

"cinema of cinema in
a controlling tool



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“ Cinema is the most important of all arts”.

Whilst explaining the most educational subjects to the first Soviet Commissar of Education, Lunacharsky, the head of the communist USSR, Vladimir Lenin reached this conclusion. Cinema was not only the most important of all arts, but Vladimir Lenin turned it into one of the most important ways of propaganda: by not prohibiting filmmaking, but restricting it to preach and highlight the benefits of communism, by showing off a happy working class society turned the entire world of cinema in a controlling tool for the dictator. This practice was implemented successfully in Romania in 1948, when the Decree 303 was signed: all productions had to be approved by the government, more precisely by the dictator Nicolae Ceasusecu. He turned Lenin's words into actions to such a point where the Nationalisation of the Romanian Film Industry is known to be The Golden Age of the Romanian Film Industry. For the first time in Romania, there was a notable growth in production, directors were nationally recognised for their merit and actors and the normal working-class people were proud to be represented in both fictional and non-fictional cinema. This apparent success was a man made well thought facade: communism gave the country the idea of happiness and fulfilment and the country assimilated it.

Almost 30 years after communism was abolished in Romania by the execution of the dictator Nicolae Ceausescu and his wife, Elena Ceausescu, people still find themselves talking about and , in a way or another, identifying with the communist regime. When Lucian Pintilie, film and television director, said “ Communism disappeared as a regime, not a mentality” he put into a few words what others showed through dozens of

hours of motion pictures; his observation reflects a primary theme found in most of the Romanian New Wave films(RNW)- communism during his existence in Romania from 1947 to 1989 and its traces in a post-communist Romanian country. The strong influences found in “ The Death of Mr. Lazarescu”(2005) directed by Cristi Puiu and “ 4 months, 3 weeks & 2 days”(2007) directed by Cristian Mungiu are considered inevitable due to the fact that both directors found themselves in their childhood period during the regime. It is interesting that one of the more recent Romanian films, “ The world is mine”(2015) directed by Nicolae Constantin Tanase still depicts communist characteristics, despite its American incline. It seems to be that the communist mentality that Lucian Pintilie was mentioning impregnated itself into the younger generation that is yet not ready to give it all up to the bright and fast cutting American filmmaking stylistic choices. Some of the most successful films of the RNW cinema show the traumas caused by communism in a more subtle than direct way.

This is done by the choice of aesthetic and theme: from location to filming techniques like the barren Bucharest apartment that Mr Dante Ovidiu Lazarescu is living in “ The Death of Mr. Lazarescu” to the unconventional shooting technique in “ 4 months, 3 weeks & 2days”: not focusing on the character, occasionally decapitating them in shot in order to depict the communism’s disinterest in its people. In the film “ The world is mine” the communistic traits are identified through the choice of characters as working-class people, a mother that has no identity, similar to the women that had nothing to say in front of the regime, and a main character, Larisa, that is a mix of American style choice, the age, the clothes, the language,

and the rebellious attitude similar to the one young women had after the Decree 1966, when women were breaking the law by committing illegal abortions.