khan”, “Marco Polo”, “Robinson Crusoe” and many domestic films (“Magija filmske maske” n.d.). Her daughter, Sandra Ivatović, chose the same career.

In the last area of production dominated by women, series script and continuity, the analysis singled out the two most common names that were engaged in three different series each: Nada Nedeljković and Nada Petemek. Nada Nedeljković was signed as a director’s secretary in 56 productions, while in the first years of her career, during the fifties, she also worked as a music editor in films and series. Nada Peternek has worked at Television Belgrade since its inception, primarily as an announcer and presenter, and she signed the first Yugoslav series *Service Station* (*Servisna stanica*) (*Premiula Nada Peternek* 2021). Her daughter is Tanja Peternek Aleksić, the creator of the show *TV Faces... Like the Normal World* (*TV lica... kao sav normalan svet*) (Glišić 2022).

We should also list the names of the women who contributed to the construction of at least two separate television series but whose names were not included in the analysis as much as these female novelists and

television producers: Sound recorder Divna Rajić, costume designer Gordana Anđelković, makeup artist Ljiljana Obradović, camera operator Marina Lazarević, editor Milada Rajšić Levi, assistant director Milana Stojanović, makeup artist Mirjana Rašić, wardrobe assistant Olga Skorobac, and assistant director Vera Amar. However, apart from the body of work and the possible year and place of birth, no significant data about these people is available.

WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO CULTURAL IDENTITY

While the previous sections have shed light on the roles that women played "behind the camera" in Yugoslav television series production during the 1960s and 1970s, it is equally important to delve into how their work significantly contributed to the construction of cultural identity within these series (Dyer 2002). Women's work had a huge role in in shaping the cultural fabric of that era. The television series of this period served not only as entertainment but also as a mirror, reflecting the values, norms, and habits of Yugoslav society. Costume design, makeup, and editing, predominantly managed by women, emerged as powerful tools for the portrayal and reinforcement of cultural identity (Doane 1988). In many ways, these women became the custodians of the visual and aesthetic elements that defined the characters and settings, consequently influencing the audience's perception of the cultural milieu (McRobbie 1999).

These contributions extended beyond mere technical aspects; they were subtle yet profound expressions of cultural identity (Butler 1990). The work of women in these roles helped viewers relate to the characters and settings presented on screen, fostering a sense of belonging and cultural continuity (Mulvey 1975). The cultural identity constructed through these series was not static. In some instances, these women's contributions challenged prevailing norms and values. By portraying characters who defied stereotypes or addressing societal issues, they subtly questioned and reshaped cultural narratives.

In this context it is also important to mention Cultural Identity Theory which provides a valuable framework for understanding how women's contributions behind the scenes in Yugoslav television series production during the 1960s and 1970s are intricately linked to the construction of cultural identity (Hall 1996). This theory highlights several key aspects. It addresses cultural norms and values, assumes that media is a reflective mirror of the society and deals with construction and deconstruction of the cultural identity which is not fixed. It also posits that individuals and communities develop a sense of identity through their cultural

affiliations, which include shared values, beliefs, practices, and symbols. Having said that, Cultural Identity Theory underscores the significance of cultural norms and values in the formation of identity. These norms are, as already mentioned, not static; rather, they evolve through shared practices, symbols, and beliefs. In the context of this research, women working in costume design, makeup, and editing were instrumental in adhering to and interpreting these cultural norms. They meticulously crafted the visual elements of characters and settings, ensuring a faithful representation of the cultural fabric. In essence, their work breathed life into the series, fostering a deep resonance with the prevailing cultural values and norms of Yugoslav society.

Just as Cultural Identity Theory posits that media serves as a reflective mirror of cultural identity, these women's contributions held a mirror to the society of their time (Hall 1997). Through their artistic prowess, they not only portrayed but also perpetuated the cultural milieu depicted in the series. Their attention to detail, from period-accurate costumes to culturally significant makeup, enriched the authenticity of the narrative. In doing so, they enabled audiences to engage with the depicted culture on a profound level, reinforcing the intricate bond between media and cultural identity (Stacey 1987). Cultural identity as dynamic phenomena is subjected to continuous construction and reconstruction. Women working "behind the camera" were not passive agents but active participants in this ongoing process. Their choices in costume design, makeup, and editing transcended mere aesthetics; they contributed to the dynamic evolution of cultural identity. At times, their work even challenged existing norms and values, demonstrating that cultural identity is a living entity, responsive to the evolving socio-cultural landscape.

The women's roles as cultural interpreters were emblematic of the connection between media representation and cultural identity. Their work left an indelible mark on the broader discourse of cultural identity within Yugoslav television series.

CONCLUDING CONSIDERATIONS

The role of women in the creation of series in the 1960s and 1970s in socialist Yugoslavia was very limited in number and very clearly defined in the division of work. They were mostly involved in creating the aesthetics and appearance of the characters, as well as editing and assisting and organizing the events behind the camera. Very rarely did a woman have the conductor's baton over all or part of the process and directly participate in the creation of the content, script or series as a whole. When this was

the case, it was the women who had the support of their husbands who were also involved in these jobs. Also, if it is taken into account that the same people worked on many series, as the analysis showed, the 118 detected positions where women worked in the series covered by this analysis, does not mean that 118 women participated, but that number was significantly lower, that is, the production of series was very closed, especially for members of this gender.

Nevertheless, although few in number, and often on the margins of the public's focus when it comes to production, these women defined the television and series spirit and culture of a time, almost entirely when it comes to the appearance of the characters, both in clothing and in the segment that concerned makeup, and they were also very influential in the field of video and sound editing. Participating in the creation of these works, which became classics of the Yugoslav serial program, they had a very important role in shaping and creating the cultural heritage and cultural awareness of future generations. Many of them were pioneers in their fields and their contribution was not only in creating specific series, but in creating awareness of the opportunities that women have in this industry. True, many were helped by the fact that they had access with the help of their husbands, but with their actions they paved the way for other members of this gender, such as their daughters, to participate more easily and equally in the creation of future film and serial productions.

As it was established that many of them were hidden from the public eye, often on the margins of attention and events, there is very little information available about most of these women. Therefore, it would be good to conduct more extensive research in the future that would document the details of their work in the context of socialist culture. Also, it would be interesting to conduct comparative research that would aim to compare the statistics obtained for former-Yugoslavia and to explore the statistics obtained in this research with other countries in the same period, or even to the modern-day states of which Yugoslavia was comprised. This research can serve as a valuable starting point for such an endeavor, even though its primary goal was not in that direction; instead, it aimed to highlight the presence, potential, and roles of women in the creation of television series by comparing them with the roles of men throughout the entire process of production and distribution during that time. This is very important, because understanding that time and all its products, as well as what is its contemporary legacy, is not possible without this kind of conceptualization.

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