



Milan Pešić



NARODNI MUZEJ CRNE GORE
ATELJE DADO



„Volio bih kad bi ovi moji radovi podstakli ljude, kosmpolite da utiču da što manje bude zlih ljudi u našem rodu, što manje zla i nepravde na našoj najljepšoj planeti. Pa možda neka odatle potekne apel da ljudi moraju (kao u vašem udruženju) biti ljudi a ne zla braća.“ - Milan Pešić

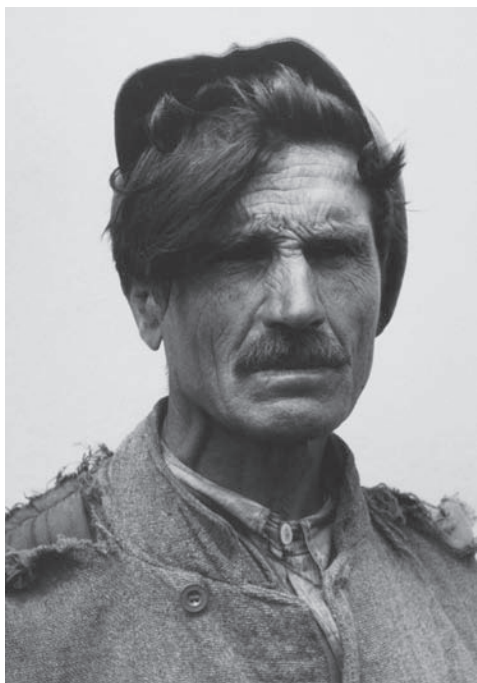
Jedan od malobrojnih fotografa - autora koji je svojim predanim i posvećenim radom decenijama bilježio promjene u crnogorskom društvu, u vrijeme nakon Drugog svjetskog rata, u dobu „dizanja iz pepela“ i ostavio nam dragocjeno svjedočanstvo o događajima i ljudima, svakako je Milan Pešić. Bavio se fotografijom do poslednjeg dana svog života sa jednakom posvećenošću i ljubavlju prema čovjeku sa ovog podneblja i predjelima koje je obilazio „otkrivajući njihove tajne“.

Buran život, iskustvo Golog otoka, bogata biografija i značajna priznanja svjedoče o njegovoj snažnoj ličnosti, borcu za pravdu, velikom entuzijasti, ali i velikom talentu za fotografiju i film. Nažalost, i nakon mnogo decenija rada i apsolutne posvećenosti svom životnom pozivu nije dobio zaslužen mjesto u istoriji crnogorske (nekada jugoslovenske) fotografije¹. Ovaj samouki autor je u tajne fotografije ušao zahvaljujući druženju sa znamenitim snimateljima i filmskim radnicima toga vremena, učeći od njih, najprije kao vozač (sredinom pedesetih godina prošlog vijeka). Đoko Mijajlović (u čijoj foto sekciji je dobio prva znanja o fotografskom zanatu), Čedo Kušević (fotograf i profesor geografije), Anton Lukateli (prvi crnogorski snimatelj i začetnik crnogorske kinematografije, jedan od osnivača “Pobjede”, kome je kasnije po prelasku u Beograd Pešić postao asistent), Stevo Radović–snimatelj, Stevo Lepetić–reporter, Karlo Martineti. Svi oni bili su njegovi prijatelji, učitelji, saradnici. Na razvijanje njegovog urođenog osećaja za lijepo i učenje u “hodajućoj akademiji” kako je on često nazivao vrijeme svojih fotografskih početaka i buđenje sklonosti “za magičnu igru svetlosti i senki”, uticalo je druženje i prijateljstvo sa velikanima crnogorske i jugoslovenske likovne umjetnosti: Miroslavom Šarkom, Božidarom Jakcem, Zdenkom i Borisom Kalinom, Petrom Lubardom, Milom Milunovićem, Acom Prijićem...

Po dolasku u Beograd zapošljava se kao asistent snimatelja u Filmskim novostima. To je bilo vrijeme izgradnje zemlje ali i političke nesigurnosti zbog udaljavanja od Rusije, vrijeme u kojem vladaju glad, siromaštvo i UDBA koja je nadzirala sve pa i medije. Zbog nepristajanja da „sarađuje“ šalju ga na Goli otok (1951.) gdje provodi tri godine, koje će trajno obilježiti čitav njegov život. Tokom svoje duge karijere učestvovao je u snimanju mnogih televizijskih reportaža, među kojima je i kulturna emisija “Karavan” koja je ušla u istoriju dokumentarnih programa JRT-a, a za koje je dobio mnogo brojna priznanja, a kada je prešao u *Pobjedu* bio je prvi dopisnik za JRT za Crnu Goru.

Obilazeći Crnu Goru, pješčačeći po njenim najskrivenijim i najnepristupačnijim vrljetima, srećući seljake–težake, ribare, stočare, radnike, žene i djecu... na svojim poslovima, u svakodnevnoj borbi za opstanak, po snijegu, hladnoći, suši imao je izuzetan osjećaj da prepozna i uhvati trenutak koji najpotpunije oslikava velike prirodne kontraste u nemilosrdnim crnogorskim predjelima u odnosu na koje se često osjećala čovjekova apsolutna nemoć. Pojedine motive je pratio danima čekajući „pravi trenutak“ apsolutne ravnoteže svih elemenata, dok su pojedini snimci nastajali zahvaljujući njegovoj munjevitoj reakciji u trenu.

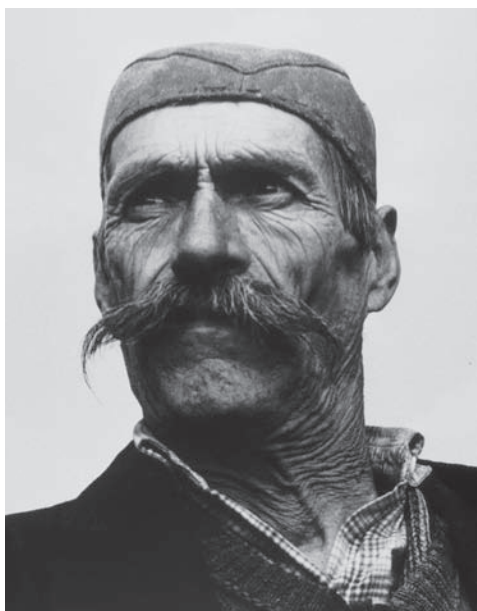
¹ Jedina obimna studija u kojoj je moguće upoznati Pešićevo djelo je knjiga *Milan Pešić Crnom Gorom*, autora Jovice Marčete, koji je napravio izbor od oko 200 snimaka praćenih autorovim komentarima, iz obimne Pešićeve dokumentacije.



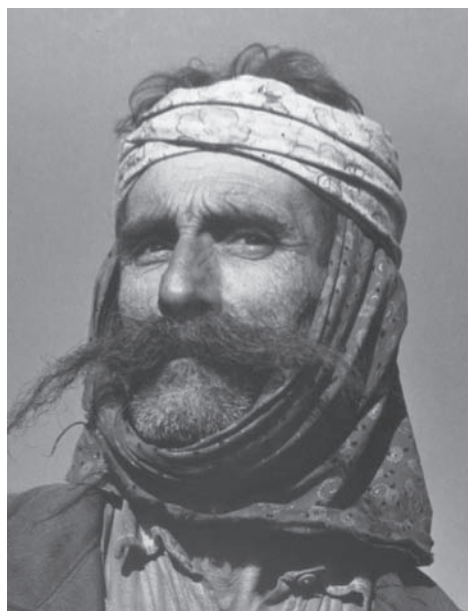
Ramenaš
The Shoulder Man



Žena sa vrhova Sozine
A Woman from the Tops of Sozina



Matija Balšić, 1964.



Stari Malisor
Old Malisor

Može se reći da nema predjela u Crnoj Gori u koji nije zašao. Sa osjećanjem naklonosti i divljenja bilježio je pitoreskne ruralne predjele, događaje i posebno portrete gorštaka. Serija ovih portreta svakako spada u jedan od najupečatljivijih fotografskih djela Milana Pešića. Čvrsto modelovani, spontani i autentični oni su doživljeni kao integralni dio predjela iz kojeg potiču, kao neka vrsta antropološke studije o odnosu pejzaža i fizionomije ljudi koji ga nastanjuju. I mada većina fotografija kada se posmatraju sa vremenske distance izgledaju klasično, kao „stereotipi fotografske prošlosti“ jednog vremena, one predstavljaju značajno svjedočanstvo o trenucima kada su snimljene gradeći jedan vizuelni dokumentarni kontekst, posebno imajući u vidu da u Crnoj Gori sistematizovane fotografske arhive, van stručnih oblasti, praktično ne postoje.

Rad Milana Pešića karakteriše neka vrsta optimističnog humanizama, što se pogotovu čita u njegovim komentarima u pomenutoj knjizi. Ipak, on nikad ne idealizuje ljudsku prirodu. Ovaj odnos se najbolje ogleda u snimcima scena zabilježenih u dramatičnim situacijama poput kolone koja kroz sniježne nanose nosi povrijeđenog u bolnicu.

One nastavljaju da privlače pažnju i podsjećaju na minule godine i zbivanja i „pošto se taj događaj završio“, dajući neku vrstu besmrtnosti (i važnosti) koju možda bez fotografovog „intervenisanja“ nikada ne bi imao. U njegovim snimcima se snažno ogleda životnost trenutka ali i duh vremena – gledajući ove snimke, posmatrač – barem on srednjim godinama ili stariji – mnoge od snimljenih prizora prepoznaje kao moguće sjećanje – ali isto tako je svjestan da takve scene najvjerovatnije nikad više neće vidjeti.

Iako možda nije bio upoznat sa autorskim stavovima velikih svjetskih fotografa koji su mu prethodili, u Pešićevom radu je moguće prepoznati mnoge značajne odrednice fotografskih praksi sredine XX vijeka, od američkog formalizma, fotožurnalizma i *life* fotografije.

“Prava fotografija ne traži objašnjenje, niti može biti sadržana u riječima” – govorio je legendarni fotograf veličanstvenih predjela američkog zapada Anselm Adams. Mnoge Pešićeve mogu biti dostojna paralela upravo Adamsovim snimcima. Iako fotografije zapravo ne trebaju objašnjenje niti tumačenje komentari koji su dati u knjizi su dragocjeni jer približavaju situaciju, čineći sliku još kompletnijom i kompleksnijom. Snimak usnulog djeteta u bisagama nazvan *Vranac mi kolijevka – vjetar uspavanka* sublimira autorov izuzetan osjećaj za izdvojeni trenutak i magičnost situacije i sposobnost da percipira jedinstvenost momenta. (Iz autorovog komentara saznajemo da je snimak načinjen u posljednjem trenutku neposredno prije nego što se dijete probudilo.) Poetičnost i spontanost ovaj snimak čine univerzalnom i arhetipskom predstavom čiste emocije.

Veliki dio njegove zaostavštine koja broji oko 150.000 snimaka, desetak kraćih filmova, a čiji je popis pravio sam autor neposredno prije smrti kao i veliki broj novinskih članaka i reportaža ilustrovanih njegovim fotografijama, ostao je u njegovom domu u Bijeljini gdje je proveo godine nakon što je otišao u penziju.

I pored više inicijativa, taj materijal nikada nije klasifikovan niti arhiviran niti je dobio adekvatan tretman zbog izostanka razumijevanja i podrške relevantnih institucija kulture u Crnoj Gori. Vremenom, ove arhive će vjerovatno biti trajno izgubljene ili nedostupne, čime će se onemogućiti sagledavanje opusa Milana Pešića kao autora koji je značajno uticao na razvoj fotografije i dokumentarnog filma u Jugoslaviji. Time bi bio izgubljen i fotografski dokumentarni materijal relevantan za niz naučnih oblasti u kojem Crna Gora i onako oskudijeva.

Mirjana Dabović Pejović

► Iza rešetaka | Behind the Bars





Vranac mi kolijevka - vjetar uspavanka, 1965.

The Black Horse - my Cradle, the Wind-my Cradle - Song, 1965



"I wish these works of mine would encourage people, cosmopolites, to help reduce the number of evil people in the human race, to reduce evil and injustice on this most beautiful planet. And perhaps this could launch an appeal to people (just like in your association) to cherish human qualities rather than be evil brothers". - Milan Pešić

Undoubtedly, Milan Pešić is one of the few photographers – artists who committedly and devotedly recorded changes in Montenegrin society for decades, in the time of a "rise from the ashes" in the aftermath of World War II, leaving us precious testimony of events and people. Pešić engaged in photography to the last day of his life, with equal devotion and love for man from this region and for various landscapes he had visited "revealing their secrets".

Pešić's turbulent life, experience of Goli Otok prison, rich biography and significant recognitions speak volumes of his strong personality, his struggle for justice, great enthusiasm but also great talent for photography and film. Unfortunately, not even after decades of work and absolute commitment to his vocation did he get a rightful place in the history of Montenegrin (once Yugoslav) photography¹. This self-taught artist delved into the secrets of photography thanks to his association with eminent cinematographers and film workers of the day, learning from them, first as a driver, in the mid-1950s: Đoko Mijajlović (whose photo section gave him the first insights into the craft of photography), Čedo Kušević (a photographer and geography teacher), Anton Lukateli (the first Montenegrin cinematographer and founder of Montenegrin cinematography, one of the founders of *Pobjeda*, assisted by Pešić upon his settlement in Belgrade), Stevo Radović – cinematographer, Stevo Lepetić – reporter, Karlo Martineti. They were all his friends, teachers, associates. The development of his innate sense of beauty and his learning process in this "walking academy", as he often referred to the period of his first encounters with photography and his newly aroused interest in "the magic play of light and shadow", were influenced by his association and friendships with the giants of Montenegrin and Yugoslav fine arts such as Miroslav Škark, Božidar Jakac, Zdenko and Boris Kalin, Petar Lubarda, Milo Milunović, Aco Prijčić and others.

Upon his arrival in Belgrade, he got a job as a camera assistant in the Newsreels. That was a time of the post-war building boom but also of political uncertainty caused by the country's distancing from Russia, a time characterized by hunger, poverty and State Security Administration (UDBA) monitoring everything, including the media. Due to his refusal to "cooperate", he was sent to Goli Otok prison (1951) remaining there for three years, the period which will leave a lasting imprint on his entire life. In the course of his long career he took part in the making of various television reportages, such as the cult television show "Caravan" ("Karavan") which entered the history of documentary programmes of the Yugoslav Radio Television (JRT) winning him numerous recognitions; when he moved to *Pobjeda*, he was the first JRT correspondent for Montenegro.

Making tours around Montenegro, walking across its most hidden and inaccessible crags, meeting farmers, fishermen, cattle-raisers, workers, women and children going about their work, in their daily struggle for survival in snow, cold or drought, Pešić had an extraordinary ability to recognize and capture the moment which best reflected the stark natural contrasts in the relentless Montenegrin landscapes often making one feel man's absolute powerlessness. Sometimes he would spend days observing a motif and waiting for the "right moment" when all elements were in absolute balance, while some shots, on the other hand, were made thanks to his lightning fast reactions.

¹ The only extensive study providing an overview of Pešić's work is the book entitled *Milan Pešić Crnom Gorom (Milan Pešić Across Montenegro)*, written by Jovica Marčeta, who used Pešić's large documentation to make a selection of around 200 shots followed by the artist's comments.



Bog je sa nama, 1957.
God is with us, 1957

It can be said that there is no area in Montenegro that Pešić did not delve into. With affection and admiration he recorded the picturesque rural landscapes, events and portraits of highlanders in particular. The series of these portraits are no doubt among Milan Pešić's most striking photographic works. Strongly modelled, spontaneous and authentic, they are experienced as an integral part of the landscape they originate from, as a sort of anthropological study of the relationship between a landscape and the people inhabiting it. Despite the fact that the majority of photographs appear rather classical with hindsight, as the "stereotypes of photographic past" of a certain time, they represent a significant testimony to the moments when they were taken creating a visual documentary context, especially in the light of the fact that in Montenegro there are practically no systematized photographic archives outside specific areas of expertise.

Milan Pešić's work is characterized by some sort of optimistic humanism, which is mostly read in his comments from the book mentioned in the footnote. Nevertheless, he never idealizes human nature. This attitude is best reflected in the shots of the scenes taken in dramatic situations such as a column of people trudging their way through the snowdrifts carrying an injured person to hospital.

These shots continue to attract the attention and remind the viewer of the bygone years and events; and "since the event passed, they give it some kind of immortality (and importance)" that it might never have had without the photographer's "intervention". Pešić's shots strongly mirror the life of the moment but also the spirit of the time: watching them, the viewer, at least the middle-aged one or older, recognizes many of the scenes as possible memory, at the same time being conscious that she will most probably never see these scenes again.

Although he may not have been acquainted with the artistic attitudes of the world's great photographers as his predecessors, Pešić's work shows many important traits of photographic practices from the mid-20th century, from American formalism, photojournalism and life photography.

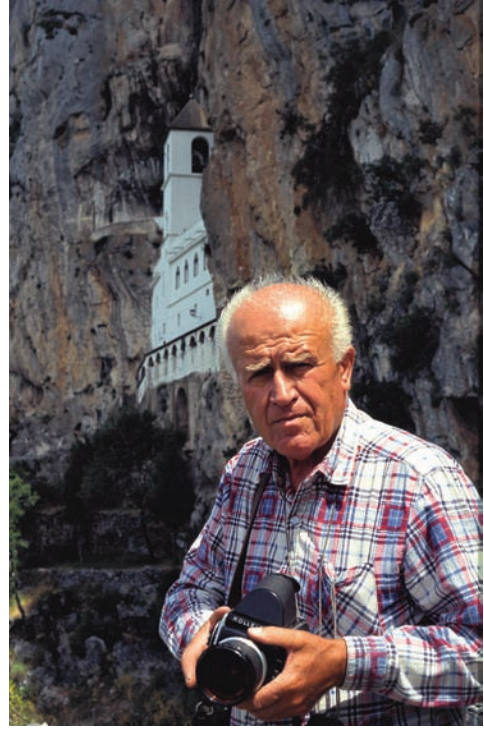
"A true photograph need not be explained, nor can it be contained in words" – said Ansel Adams, the legendary photographer of magnificent landscapes of the American West. Many of Pešić's photos can be a dignified parallel to Adams's shots. Although photographs need no explanation or interpretation, the comments provided in the book are precious as they bring the situation closer, making the picture even more complete and complex. The shot of a sleeping child in saddlebags called *Horse is My Cradle – the Wind My Lullaby* conveys the artist's remarkable sense for an isolated moment and the magic air of the situation as well as his ability to perceive the unique nature of the moment. (The artist's comment tells us that the shot was taken at the very moment before the child woke up.) Its poetry and spontaneity make this shot a universal and archetypal representation of pure emotion.

A large portion of Pešić's legacy totalling about 150,000 shots and 10 short movies, inventoried by the artist himself immediately prior to his death, as well as a large number of newspaper articles and stories illustrated by his photographs, has remained in his home in Bijeljina where he spent the years after his retirement. Despite several initiatives, due to the lack of understanding and support from relevant cultural institutions in Montenegro, the material has never been classified or archived, or treated appropriately for that matter. In time, these archives will probably be irretrievably lost or inaccessible, which will make it impossible for Milan Pešić's oeuvre to be studied and seen as an artist who has made a major impact on the development of photography and documentary films in Yugoslavia. In this way, photo documentation of importance for a range of scientific fields that Montenegro certainly does not abound in, would also be lost.

Mirjana Dabović Pejović

Milan Pešić, 1924–2009.

Rođen u Crnoj strani u blizini Danilovgrada, Crna Gora
Djetinjstvo i mladost proveo u Drenovcu, blizu Dečana
1941. Zarobljen i deportovan u italijanski logor
1943. Pridružio se Narodnooslobodilačkoj armiji
Od 1946. bavi se fotografijom
1947. Jedan od osnivača Foto kluba „Titograd“
1950–1951. Reporter za Filmske novosti iz Slovenije
1954–1961. *Freelance* reporter za dnevne novine „Pobjeda“
1961–1987. *Freelance* reporter za Radio Televiziju
za Crnu Goru, Sandžak i Dubrovnik



Nagrade:

1962. i 1965 – Trinaestojulska nagrada
1971. Nagrada Internacionalni majstor fotografije
1973. Nagrada Majstor fotografije, Foto Saveza Jugoslavije
1993. Nagrada Foto Saveza Jugoslavije za životno djelo
2000. Nagrada Udruženja novinara SRJ za životno djelo

Foto | Photo: Jovica Marčeta

Born in Crna strana, near Danilovgrad, Montenegro
He spent childhood and youth in Drenovac, near Dečani
1941. Captured and deported in italian concentration camp
In 1943. Joined National Liberation Army
Since 1946. Engaged in photography.
1947. One of the founders of Photo Club „Titograd“
1950–1951 Reporter for Film News from Slovenia
1954–1961 Freelance reporter for daily news „Pobjeda“
1961–1987 Freelance reporter for Radio Television for Montenegro, Sandžak and Dubrovnik

Awards:

1962. and 1965 - 13. July Prize
1971. International Master of Art Photography prize
1973. Prize Master of Photography, Photo Association of Yougoslavia
1993. The prize of Photo Association of Yougoslavia for Lifetime Achievement
2000. The prize of Association of Journalists SRJ for Lifetime Achievement

www.vagskal.se



Prilikom snimanja dokumentarnog filma *Čovjek i sjenka*, 1996. godine
On the occasion of the shooting the documentary film *Man and Shadow* in 1996.

Foto | Photo: Jovica Marčeta

Naslovna strana | *Cover page*:
Stari Durmitorac, 1955. | An Old Man from Durmitor, 1955

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